

Siqonomeq-kisuhs (Alewives Moon): restoring Wabanaki ways of knowing in river restoration.

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Kennebec River Restoration

Let's save America's Atlantic salmon

BY JOHN WALDMAN, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR - 09/10/22 10:00 AM ET



AP Photo/Heather Ainsworth

In this Oct. 10, 2011 photo, a Chinook salmon fights its way towards a barrier in the Beaverdam Brook at the Salmon River Fish Hatchery in Altmar, N.Y. . The U.S. Geological Survey undertakes efforts to restock Atlantic salmon to Salmon River and Lake Ontario, bringing back the popular game fish to go along with a robust population of western salmon species. The Beaverdam Brook is a tributary of the Salmon River. (AP Photo/Heather Ainsworth)

Wild Atlantic salmon, known as the "King of Fish" for their sporting qualities,

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LOCAL & STATE >

Posted March 15, 2021 | Updated March 15, 2021

INCREASE FONT SIZE **A**

Public hearing on Kennebec River plan draws questions, comments about dam removal

The Maine Department of Marine Resources held a virtual public hearing Monday on a proposed amendment to its Kennebec River Management Plan.

BY **AMY CALDER** MORNING SENTINEL



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5 COMMENTS

A proposal to amend the state's Kennebec River Management Plan to restore a healthy river and boost fish population drew both support and opposition Monday.



Some people who attended a virtual public hearing hosted by the Maine Department of Marine Resources said removing the Lockwood Dam in Waterville and the Shawmut Dam in Fairfield would allow endangered Atlantic salmon to move upriver to spawn and pave the way for recreational opportunities on the river and boost economic development.

But others claimed that removal of those or other dams owned by Brookfield Renewable Partners would negatively impact the economy and properties along the river, create job losses and cause municipal tax rates to increase.

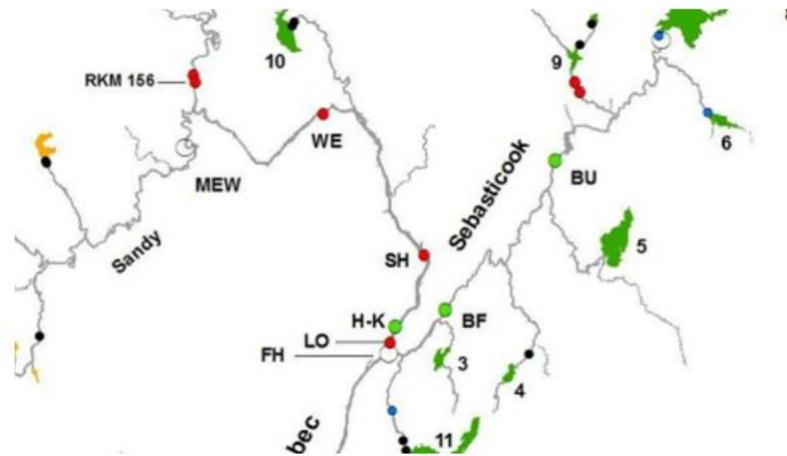
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Wabanaki perspective on Kennebec River damming

BY [MALL OBOMSAWIN](#) · MARCH 15, 2021 · 10 MINS READ



Map from "Kennebec River Management Plan Diadromous Resources Amendment" report, p. 56, prepared by Maine Department of Marine Resources.

For millennia, the Kennebec River was the nucleus of Wabanaki food-systems, diplomacy, and ceremonial life. After hundreds of years of industrial development, it has become unsustainable for Wabanaki peoples and our aquatic relatives alike. The future of Atlantic Salmon and several other sea-run fish now hinges on the restoration of this waterway.

The five Wabanaki nations are often described as "riverine" peoples, because the interconnected waterways of our homelands are a vital part of our cultural identities and sustenance. We have always traversed our vast territory by canoe, considering the Kennebec River as both a relative in herself and a means to reach our relatives throughout our kinship network. Using the Kennebec River system (the second largest in Maine), one can access the St. Lawrence, Androscoggin, Allagash, St. John, St. Croix, Aroostook, Sebasticook, Penobscot, and Machias rivers, and the open ocean.

