

Restoring Migratory Species and Habitat in Maine



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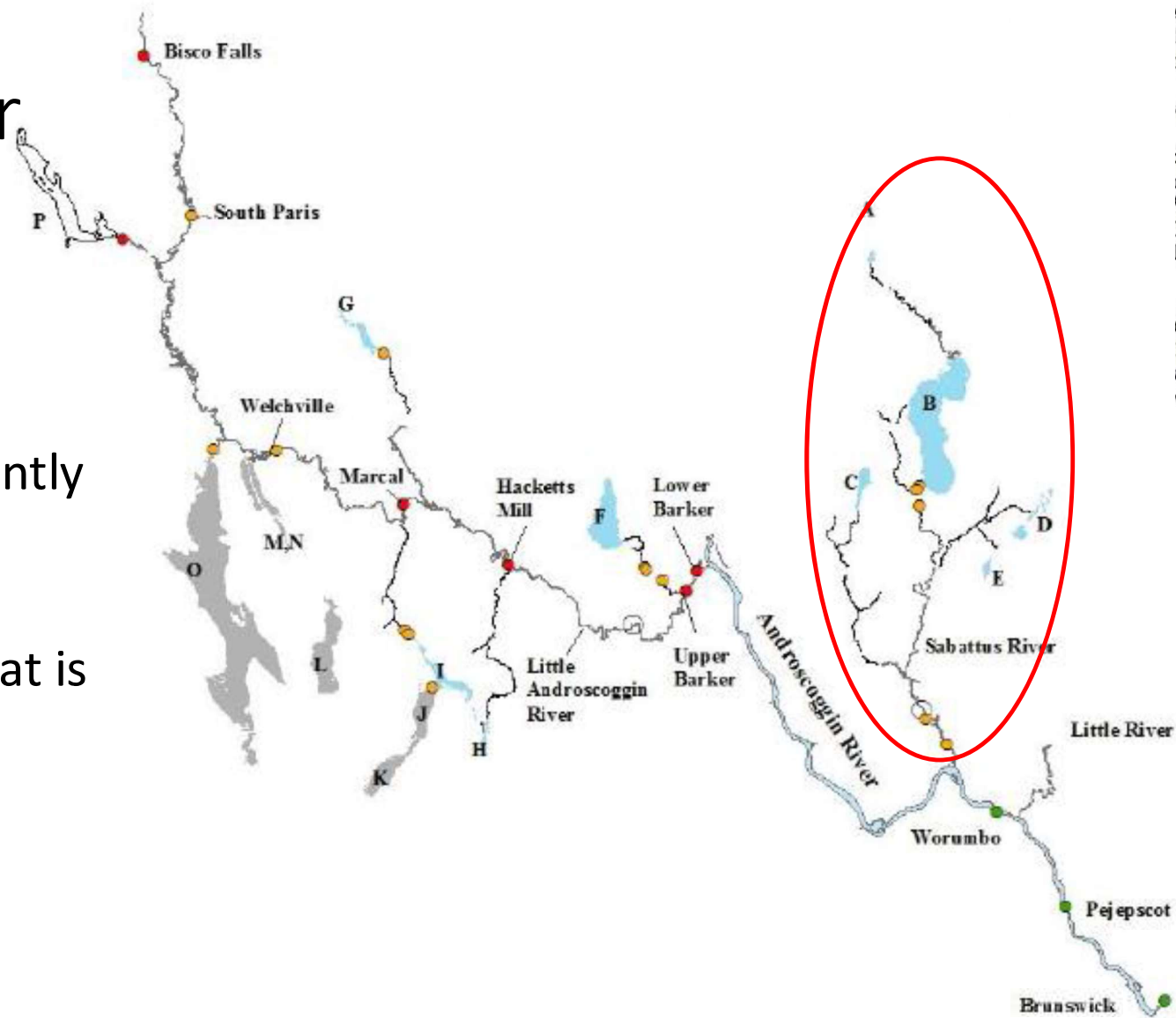
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Androscoggin River

Sabattus Watershed

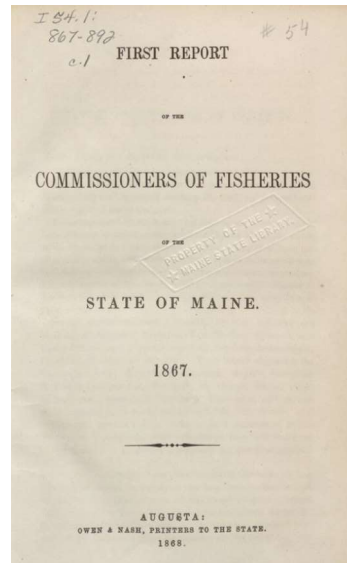
- The Androscoggin River is Maine's third largest river
- No spawning habitat is currently accessible to alewife
- Sabattus Pond is the largest pond in the Androscoggin that is stocked by DMR today



History of the Androscoggin

The excerpt on the right is from the first report to the Senate and House of Representatives in 1860.

- This documented impacts of dams on fisheries
- Also documented habitat for sea-run fish in Maine, including in Sabattus Pond



FISH COMMISSIONERS' REPORT. 39

ANDROSCOGGIN.

Of the Androscoggin we can give only a meagre report. The lower portion was visited as far as Lewiston, and the vicinity of Rumford falls examined.

The Androscoggin was a salmon river, and the salmon ascended as far as Rumford falls, breeding in the main river and in most of the tributaries. On the Little Androscoggin they were known to breed opposite Paris Hill, but their ascent was stopped by Snow's fall, two miles from West Paris. Lewiston falls were difficult, but did not prevent the passage of salmon. At Rumford, however, occurs a formidable cataract, quite impassable to fish. At this point, within one mile, the river falls 162 feet. One-half of this descent, about 80 feet, is in one plunge at an angle of thirty or forty degrees, over a ragged ledge. The water rushes down with fearful velocity, and reaches the lower basin all white and frothy. The spray is scattered several hundred feet. This fall settles the point that salmon never reached the State of New Hampshire by this route. The last seen at this point were more than fifty years ago. One or two were then taken; but Mr. Joseph Hall, aged eighty-five, who has lived in this vicinity all his life, remembers no other instance. The tradition, however, prevails, that in former times they were very abundant at the foot of Rumford falls, and in Swift river, a tributary entering just below. At Lewiston salmon were caught as late as 1815. Col. Wm. Garcelon of Lewiston, recollects this fact; and also that the first dam built at Brunswick was a low one and did not prevent the passage of salmon; but that higher ones subsequently built entirely cut them off. At the present time none ascend the river. Alewives used to breed in Sebattus pond; they too are exterminated.

