2022 - 2032 Vision for the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Program

Prioritization Framework

April 1, 2024

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Executive Summary

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) communicated their *2022-2032 Vision for the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) Program* (303(d) Program Vision) as a strategy to manage and direct CWA Section 303(d) program activities to achieve water quality goals. CWA Section 303(d) activities include assessing if waters meet water quality standards, compiling a list of impaired waters (waters that do not meet water quality standards), and developing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for those impaired waters. The 303(d) Program Vision expands on these core 303(d) program activities and is intended to encourage flexible and innovative approaches to implement the 303(d) program, identify strategies for restoration and protection, strengthen partnerships, and develop solutions to water quality issues. The 303(d) Program Vision instructs states to write a Prioritization Framework document to describe how the state plans to carry out 303(d) program activities.

This Prioritization Framework is a planning document with the purpose of articulating a long-term strategy and associated goals for the CWA Section 303(d) program for the State of Maine. It does not present or address all the strategies that the State will employ to improve and protect its waters. The Prioritization Framework is divided into two sections that cover two key purposes: (Part 1) To describe long-term priorities and a rationale for selecting those priorities, and (Part 2) To outline a general strategy for implementing the Goals of the 303(d) Program Vision. This document outlines a framework to organize program activities; it does not constitute regulation, policy, or new mandates.

Part 1: Long-term planning efforts in this document are organized into three categories: (A) Restoration of Impaired Waters without a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) in place (on the 303(d) List), (B) Restoration of Impaired Waters with a TMDL in Place, and (C) Protection of Unimpaired Waters. The primary effort will be to address the restoration of impaired waters, firstly waters without a TMDL in place and then those with a TMDL in place but in need of additional plans to achieve restoration. Protection plans for unimpaired waters will also be considered in long-term planning efforts, as it is easier to protect waters before they degrade than to restore them afterward.

Part 2: The 303(d) Program Vision includes a list of Goals and Focus Areas to be addressed in the Prioritization Framework. EPA describes the Goals as outlining aspirations and highlighting opportunities to implement Maine DEP's CWA Section 303(d) program activities. These Goals consist of Planning and Prioritization, Restoration, Protection, Data and Analysis, and Partnerships. EPA describes the Focus Areas as cross-cutting themes of national, regional, and local importance consistent with EPA priorities, to consider in CWA Section 303(d) program implementation. These Focus Areas consist of Environmental Justice, Climate Change, Tribal Water Quality and Program Development, and Program Capacity Building. This document provides a list of the ongoing actions already being taken by the State that fall under each Goal or Focus Area, as well as actions we aspire to take in the future.

Introduction

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) communicated their *2022-2032 Vision for the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) Program* (303(d) Program Vision) as a strategy to manage and direct CWA Section 303(d) program activities to achieve water quality goals. CWA Section 303(d) activities include assessing if waters meet water quality standards, compiling a list of impaired waters (waters that do not meet water quality standards), and developing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for those impaired waters. Section 303(d) of the CWA requires states to identify impaired waters in the Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report (Integrated Report). The list of impaired waters without a TMDL in place is also known as the 303(d) list. According to the CWA, each state must develop a TMDL report or other adequate restoration plan for all waters identified on their 303(d) list of impaired waters. A TMDL establishes the maximum amount of a pollutant that can be discharged to a water body and meet water quality standards and serves as the starting point or planning tool for restoring water quality.

The 303(d) Program Vision expands on these core 303(d) program activities and is intended to encourage flexible and innovative approaches to implement the 303(d) program, identify strategies for restoration and protection, strengthen partnerships, and develop solutions to water quality issues. The EPA 303(d) Program Vision outlines a framework to organize state 303(d) program activities; it does not constitute regulation, policy, or new mandates.

The 303(d) Program Vision instructs states to write a Prioritization Framework document to articulate how the state plans to carry out 303(d) program activities in the coming decade. This Prioritization Framework is a planning document for the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to articulate a long-term strategy and associated goals for the CWA Section 303(d) program for the State of Maine. It does not present or address all of the strategies that the State will employ to improve and protect its waters.

