THE MIGHT

BENOBSCOT

MAINE'S MARVELOUS RIVER IN PICTURES AND WORDS

BDN

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PENOBSCOT NATION:

A people of the river past, present, future

BY ALAN CROWELL

SPECIAL SECTION WRITER

For thousands of years, the Penobscot River provided the Penobscot Nation with food, fiber, medicinal plants and a means of transportation that supported an extensive a result of the industrial revolution," said trading network.

The identity of the Penobscot people is so many years." intertwined with the river that it is impossible to separate the two, say members fish dangerous to eat and threatened the of the tribe.

"It is our lifeblood. We are the river." said John Banks, Director of the Penobscot Nation's Natural Resource Department.

That strong sense of connection has driven the Penobscot Nation's advocacy for cleaner water and the removal of dams along the Penobscot, an advocacy that has played a central role in improving water quality.

The Penobscot Nation's water quality labs on Indian Island have helped track down pollution sources that have caused algae blooms and traced pollution caused by industrial sources, said Banks.

In court, the Penobscot Nation pushed for higher federal water quality standards by arguing that while members of the tribe were guaranteed the right to sustenance fishing on the Penobscot River, the level of toxins in river fish was too high to allow members of the tribe to safely take modern science is coming increasingly advantage of that right.

As part of the Penobscot River Restoration Trust, the Penobscot Nation also played a central role in the removal of dams along the river and the restoration of several species of anadromous fish to their historic habitat.

The removal of the dams and the improvement of water quality signal a reversal of a trend that lasted for hundreds

of years, in which the Penobscot was treated as an industrial resource, a means to provide power for sawmills and to carry effluent downstream while ignoring the damage done to the environment.

"People turned their back to the river as Banks. "The river was treated as a sewer for

Toxins like dioxin and mercury made Penobscot Nation's traditional use of the river. Dams built on the Penobscot or its tributaries prevented the run of an adromous fish like shad, alewives and salmon.

Today, as a resurgent alewife and shad population signal a return to health for the river and many of the species that depend on it, Banks said the river's renaissance is creating new economic opportunities for everyone, including opportunities for tourism created by the restored fisheries as well as greater use of cleaner waterways stretching all the way to the newly created Katahdin Woods and Water National Monument for tourism.

Banks is proud of the role that the Penobscot Nation played in advocating for a healthier river and he is optimistic about

One reason for that optimism is that closer to traditional native beliefs that everything in nature is interconnected, including humans.

"The big thing was just to understand that everything is interconnected in the natural world and we are part of that, we are not separate from it," said Banks.

PENOBSCOT RIVER FUELS **COMMUNITIES LIVELIHOODS**

BY ALAN CROWELL

SPECIAL SECTION WRITER

A century and a half ago, when Bangor was the lumber capital of the world and Brewer's kilns produced millions of bricks each year, the Penobscot River was at the center of thriving world-class industry.

Orono and Old Town.

A century later, when paper and pulp mills were the most prominent industry along the river, the Penobscot helped power the mills and flushed their industrial effluent downstream.

Today, industry on the Penobscot has morphed to fill smaller niches in highly competitive world markets but the river remains a key part of the region's economic backbone as well as its future.

"It is why we are here," said Richard Shaw, of several books on Bangor's history.

While the Penobscot has always played a central role in the life of towns in the area, that role is changing as the cities and towns along the river themselves change.

When Dick Shaw grew up in Bangor, the river was dirty and smelly. Soapy scum floated on its surface and nobody swam in it. Today, Shaw sees pleasure boats on the river and hopes he lives to see the day when people swim in it again as they did in his mother's time.

Bangor's waterfront is now a source of pride and a draw for concerts and yearly lovers to town.

"I would say there has been a renaissance," said Shaw.

D'arcy Main-Boyington, Economic Development Director for Brewer, has also seen the change in her town.

"It is transformative," said Main-Boyington. "The difference on the Brewer waterfront over the past 15 years is amazing," she said.

Growing up in Orono, Main-Boyington remembers a Penobscot so polluted that buildings were constructed facing away from the river rather than toward it.

Today, however, people are turning back Upstream, the river powered mills in toward the river and in Brewer a much cleaner river is attracting people and businesses.

> Brewer's Riverwalk, a children's garden and kayak steps allow better access to the river and a new generation of small businesses see the river as an asset.

