

Report on the inspection of several salmon streams in Maine

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An inspection trip covering the St. George, Penobscot, Narragansett, and Machias rivers was made by F. C. Walcott (American Wildlife Institute), and W. C. Herrington and L. D. Stringer (both of the Fish and Wildlife Service) during the period of August 28 to 31, 1945.

August 28, 1945:

The party called on Mr. Frank Baker to discuss the new salmon committee appointed by the Governor. The committee is composed of Mr. Baker, Scarborough; Mr. Lloyd Byer, Wiscasset; and Mr. Sam Wooster, Machias. Mr. Baker plans to get the committee together very soon to outline the general procedure and then hold a meeting with Mr. George Stobie, Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Game and Mr. W. C. Herrington to discuss their ideas on restoration methods.

Stopped at Damariacotta Mills on the Damariscotta river to examine the alewife fishladder. The water in the river was low, about 12 inches below spring condition. There were many young alewives present in the ladder, stream and salt water.

St. George river: This river was examined at Warren, Maine. The water was very low. There was no water going over the dam. The water level was about 10 to 12 inches below the top of the dam and there were 12 inch flashboards in place on the top of the dam. The fishway was closed and the writer believes that it would not function at this low water, if it were open. All the water flow at this point was through the penstock on the right bank of the river to the Georges River Wollen Mills. The entrance

to the penstock is covered by a rack, but this probably would not stop parr and smolts from entering the penstock. The river was also examined at Union, Maine, just below Sennebec Pond. The river at this point was also very low, with the water level about 2 feet below the spring height. Some of the water was leaking through the canal and old mill on the left bank. Temperatures at Union at 5:30 PM: water 21.0°C, air 22.0°C.

August 29, 1945:

Conferred with Warden Supervisor Paul Hanscom regarding conditions on the Penobscot river. Mr. Hanscom reports that the East Branch is in good condition. He has just finished an inspection of the upper river with Warden Myron Smart. He reports one adult salmon seen at the fishway at Matteseunk. Warden Hanscom believes most of the fishways on the Penobscot open too far downstream or away from the face of the dam and throw too little water to attract fish. He thinks that the fishways are adequate in internal design if fish find them, but suggests that they might function better if the location in the dam were reversed, so that the downstream end were level with the face of the dam and the rest of the fishway projected back into the forebay. He also suggests that the present fishways might be remedied by filling the space between the fishway and the dam with concrete curving from the face of the dam to the downstream end of the fishway and over which water would fall. This would allow the fish to work along the face of the dam to the entrance to the fishway.

The Veazie dam and fishway were examined. The water was low, about 6 to 12 inches below the top of the flashboards. Many leaks in the flashboards and most of the water flow was coming from the tailrace of the

power plant on the right bank (opposite the fishway). Temperatures at Veazie at 10:30 AM: water 21.0°C, air 26.0°C.

The dam and fishway at Bangor were examined. The water was low, the left end of the dam from the old fishway to the left bank was dry, with the water level about 6 inches below the top of this part of the dam. Water was coming over the right section of the dam. The fishway was operating but the water was low. The trap at the upper end was about two-thirds out of water. Warden Austin Wyman, watchman at the trap, reports 168 salmon taken to date; 108 fish were taken to Craig Brook Hatchery; 60 released to migrate up river. No fish have been taken since the middle of July. Four fish were caught in the trap at the Veazie dam during the week of August 19th. Approximately 40 fish have been taken by sportsman at the Bangor Pool. Warden Wyman believes the operation of the fishway at Bangor would be much improved if a concrete wall were constructed on the rocks below the fishway so that water would be diverted along the face of the dam. He also suggests that the left end of the dam be lowered or have a notch cut in the end close to the fishway so that a flow of water would be maintained during the summer to attract fish. From records of the trap catch for this and previous years he finds that almost all the salmon were taken when 4 inches or more of water was flowing over the dam close to the fishway.

The general salmon situation was outlined and discussed with Head Warden Malloy at Augusta.

August 30, 1945:

The dam and fishway at Machias on the Machias river were inspected. The water here was also low. The upper third of the fishway was dry and the water in the lower part was due entirely to leaks in the dam and from power

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outlets. It would be impossible for fish to pass at this stage. Temperatures at Machias at 11:30 AM: water 22.0°C, air 25.5°C.

The dam and fishway on the Machias river at Whitneyville was also examined. Water was spilling over three foot flashboards. The fishway which last year had two central partitions missing has been braken open altogether so that it would be impassable. At present there is about a 6 to 8 foot drop with no arrangement for lifting fish. The entrance to the forebay is a small opening about 1 foot square near the bottom of the dam. The writer believes that the head of water and the force with which this water would flow from this opening would block all salmon. This needs to be repaired to lift fish to the top of the forebay. Water temperature at Whitneyville at 12:00 noon: 24.0°C.

The dam at the foot of Beddington Lake on the Narraguagus river was inspected. The water level was very low behind the dam. The bottom of the stream was dry at the foot of the dam in the forebay out to the log sluice. This sluice was closed but leaking. There was very little head of water (3 to 4 feet). It is the opinion of the writer that the introduction of a few baffles in the log sluice would allow the gate to be opened without drawing down the lake and would allow salmon to pass this barrier. F. C. Walcott saw two adultsalmon in the pool below the dam. Temperatures in this pool at 2:30 PM: water 22.0°C, air 23.0°C.