

Table excerpted from [Maine DEP Revised Triennial Review package](#) (8/11/2025)

**Maine Department of Environmental Protection
2025 Triennial Review of Water Quality Standards**

Table 2. List of Proposals for Upgrades of Water Quality Classifications

Proposals recommended for upgrade

Class Change	Waterbody	Town(s)	Proposed by	Background for Proposal and Department Recommendations
Androscoggin River Basin				
A to AA	Abbott Brook and Tributary	Parkertown Township	Maine DEP	<p><u>Background:</u> Abbott Brook and its tributaries in Lincoln Plantation are tributaries to the Magalloway River and were upgraded to Class AA in 2009. Two very short segments of Abbott Brook (combined ~0.3 miles) and a portion of one unnamed tributary (~0.6 miles) located upstream in Parkertown Township were inadvertently omitted from the upgrade and remained Class A. It is expected that these upstream waters provide similarly valuable brook trout habitat as the waters downstream in Lincoln Plantation and they serve to protect water quality for downstream Class AA waters.</p> <p><u>DEP recommendation:</u> The Department recommends an upgrade to Class AA for Abbott Brook and Tributary.</p>
Kennebec River Basin				
A to AA	Mt Blue Stream and Tributaries	Avon and Weld	Maine DEP	<p><u>Background:</u> Mount Blue Stream and tributaries are Class A and contain high quality habitat for endangered Atlantic salmon and have been designated as critical habitat for Atlantic salmon by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries and the US Fish and Wildlife Service under the federal Endangered Species Act, lending significant ecological importance to these waters. The watershed is 90% forested with little development activity and 13% of the watershed is protected as conservation land as part of Mount Blue State Park, lending scenic and recreational importance to these waters. External data indicate good water quality and a macroinvertebrate community indicative of excellent water quality in Mount Blue Stream. DEP monitoring data for Mount Blue Stream indicate attainment of Class A aquatic life criteria (which are the same as Class AA criteria) and good water quality for salmonids.</p> <p><u>DEP recommendation:</u> The Department recommends an upgrade to Class AA for Mount Blue Stream and tributaries.</p>

Class Change	Waterbody	Town(s)	Proposed by	Background for Proposal and Department Recommendations
B to A	Sandy River and Tributaries	Avon, Farmington, Freeman Twp., Madrid Twp, New Vineyard, Phillips, Salem Twp, Strong, Temple, Township 6 North of Weld, Weld	Maine DEP	<p><u>Background:</u> Sandy River from Phillips to Farmington and its tributaries are Class B and provide high quality habitat for federally endangered Atlantic salmon. Data indicate that Class A aquatic life criteria for macroinvertebrates were attained in 2022, and the river provides good water quality for salmonids. Although the watershed is predominately forested (84%), there are also roads, residential and commercial development, and agricultural and industrial logging uses. A variety of discharges (overboard discharge and stormwater) and land development permits were identified. Although nutrient data are limited for this watershed, total phosphorus values at two sites on an unnamed tributary in Avon in 2022 did not meet Class A standards.</p> <p><u>DEP recommendation:</u> <i>The Department recommends an upgrade for all tributaries entering the Sandy River in Avon between Avon Valley Road and Mount Blue Pond Road west of Rt. 4., a predominantly forested area with minimal development pressures where waters are expected to attain Class A criteria. Further investigation and supporting data are needed for other parts of the watershed to evaluate Class A attainment.</i></p>
B to A	Temple Stream and Tributaries	Avon, Temple, Wilton, Farmington	Maine DEP	<p><u>Background:</u> Temple Stream and tributaries are Class B and provide high quality habitat for federally endangered Atlantic salmon. Following removal of the Walton's Mill Dam, DMR documented evidence of wild sea run Atlantic salmon adults spawning upstream of the former dam in 2023. Over 87% of the watershed is forested and 2% of the watershed is in conservation land. Agricultural areas, roads, and residential and commercial development are concentrated in the lower watershed along Temple Stream and road from Edes Brook downstream to the Rt. 2 crossing. DEP macroinvertebrate data for two sites in the lower watershed collected in 2020 and 2023 attained Class A criteria. However, one site in the lower watershed only attained Class C criteria in 2020 based on algae, and one site in the lower watershed did not meet Class A freshwater nutrient criteria in 2023.</p> <p><u>DEP recommendation:</u> <i>The Department recommends an upgrade for the main stem of Temple Stream and associated tributaries above the confluence with Edes Brook and all tributaries to Drury Pond and the stream between Drury Pond and Temple Stream. These are predominantly forested areas in the upper headwaters with minimal development pressures where waters are expected to attain Class A</i></p>

