

As reported this week in the Orland *Falcon*, our town's NEW newsletter, there's exciting news about the Orland village fishway and dam! On June 6, 2025, the Town announced on its website that the [Greenfield Penobscot Estuary Beneficial Project Trust](#) had awarded us \$310,000 for a feasibility study to look at options for fishway and dam upgrades. The town appointed a steering committee, and from grant funds

- has contracted with [Inter-Fluve](#) and [Downeast Salmon Federation](#) to complete a scope of work document over the next few weeks, issue a request for qualifications to select an engineering firm, and provide project management
- will contract with the selected engineering firm to conduct the feasibility study. We estimate the study to be completed by June 2026 and will propose 1-2 options for consideration by the Town.

The goals of the study are to identify the best options for maintaining water levels, minimizing upstream mercury contamination, and improving fish passage. Ground rules for the grant agreement and feasibility study are:

1. The dam must stay in place
  - a. To keep down levels of upstream mercury that's bad for people and the environment
  - b. To maintain water levels in the Narramissic River impoundment
  - c. To keep as much salt water as possible out of the Narramissic above the dam to protect firefighting equipment
  - d. To maintain the structure of the route 166 bridge that won't support tidal flows in the waterway.
2. A nature-like barrier and fishway cannot be considered under the terms of the grant because of hazardous construction in the mercury-contaminated channel below the dam.
3. Funding for the fish trap and weir is not part of this project. The Town has funds from herring harvest income, and from ARPA for limited repair of the fish trap, as discussed at Town Meeting. Impact of fishway and dam options on the fishery will be considered.

The 3rd steering committee meeting will take place on Oct. 29 from 5:30 to 7:00 in room 19 of the Orland Community Center with our partners, Inter-Fluve and Downeast Salmon Federation. Our meetings are open to the public; agendas and minutes are posted on the town's website under Government/Agendas and Minutes/Fish Committee. Our announcements and updates are placed under Departments/Narramissic Orland/Orland Fishway and Dam. We welcome community members' input into defining the scope of the project and into selecting the engineering firm that will perform the feasibility study.

Please contact members of the steering committee as below with any questions. Let us know if you would like a copy of the grant agreement. We look forward to your participation!

Thanks,

Pete Robshaw, Chair, for the Steering Committee:

Members of the Fish Committee: Anne Leclerc, Peter Wardwell, Jay Clement, Kyle McGeechan, and Pete Robshaw, chair;

John Gray, community member; Claus Hamann, volunteer; Lester Stackpole, Board of Selectmen.

Note: Also on **Oct. 29**, the [Greenfield Penobscot River Remediation Trust](#) - the group responsible for funding and organizing cleanup of the lower Penobscot, is hosting a **drop-in information session at the Alamo in Bucksport from 2-5 pm and a community meeting from 6-7 pm**. See [their flier here](#) and join the sessions for updates on mercury remediation that are planned for the lower Penobscot, East Channel and Orland estuary!