> Industrial giants like Cianbro still use the river. In 2012, Cianbro floated huge industrial modules downstream on their way to Newfoundland in 2012, and industry remains a key part of Brewer's economy.

Main-Boyington said that she hopes unofficial historian of Bangor and the author Brewer is able to continue to grow its industrial base in coming years.

> But today, that growth does not have to mean choosing between the river as an industrial resource and the river as a natural resource that can add value to the broader community.

> "We are really trying to get people out of their cars out on the waterfront, walking and relaxing," she said. "I think the path we are on right now is bringing the river back into the community as a focal point of the community."

Main-Boyington said the cleaner Penobscot is helping to draw locally-based entrepreneurs folk festivals that bring music and music interested in creating unique dining and shopping experiences in the downtown area.

It is a different role for a river with a proud industrial history, and it is a big part of the reason that Main-Boyington sees a brighter future for her city.





PENOBSCOT RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT:

Connecting 2,000 miles of river to the sea

COURTESY PENOBSCOT RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT

On June 14, hundreds of people, including federal, state, local and tribal officials and conservation partners, gathered in Howland, Maine, to celebrate the completion of the last major milestone in the Penobscot River Restoration Project, considered one of the largest, most innovative river restoration projects in the nation.

For the first time in more than a century, American shad, river herring, and Atlantic salmon could swim freely around the Howland dam to and from important historic spawning and rearing habitat, thanks to the completion of the large, stream-like fish "bypass" channel around the dam. The bypass reconnected the Piscataguis River to the main stem of the Penobscot and the Gulf of Maine, allowing sea-run fish to swim freely past the dam for the first time in almost 200 years.

The completion fulfilled the Penobscot Project's goal of significantly improving access to 2,000 miles of Maine's largest river for 11 species of native sea-run fish, while maintaining energy through increased hydropower generation at other dams in the watershed

The project is already showing success. More than two million river herring are expected to surge past the former Veazie dam site this year, and recently more than 225 Atlantic salmon have also entered the river. In 2016, the river herring count (alewife and blueback herring) totaled 1.8 million, and more than 7,000 American shad were counted upriver as well.

...the river now better supports Penobscot Nation tribal culture. renews traditional uses, and provides broad benefits to fish and wildlife...

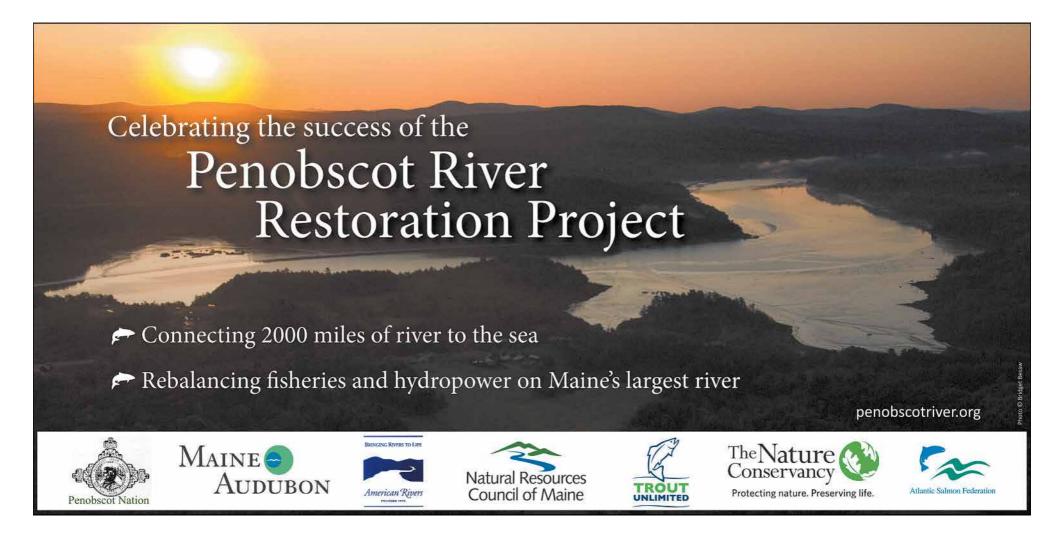
Sea-run fish are rapidly recolonizing places they haven't regulatory certainty for the dam owners. been able to reach since the 1800s. River herring, shad, eels, and Atlantic salmon have been sighted more than 90 miles above the former Veazie dam at the Mattaceunk dam in Medway and also into the upper reaches of the Mattawamkeag River. Sturgeon are reclaiming their historic habitats upriver as well.