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				<i>criteria. Further investigation and supporting data are needed for other parts of the watershed to evaluate Class A attainment.</i>
Penobscot River Basin				
A to AA	Pleasant River Middle Branch and Tributaries	Brownville, Williamsburg Twp., Ebeemee Twp., Katahdin Iron Works Twp., and TB R11 WELS	Maine DEP	<p><u>Background:</u> Pleasant River Middle Branch and tributaries provide high quality habitat for federally endangered Atlantic salmon and have been designated as critical habitat for Atlantic salmon by NOAA Fisheries and the US Fish and Wildlife Service under the federal Endangered Species Act, lending significant ecological importance to these waters. Over 80% of the watershed is forested with little development activity and 76% of the watershed is protected as conservation land as part of the Appalachian Mountain Club's Pleasant River Headwaters Forest, lending scenic and recreational importance to these waters. DEP monitoring data for Pleasant River Middle Branch indicate attainment of Class A aquatic life criteria (which are the same as Class AA criteria) in 2024 and good water quality for salmonids.</p> <p><u>DEP recommendation:</u> <i>The Department recommends an upgrade to Class AA for Pleasant River Middle Branch and tributaries.</i></p>

Proposals not recommended for upgrade

Class Change	Waterbody	Towns	Proposed by	Background for Proposal and Department Recommendations
Androscoggin River Basin				
C to B	Androscoggin River, Confluence with Ellis River to Worumbo Dam	Albany Twp, Auburn, Avon, Bethel, Buckfield, Byron, Canton, Carthage, Casco, Chesterville, Dixfield, Durham, Fayette, Freeport, Greene, Greenwood, Hartford, Hebron, Jay, Leeds, Lewiston, Lisbon, Livermore, Livermore Falls, Mechanic Falls,	Androscoggin River Watershed Council	<p><u>Background:</u> The Androscoggin River is Class C from the confluence with the Ellis River (at Rumford Point) to Worumbo Dam (at Lisbon Falls) (~85 miles), has a total of nine dams, eight discharges, urban centers (including Rumford, Lewiston, and Auburn) and a significant amount of agriculture.</p> <p>Department and external data document that Class B criteria for dissolved oxygen (DO) are usually, but not always, attained in the segment in question. For the upper river (Ellis River to Gulf Island Pond (GIP) dam), data are very limited. Discrete DO data collected by Maine DEP's Volunteer River Monitoring Program (VRMP) (2020-2024) and continuous DO data collected by the Department at the Turner Center Bridge (2001-2024) meet current Class C criteria, but data occasionally do not meet current Class B criteria. GIP DO data do not meet Class B criteria based</p>

