

From: Stephen Heinz heinz@maine.rr.com
Subject: West Branch update and Legal Defense Fund support
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Dear Maine TU Legal Defense Fund Donor,

I wanted to share a brief update on the West Branch and to thank you again for your past support of the Maine TU Council Legal Defense Fund.

Attached are two recent filings that are now part of the federal record:

- the West Branch Penobscot Angler Survey and Economic Assessment Report; and
- our FERC Compliance filing regarding the June 17, 2025 generator trip event at McKay Station.

The report puts solid, on-the-ground information into the record — not just on angler use and economic value, but on how flows, temperature, and day-to-day hydropower operations are affecting the fishery and the people who care about it. The report is meaty and technical, so I suggest that you start with the executive summary. The FERC Compliance filing advocated for near-term action that is intended to influence the outcomes of the final FERC licenses. Together, the filings show, in concrete terms, how repeated generator trip events and unstable operations continue to harm the river.

This work fills important gaps in the record at a critical point in both compliance actions and the ongoing relicensing process. It gives us a fighting chance of getting the changes needed to stop fish kills and begin turning around the declining fishery.

At the same time, Brookfield has given no indication that it is inclined to resolve these issues voluntarily. Based on past experience, it appears likely that some level of legal action will be needed to secure the new terms and conditions required to improve the fishery. That is where the Legal Defense Fund remains important — to ensure Trout Unlimited is prepared for the legal work that may lie ahead.

If you have already contributed to the Legal Defense Fund this cycle, thank you. If you have not, I hope you'll consider doing so. We will not be bombarding you with repeated requests, and hope you will respond to this one.

Thank you for your continued commitment to Maine's rivers and fisheries.

Sincerely,

Steve Heinz
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Penobscot River - Angler Survey... 

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Council Letter to FERC... 