"It is thrilling to see the river rebounding since the Penobscot Project reconnected the Gulf of Maine to more than 2,000 miles of upstream waters," said Don Hudson, Chairman of the Penobscot River Restoration Trust. "The fish know just what to do, and the eagles, otters, wildlife watchers, boaters, and fishermen do, too."

Five years ago, in June 2012, the Great Works dam removal began, followed by the removal of the Veazie dam at the head of tide in 2013. At the same time, dam owners built a fish elevator at the Milford dam, now the only dam on the lower Penobscot. Dam owners increased power generation at several other locations within the Penobscot watershed to maintain and even increase power generation in the river.

The restored river provides many cultural, economic, and recreational opportunities from the Penobscot headwaters to the Gulf of Maine. As a result of the project, the river now better supports Penobscot Nation tribal culture, renews traditional uses, and provides broad benefits to fish and wildlife along the river corridor and into the Gulf of Maine. The project has also resulted in increased business and

The Penobscot River Restoration Trust is a nonprofit organization responsible for completing the core elements of the Penobscot Project. Members are the Penobscot Indian Nation, American Rivers, Atlantic Salmon Federation, Maine Audubon, Natural Resources Council of Maine, Trout Unlimited, and The Nature Conservancy.



THEN AND NOW: The Penobscot River

HISTORIC PHOTOS COURTESY OF BANGOR **PUBLIC LIBRARY, BANGOR HISTORICAL** SOCIETY, PATTEN LUMBERMEN'S MUSEUM, THE RICHARD SHAW COLLECTION, AND UNIVERSITY OF MAINE FOGLER LIBRARY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Those lucky enough to live near the Penobscot River realize there is no other thoroughfare in the world quite like it. Dubbed "The Rhine of Maine" by our ancestors, the 350-mile long Penobscot might win bragging rights when it comes to its jawdropping beauty, centuries of history, and unbreakable tribal ties.

whole lot of wilderness, the Penobscot has inspired poetry, paintings, songs, stories, and even a scene in Tom Clancy's submarine novel, "The Hunt for Red October." Like a family member, its mood is ever-changing - ranging from placid in summer to ice-encrusted in winter. No one could ever imagine life without it by our side.

"The Penobscot River is one of the reasons that our city was first settled," said Melissa Gerety, executive director of the Bangor Historical Society, "so large ships could travel up the river. The intersection of the Penobscot and the Kenduskeag Stream made Bangor an ideal location for the timber coming from the north woods to be processed at the lumber mills and then loaded onto ships and sent around the world."

Society walking tours make much of the river's historic mystique. Rock-ribbed harbor masters settled many a squabble between boat captains who desired favorable berthings. Ships were packed so tightly that, at times, one could skip from Bangor to Brewer across their decks. And where would Bangor's 19th century "Devil's Half Acre," an area noted for its offerings of vice, have been without the river to bring its hungry male customers down from the woods and up from the sea?

Portuguese explorer Estevan Gomez was the regards the river as their own. first European believed to have explored the river, in 1525. Frenchman Samuel de Champlain followed Clean Water Week at Bangor's Wastewater in 1604. A few years later, French priests converted Penobscot Indians living along the river to

river becomes Penobscot Bay, was settled by the French, and the Penobscots settled Indian Island in Old Town.

Joshua Treat was the river's first permanent English settler, and eventually the Penobscot was settled all the way north to Medway, where it splits into its East and West Branches and beyond. The Penobscot tribe still claims the islands as sacred hunting grounds from Old Town northward.

The British navy drove colonists' ships up to Bangor in the disastrous 1779 Penobscot Expedition, and marched into the "Queen City" for a brief occupation in 1814. After that, the river was largely a commercial thoroughfare, with Bangor as its Dotted with islands, mills, cities, towns, and a head of navigation and the town of Veazie the head of tide. Boston steamers began providing service in 1835, and by the early 20th century, the Penobscot was becoming the river of today, given more to pleasure craft and recreationalists.

