

## **Comments of Dick Anderson, Former fisheries biologist, Maine Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife**

Dick Anderson, a young fisheries biologist for the Maine Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife in the 1960s, today recalled how polluted the Androscoggin had become.

“All Maine people can feel proud today on the 45th anniversary of the Clean Water Act.

This act was written by our GREAT Senator, Edmund Sixtus Muskie and its passage was spearheaded by him in the Congress of the United States, over many years. It resulted in the forced clean up of our filthy rivers, including the Androscoggin. All of us have invested in this clean up and the result we can see here today.

I was a young fisheries biologist working for the Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife in the early 1960's when the department decided to conduct a survey of the Androscoggin River and its major tributary, the Little Androscoggin. Legendary fisheries biologist Stu DeRoche and I, along with a couple of summer assistants, paddled the Androscoggin from the New Hampshire Border to Brunswick and the entire length of the Little Androscoggin from West Paris to Auburn. It was a revolting task. Every bit of liquid waste, and some solid waste, was dumped into the river. That is hard to believe in this day and age but it is true. At least seven pulp and paper mills were dumping untreated waste into the river, tanneries added their toxic wastes, major cities contributed the waste from tens of thousands of citizens and everything else was dumped into this Androscoggin River.

We traveled through this disgusting mess, took notes and wrote a report describing these squalid conditions.

The public started to take note of the conditions, including the really bad smell.

We had been left this mess by the people before us and we have cleaned it up with the passage of legislation and a major investment in pollution reduction.

Yes, let's celebrate today and make the commitment to keep this river, and all the other great rivers of Maine and the United States up to the highest state of purity.”