Current Management

2017 Draft Fisheries Management Plan for the Lower Androscoggin River, Little Androscoggin River and Sabattus River

“Reach 3: Sabattus River Drainage and Little River Drainage

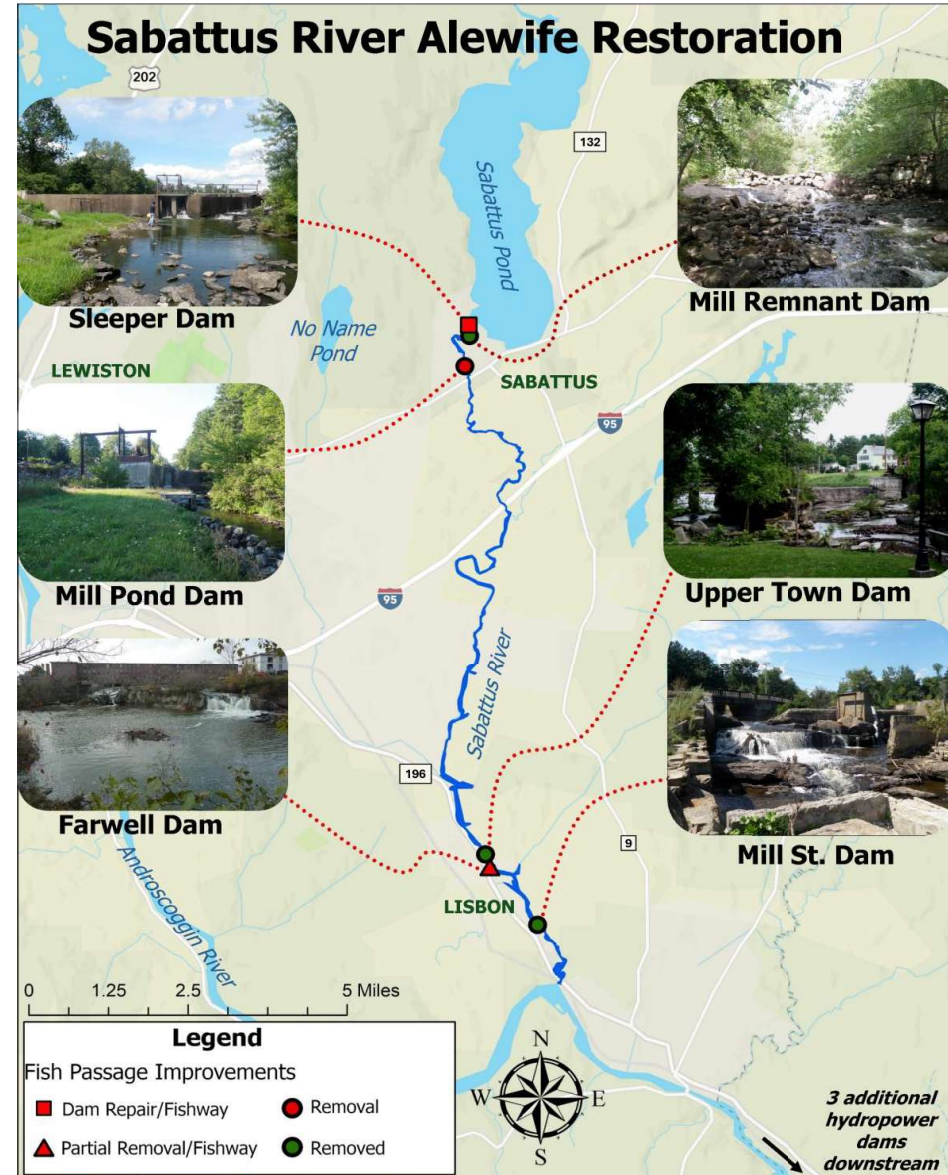
1. Manage Reach 3 as a migratory pathway for Alewife, American Shad, Blueback Herring, Atlantic Salmon, American Eel, and wild Brook Trout and for sustained production of these species consistent with habitat capacities (if known). The annual production of adult anadromous species in Reach 3 is estimated to be 509,480 Alewife; 5,577 American Shad; 48,408 Blueback Herring; and 29 Atlantic Salmon.
 - a) **The MDMR and partners will provide fish passage at five dams on the Sabattus River as soon as possible.**
 - b) The MDMR will continue the interim, annual stocking of Alewife at 6 fish/acre in Sabattus Pond, Little Sabattus Pond, Loon Pond, Sutherland Pond, and No Name Pond until upstream and downstream passage make this spawning habitat accessible to migrating fish.
 - c) As resources allow, the MDMR, MDIFW and partners will provide upstream fish passage at road crossings and other man-made structures located on tributaries that impede diadromous and freshwater species.”

Table 3. Alewife production potential for historically accessible spawning habitat within the Androscoggin River watershed.

Reach	Surface acres	Alewife production at 235/acre
Sabattus Pond	1,787	419,945
Little Sabattus Pond	25	5,875
Sabattus River	110	25,850
Loon Pond	70	16,450
Sutherland Pond	53	12,455
No Name Pond	123	28,905
Sabattus subtotal	2,168	509,480
Taylor Pond	625	146,875
Marshall Pond	102	23,970
Lower Range Pond	290	68,150
Worthley Pond	42	9,870
Middle Range Pond	366	86,010
Upper Range Pond	391	91,885
Hogan Pond	177	41,595
Whitney Pond	170	39,950
Tripp Pond	768	180,480
Thompson Lake	4,426	1,040,110
Little Androscoggin subtotal	7,357	1,728,895
Brunswick impoundment	313	73,626
Pejepscot impoundment	213	50,035
Worumbo impoundment	1,124	264,209
Lower Barker impoundment	11	2,672
Upper Barker impoundment	142	33,270
Hackett's Mill impoundment	93	21,955
Marcal impoundment	95	22,303
Impoundment subtotal	1,992	468,070
Lake/pond total	9,525	2,238,375
Watershed total	11,517	2,706,445

Sabattus River

- In 2018, there were six barriers to fish passage on the Sabattus River
- Once access is restored, a self-sustaining run of ~1,000,000 adult alewife will return to the Androscoggin watershed annually
- Many of those adults will not make it back to Sabattus Lake and that is a good thing!
 - Loons, eagles, otters, seals, bass, cod, and even lobsters all eat alewives
 - Alewives are a keystone species providing food for much of the ecosystem



Farnsworth/ Joliet/ Mill Street Dam



Farnsworth/ Joliet/ Mill Street

2019



~2000



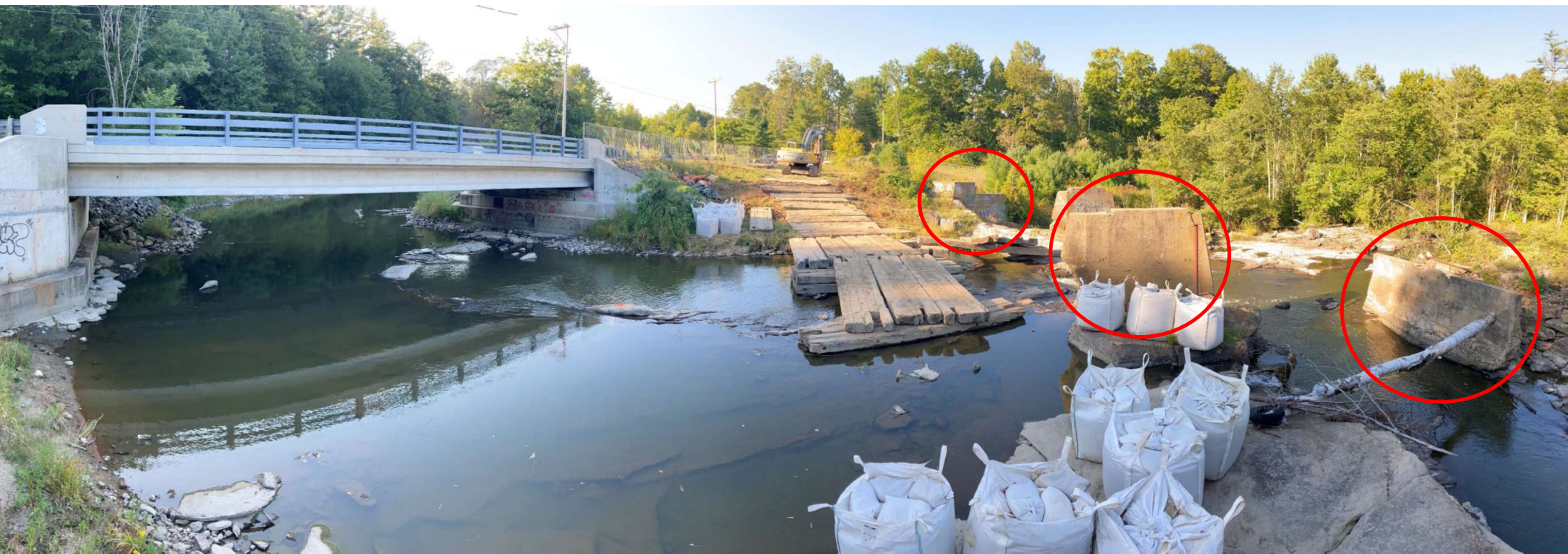
Farnsworth/ Joliet/ Mill Street

- DEP removed mercury from the stream in 2019
- DMR removed the dam at the same time to lower water levels and allow for mercury removal
- DMR is working at the site again in 2024 to remove concrete and improve passage

