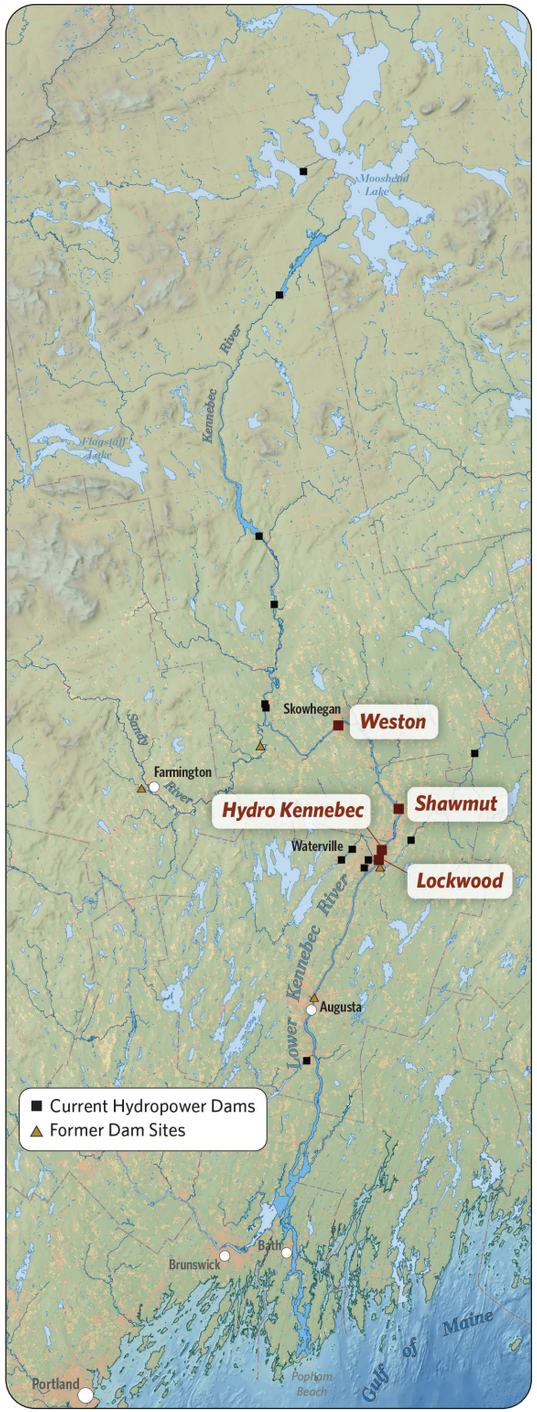

Did You Know?

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Brookfield recently reached an agreement for the purchase of four dams on the lower section of the Kennebec River: Lockwood, Hydro-Kennebec, Shawmut and Weston.

This agreement is one step in a long process to restore the river's ecological health while strengthening the region's economic vitality. It builds on years of work—including the removal of Augusta's Edwards Dam in 1999—and does not affect the remaining hydropower dams in the watershed.

Over the coming years, the restoration process will involve close collaboration with towns along the river, as well as ample opportunity for public input, to ensure the outcomes can benefit people and nature.

Want to Learn More?

If you would like to learn more or get involved, contact the project team at **kennebec@tnc.org**

Together, we can ensure this effort brings real economic and ecological benefits to Central Maine.

nature.org/kennebec

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Fact Sheet:

Lower Kennebec River Dams and Next Steps

Updated November 2025

TIMELINE

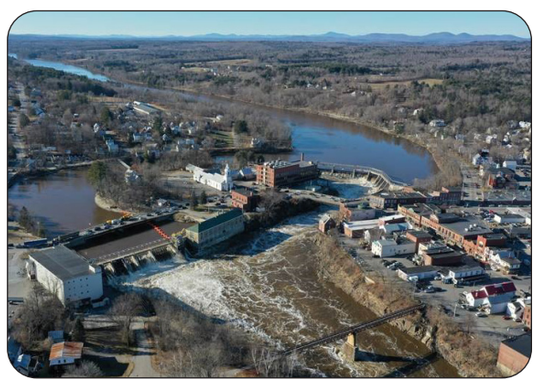
Changes at any dam will not begin for at least the next few years, and in most cases longer. During that time, the dams will continue to operate safely, supply power to the grid, and provide tax revenue to communities.

NEW OWNER

The Kennebec River Restoration Trust (KRRT), a new non-profit organization, is being formed to take ownership of the dams and manage the multi-year restoration process in collaboration with local communities. Its board, staff and advisory groups will represent a broad range of sectors and perspectives. Brookfield will continue to safely operate the dams under a contract with KRRT.

MUNICIPAL REVENUE

For the next several years at least, the dams will continue to operate and provide tax revenue to communities. During that time, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), KRRT and our partners will work with towns to develop and implement a plan to ensure revenue stability through the restoration process and beyond.



SAPPI'S SOMERSET MILL

TNC, KRRT and our partners are 100% committed to developing a solution with Sappi that fully addresses the Somerset Mill's long-term water system needs. Taking the time to work with Sappi to find the right solution and support its design and implementation is one of our top priorities.

ENERGY & ELECTRICITY

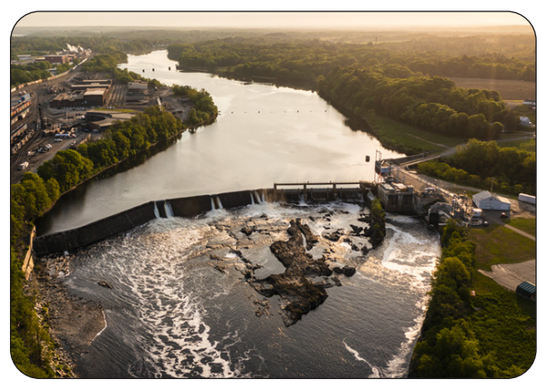
These dams will continue producing electricity for at least the next few years, and in most cases longer. Beyond that, TNC, KRRT and our partners are committed to pursuing new opportunities for renewable energy production and battery storage, to be phased in as the dams are decommissioned.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Dam removal helps control invasive fish by removing the long, warm impoundments where invasive fish thrive, and where native species suffer. River restoration will also revive the historic rapids on the river that block the spread of most invasive fish species. The biggest risk for the introduction of invasive fish species has always been from fish moved illegally by people, not from restoring waterways to a free-flowing state.

CLEAN SEDIMENT

Extensive surveys of each impoundment over the past year found very little accumulated sediment and no elevated levels of toxicity. Because these are all run-of-river dams, they are regularly flushed in major flood events like the one on the Kennebec in December of 2023. As a result, the dams do not hold back massive amounts of sediment, which is where toxins typically settle.



WATER LEVEL

These dams are all "run-of-river" facilities, which means they are required to let through the same quantity of water that flows to them from natural runoff and releases upstream. The Kennebec is one of Maine's largest rivers—even in a dry year like 2025, more than 900 million gallons of water flows past Skowhegan and Waterville each day. This won't change after dam removal. The best way to picture how the Kennebec might look after a dam removal is to look directly downstream from the dam, where the river is already free-flowing.

FLOODING

In big storms, "run-of-river" dams like these can actually make flooding worse for nearby communities, as we saw in December 2023. While flooding is a natural part of river systems, restoring the river to a more natural state can reduce the severity and impact of flooding for riverside communities.