My areas

Sites of Sustenance

- Historically and contemporary
- Foodways and 13-month calendar
- Places are organizing people
 - Ex: Siqonomeq and waterfalls



My areas

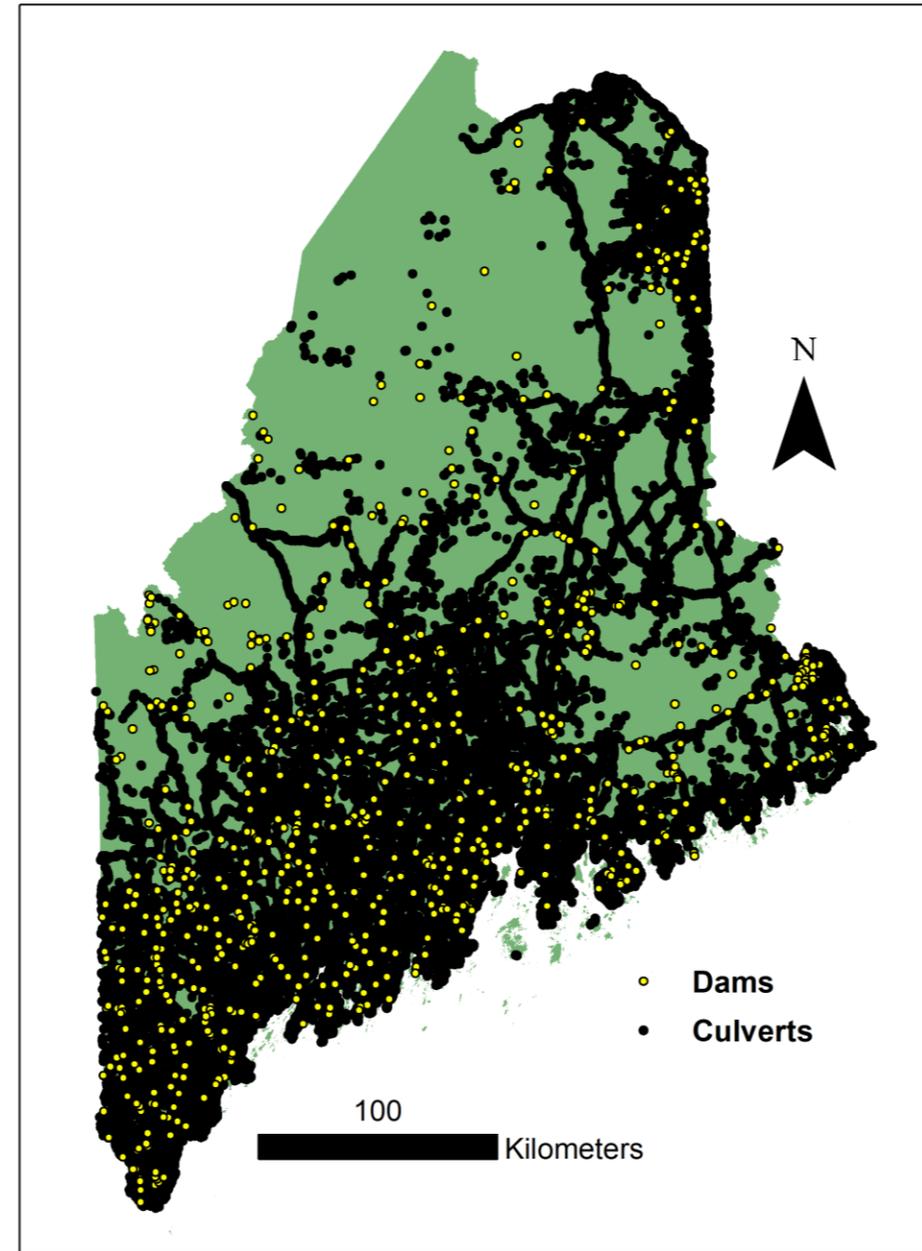
Sites of Sustenance

- Foodways and 13-month calendar
- Places are organizing people
 - Ex: Summer time on the coast
- Historically and contemporary