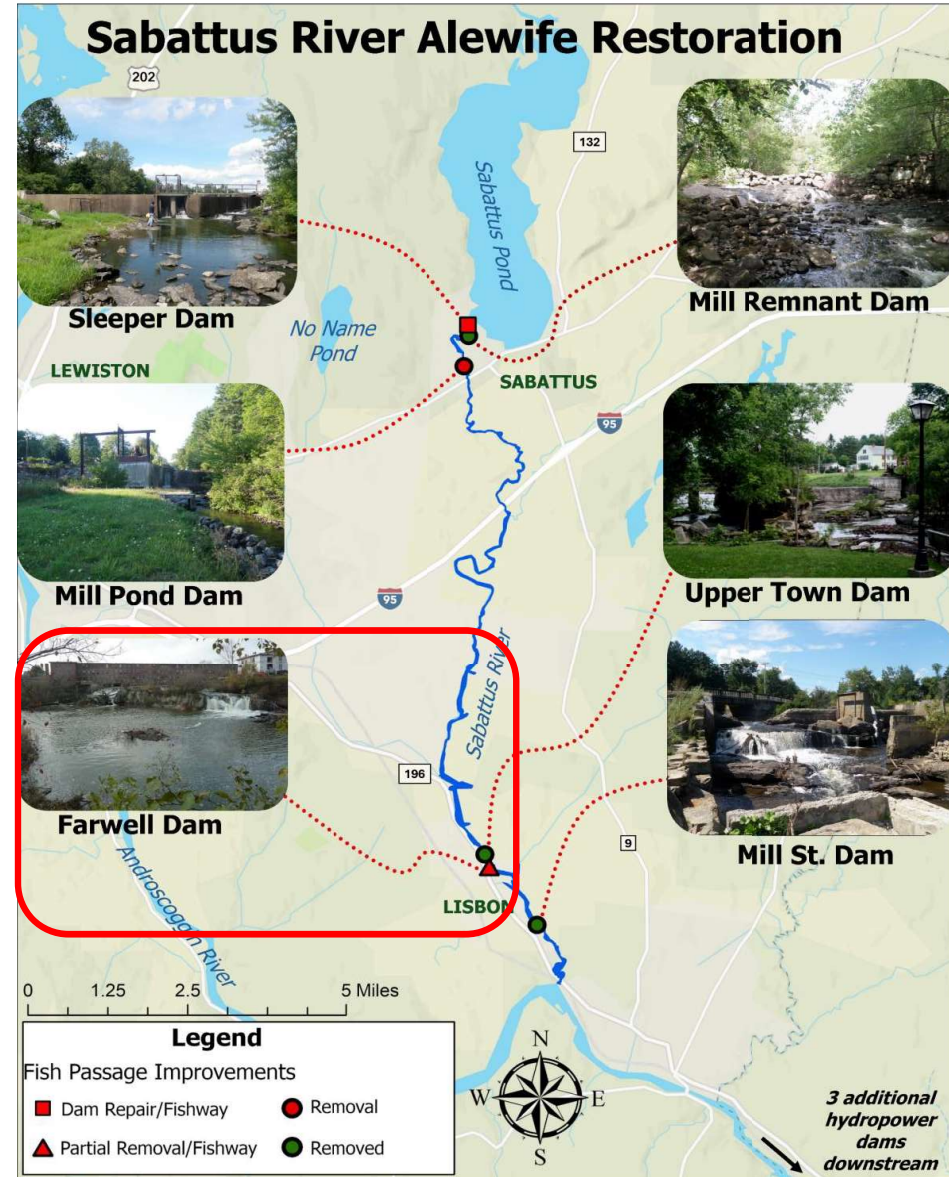


Farnsworth/ Joliet/ Mill Street

DMR is working at the site again in 2024 to remove concrete and improve passage



Farwell Mill Dam



Farwell Mill Dam



Pictured are two men standing on a rock in the Sabattus River just in front of the floodgates, down from the falls, by the Farwell Mill. The picture is from around 1900. (Linda Gamrat.)

