

The Alewife Interaction Committee had planned to conduct an extensive research project starting in 2023 carried out by the University of Maine to better understand ecological interactions between sea run alewife (SRA) and landlocked salmon (LLS). The research project in conjunction with long-term monitoring plans was aimed at understanding ecological drivers and mechanisms within coastal systems where both species would be present. The research project plan was to manipulate two coastal lake systems where landlocked salmon are present and alewife were not yet present. Using these two study waters, the goal was to stock adult sea-run alewives at a predetermined rate (>50,000 SRA per year) to study the potential interactions among the species. The initial priority was to stock one water with SRA for two years and then stock the other water for the following two years while studying both waters for all four years. Unfortunately, SRA were not stocked in the spring of 2023 delaying the project by a year due to logistical and social constraints (staffing, availability of trucks, availability of SRA, public perceptions of the project).

The committee regrouped in the fall of 2023 to further assess the logistical constraints of stocking SRA along with addressing funding challenges for supporting the University lead research project. Ultimately, the decision was made to pause the research project until funding needs and logistical constraints could be fully addressed. The AIC has regrouped again in 2024 to refocus on the previously identified long term monitoring plans to explore what avenues of data collection will still provide beneficial information for the needs of the AIC.