

A Retrospective on the Maine Land and Water Resources Council and the Maine Rivers Act

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Maine Land and Water Resources Council



Maine's Land and Water Resources Council

First Created by Executive Order - 1976

**Virtually a federal requirement for states
to get federal funds under President
Johnson**

**Then, enacted into state law – and active
until around 2007 and repealed from state
law around 2011**

Land and Water Resources Council Role

- ❑ Provided a mechanism for coordinating the development and implementation of natural resources policy at the State Executive Department level
- ❑ Undertook studies
- ❑ Prepared and submitted legislation

Council Members

Departments of:

Conservation, Environmental Protection,
Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Marine
Resources, Agriculture and Transportation

Along with the State Planning Office and
Office of Energy Resources

Early Initiatives – 1977 - 1983

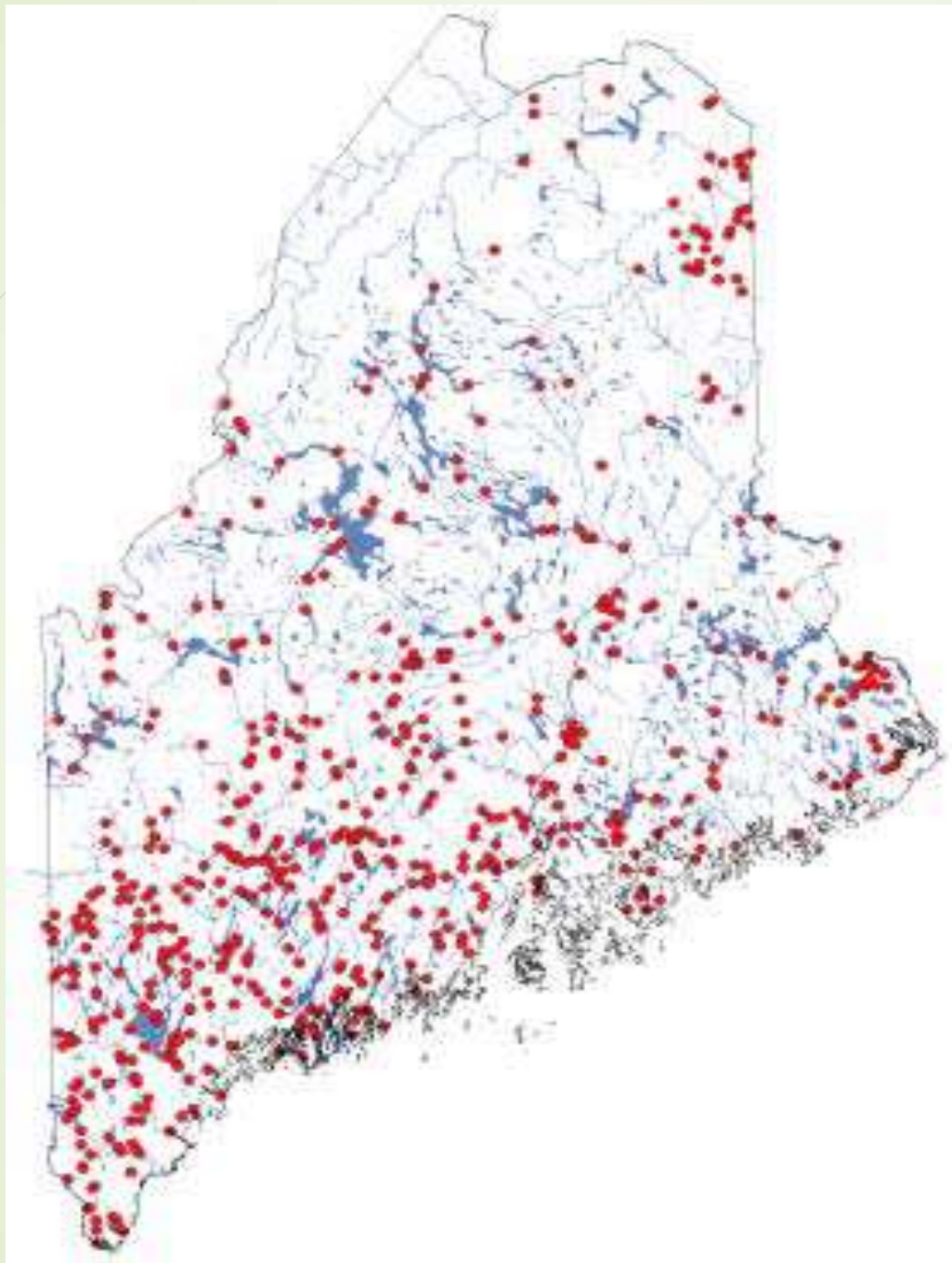
- ❑ **Protecting people, property and natural resources from coastal storm damage following the 1978 storm**
- ❑ **Protecting ground water resources**
- ❑ **Protecting and managing Maine rivers for multiple uses including recreation and hydropower development**

