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## Review of Schmitt, Catherine: The President's Salmon

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Schmitt, Catherine. *The President's Salmon...* 2015

The Penobscot Salmon Club, comprised of Maine recreational fishers, presented the U.S. President with the first Atlantic salmon caught each spring from 1912 to 1992. The author (Communication Director for Maine Sea Grant, with degrees in environmental science and ecology) ties the annual presentation to an account of the health of the Penobscot River salmon fishery from abundance to decline and then revival in the 1990's. Salmon spend most of their lives in the ocean, returning to the same rivers where they hatched. There they spawn and then return to the ocean. The young fish swim down the rivers to the ocean and the cycle continues. The Penobscot River is 109 miles long, and its West and South Branches bring the total length to 264 miles. It was gradually developed with dams to provide power for paper mills and hydroelectric plants. The resulting pollution and physical obstacles posed by the dams caused a decline in the salmon population affecting not only recreational anglers but the native American populations for whom salmon were an important food source. Battles between conservation and environmental interests and large corporations; state and federal fishery management groups and loggers and mill owners are described. The book weaves developments on the world and national scenes with updates on the status of salmon populations in Maine rivers, and traces changing attitudes of governmental bodies on fishery regulation. A discussion of salmon hatcheries and their effect on wild populations is included. VERDICT: Conservation-minded readers who enjoyed "Four Fish" by Paul Greenberg (2010), those interested in natural history, fishers, and both Maine residents and visitors will appreciate this well-written work. Notes at the end of each chapter and a selected bibliography provide further information. (Photos and diagrams not seen).

1