Photo: State aims to build fish ladder through Lisbon dam



Credit: Russ Dillingham/Sun Journal

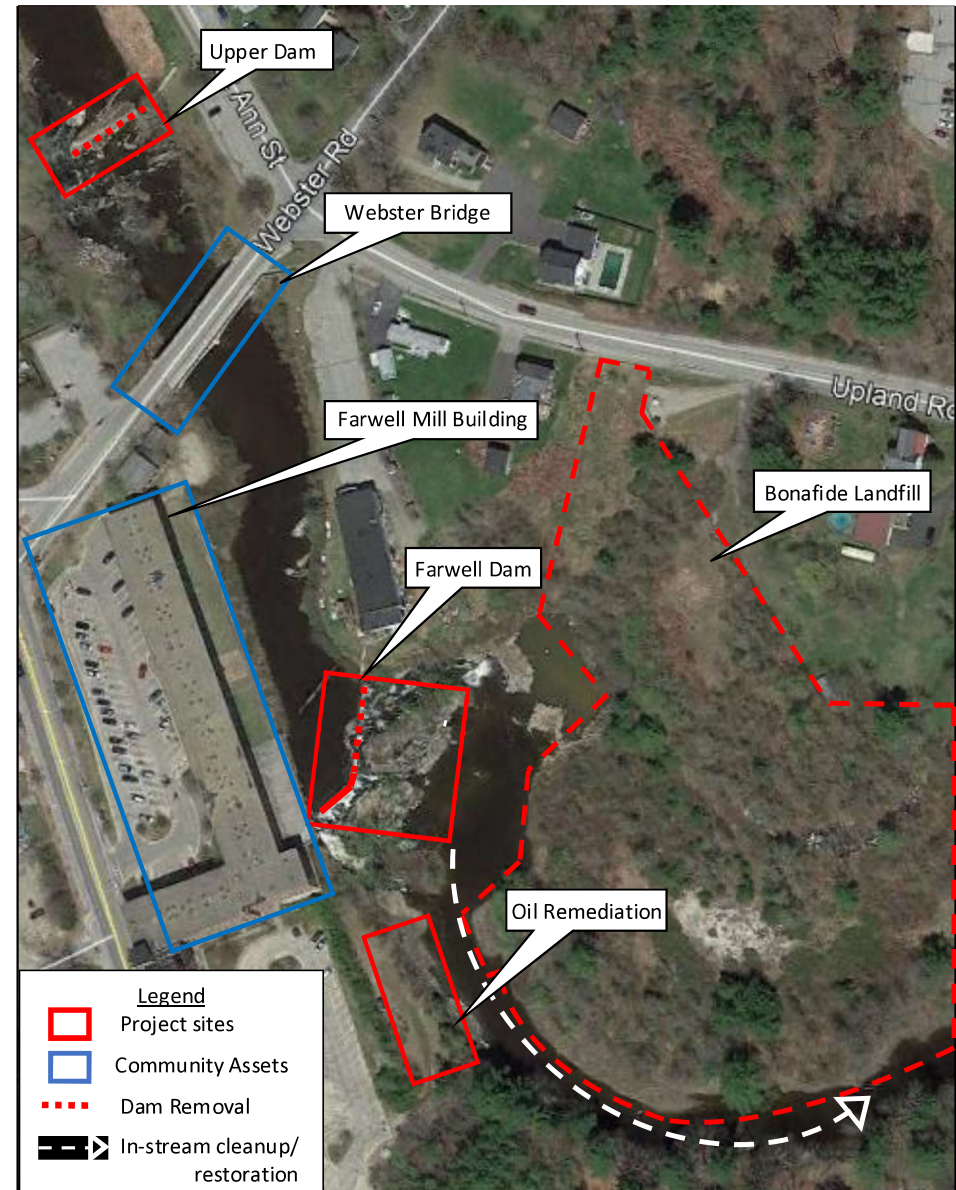
Farwell Mill Dam



Farwell Dam and Bonafide Landfill

Project Sites and activities

- 1) Farwell Dam
Partial Dam removal and construction of a fishway
- 2) No 6 Oil Remediation
Stream cleanup, streambank restoration, and appropriate landfill cleanup and closure
- 3) Bonafide Landfill
Stream cleanup, streambank restoration, and appropriate landfill cleanup and closure

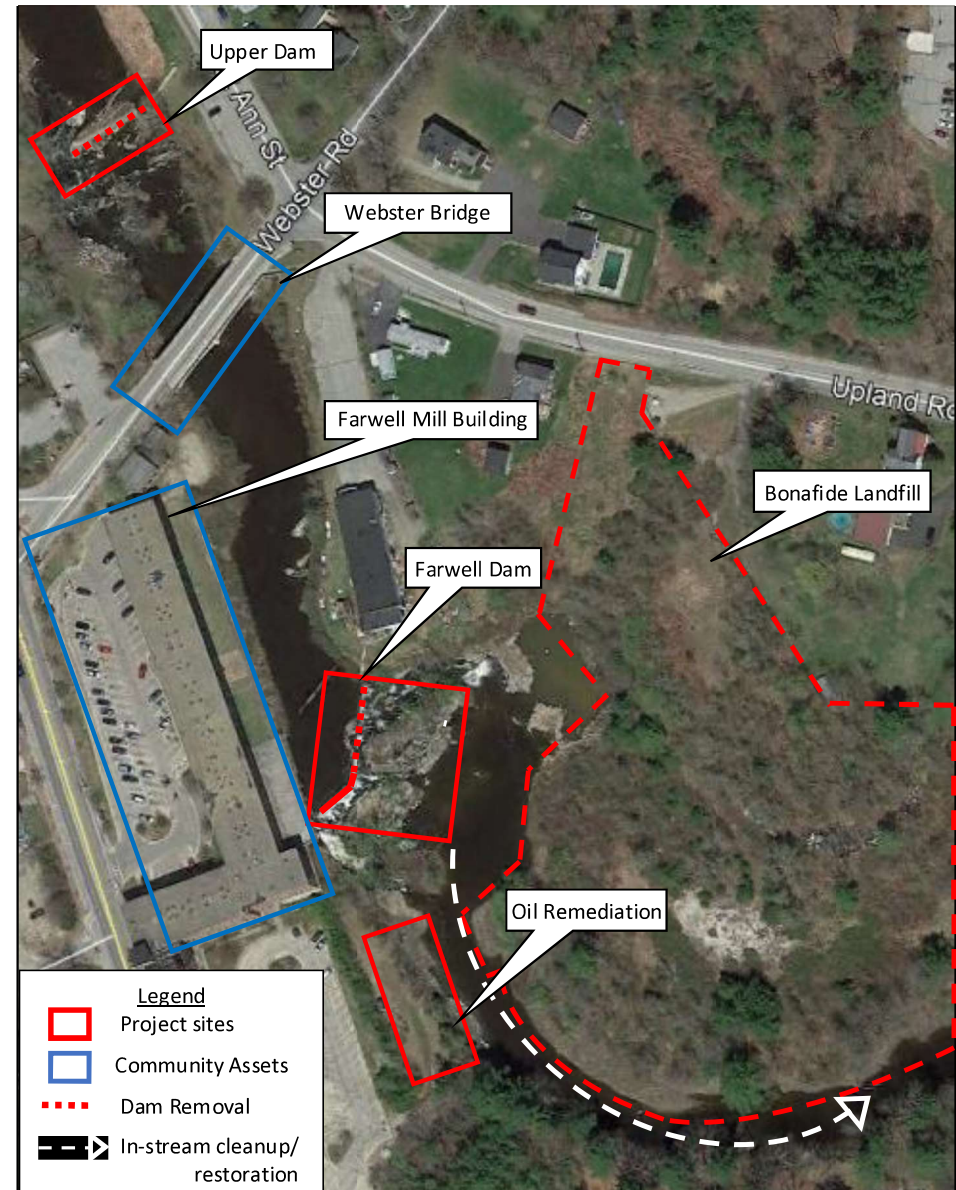


Farwell Dam and Bonafide Landfill

Dam removal and fishway construction in tandem with cleanup of landfill and streambed

Site Constraints

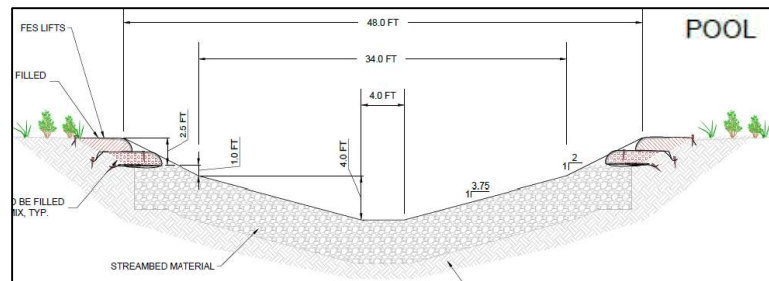
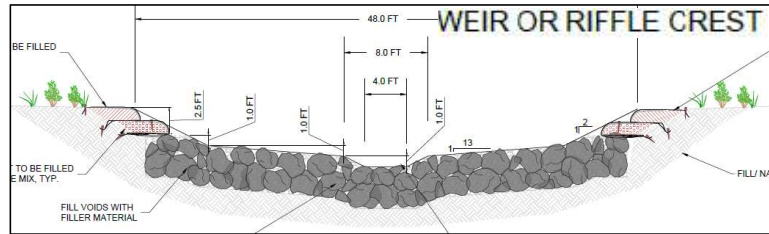
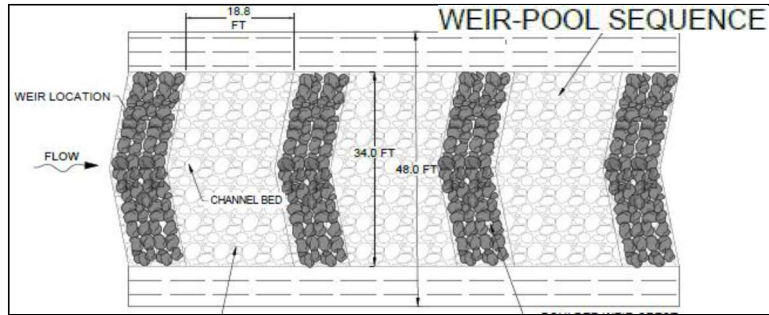
- River is likely not in historic channel
- Dam is structurally tied to Farwell Mill Building and spillway is under the building
- Bonafide Landfill cleanup/closure overlaps with fishway location