Impetus to Protect Maine Rivers and Create a Balance of Uses

- ❑ US Army Corps of Engineers - Dickey-Lincoln proposal for a large hydropower dam on the St. John River
- ❑ The Dickey-Lincoln debate began in the late 1960s and continued until the mid 1980s.
- ❑ Dickey was a “public power” project involving appropriations from the U.S. Congress and was opposed by private power companies.
- ❑ Environmental concerns and political funding considerations finally defeated the project

Maine's Long History of Dam Construction

- ❑ Dates back to Colonial times
- ❑ Corps of Engineers identified hundreds of dam sites for potential development
- ❑ Even today still over 600 dams in Maine greater than 4 feet high



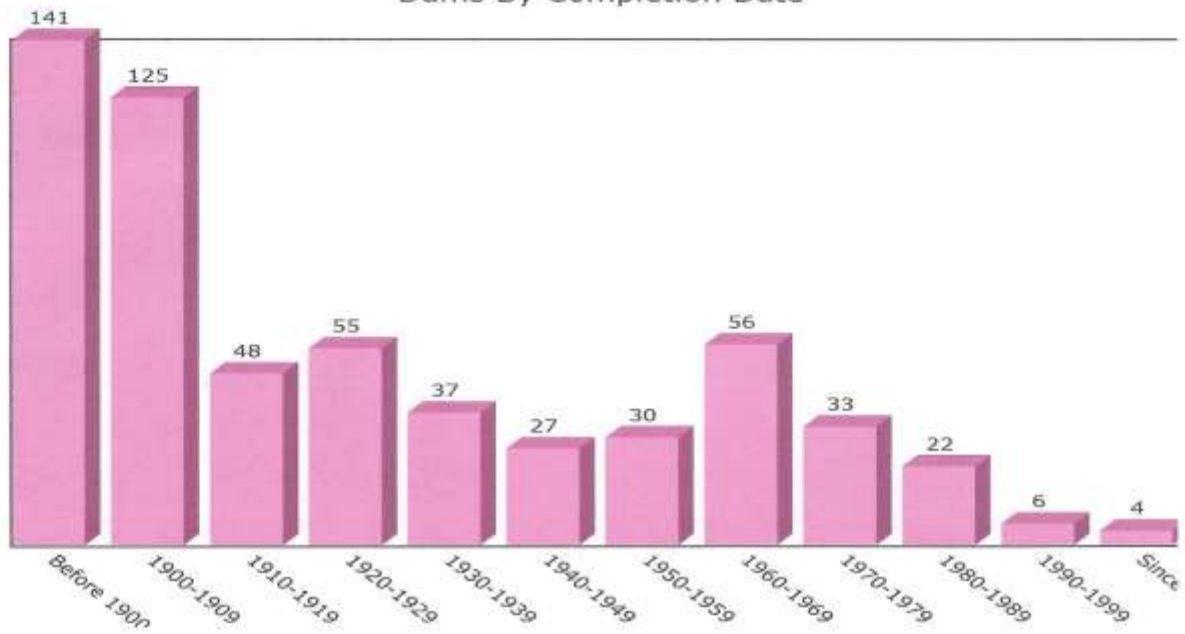
The 2002 map depicts 649 dams listed in the National Inventory of Dams database, which includes dams with four feet or greater height. Hundreds of smaller dams are not shown on this map.

A Citizen's Guide to Dams, Hydropower, and River Restoration in Maine

NATURAL RESOURCES
COUNCIL OF MAINE



Dams By Completion Date



**National Dam Inventory
Maine
US Corps of Engineers**

Maine Rivers Study - 1982



Project Leader Drew Parkin, US Dept. of Interior

Involved large number of Maine state natural resource agency personnel, environmental organizations and federal employees

Policy Neutral Study – with no political agenda

Categorized Maine Rivers into 4 categories A, B, C and D

Maine has 32,000 miles of permanently flowing rivers and streams

'A' Rivers Main Segments total length - 867 miles

Composite natural resource and recreational values greater than state significance

