**Project Title:** Habitat complexity as a limiting factor for salmon recovery in rivers of Downeast Maine

**Project Location:** Virtual

**Project Leaders: Ernie Atkinson** (ernie.atkinson@maine.gov) **and Rory Saunders** (rory.saunders@noaa.gov)

**Project Time Frame:** April 2021 – June 2021

**Total Hours:** up to 200

**Semester Hour Allocation:** roughly 10 hours per week as available

A series of recent workshops and symposia have highlighted the need to increase the number of smolts (juvenile Atlantic salmon) successfully emigrating from rivers in light of the challenging conditions Atlantic salmon face in the marine environment. One factor that may be limiting the production of smolts in freshwater is the lack of habitat complexity. The successful applicant will help us review historical records and current literature with a view to determining if the loss of habitat complexity is a factor limiting salmon recovery efforts and if so, whether management intervention is feasible and desirable.

The intern would be involved in:

* Reviewing historic records related to structural simplification of riverine habitats involving log driving, dam building, channel straightening, and other interventions
* Reviewing the state of the science related to habitat complexity and salmon smolt production
* Drafting a review of the literature related to structural simplification and the implications for Atlantic salmon recovery efforts in Maine
* Presenting findings to stakeholders and agency scientists

Opportunities Include:

* Getting to know and work with scientists from state and federal agencies
* Exposure to fisheries science as a potential career
* Practical experience in fisheries science