Farwell Dam Removal and Fishway

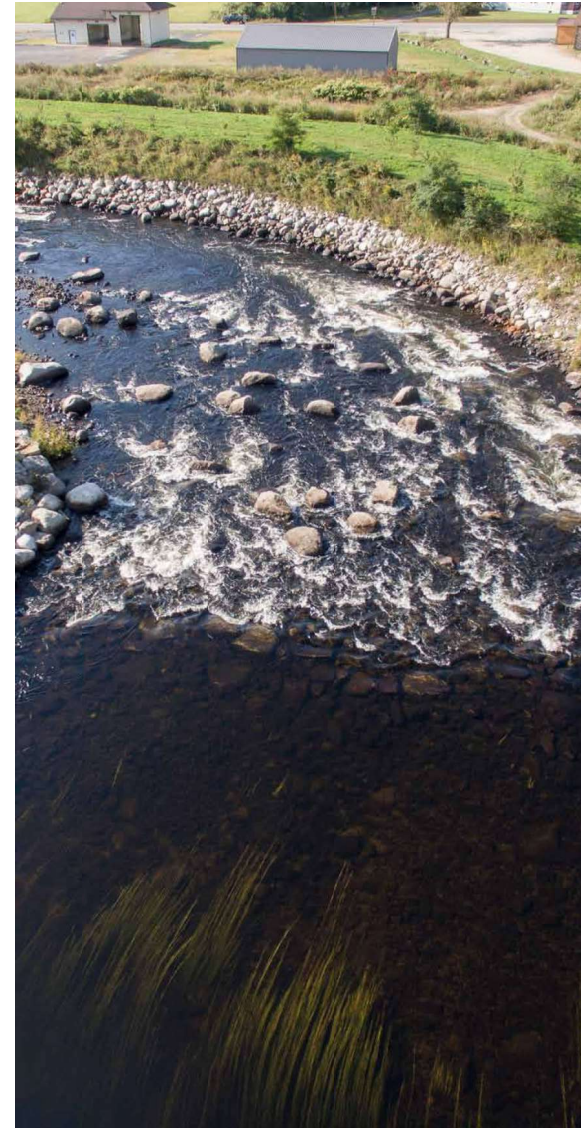


Farwell Dam Removal and Fishway

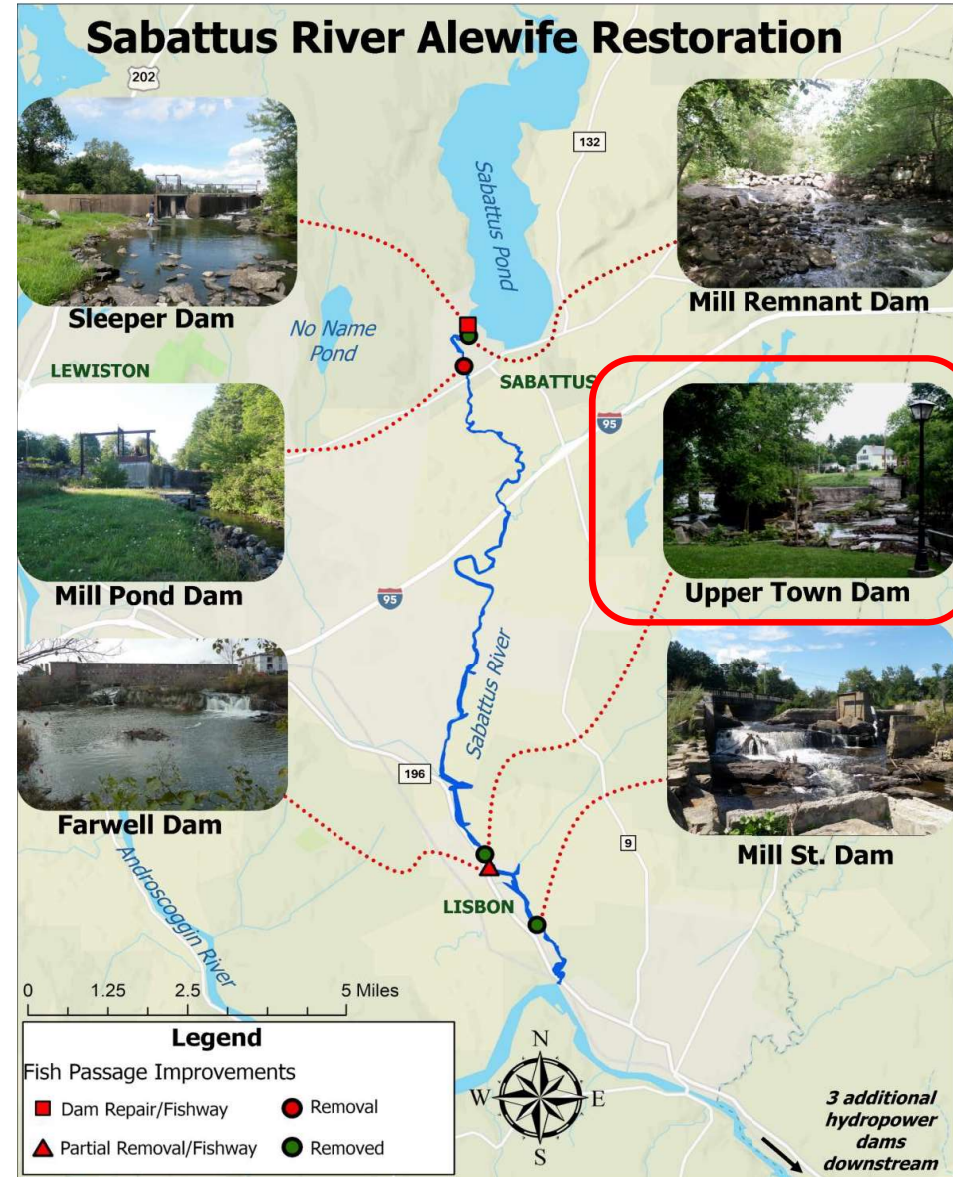


Nature-Like Fishway Example

Photos by Inter-Fluve of the Howland Nature-like Fishway. The fishway was designed to pass fish, to be stable during flood events, and includes public access.



