

# PROTECT MAINE'S CLEAN WATER

## Support the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's upgrades of more than 800 miles of rivers and streams.

**Maine's water classification program provides a principal foundation for the protection of water quality in Maine in accordance with the federal Clean Water Act.**

- Every three years, Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) reviews the waters of the state and recommends improved protections for appropriate water bodies.
- The additional protections involve a higher level of classification, which means a higher level of protection from pollution. For example, upgrading a Class C river to a Class B river means that wastewater dischargers are regulated more strictly to protect a broader range of uses.
- DEP typically recommends upgrades when water bodies meet the standards of the next highest level of classification, based on lowered levels of pollutants or on new science that shows the water body meeting a higher level than its existing classification. Sometimes, DEP recommends an upgrade proactively when it anticipates reasonable future steps will result in attainment of the higher class.

**DEP's upgrade package includes increased protections for many important rivers and streams, including:**

- **South Branch Sandy River and its tributaries**, which are important spawning streams for Atlantic salmon and brook trout: Class A to AA.
- **Orbeton Stream and its tributaries**, also important spawning streams for Atlantic salmon and brook trout: Class A to AA.
- **Little Narraguagus River**, which is an important habitat for Atlantic salmon: Class A to AA.
- **West Branch Penobscot River above Ambajejus Lake**, which is an important trout and salmon habitat and offers great scenic value and high recreational use: Class A to AA.



photo by MissingLynx/NRCM

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**DEP's periodic upgrades of water quality protection and classifications are among the most important tools to improve and protect Maine's clean water.**

- 2022 is the 50th anniversary of Senator Edmund Muskie's Clean Water Act, which dramatically improved the quality of water and the quality of life in Maine and across the country.
- The system of water quality classification reviews and upgrades is based on Senator Muskie's ideas.
- There could be no more fitting tribute to Senator Muskie's legacy than passing DEP's upgrade package in this 50th anniversary year.

**Support DEP's proposed upgrades to Maine waters and protect what makes Maine so special.**

For more information, please contact  
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# Environmental Priorities Coalition

Maine's **Environmental Priorities Coalition** is a partnership of 37 environmental, conservation, and public health organizations representing over 120,000 members who want to protect the good health, good jobs, and quality of life that our environment provides.

**We are counting on Maine policymakers to take the important steps needed to protect Maine's extraordinary environment so all Maine people and Maine communities can thrive.**