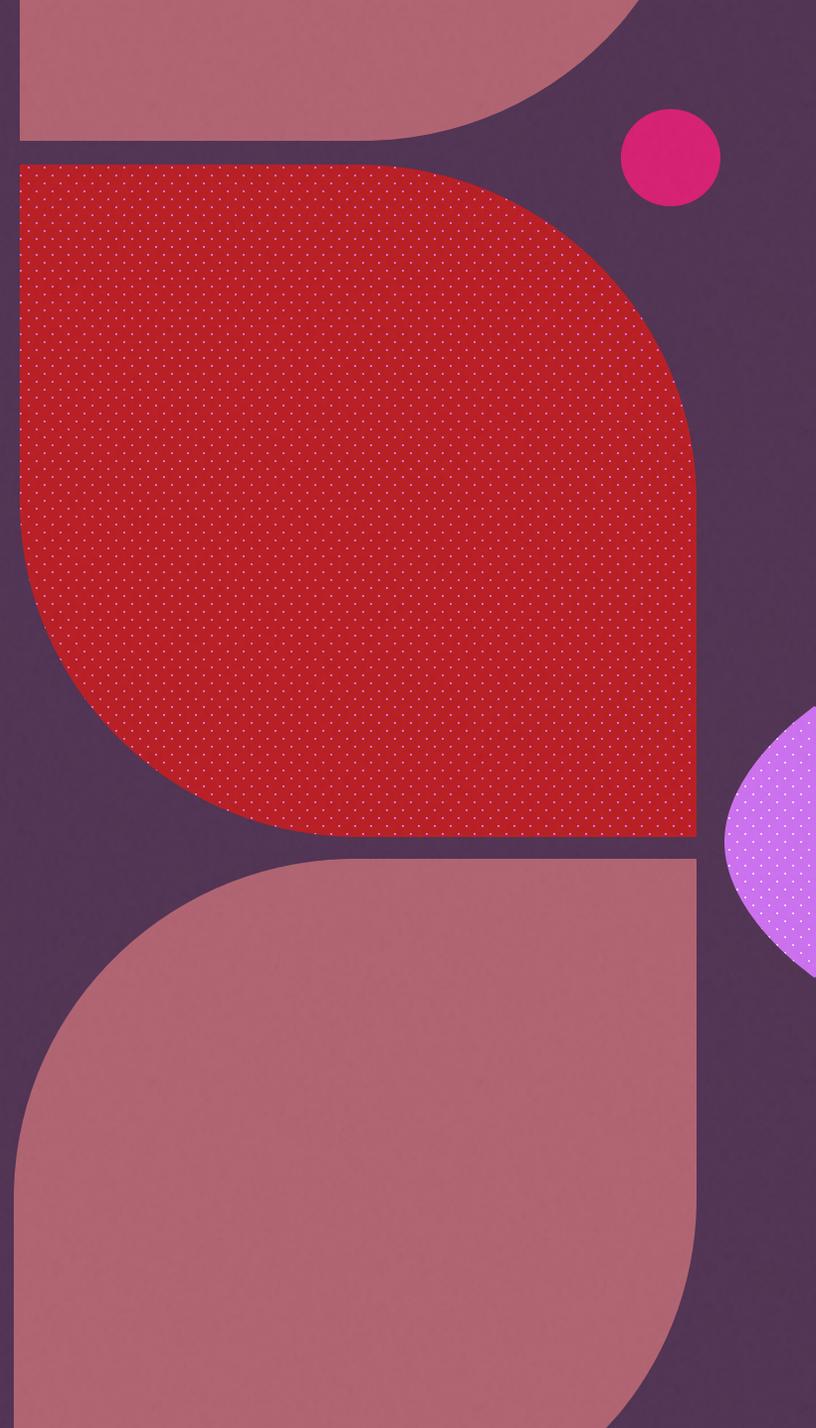


The Context



Overall Directions

- How can indigenous ways of knowing inform river restoration and provide a guide forward.
- Restore Wabanaki “text”



Gluskabe

Mythology and Folklore

- Process and heal
- Knowledge, values, and management
 - Stories about water



Gluskabe and the Giant Animals

- Story time:



Gluskabe and the Giant Animals

- Story time:
- Sustenance is to have life (MITSC, 2022)



Gluskabe and the Giant Animals

- Story time:
- Sustenance is to have life (MITSC, 2022)
- Management of Rivers (Prins & McBride, 2007)



Gluskabe and the Weir

- Story time:

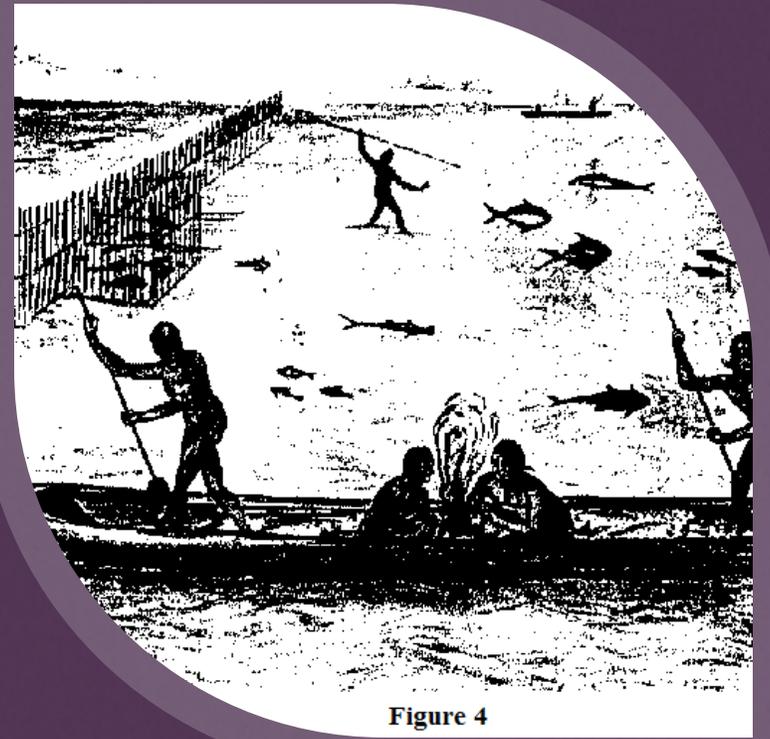


Figure 4

Gluskabe and the Weir

- Story time:
- Practice and river dynamics

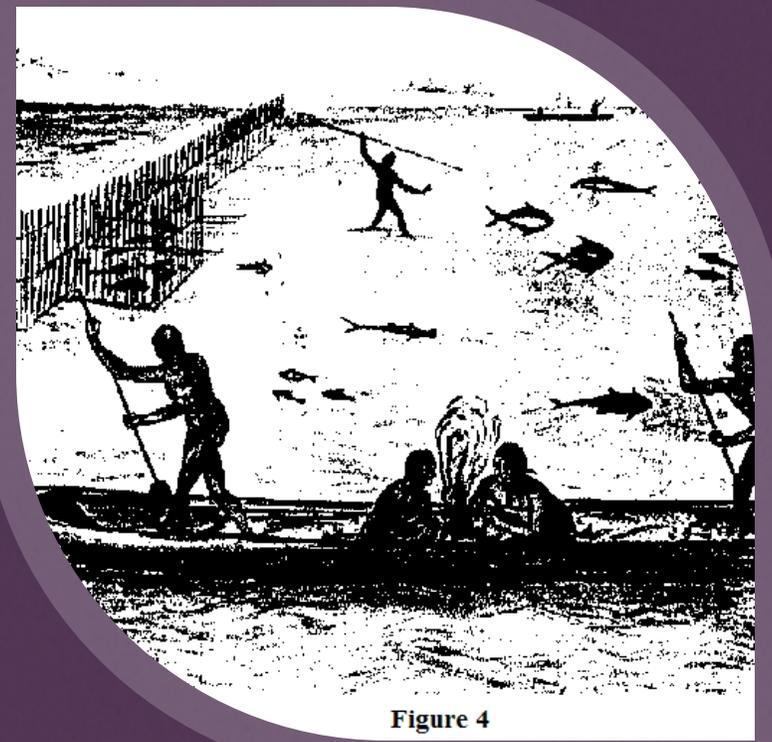


Figure 4

Gluskabe and the Weir

- Story time:
- Practice and river dynamics
- Balancing ecology and sustenance



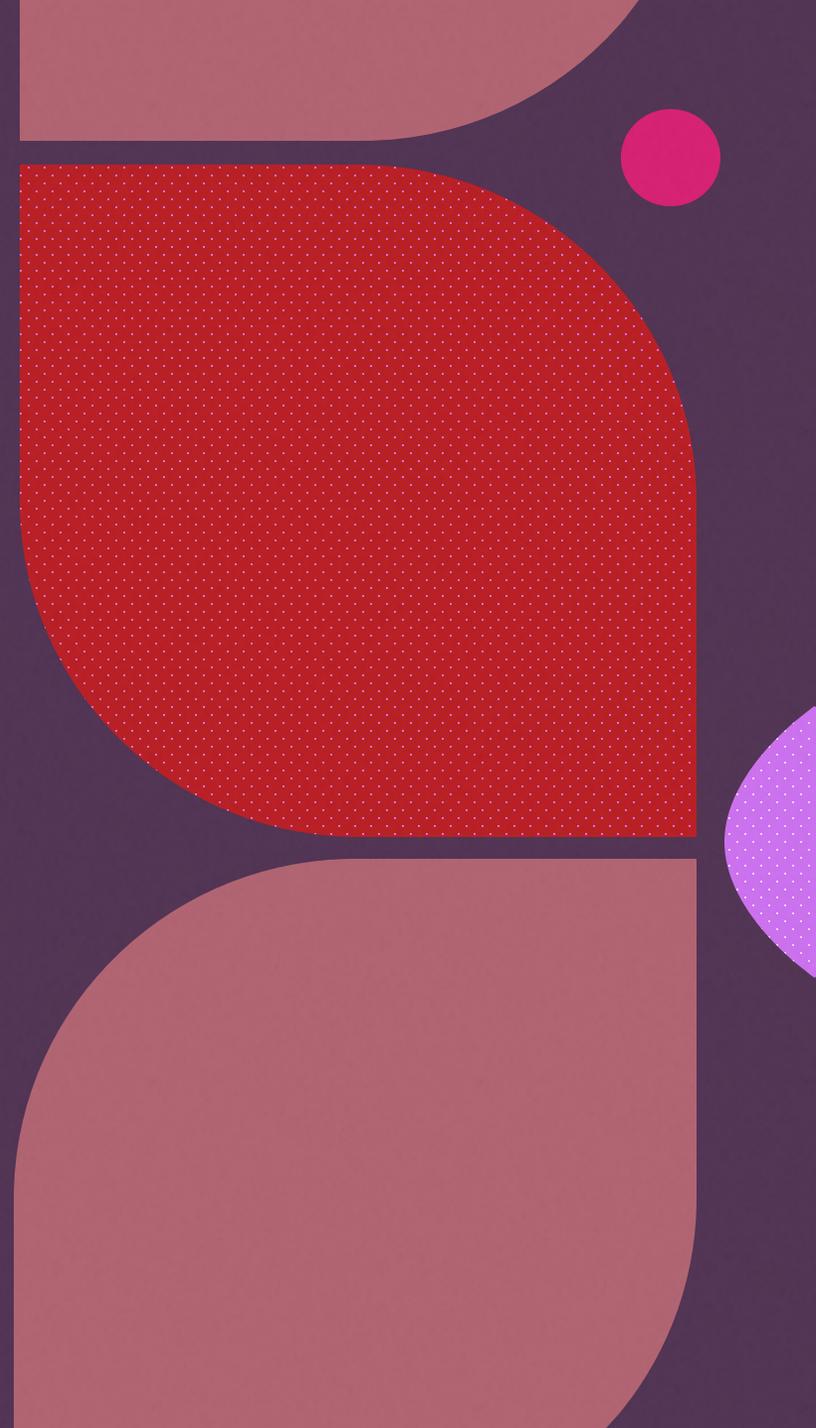
Gluskabe and the Weir

- Story time:
- Practice and river dynamics
- Balancing ecology and sustenance
- Mainstem blockages are bad