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		Mexico, Milton Twp, Minot, Monmouth, Mount Vernon, New Gloucester, New Sharon, Norway, Otisfield, Oxford, Paris, Perkins Twp, Peru, Phillips, Poland, Raymond, Readfield, Roxbury, Rumford, Sabattus, Sumner, Temple, Township 6 North of Weld, Township C, Township D, Township E, Turner, Vienna, Wales, Washington Twp, Wayne, Weld, West Paris, Wilton, Woodstock		<p>on 38 M.R.S. § 464(1)(3). Macroinvertebrate data collected in the upper river since 2000 mostly meets Class B criteria, but the data are relatively old, and no data are available for the river between Livermore Falls and Lewiston. Bacteria data are not available for the upper river.</p> <p>For the lower river (GIP Dam to Worumbo Dam), 2020 to 2024 discrete and continuous DO data also indicate that the lower river meets current Class C criteria but occasionally does not meet Class B criteria. Macroinvertebrate data indicate that this segment meets Class C criteria; however, only two of the five stations meet Class B criteria. Limited bacteria data indicate that the lower river does not meet either Class B or Class C criteria. No recent ambient freshwater nutrient data are available for the upper or lower river to assess those criteria.</p> <p>Based on the review of water quality data, the proposed segment of the Androscoggin River meets its current Class C criteria, but it does not fully meet all Class B water quality criteria.</p> <p><u>DEP recommendation:</u> <i>Based on the review of water quality data, the segment meets its current Class C criteria, but it does not fully meet all Class B water quality criteria. Furthermore, the Department's analysis indicates that the river cannot meet Class B criteria at all times during critical conditions. Additional data are needed for the upper river to assess attainment of criteria and make an assessment of the potential implications to existing waste discharge licenses. For these reasons, the Department does not recommend an upgrade to Class B for either proposed segment.</i></p>
C to B	Androscoggin River, Gulf Island Pond Dam to Worumbo Dam	Lewiston, Auburn Lisbon, Durham	Grow L+A	<p><u>Background:</u> The Androscoggin River from GIP Dam to Worumbo Dam is designated as Class C. Grow L+A states that an upgrade of this segment would reflect water quality improvements, the attainment of Class B standards most of the time, and benefit users of the river and the local economy.</p> <p>The segment proposed for upgrade has a total of 14 dams, multiple discharges, urban centers (including Lewiston, Auburn, Brunswick, and Topsham), and a significant amount of agriculture. A 2011 report summarizing Department data showed that Class B criteria for DO and aquatic life were not always attained. Water quality models indicated that Class B DO criteria would not be attained in much of the segment in</p>

Class Change	Waterbody	Towns	Proposed by	Background for Proposal and Department Recommendations
				<p>question during critical conditions¹, which the Department considers when reissuing waste discharge licenses. The GIP impoundment above the segment in question is only required to meet Class C DO criteria. Because flow from this impoundment accounts for 97% of the flow in the segment in question, continued Class C DO conditions of 5 ppm in GIP would prevent attainment of Class B DO conditions of 7 ppm downstream.</p> <p>Recent water quality monitoring data including discrete DO data collected by DEP's Volunteer River Monitoring Program (VRMP) indicate that this segment meets current Class C criteria, but it occasionally does not meet current Class B criteria. Continuous DO data show that Class C criteria are met, but on occasion DO concentrations do not meet Class B criteria for short periods. Macroinvertebrate data indicate that this segment meets Class C criteria but does not consistently meet Class B criteria. Based on limited available bacteria data, this segment does not meet either Class B or Class C criteria. No recent freshwater nutrient data are available to adequately assess those criteria.</p> <p><i>DEP recommendation: Based on the review of water quality data, the Lower Androscoggin River meets its current Class C criteria, but it does not fully meet all Class B water quality criteria for bacteria, aquatic life (biomonitoring), and dissolved oxygen. Furthermore, the Department's analysis indicates that the river cannot meet Class B DO criteria at all times during critical conditions of high water temperature, low flow, and maximum licensed discharge levels. The status of phosphorus criteria attainment is unknown. For these reasons, the Department does not recommend and upgrade to Class B for the proposed segment.</i></p>
Presumpscot River Basin				
C to B	Presumpscot River Mainstem from Saccarappa Falls to Head of Tide at Presumpscot Falls	Westbrook, Portland, Falmouth	Friends of the Presumpscot River, American Rivers	<p><u>Background:</u> The Presumpscot River is Class C from Saccarappa Falls to Head of Tide at Presumpscot Falls. Actions to improve water quality and aquatic habitat include, but are not limited to, the reduction of pollutant discharges to the river; the removal of two dams (Smelt Hill Dam in 2002 and the Saccarappa Dam in 2019); ongoing efforts to reduce combined sewer overflows (CSOs); planned discharge reductions to the Pleasant River; numerous regulatory actions; and the creation of fishways and</p>

¹ Critical conditions consist of high water temperature, low flow, and maximum licensed discharge levels.

