



TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER
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August 18, 2021

Maine Department of Environmental Protection
Attn: Kathy Howatt
17 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0017
Kathy.Howatt@maine.gov

Dear Ms. Howatt,

The Town of Fairfield received a copy of the DRAFT Maine Water Quality Program; Clean Water Certification, Shawmut Hydroelectric Project #L19751-33-H-N (DENIAL).

First, I want to want to thank the Department of Environmental Protection for their detailed review and concerns regarding the water quality of the sections of the Kennebec River around our community as it relates to fish habitat. We agree that strong water quality standards are important to sustaining life of so many species, not just the fish. Something the Town of Fairfield has recently been reminded of with the ongoing Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination problem happening throughout our entire community.

The second item is a question regarding the quality standards and whether they have been set to a level that failure is inevitable? If the Department were to use these same standards at all other dam locations across the state, how many of them would receive certification?

The concern is that while this document states "...that removal of the Shawmut Dam and the associated release of its impoundment is not proposed or considered in the water quality certification application...", Section 5. Public Comments, page 52. The questions then become "How does one achieve these standards if not with the removal of the dam. This question does not come from a thought process of "if we can't meet it, lower it" but a more practical position that 99% of 500 naturally reared adult salmon (as mentioned on page 35) is different than 99% of 500 farm raise adult salmon.

Thank-you for reading about our concerns and should you have any questions and wish to discuss this matter further, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards,

Michelle M. Flewelling, Town Manager