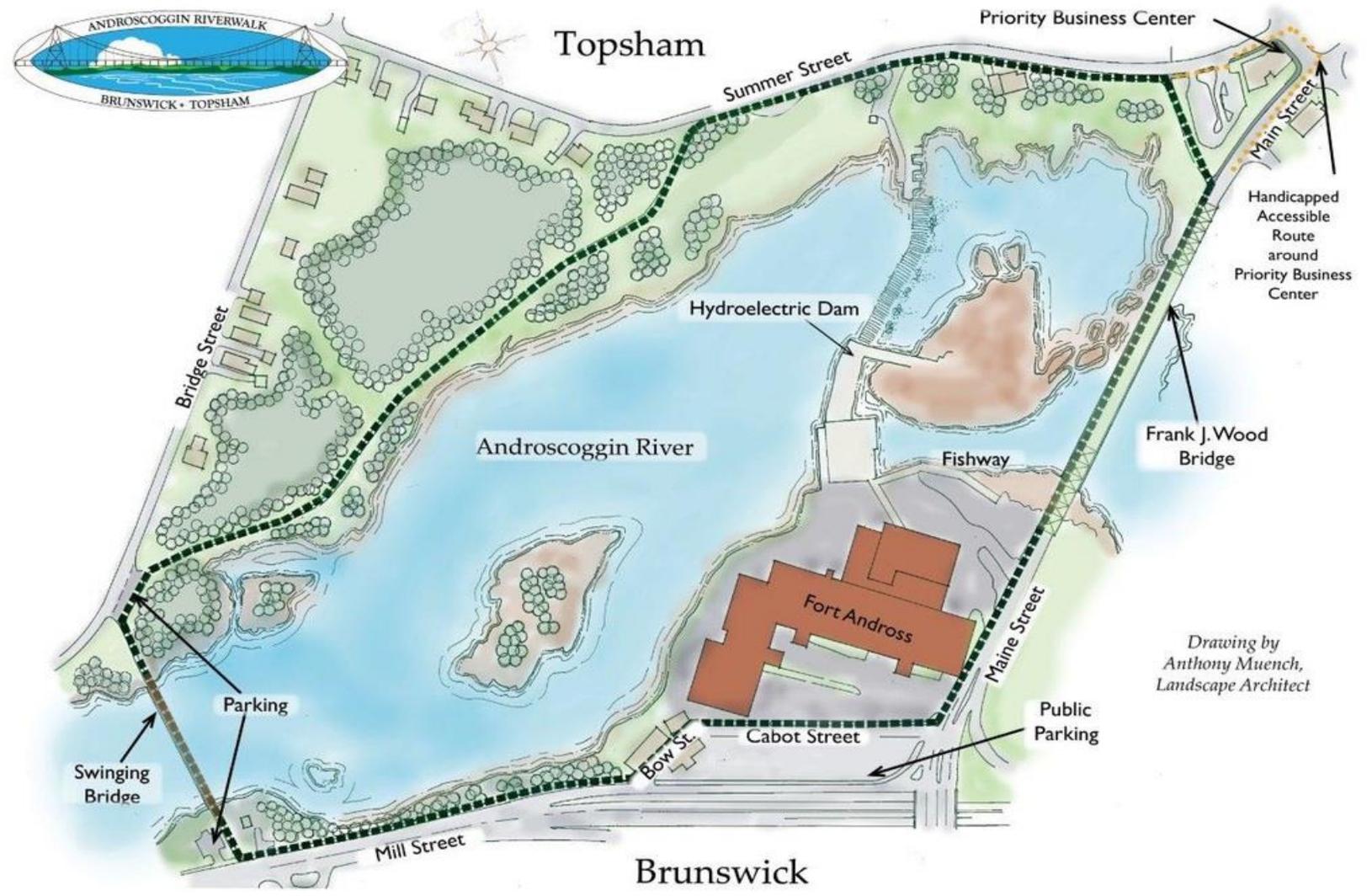


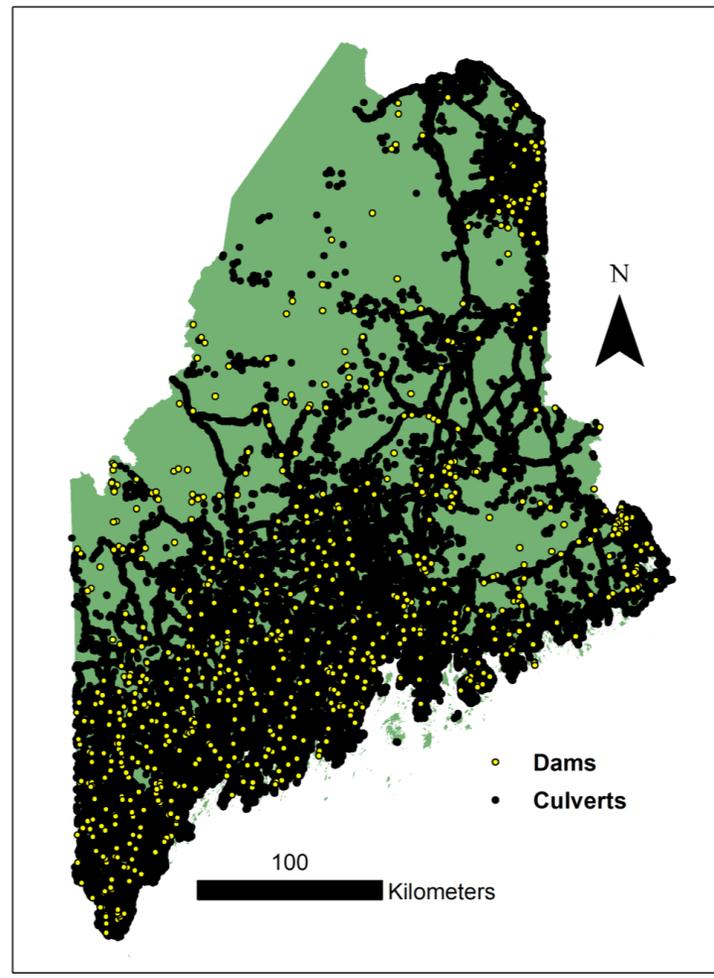
Stories of Gluskabe

- Blockages disrupt movement, ecology, and sustenance
- Wabanaki management – balance and relationship with species



Gluskabe Blocks the river





Grandmother's Teachings

Over 200 years of blockage

- Paint turned black (Lichter et al., 2006)
- CCPC (Judd, 1990)
- Water policy (MITSC, 2022)



Grandmother's Teachings

Over 200 years of blockage

- River herring (Bassett, 2018)
- Newsworthy (Hall et al., 2011)
- This dam and at Augusta (Lichter et al., 2006)



Grandmother's Teachings

Over 200 years of blockage

- Industry resistance (MITSC, 2022)
- Localized resistance (Willis, 2009).