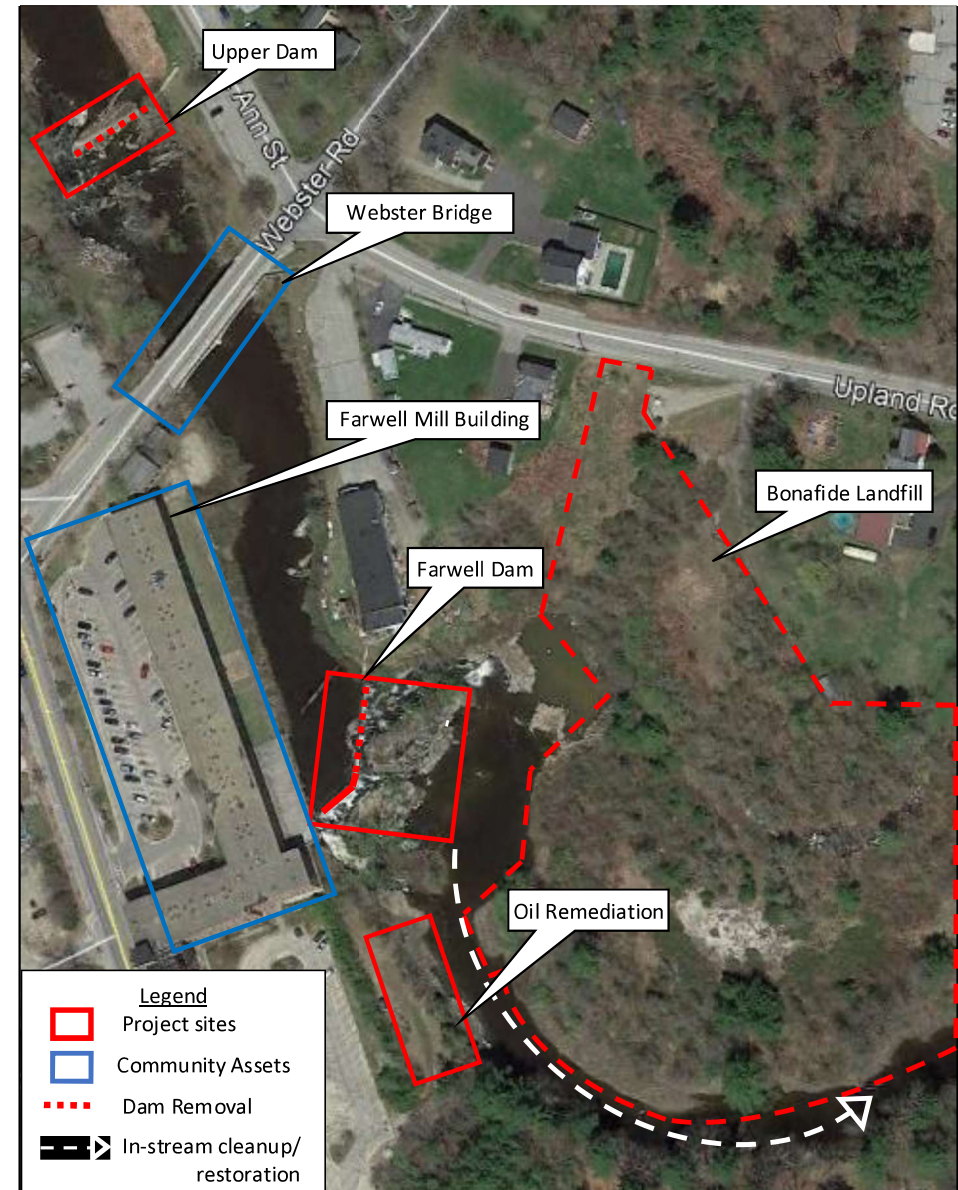
Upper-Town Dam



Upper-Town Dam

Project Sites and activities

- 1) Farwell Dam
Partial Dam removal and construction of a fishway
- 2) No 6 Oil Remediation
Stream cleanup, streambank restoration, and appropriate landfill closure
- 3) Bonafide Landfill
Stream cleanup, streambank restoration, and appropriate landfill closure
- 4) Upper Dam
Dam removal and streambank restoration

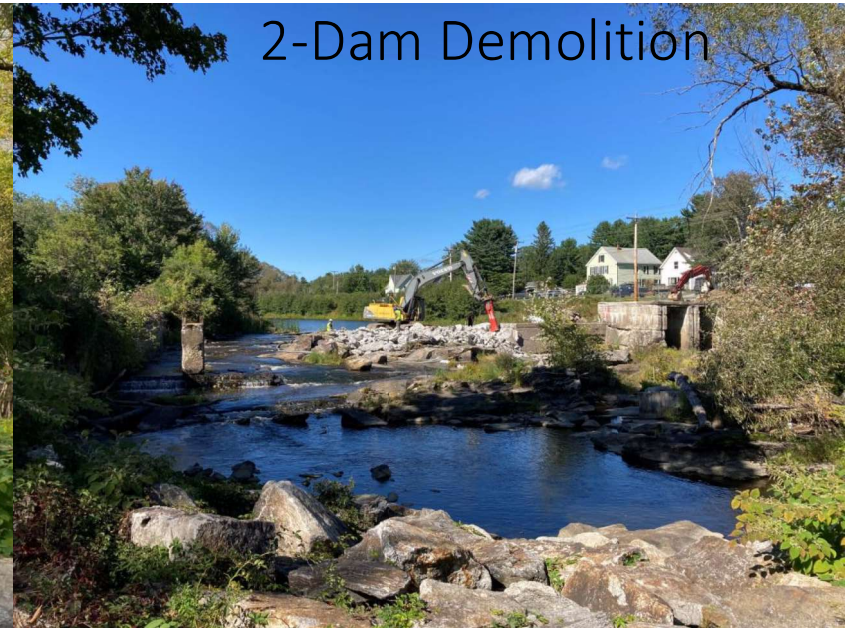


Upper-Town Dam

Looking upstream at the dam site



1- Pre-Project



2-Dam Demolition



3- Dam and gatehouse removed



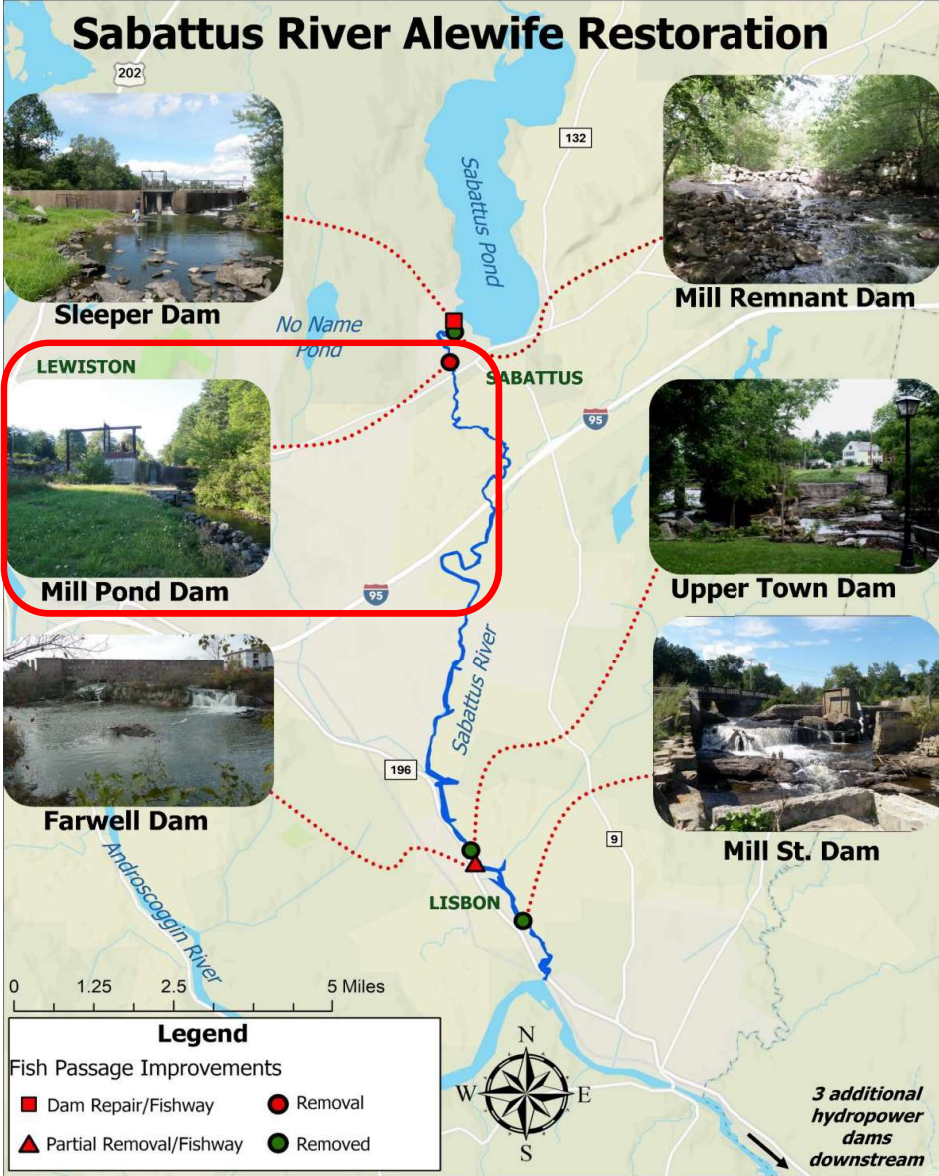
4- Retaining walls removed and riverbanks regraded

