

News Release

Northeast Region External Affairs Office

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Date: September 9, 2005

Maine Atlantic Salmon Habitat Analysis completed

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Gulf of Maine Coastal Program and the Maine Atlantic Salmon Commission are pleased to announce the publication of the second edition of the Maine Atlantic Salmon Habitat Atlas. The Atlas provides detailed maps of Atlantic salmon spawning and rearing habitat along 15 rivers in Maine. Habitat information is now available for all surveyed portions of the following watersheds: Aroostook, Dennys, Ducktrap, East Machias, Kennebec, Machias, Narraguagus, Passagassawakeag, Penobscot, Pleasant, Presumpscot, St. George, Sheepscot, Tunk and Union River.

According to Joan Trial from the Maine Atlantic Salmon Commission, "More than 30 fisheries biologists and GIS specialists have been involved in completing this important undertaking over the past decade." Atlantic salmon habitat data was collected between 1994 and 2003 by field biologists from the Maine Atlantic Salmon Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Maine Fisheries Program Complex. Maine Office of Geographic Information Systems supplied basemap information, which was modified as needed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Gulf of Maine Coastal Program. Staff at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Gulf of Maine Coastal Program and the Maine Atlantic Salmon Commission developed the habitat data for the completed Atlas. Jed Wright from the Gulf of Maine Coastal Program remarked, "Thanks goes to many individuals and organizations that provided important support, and to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Maine Atlantic Salmon Commission for providing funds needed to complete this project."

This second edition of the Atlas is available in PDF files for standard viewing, and in ArcView Shapefile format for those with GIS capabilities. The PDF files in the Atlas depict spawning and rearing habitat and other significant points of interest. The GIS data provides the same



spawning and rearing habitat information that can be viewed in the PDF files, along with additional data about type of habitat, habitat area and year and type of survey. An additional GIS dataset including even more detail about the habitat, such as substrate composition, habitat unit dimensions and other variables, is available upon request. "Now that the data is available digitally for the first time, we expect that it will become a more accessible and helpful tool for Atlantic salmon researchers, resource managers involved in fish stocking and habitat restoration, and land trusts focusing on habitat protection," remarked Alex Abbott, a GIS contractor actively involved in completing the Atlas.

To find habitat data for a specific river in PDF file format, go to the Maine Office of GIS website at <http://apollo.ogis.state.me.us>, select "Maps," find the "Maine Atlantic Salmon Habitat Map Series" and select the watershed of interest to you. You can view the data directly from the website, but if you are interested in frequently accessing data for a specific river system, you will want to download the information for quicker access. To get metadata and an ArcView habitat Shapefile, go to the Maine Office of GIS website at <http://appollo.ogis.state.me.us/catalog>, select "ASHAB3." Click "View metadata" to learn more about the data, or "Show data" to download the zipped ArcView Shapefile.

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