HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO KILL A MAINE WILD TROUT AND SALMON RIVER?

$15,000/YEAR FOR BROOKFIELD RENEWABLE

AUGUSTA, ME, March 28, 2024 – Brookfield Renewable Partners L.P.'s (NYSE: BEP) war on Maine wild trout and salmon continues and the latest battle reveals how much it costs the $14 billion Canadian company to kill a premier Maine trout river -- $15,000/year and nothing more.

The $15,000 annual fine, offered by Brookfield and agreed to by Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, goes for three years and comes in response to a 17-hour de-watering and fish kill on Maine's Moose River caused by Brookfield owned and operated Brassua Dam.

Brookfield Renewable is a subsidiary of Brookfield Corporation (NYSE: BN), a $63 billion company headquartered in Toronto.

"The Moose River and the Roach River are the two major spawning grounds for Moosehead Lake wild fish," said Steve Heinz, Maine Trout Unlimited Council FERC Coordinator, representing Maine's six TU chapters with a membership of more than 2,000 sportspersons and conservationists. "The settlement shows no respect for this special resource and certainly does nothing for the fish."

"We are shocked that MDIFW is willing to trade dead, wild fish for funding," said Heinz. "Financial giant Brookfield -- which owns over 80 percent of Maine's hydro capacity – is happy to pay for killing off multiple year classes of our wild trout and salmon rather than pay to fix the problems that caused the fish kill."

"It's not just about the fish. Birds, mammals – the entire food chain of the ecosystem took the hit." said Heinz.

<u>Killing Three Year-Classes of Salmon, 12,000 Salmon Parr, Brook Trout Adults and Eggs</u>

This latest event to come to light occurred near the Town of Rockwood on Maine's Moose River below Brassua Dam, which is owned and licensed by Brookfield's White Pine Hydro LLC; Merimil Limited Partnership; and Eagle Creek Kennebec Hydro, LLC. According to Brookfield's own report, Brookfield-controlled Moose River water flows below Brassua dropped to 25 cubic feet per second (CFS) for 17 hours beginning on March 22, 2023 (photo below). Minimum water flows for the Moose River at Brassua, established by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and governing the Brookfield operation, are 425 CFS.

As the water stoppage was taking place, according to Brookfield, no alarm system alerted anyone of the event and, subsequently, no explanation was given regarding the cause of the fish-killing fall in water flows from Brassua Dam. No Brookfield representative was onsite to notice the low flow until more than 16 hours after the event began, according to Brookfield.

"This is no great surprise," said Heinz. "One of the first things Brookfield did when it came to Maine more than a decade ago was take out most of the dam keepers. There is no longer 'on-site' staff at Brassua as is the case for the great majority of Brookfield's Maine hydro projects."

The devastating impact of this low flow were detailed in an IF&W letter of April 25, 2023. Excerpts:

> "…we anticipate that three year-classes of salmon would have been impacted…we estimate that the Moose River produces around 12,000 salmon parr. This would correlate to around 3,000 adult wild salmon…"
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> "…brook trout production in the Moose River… (is) probably second only to the Roach River in terms of contributions to the lake's (Moosehead) wild brook trout fishery. …the low water event in March would have impacted eggs and perhaps residential fish."

Tim Obrey, Regional Fisheries Supervisor, Moosehead Lake Region, and author of the April IF&W letter, further wrote that IF&W concurred with Brookfield's "plan to mitigate the low flow event by providing $15,000 annually for three years for fisheries projects in the Moosehead Lake Region."

FERC Gives a Pass to Brookfield

For its part, federal regulator FERC in a letter dated August 29, 2023, noted that Brookfield failed to report the event within the mandated 14-day period and that Brookfield "technicians did not observe any adverse environmental effects within the tailrace during the incident…" In spite of this and other issues raised in the letter, author Andrea Claros, Chief, Aquatic Resources Branch, Division of Hydropower Administration and Compliance at FERC, wrote "the incident will not be considered a violation…"

Fighting for Maine's Rivers, Trout, Salmon

"No water, no fish," said Heinz. "It's a stark, simple and deadly reality."

"Maine's waters are a public resource – hydro dams operating on them are required to be licensed by FERC and abide by license terms and conditions; Brookfield failed to meet those obligations for the Brassua Project and a premier Maine wild trout and salmon fishery paid the price. For this Brookfield received a slap on the wrist, which is of no material importance to this international, multi-billion-dollar company," said Heinz.

"Mainers must fight for Maine and our natural world," said Heinz. "The Moose River fish kill is only the latest example of the challenges we face. Mainers deserve better and so do the fish."

Related to this, Brookfield dam-related water flow problems on the West Branch below Ripogenus came into vivid perspective following reports in the summer of 2023 of a dried up river, fish kills, and the elimination of an entire spawning season of salmon. After a summer thunderstorm shut down Brookfield's Ripogenus dam for five hours in July, the company did not explain why it did not release water through other dam gates, nor why technicians arriving long after the shutdown "did not conduct any river surveys for environmental effects." A similar 'dead fish for funding' arrangement has been proposed by Brookfield there. As retired Fisheries Biologist Ed Spear recently filed in a letter to FERC, "Cash for dead fish stinks."

In response to complaints about the incident from TU and others, FERC, which licenses and regulates the nation's hydroelectric dams including Ripogenus, has been investigating the shutdown.