Upper-Town Dam

Looking downstream from a drone at the former dam site
Webster bridge is in the background



Mill Pond Dam



Mill Pond
(Main Street)
Dam

Looking upstream
at the dam



Mill Pond
(Main Street)
Dam
View of the Pond
from the dam



Mill Pond
(Main Street)
Dam
View of the dam
and pond from
upstream



Mill Pond
(Main Street)
Dam
View downstream
from the dam



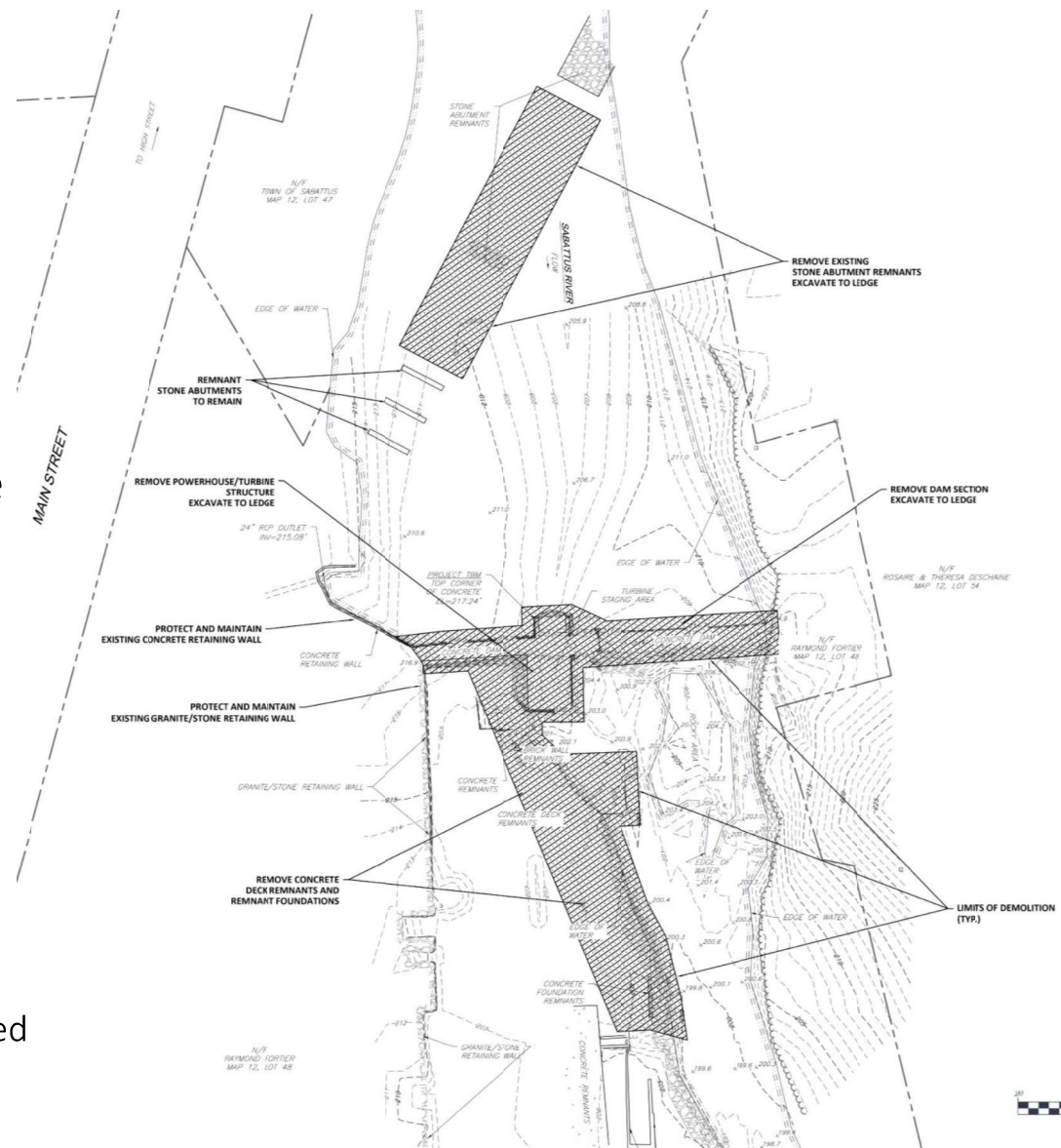
Mill Pond (Main Street) Dam

Aerial view of the
dam and pond

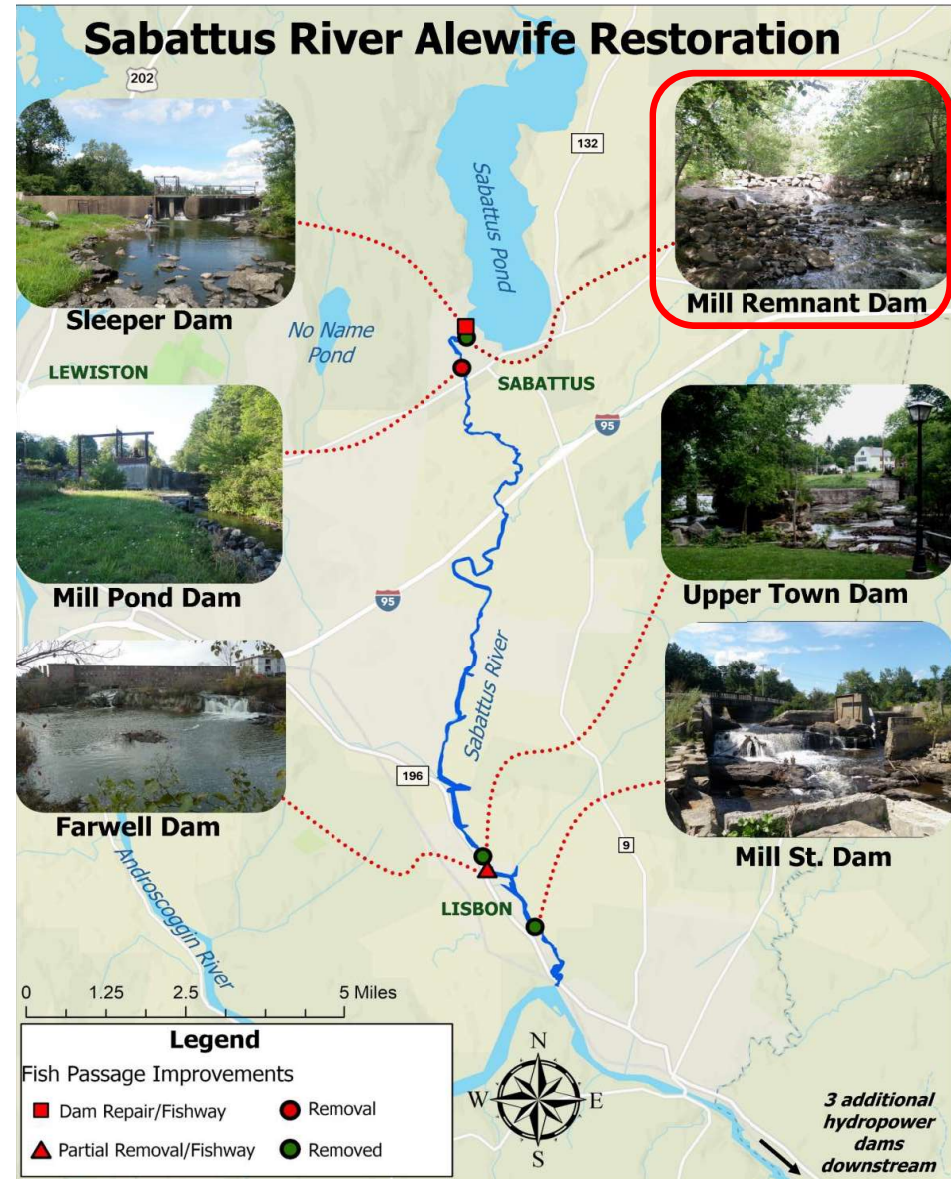


Mill Pond (Main Street) Dam

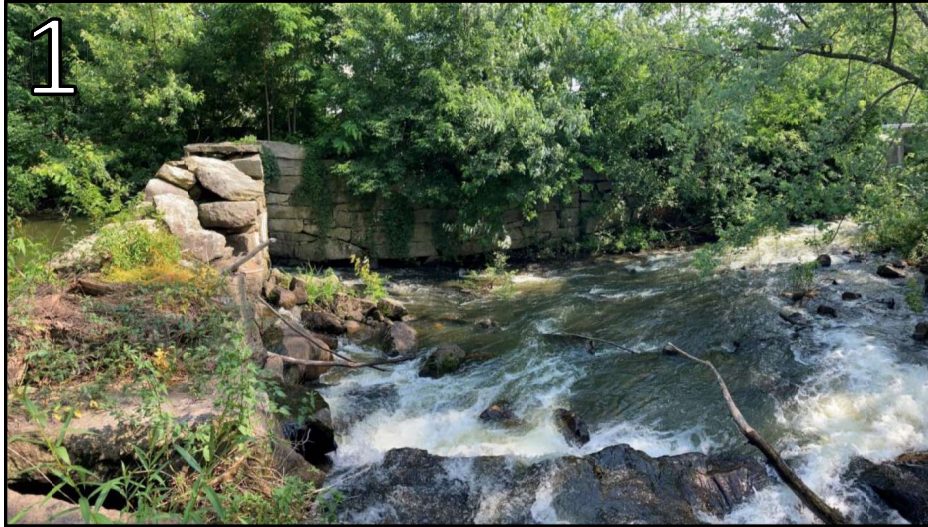
- Dam, concrete deck, and abutments to be removed
- Riverbed to be regraded, stabilized using stone and native vegetation
- Dam safety issues to be addressed
- Sediment to be tested for contamination and removed as needed
- Upper pond area to revert to natural wetland/river conditions