> "I've had the good fortune of canoeing the Penobscot, its north branch, south branch, and west branch," said Zip Kellogg of Newcastle, "each from places where they are about as wide as a canoe, all the way to Bangor, where all Penobscot water meets the ocean tides. This has been a hobby, perhaps a passion, maybe even an addiction."

> Historically, Kellogg said, the river provided a homeland for Native Americans, as well as a food supply and travel network. It became an economic and power source for 19th and 20th century industry. And it provided respite and rejuvenation for author Henry David Thoreau, who came up the river on north woods excursions. Despite changes in its landscape (dams in Veazie and Old Town have been removed, and salmon fishing is limited in places), it still has much to offer locals and visitors.

> Today, the Penobscot is never far from the minds of people who care about its present and Penobscot Riverkeepers schoolchildren on educational canoe trips along the fabled thoroughfare, and the Penobscot Tribe

> On June 8, students from across Maine celebrated Treatment Plant. Ten juvenile salmon treated in water at the plant were released into the river to

Catholicism. Pentagouet, now Castine, where the bring awareness of the importance of clean water in the river's ecosystem.

> Two days later, a Penobscot River rally and flotilla attracted canoeists and kayakers in support of the Penobscot Nation's ongoing struggle to protect and enhance the river's water quality and watershed. An often overlooked fact is that the river's drainage basin contains a staggering 8,610 square miles.

> "The Penobscot River is beautiful, and Maine is my spiritual home," said participant Elaine Levine of South Freeport. "There's so many things to be involved in we don't even know where to begin. It just seemed like one of the things we should do."

> Understanding today's river means sharing its past with people too young to recall its glory days as a shipping and pleasure craft center. If you witnessed the two lost white beluga whales near the salmon pool in 1954, tell your grandchildren about. If you rode the Bon Ton ferry for a nickel, from Brewer to Bangor, what was it like? And fewer and fewer people are living who rode the last of the Boston boats up to 1935, so share that experience, too.

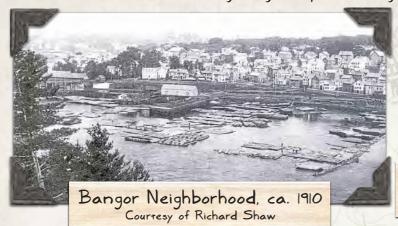
> Sending the year's first fresh-run salmon to the White House is also a lively story. So is the launching of the Horace E. Munroe from Brewer in 1919. Ice cutting and log driving were not for the faint of heart. So was dam keeping and sail making. All were trades directly related to life on the Penobscot. There were no safe jobs in the river's early days, and people died on the river making a living.

> The river towns are filled with sculptures, markers, and modern art celebrating its past and present. Gomez, Champlain, even Paul Bunyan, are important names. Why not photograph each and make your own book?

> Penobscot River history is filled with happy and sad stories, and they need to be told. And why not publish a dictionary of names and terms long associated with the river and its branches, such as Telos Cut, boom, sluice, peavey, cant dog, and peapod boat.

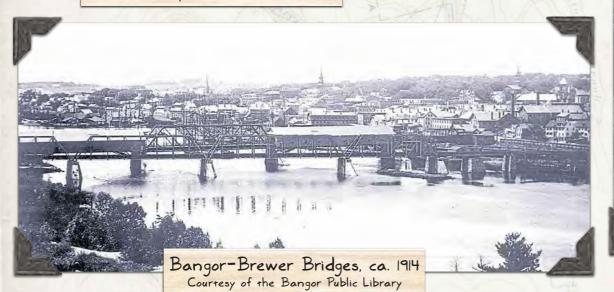
> The good news is that the waterfront is safe and clean today, said Bangor's economic development director, Tanya Emery.

> "The city's longtime focus on waterfront and downtown revitalization has ultimately resulted in an incredibly livable city," she said.