The 303(d) Program Vision is envisioned to cover the decade from 2022 through 2032. However, the first several years consisted of a "Bridge" period prior to the development of this Prioritization Framework. The Prioritization Framework formally covers the time period beginning in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2025 and continuing through FFY32. During this period, Maine DEP will identify plan priorities in individual two-year increments to report to EPA. The two-year priorities will consider the long-term planning described in this document.

This Prioritization Framework is divided into two sections that cover two key purposes:

Part 1: To describe long-term priorities and a rationale for selecting those priorities.

Part 2: To outline a general strategy for implementing the Goals of the 303(d) Program Vision.

Part 1: Long-Term Planning Objectives and Vision Priorities

Long-term planning efforts in this document are organized into three categories.: (A) Restoration of Impaired Waters without a TMDL in place (waters on the 303(d) List)[1] (B) Restoration of Impaired Waters with a TMDL in Place[2], and (C) Protection of Unimpaired Waters. The primary effort will be to address the restoration of impaired waters, firstly waters without a TMDL in place and then those with a TMDL in place but in need of additional plans to achieve restoration. Methods of restoration of impaired waters include the development of a TMDL, the development of an Advance Restoration Plan (ARP), which is a restoration plan that is implemented in advance of developing a TMDL, or implementation of enforceable controls to achieve restoration in a Wastewater Discharge Permit. Protection plans for unimpaired waters will also be considered in long-term planning efforts, as it is easier to protect waters before they degrade than to restore them afterward, but to a lesser extent than restoration plans. The following section describes selection criteria for waters within these categories.

A. Restoration of Impaired Waters without a TMDL in Place

1. Selection Criteria for Waters for Each Two-Year Prioritization Period

The first step in the planning and prioritization process for restoration of impaired waters without a TMDL in place (on the 303(d) list) is to determine which waterbodies will be the focus of the next two-year prioritization period.

The following criteria will be used to select waters. The rationale for each criterion is provided below it in italics. The number of waters selected for each two-year period will be variable and not all eligible waters will be selected in a given two-year prioritization period or during the entire Vision period. Ultimately Maine DEP staff will select waters for restoration using best professional judgement.

- Waterbodies in Category 5 of Maine's Integrated Report, the 303(d) list of impaired waters.
    - *Use the existing process for evaluating waters.* S*tarting with the subset that are impaired is a good use of resources. The CWA requires States to address impairments on the 303(d) list, thus satisfying a federal requirement.*

- Waterbodies by impairment parameter. Impairment parameters are specific to waterbody type. Rivers/streams: benthic macroinvertebrates bioassessments, periphyton indicator bioassessments, fecal indicator bacteria, nutrient criteria when adopted; Marine/estuarine waters: fecal indicator bacteria and nutrient criteria when adopted; Coastal designated beaches: fecal indicator bacteria; Lakes: total phosphorus and secchi disk transparency (indicating a deteriorating trend in trophic state and/or nuisance algal blooms).

[1] Listed in Integrated Report as Category 5: Waters impaired or threatened for one or more designated uses by a pollutant(s) and a TMDL is required.
[2] Listed in Integrated Report Category 4-A: TMDL is completed. A TMDL is complete but insufficient new data exists to determine that attainment has been achieved.

  - *Bioassessments evaluate attainment of the aquatic life designated use and provide the most thorough method Maine uses for assessing the water quality of rivers and streams. Fecal indicator bacteria are protective of public health and are, therefore, prioritized for selection in both rivers and streams and marine waters, including coastal beaches. Nutrient criteria for fresh and marine waters, when adopted, will be a priority to address through permitting point sources. Total phosphorus and secchi disk transparency impairment parameters indicate a deteriorating trophic state in lakes and/or nuisance algal blooms, which are the primary methods for assessing attainment of lake water quality in Maine.*

- Waterbodies with sufficient data to know the current impairment status and probable cause of impairment and where active data collection or other active projects are not currently taking place.
  - *It is not an effective use of resources to develop a TMDL for a waterbody with outdated data or lack of current knowledge of the impairment status. Furthermore, current data collection and active projects should be concluded such that these data can be used toward the development of more informed TMDLs.*