 - o MDIFW Consultation has been initiated
 - o MNAP wetland mapping/review has been requested



Mill Remnant Dam



Mill Remnant Dam view of the dam and town parcel



Mill Remnant Dam

Looking upstream from
the dam before →



And after the project →



Sabattus Lake Water Control Dam “Sleeper Dam”



Sleeper Dam

Looking at the
downstream face of
the dam

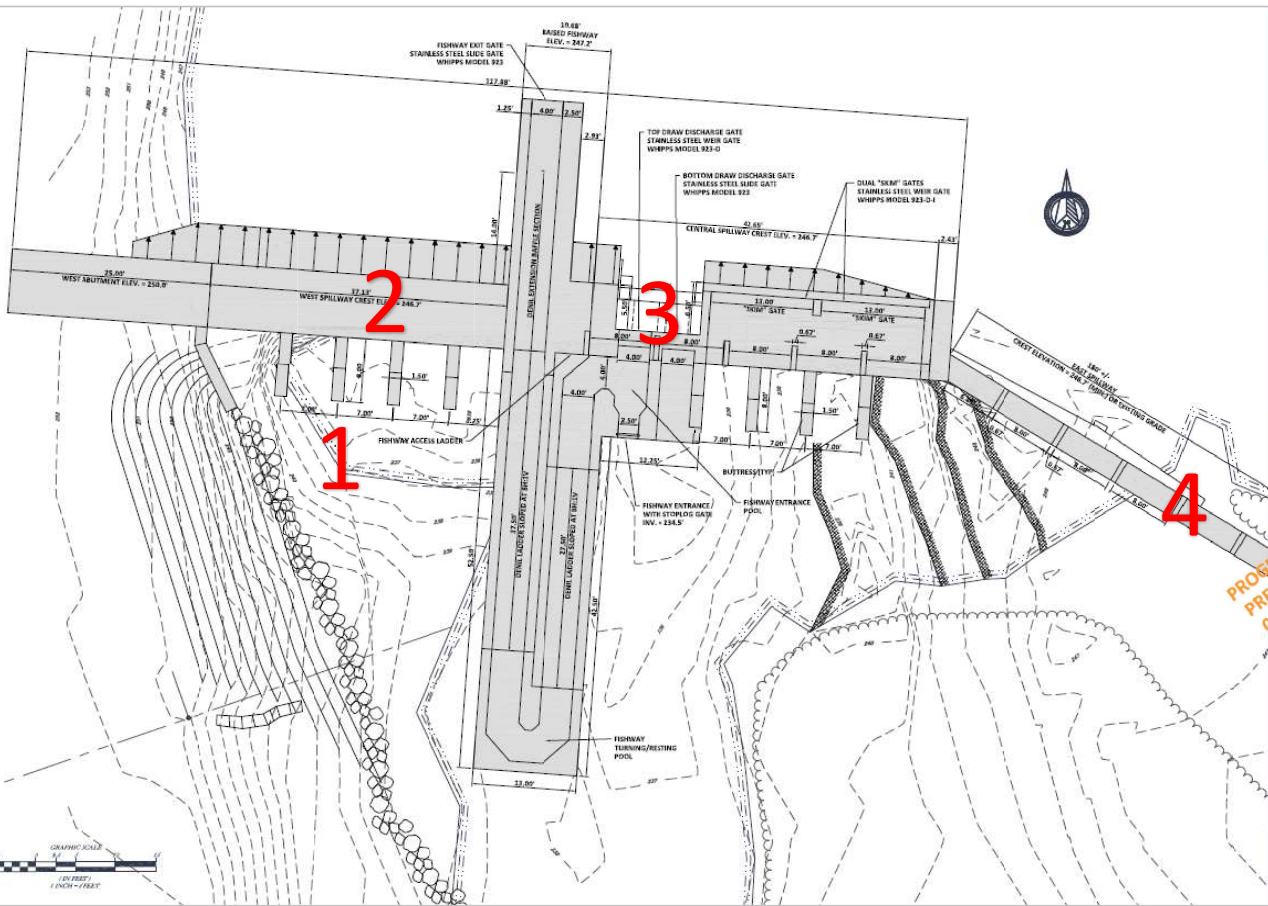


Sleeper Dam

Looking at the
downstream face of
the dam when the lake
is full



Sleeper Dam



Upgrades to the dam and new fishway

Upgrades include:

1. Buttresses
2. New concrete cap
3. New gates
4. New concrete spillway

Upgrades will not change water levels

Sleeper Dam

Looking at the lake, dam, and river from the river right abutment

Proposed 2025 Schedule

July 5: Start of lake draw down

August 1: Start in-water work

November 7: Complete in-water work