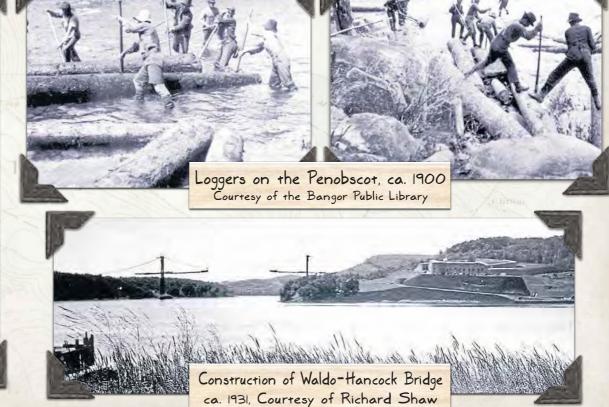


Sam Veazie, ca. 1860 Bangor Lumber Baron Courtesy of the Bangor Public Library

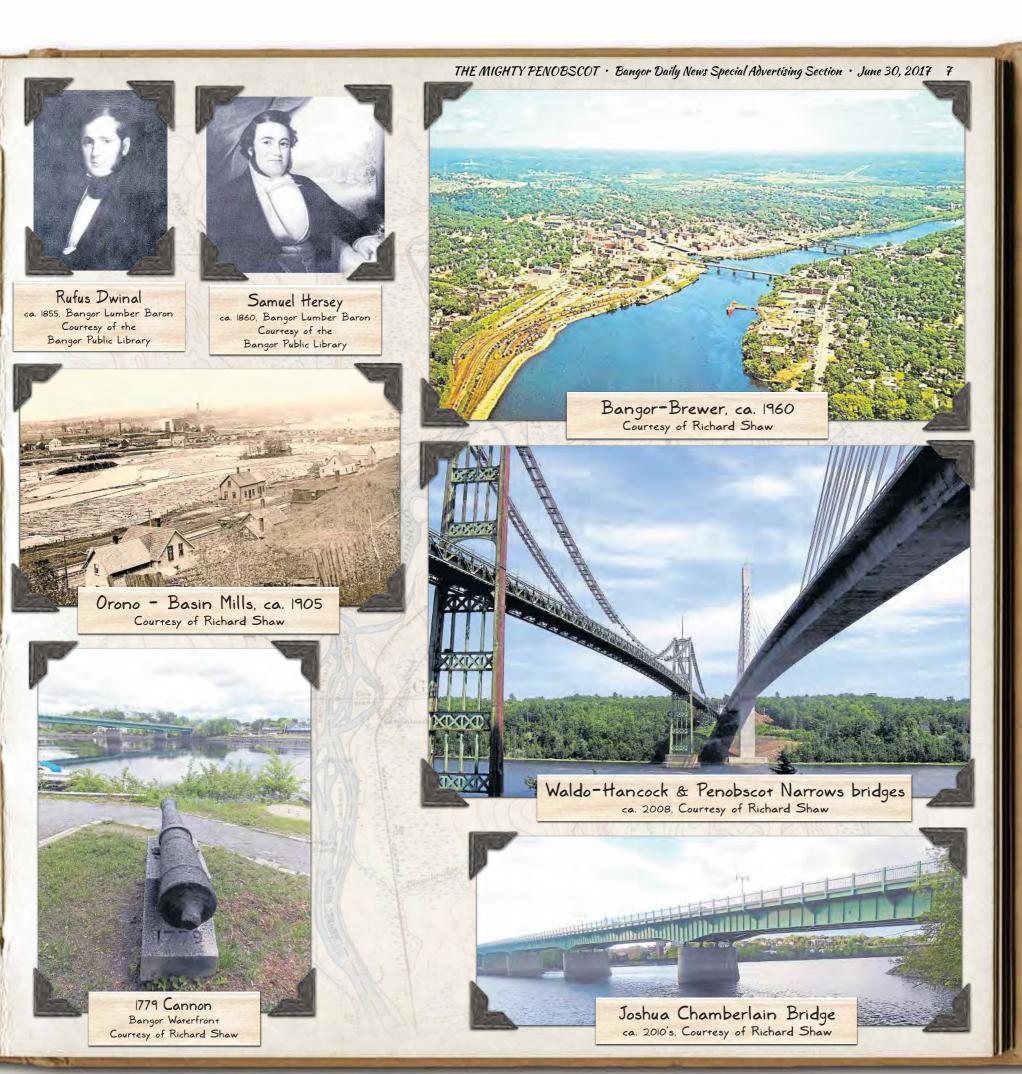


Construction of Joshua Chamberlain Bridge
Courtesy of the Bangor Public Library





McGilvery Shipyard in Brewer Courtesy of Maine Historic Preservation Commission



KATAHDIN WOODS AND WATERS NATIONAL MONUMENT PROTECTS RICH HUMAN HISTORY

COURTESY FRIENDS OF KATAHDIN WOODS AND WATERS

is the centerpiece of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument and has a rich history dating back 11,000 years.