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				<p>improved runs of migratory fish species. Discrete DO data collected by DEP's VRMP indicate that this segment meets current Class C criteria, but it occasionally does not meet current Class B criteria at all sites. Similarly, continuous DO data show that Class C DO criteria are met, but on occasion DO concentrations do not meet Class B criteria for short periods. Bacteria (<i>E. coli</i>) data indicate this segment does not meet either Class B or Class C criteria. Biomonitoring data indicate Class B criteria are occasionally, but not always, met. Limited phosphorus data indicate that Class C criteria are met, and one sample was slightly above Class B criteria.</p> <p><i>DEP recommendation: Based on the review of water quality data, the lower Presumpscot River meets its current Class C criteria, but it does not fully meet all Class B water quality criteria for bacteria, aquatic life (biomonitoring), DO, and possibly phosphorus. Furthermore, the Department's analysis indicates that the river cannot meet Class B DO or phosphorus criteria at all times during critical conditions of high water temperature, low flow, and maximum licensed discharge levels. For these reasons, the Department does not recommend an upgrade to Class B for the lower Presumpscot River.</i></p>
Sheepscot River Basin				
B to A	Sheepscot River, Rt. 17 Crossing in Whitefield to Somerville/Palermo Town Line	China, Freedom, Hibberts Gore, Jefferson, Liberty, Montville, Palermo, Somerville, Washington, Whitefield, Windsor	Midcoast Conservancy	<p>Background: The Sheepscot River from Sheepscot Lake to Route 17 in Whitefield is designated as Class B, and its waters provide habitat to endangered Atlantic salmon and other native sea-run fish. The removal of Coopers Mills Dam in 2018 has restored free-flowing conditions and the DMR has documented evidence of Atlantic salmon spawning and the presence of other native sea-run fish upstream following the removal. Most but not all bacteria and DO data attain Class A criteria and biomonitoring data below the former Coopers Mills Dam show attainment of Class A criteria. Over 68% of the watershed is forested and 6.6% of the watershed is in conservation land. Although Class A standards aren't always attained, Midcoast Conservancy requests this Class A designation because of recent restoration efforts and the ecological and economic importance of this segment.</p> <p>As recently as 2024, the Department renewed a wastewater discharge permit (ME0001074) for the Palermo Rearing Station authorizing discharges to the Class B segment of the Sheepscot River just below the outlet of Sheepscot Pond above the segment proposed for upgrade. There</p>

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				<p>are no water quality data available for the segment proposed for upgrade to evaluate any effects of this discharge on water quality.</p> <p><i>DEP recommendation:</i> As set forth in 38 M.R.S. § 465(2)(C), Class A waters are incompatible with discharges except for in certain cases, and existing discharges are allowed to continue only until practical alternatives exist. Further, the Department does not foresee the ability to ensure attainment of Class A standards in any portion of the proposed segment under critical conditions of low flow, high water temperature, and maximum licensed discharge levels. For these reasons, the Department does not consider either proposed segment of the river to be consistent with Class A water quality standards and does not recommend an upgrade to Class A for either proposed segment.</p>
Union River Basin				
A to AA	Upper Union River (West Branch, Middle Branch, East Branch) and Tributaries	Amherst, Aurora, Clifton, Eastbrook, Grand Falls Twp, Great Pond, Greenfield Twp, Mariaville, Osborn, T16 MD, T22 MD, T28 MD, T32 MD, T34 MD, T39 MD, T40MD, Waltham	Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation District	<p><u>Background:</u> The upper Union River including the West Branch, Middle Branch, and East Branch and Tributaries are designated as Class A and contain high quality habitat for endangered Atlantic salmon and other endangered species. The River is a Priority Water for Trout Unlimited and is part of the Downeast Species Habitat Recovery Unit for Atlantic salmon. Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation District requests an upgrade from Class A to Class AA to acknowledge the good water quality of the upper Union River and generate support to restore and protect lower reaches of the river.</p> <p>Although 62% of the watershed is forested and nearly 12% of the watershed is in conservation land, agricultural areas, roads, and residential and commercial development are concentrated in the middle portion of the watershed. There are no biological monitoring data available for the West, East, or Middle Branch main stems and no recent data for tributaries. DO concentrations met Class A criteria for the majority of sites sampled with the exception of a tributary in the East Branch. There are no <i>E. coli</i> bacteria data available for the segments proposed for upgrade to evaluate attainment. Existing freshwater nutrient data are insufficient to assess nutrient criteria attainment.</p> <p><i>DEP recommendation:</i> The Department believes that further watershed investigation and supporting data are needed and does not recommend an upgrade to Class AA for the West, Middle, and East Branches of the Upper Union River and tributaries. The Department commits, as resources allow, to evaluating which areas of the watershed may be appropriate for</p>

