

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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OFFICE OF
THE GOVERNOR

NO. 3 FY 95/96
DATE October 20, 1995

AN ORDER TO ESTABLISH THE MAINE ATLANTIC SALMON TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service have published a proposal to list Atlantic salmon in seven Maine Downeast rivers as threatened under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, 16 U.S.C. sections 1531 *et seq.*, including the Machias, East Machias, Dennys, Pleasant, Sheepscot, Narraguagus and Ducktrap Rivers;

WHEREAS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service have designated Atlantic salmon in the Kennebec, Penobscot, and St. Croix Rivers and the Tunk Stream as species of concern and have requested information on whether native stocks in these rivers continue to exist, and if so, the status and threats to any such native stock populations;

WHEREAS, the State of Maine has primary responsibility for the management and conservation of the salmon stocks of these rivers on behalf of the citizens of Maine;

WHEREAS, the State of Maine and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service have worked cooperatively for over thirty years to conserve and restore Atlantic salmon in Maine rivers, and wish to preserve this cooperative working relationship;

WHEREAS, while there are significant disputed biological and legal issues concerning the validity of the proposed Endangered Species Act listing action by the federal government, there is a general consensus that Maine salmon runs should be conserved and restored to the extent feasible;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Angus S. King, Jr., Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby establish, effective immediately, the Governor's Maine Atlantic Salmon Task Force, as follows:

1. Purpose and Charge

The Task Force shall advise the Governor on the appropriate response to the proposed listing of Atlantic salmon on the seven Downeast rivers and the development of a conservation plan to address preservation of salmon and their habitat on these rivers. The Task Force shall

also advise the Governor on the appropriate response to the federal request for comments on whether any native, naturally reproducing populations of anadromous Atlantic salmon remain on the Penobscot, Kennebec, and St. Croix Rivers, and the Tunk Stream, and if so, what information exists on the status and threats to those salmon. In preparing its recommendation, the Task Force shall review the best available scientific information in light of the legal requirements of the Endangered Species Act, as well as the guidance offered by the federal government on the components of a conservation plan for the seven Downeast rivers.

2. Report

The Task Force shall submit its report to the Governor no later than December 15, 1995, in order to allow the Governor to file comments prior to the December 28, 1995 deadline for comments on the proposed federal listing action.

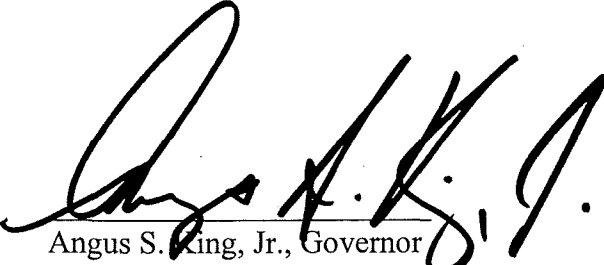
3. Membership

The Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall appoint Task Force members, including the Commissioner of the Department of Marine Resources, the Commissioner of Agriculture, the State Forester, representatives of private recreational fisheries interests and Native American sustenance fishers, as well as representatives of the agriculture, aquaculture, paper and forestry sectors. The Commissioner shall also appoint representatives to the following six technical working groups that will support and advise the Task Force in its work: (1) Salmon Genetics; (2) Forestry; (3) Agriculture; (4) Recreational Fishing; (5) Aquaculture; and (6) Status of Penobscot, Kennebec, St. Croix and Tunk Stream Stocks.

4. Funding and Staff

The Task Force will be supported, staffed, and funded within existing resources by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the Department of Marine Resources, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Conservation. The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall be responsible for coordination and Task Force activities and departmental support. The Task Force shall request the participation and cooperation of the Atlantic Salmon Authority and its staff.

The effective date of this Order is October 20, 1995.



Angus S. King, Jr., Governor