Soon after the glaciers melted, native people began to inhabit the area. Traditionally they used the river as a vast transportation network, seasonally searching for food, furs, medicines, and many other resources and considered it a centerpiece of their rich logging history beginning in the 1840s culture and spiritual values.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, visitors came from afar to approach and climb Katahdin by way of the East Branch watershed. Visitors included the famous mountain guide, Rev. Marcus Keep, in 1846, and the artist Frederick Church in 1855.

Henry David Thoreau had hoped to climb the mountain by going up Wassataquoik a wide variety of recreational opportunities Stream, which flows into the East Branch, when he descended the East Branch in 1857. He had previously climbed most of the way up Katahdin from the south in 1846, but had to give up the idea because one of his for more information. companions had injured his feet.

was guided up the mountain by William "Bill" Sewall from Island Falls. To the dismay of his guide, he lost a boot crossing Wassataquoik Stream making it necessary to hike in his spare moccasins.

The Appalachian Mountain Club held their August camps in the area in 1887 and friendsofkatahdinwoodsandwaters.org.

again in 1916, using Wassataquoik Stream for their approach.

A party including Percival Baxter visited The East Branch of the Penobscot River in 1920, before he became governor of Maine.

> In 1939, young Donn Fendler was lost as a twelve-year-old boy on the mountain for nine days, beat the odds, and survived by following Wassataquoik Stream down to the East Branch where he was ultimately spotted across from Lunksoos Camp. He later authored "Lost on a Mountain in Maine."

> The East Branch watershed also has a with 11 million board feet of logs sent down Wassataquoik Stream during peak operations. Log drives in Maine were abandoned in the 1970s and a vast network of logging roads has taken over as the means of transporting wood to area saw and paper mills.

> Today, the National Monument provides including paddling, hiking, camping, bird and wildlife watching, fishing, biking, and, seasonally, hunting, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing. Go to nps.gov/kaww

Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters is In 1879, the young Theodore Roosevelt a non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve and protect the outstanding natural beauty, ecological vitality, and distinctive cultural resources of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument and surrounding communities for the inspiration and enjoyment of all generations. Join us at





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PADDLING THE WEST BRANCH OF THE PENOBSCOT RIVER:

A step back in time

COURTESY MAHOOSUC GUIDE SERVICE ABRIDGED FROM AN ARTICLE BY STEVE PINKHAM

Steeped in Wabenaki lore, lumbering history and sporting adventures, the West Branch of the Penobscot River is one of Maine's most scenic and beautiful rivers.

West Branch with Master Guide Polly Mahoney of Mahoosuc Guide Service and Jason Pardilla, a direct descendant of Joe Polis (who guided Thoreau through these site where Thoreau had once camped, then moved on to views of Soubunge Mountain and Katahdin then camped waters in 1857), we were able to share the camp experience the way it was in the 19th century. Delicious breakfasts and dinners were cooked over an open fire, with a surprise dessert each evening baked in a Dutch oven.

This reminded me of how much the lay of the land has changed since the days when Henry David Thoreau and other sportsmen paddled this river. Caribou Lake and South Twin Lake, which were separated from the river, were seldom ever seen by the early adventurers.

Our trip started at Lobster Lake, one of Maine's most up Katahdin in 1820, called it Peskabejick, meaning "branch of a dead water." John G. Dean's 1841 Map of State of Maine labelled it Lake Matahumkeag, and this name, or variations of the spelling, were applied by other On a recent Thoreau-Wabenaki canoe trip down the mapmakers for another 40 years, then changed back to

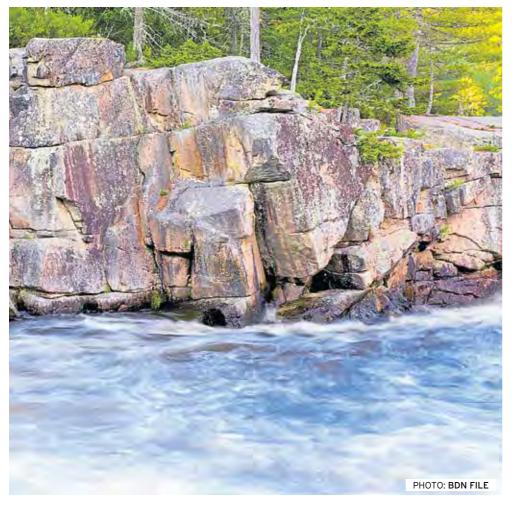
> We paddled down the West Branch, having lunch at a set up our camp at Big Island, where the river splits. Here Jason taught some of our group the art of poling a canoe.