- Waterbodies in locations with interested and engaged partners.
  - *Restoration work may be more effective when working in conjunction with partners, especially those with motivation to see work accomplished and maintained long-term. Additionally, this addresses the Partnerships Goal of the 303(d) Program Vision.*

- Waterbodies that address the goals or focus areas of the 303(d) Program Vision.
  - *It is important to select waterbodies equitably and with Maine DEP's goals in mind. Specifically, to prioritize selection of waters that address the 303(d) Program Vision Focus Areas: these include waters located in identified Environmental Justice (EJ) communities, that support Tribal water quality programs or goals, that address the effects of climate change, and that would help build capacity for continued work.*

2. Restoration of Impaired Waters

After selecting the priority impaired waters, Maine DEP staff must decide how to address the impairment(s) or make progress towards this goal. Maine DEP would like to recognize that it is important and valuable work to make incremental improvement to waters. In urban streams, for example, it is always feasible to accomplish things that will significantly improve the habitat and the composition, structure, and function of the biological community, even if full restoration of water quality standards has not been accomplished, and such improvements are also a worthwhile goal.

Following internal discussions, staff hope to make the decision of how to address the impairment(s) a collaborative process with relevant stakeholders and/or the community and encourage interested stakeholders to take ownership of the restoration process and the direction it

takes. Rather than prescribing an action to the community, Maine DEP hopes to work collaboratively with the affected stakeholders to select a course of action that will work towards restoration while considering the priorities and resources of the affected stakeholders and communities. This process will likely include meeting with the relevant stakeholders and/or community of the selected waterbodies to discuss the impairment and potential options for working toward restoration. This process would likely include outreach methods to communicate information about the impaired waterbody, the impairment, and the watershed. Decisions must be made with the understanding that Maine DEP must follow federal requirements and ultimately receive the approval of EPA.

The following list presents methods that are available to address impaired waters and the situations in which they are suitable options. In many cases, Maine DEP anticipates the need for a stressor analysis and development of a watershed plan that includes specific recommendations for best management practices and/or other actions that directly address the identified stressors. The analysis and plan may happen as part of one of the below methods or following the completion of the activity.

- Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL): Restoration plan required by the CWA for impaired waters, moves water out of Category 5 in the Integrated Report. Discusses sources, targets, and allocations of pollutants. Can include an Implementation Plan to direct restoration activities.
    - Watersheds with impairments that fit into existing Statewide TMDLs (Bacteria, Nonpoint Source (NPS), Impervious Cover).
    - Stakeholders that want a TMDL in place, with or without a TMDL Implementation Plan.

- Advance Restoration Plan (ARP): Restoration plan that takes place ahead of TMDL development because the ARP approach would be a faster and more efficient path to restoration than a TMDL. Maine ARPs would be written to include the 9 elements required to qualify for 319 implementation grant funding.
    - Watersheds with only nonpoint pollution (NPS) sources.
    - Watersheds with sufficient available data, straightforward problems, and local engagement to indicate ARP would lead to restoration.
    - Environmental Justice or other communities that have strong local interest but do not have the resources to write grants or hire consultants to develop a restoration plan. In these cases, DEP staff would write, or contribute to writing, an ARP.
    - Stakeholders that prefer this option over a TMDL.

- Implement Controls in a Wastewater Discharge Permit[3]
    - Rivers/streams and marine/estuarine waters with a point source creating the impairment, where allocations can be modeled and implemented into a wastewater discharge permit without preparation of a TMDL.

[3] Listed in the current Integrated Report Category 4-B: Other pollution control requirements are reasonably expected to result in attainment of standards in the near future.

  - Need to consider the timing of the 5-year permit renewal schedule and data availability.

- Monitoring or Monitoring Plans: DEP staff conduct monitoring or develop monitoring plan to be implemented by stakeholders, ahead of other restoration plans.
  - Stakeholders are engaged and ready to take action, but additional monitoring data is needed to increase knowledge of the waterbody.
  - Communities that want to be more actively in control of the actions taken and plan to have continued stakeholder involvement.

