



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES
21 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0021

PATRICK C. KELIHER
COMMISSIONER

November 06, 2018

Nat Tupper
Yarmouth Town Manager
200 Main Street
Yarmouth, ME 04096

RE: Royal River Connectivity

Dear Mr. Tupper,

Many regions of Maine are working collaboratively on improving river connectivity while meeting broader community objectives at fish passage impediments. On August 3rd, 2018 dialogue was reinitiated with several interested parties related to the Royal River, specifically regarding passage at the two lower most dams at Bridge Street and East Elm Street. The Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) supports efforts to improve stream connectivity and restore habitat at these projects if community concerns regarding changes at the sites can be meaningfully addressed.

The Royal River watershed supports regionally significant wild and stocked trout fishery resources. Sampling conducted by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IFW) documented the presence of wild brook trout in the Royal River and 15 of its tributaries. Historically, the Royal River supported small but important runs of Atlantic Salmon and river herring species. Restoring access by reconnecting the drainage with tidal waters could allow for the improvement of sea-run and brook trout fisheries, as well as possibly provide habitat for other sea-run species such as American eel, blueback herring, and American shad. The lack of upstream access and poorly designed fish passage has hindered the development of diverse fisheries.

DMR is supportive of moving conversations forward related to connectivity in the Royal River and will continue to discuss these issues with the interested parties. Community support for any alternative developed is essential.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicholas Popoff at Nicholas.Popoff@maine.gov.

Sincerely,

Sean Ledwin
Director
Sea-Run Fisheries and Habitat Division