The next day we passed the site where Joseph Smith had a halfway house, stopped for snacks, and then paddled Chesuncook Lake. into Chesuncook Lake. It was a short paddle to our lunch the old cemetery, which has been moved uphill to a beautiful grove in the woods to avoid any flooding. Here many of the early lumbermen and guides are buried.

On our third night out, while camping at Cunningham beautiful lakes, Louis Neptune, who guided Joseph Treat Brook, we experienced a once in a lifetime scene. At sunset, as we watched Katahdin across the lake, one of the campers noted a halo around the top of the mountain. This was a full moon rising directly behind the mountain, bathing it in golden light. As the moon rose, the orb hovered over the summit momentarily, then rose straight up, creating a magical and breath-taking effect.

> We canoed down Chesuncook, getting occasional at Mosher Island, a beautiful setting in the southern end of the lake. After an afternoon rest and a hearty dinner. we sat on the rocks and watched the sun set over

If you love the outdoors and are looking for a memorable site at Graveyard Point at Chesuncook Village. We visited vacation, taking a guided trip down the West Branch and Allagash Rivers is the most comfortable and enjoyable ways to experience the Maine Woods as Thoreau and many others did in the nineteenth century.





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PENOBSCOT RIVER RAFTING: An adventure worth sharing

COURTESY MAUREEN MCDONALD/PENOBSCOT ADVENTURES

"I am looking for someone to share in an adventure"

In J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Hobbit," Gandalf sought to enlist Bilbo Baggins in an epic adventure. People because our social connection is heightened during stimulating physical adventures. Wanting to connect with the special people in our lives is ubiquitous to the human experience. And rivers, especially their rugged white water sections, are the sought-after atmosphere for these adrenaline-fueled occasions.

The West Branch of the Penobscot is marketed as the most challenging rafting in New England. As Raylin like a family all working towards a common goal." Wiggin explained, when asked why he and his then girlfriend, Samantha, chose to go rafting on the Penobscot birthday celebration for her future wife, Kerri. When river: "We were looking for something exciting to build that adrenaline and give us that stronger connected bond." He had the impression that the West Branch offered the most exciting rafting. In fact, they ended up rafting it on multiple occasions.

Raylin solidified their relationship and proposed to Samantha (she said yes). When asked what is so special about the West Branch of the Penobscot River, Raylin really connected them to one another." assuredly replied:

"There's something magical and uniquely romantic normally seek out and embrace fast paced group activities about the West Branch. Not to mention the special feeling of community you get spending time with both the guides and the other guests... you really start to feel

> "There's something magical and uniquely romantic about the West Branch."

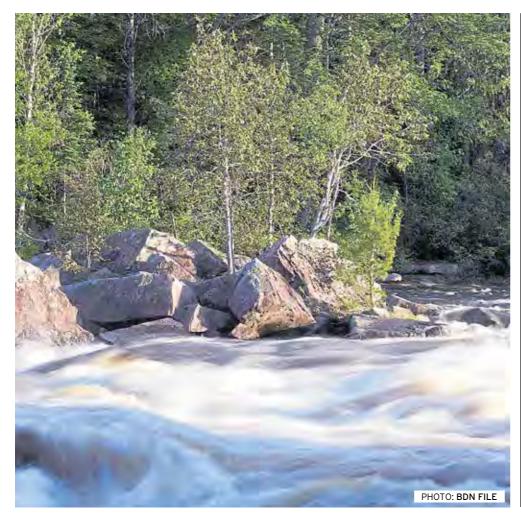
asked why she chose the Penobscot, she said "We chose the Penobscot River...because we had rafted the in Millinocket, Maine. Owned by the McDonald family and run Kennebec, Dead and the Penobscot before and the Penobscot is by far the best of those. They invited 13 women who ranged in age from their mid 50s to mid 20s

On their fourth trip in 2015 down the Mighty Penobscot, to share in their adventure. Of course, the wild ride on the river met her every expectation that day. It was, however, the time post-trip around the campfire that

> This summer, the West Branch will host more special shared adventures. Carol Salmon from New Brunswick and her sister, Janet, are planning a 50th birthday trip for their "baby" sister, Mia. And Gregg Desiderio, a school principal from New Jersey, is planning a trip on the Penobscot with his son to commemorate the excursion he took with his father into the Allagash waterway years ago.