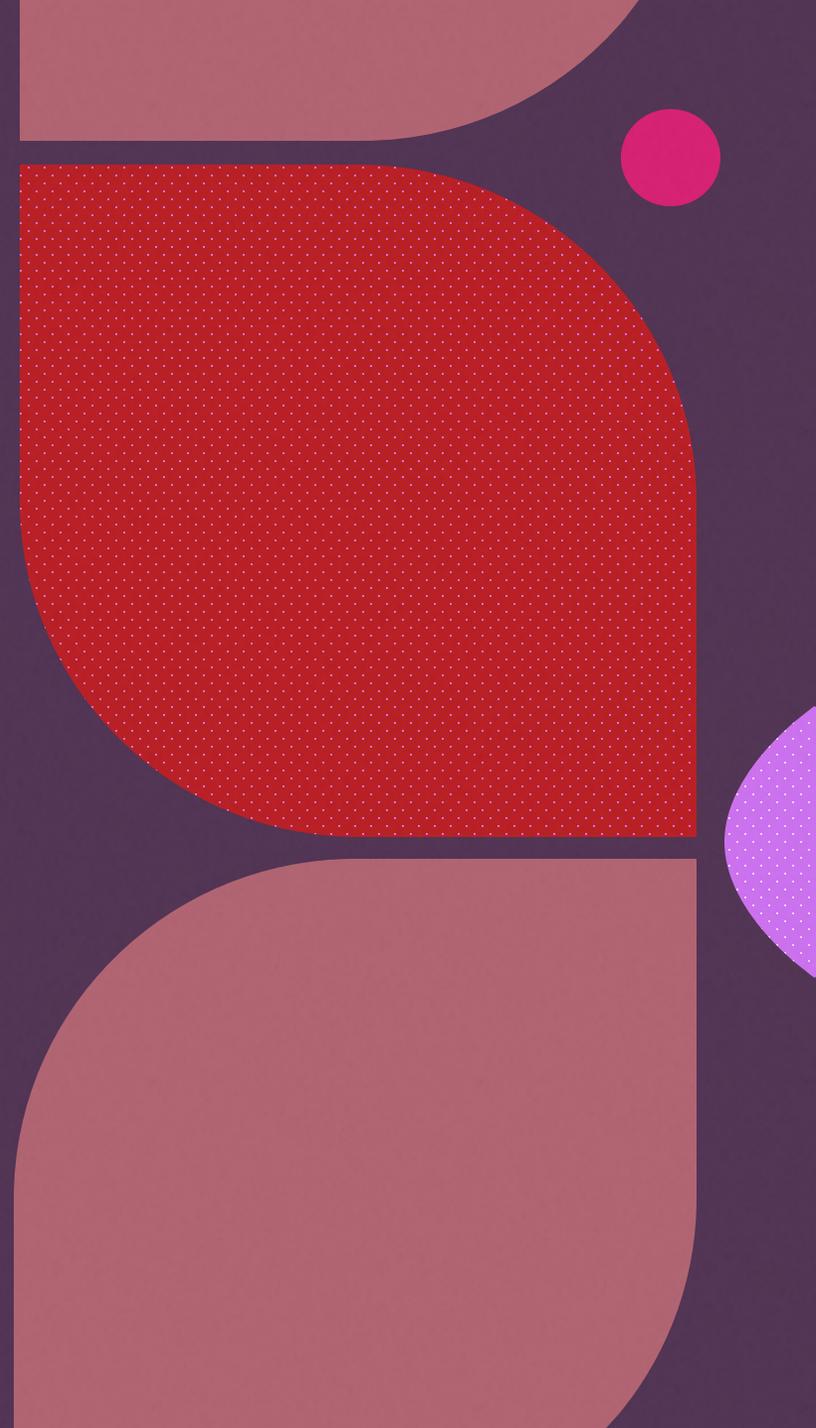
Summarize the Stories of Gluskabe

- Blockages disrupt movement, ecology, and sustenance
 - Why the health disparities exist
 - Restricting presence and sustenance
- Wabanaki management – balance and relationship with species

Grandmother Corrects

Sites of Sustenance

- Mi'kmaq Nation – Presque Isle
- Houlton Band of Maliseet
- Penobscot Nation
- Passamaquoddy Nations



Grandmother Corrects

Siqonomeq is restored

- Our children are gathering again
- Engaging in multiple sciences
- Reaccessing identity