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				<i>a potential upgrade to Class AA and coordinating with local partners and collecting new data as deemed necessary, and as resources allow.</i>
Washington County				
SB to SA	Chandler Bay	Jonesport	Eastern Maine Conservation Initiative	<p><u>Background:</u> Chandler Bay in Washington County is designated as Class SB. Eastern Maine Conservation Initiative requests an upgrade to Class SA because Chandler Bay is an important ecosystem to protect in eastern Maine and an upgrade would have a beneficial effect on the immediate marine environment and the communities that surround it.</p> <p>Although approximately half of the watershed is forested and 2.4% of the watershed is in conservation land, there are a variety of land uses including agriculture, developed areas, and areas with forestry activities in the watershed. Roads and residential and commercial development are concentrated in the lower watershed and along the coast and a licensed stormwater discharge in the watershed that flows into Beaver Brook (Class B) and then into Chandler Bay.</p> <p>Monitoring data indicate attainment of Class SB numeric DO criteria and the expectation is that these waters also attain Class SA narrative DO criteria of "as naturally occurs." These data also indicate that habitat is free-flowing and natural. Fecal coliform bacteria data (2008 and 2019) indicate good water quality for the designated use of shellfish harvesting. Data are not available for the designated uses of recreation in and on the water (enterococcus) and shellfish propagation.</p> <p>According to Maine statute (38 M.R.S. § 465-B(1)), the highest estuarine and marine water classification (Class SA) should be applied to waters that are considered "outstanding natural resources and which should be preserved because of their ecological, social, scenic, economic or recreational importance." Class SA criteria include "natural" habitat and aquatic life "as naturally occurs" (38 M.R.S. § 465-B(1)(A) and (B). Additionally, in accordance with 38 M.R.S. § 464(4)(F)(2), all SA waters are considered outstanding national resources unless otherwise specified under Section 469.</p> <p>In 2021, the Department issued a wastewater discharge permit (ME0037559) for Kingfish Maine, Inc. to construct and operate a land-based aquaculture facility in Jonesport, Maine, that would discharge into Chandler Bay. At this time, Kingfish Maine remains fully permitted with all</p>

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				<p>required local, state, and federal permits, and the Department expects construction activities to proceed for this facility.</p> <p><i>DEP recommendation: Chandler Bay's watershed includes a variety of land uses including 2.4% conserved land, agriculture, developed areas, and areas with forestry activities. Given these factors, the Department's position is that Chandler Bay does not meet statutory requirements for Class SA waters, including the high bar as an "outstanding national resource." Additionally, based on the current status of the wastewater discharge permit held by Kingfish Maine, Chandler Bay does not meet statutory requirements in 38 M.R.S. § 465-B(1)(C) stating there may be no direct discharges of pollutants to Class SA waters, with specifically delineated exceptions not relevant here. For these reasons, the Department does not recommend an upgrade for Chandler Bay to Class SA.</i></p>