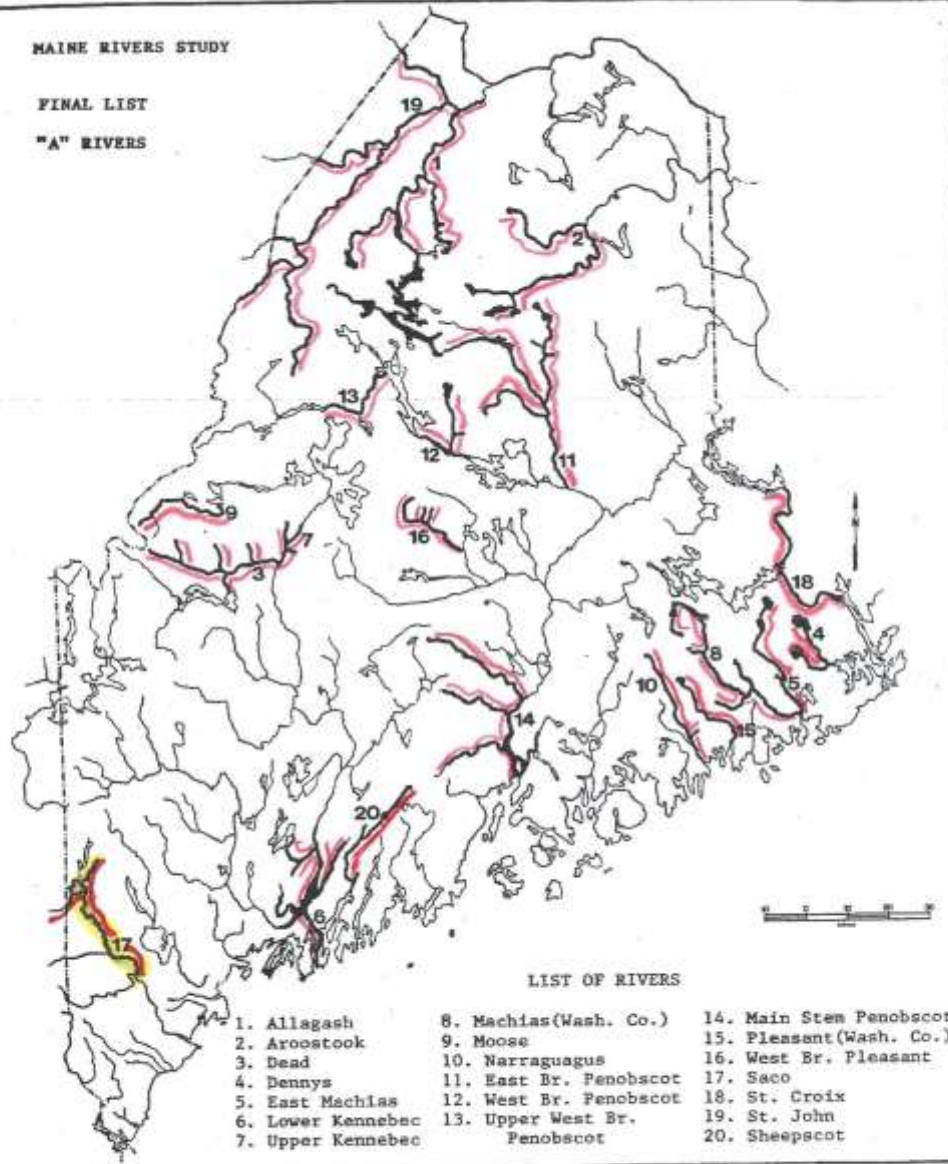
'B' Rivers Main Segments total length – 698 miles

Composite natural resource and recreational values with outstanding statewide significance

MAINE RIVERS STUDY

FINAL LIST

"A" RIVERS



LIST OF RIVERS

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Allagash | 8. Machias(Wash. Co.) | 14. Main Stem Penobscot |
| 2. Aroostook | 9. Moose | 15. Pleasant(Wash. Co.) |
| 3. Dead | 10. Narraguagus | 16. West Br. Pleasant |
| 4. Dennys | 11. East Br. Penobscot | 17. Saco |
| 5. East Machias | 12. West Br. Penobscot | 18. St. Croix |
| 6. Lower Kennebec | 13. Upper West Br. Penobscot | 19. St. John |
| 7. Upper Kennebec | | 20. Sheepscot |

MAINE RIVERS STUDY

FINAL LIST

"5" RIVERS



LIST OF RIVERS

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Arcoostook | 7. Kennebago | 13. Rapid |
| 2. Carrabassett | 8. Kennebec | 14. St. Francis |
| 3. Crooked | 9. Mattawamkeag | 15. St. George |
| 4. Damariscotta | 10. North Br. Penobscot | 16. St. John |
| 5. Fish | 11. South Br. Penobscot | 17. Sandy |
| 6. Grand Lake Stream | 12. Piscataquis | 18. West Br. Union |

The Maine Rivers Act

“The Legislature declares that certain rivers, because of their unparalleled natural and recreational values, provide irreplaceable social and economic benefits to the people in their existing state.”

In a nut shell:

No new dams on ‘A’ river segments


No water diversions around ‘A’ segments

Redevelopment of existing dams on these segments shall not diminish their resource values

Why the Maine Rivers Act was able to be implemented

- ❑ Maine Rivers Study – 1982 was timely and policy neutral
- ❑ The Land and Water Resources Council was there to coordinate data collection, the Rivers Study and legislation development
- ❑ All players at the table including hydropower interests
- ❑ There was an effective outreach program informing the public of about the Rivers Study and proposed legislation
- ❑ Emphasis was on maintaining historic and traditional values of important river segments
- ❑ Extraordinary investments made to cleanup Maine's rivers could now allowed Maine people and their children enormous natural and recreational benefits
- ❑ Hydropower interests still had river segments available for projects.

Quote March 28, 2017



“Perhaps most importantly, the LWRC remained *throughout* the necessary locus of oversight and coordination of the Rivers Bill in all its complex manifestations, from energy development to fisheries management to logging road construction; from conception to policy formulation and adoption to its implementation and evaluation. It was a miracle of sound and complex policymaking, in its own time and remains so even now! *Nothing* of its kind has ever been undertaken by Maine state government as an instrument of the common good!”

Richard Barringer, Former Chair, Maine Land and Water Resources Council