Grandmother Corrects

Siqonomeq is restored

- All children are learning with fish
- Connections to fishers
- Alewives = healthy groundfish (Ames & Lichter, 2013).
- Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

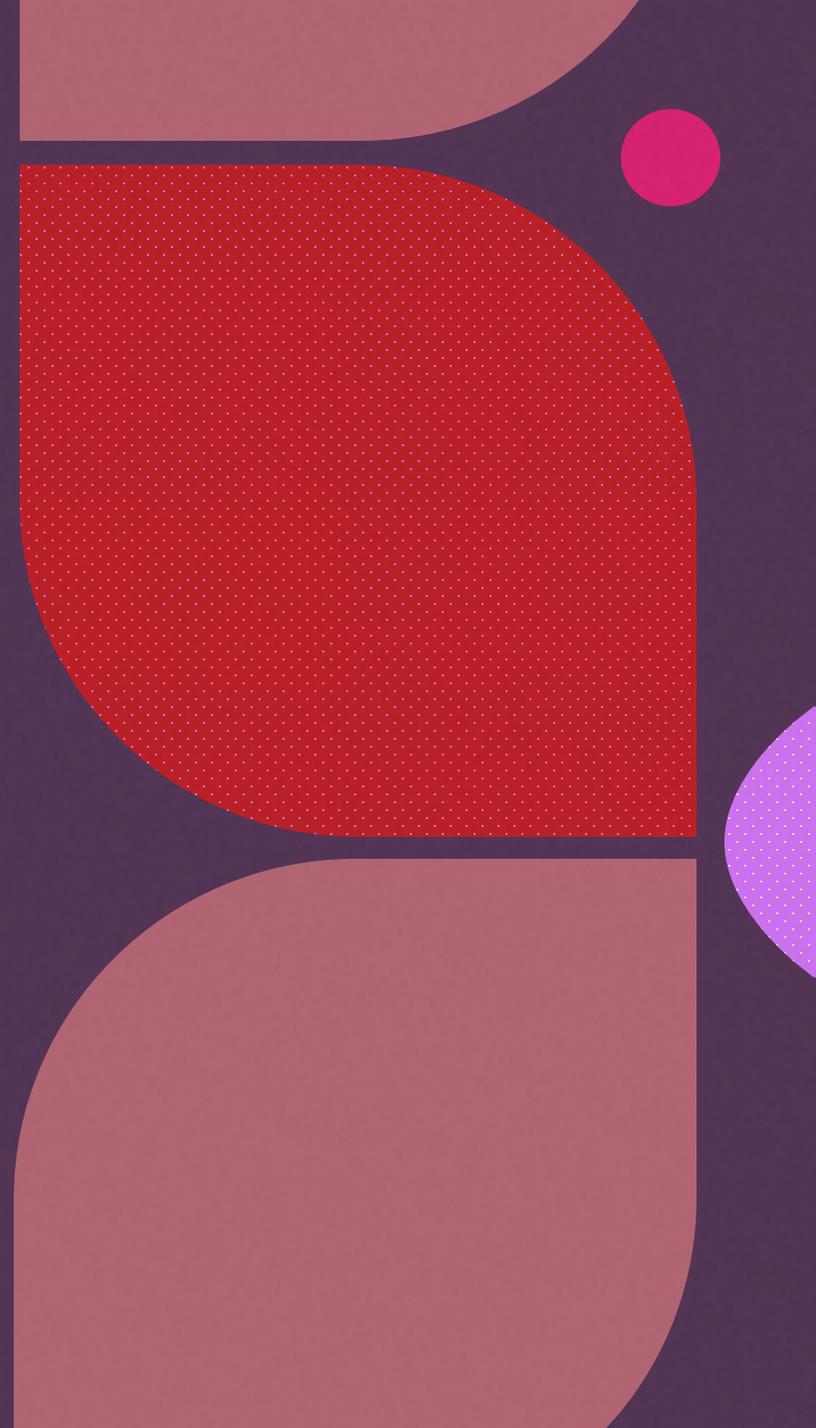


Restoring Wabanaki values to fish passage

What can I do?

- MITSC – Sea Run (2022)
- Obomsawin (2021) Wabanaki Perspectives on Kennebec River damming
- Loring – One Nation Under Fraud (2022)
- Harvard - Economic and Social Impacts of Restrictions on the Applicability of Federal Indian Policies to the Wabanaki Nations in Maine (2022)

Call of the Loon





Acknowledgements

Woliwon, Weliweni, Welalin

- Elders and Ancestors
- Conference Organizations

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