If someone asks you to share in an adventure with them, chances are you'll say "yes." Because even though there are millions of ways we are different from one another, the "need for speed for both you and me" unifies In 2015, Kelley Micheal went to great lengths to plan a us. Tap into this confluence and make sure they take you to the river—the West Branch of the Penobscot River.

> Penobscot Adventures is whitewater rafting outfitter located by a crew of guides and staff, Penobscot Adventures has offered whitewater rafting and river boarding trips for over 15 years. For more information, visit penobscotadventures.com.





2017 PENOBSCOT RIVER NAT. REGATTA PROMISES FUN FOR ALL

BY ALAN CROWELL

For the third time in as many years, Maine will host the American Canoe Association (ACA) Whitewater Nationals on a historic section of the Penobscot River reborn after the removal of dams.

The 2017 Penobscot River Whitewater Nationals Regatta will be held June 28 -July 2 in Old Town. Racers will maneuver down a 9.5-mile section of the river from Old Town to Eddington restored after the removal of the Veazie and Great Works dams through the Penobscot River Eddington Salmon Club. Restoration Project.

Race Chair Scott Phillips, a member of the Penobscot Nation and a champion whitewater racer, said the race is a celebration of a much healthier river and the partnership that worked to remove the dams.

The Penobscot Nation and the American Canoe Association are the race hosts. Major sponsors include Old Town Canoe and Penobscot Indian Nation Enterprises.

The public is invited to watch all four days of the race (Wednesday, June 28 is a practice day).

The full course will be raced June 29, June 30 and July 2. Phillips said Saturday, July 1, the day of the sprint races, may be the most exciting day to watch. On that day racers will paddle a short (roughly .6 miles)

but exciting course through the Great Works rapids beginning in Old Town. Racers will start one minute apart beginning at 9 a.m. with the last racer expected to start at about 1 p.m.

The full 9.5-mile course includes three sections of rapids. The first is the Great Works rapids, a long section of challenging rips between Bradley on the east side of the river and Old Town on the west. The second is the Basin Mills rapids in Orono, which is shorter but features big waves. The third is the Veazie rapids, near the finish line at the

Good vantage points are available in Veazie, about a half-mile upstream from the finish line of the full course. There are also good places to watch from French Island and Milford.

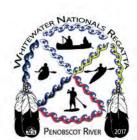
Clayton Cole, President of the New England Chapter of the American Canoe Association, said he expects canoe races to continue on the Penobscot even after the ACA nationals move on to a new river. The Penobscot has good flow during the summer and offers a beautiful environment close to population centers.

Anyone interested in volunteering, particularly if they have training and experience in white water rescue, is encouraged to e-mail Phillips at scott@ waterwaysports.com.

Additional information about the race, including details of the course can be found at the regatta website: penobscotriverwhitewaternationalsregatta.com



Penobscot River Whitewater Nationals Regatta



June 28 - July 2, 2017

Old Town, Bradley, Orono, Veazie and Eddington, Maine

Canoe Kavak SUP Wildwater



Nenakamhótihatin

"There is a race on the water"



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July 29 - Heavy Metal

Heavy machinery and blacksmithing exhibits for the whole family. Watch our steam Lombard in operation! 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Adults \$10/Children \$5.

Thursday in the Woods

Every Thursday our buildings will be open with demonstrations. Check Facebook to see what will be featured each week. Regular Admission.

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ENJOY MAINE IN

Stay in Lincoln and rent a kayak to enjoy our 13 lakes, or bring along a fishing pole and experience the best bass fishing in the northeast - and before you leave town, be sure to take a selfie #lincolnloon with our famous loon!

Bring the family for a Maine-style festival during weekend of July 20-23 and celebrate with us during the Lincoln Homecoming Loon Festival.

LincolnMaine.org