- Education and Relationship-Building Process: DEP would initiate a process to inform stakeholders about the impairment and about tools to address impairment with the goal of developing an active stakeholder group to be involved and engaged in the restoration process.
  - Communities that want to be more actively in control of the actions taken and plan to have continued stakeholder involvement.

B. Restoration of Impaired Waters with a TMDL in Place

In some circumstances, TMDLs have been developed for an impaired water, but insufficient progress toward restoration has occurred. In Maine, for most waters with TMDLs that have only NPS pollution sources, the next step toward restoration is to write a 9 Element Watershed-Based Management Plan (WBP). Some communities, especially those designated as EJ communities, may not have the resources to write grants or hire consultants to prepare a WBP. To address this disparity and the Environmental Justice Focus Area of the 303(d) Program Vision, Maine DEP staff could prepare, or assist in preparing, a WBP for the selected water.

The number of waters selected for each two-year period will be variable and not all eligible waters will be selected in a given two-year prioritization period or during the entire Vision period. Ultimately Maine DEP staff will select waters for restoration using best professional judgement.

1. Selection Criteria for Waters for Each Two-Year Prioritization Period

- Select waters with a TMDL in place where insufficient work toward restoration has occurred in EJ or other communities where there is interest in restoration efforts but insufficient resources.

2. Development of Watershed-Based Management Plans

- Maine DEP develops, or assists with the development, of a WBP for the water with community engagement.

C. Protection of Unimpaired Waters

It is also a priority for Maine DEP to protect unimpaired waters in Maine. In general, it is easier to protect waters before they degrade than to restore them afterward. Unimpaired waters will be selected primarily based on the criteria below, which are in no specific order, and may also include other criteria if new or unique situations arise. Selection of these waters will also be based, in part, on local interest and capacity. Actions implemented for selected waters would vary and be specific to the situation. The options listed below are some of the approaches that will be used to protect unimpaired waters. It should not be considered a complete list as there will likely be other approaches developed and applied as more experience is gained.
The number of waters selected for each two-year period will be variable and not all eligible waters will be selected in a given two-year prioritization period or during the entire Vision period. Ultimately Maine DEP staff will select waters for protection using best professional judgement.

1. Selection Criteria for Waters for Each Two-Year Prioritization Period

- Waters that are highly utilized or appreciated
- Waters on the NPS Priority List
- Threatened streams in developing watersheds
- Waterbodies with degrading water quality
- Unimpaired waters in EJ Communities
- High quality waters
- Waters identified by other Departments or entities

2. Options for Protection of Unimpaired Waters

- Develop, or support the development of, protection plans. These may include, but are not limited to, Lake Protection Plans or Watershed-Based Management Plans for unimpaired inland or coastal streams, which would make waters eligible for 319 implementation funding.
- Assess threatened waterbodies and their watersheds to identify current and likely future stressors on aquatic life, habitat and water quality.
- Provide education and outreach to communities with threatened waters to inform them of the value of and need for protecting the resource and measures that can be taken to provide that protection (e.g. changes to zoning and land use regulation ordinances, stream crossing upgrades).
- Initiate and/or support efforts to build local capacity to address threats and implement protection measures.
- Incorporate protection controls into State or local regulations.

Part 2: Consideration of Goals and Focus Areas

The 303(d) Program Vision includes a list of Goals and Focus Areas to be addressed in the Prioritization Framework. EPA describes the Vision Goals as outlining aspirations and highlighting opportunities to implement CWA Section 303(d) program activities and Focus Areas as cross-cutting themes of national, regional, and local importance, consistent with EPA priorities, to consider in CWA Section 303(d) program implementation. Each of the Goals (A-E) and Focus Areas (F-I) included in the 303(d) Program Vision is listed below, along with EPA's description of the item in italics. Each section provides a list of the ongoing actions currently being taken that correspond with that Goal or Focus Area, as well as actions the DEP aspires to take in the future.

A. Planning and Prioritization Goal

Develop a holistic strategy for implementation of Vision Goals and systematically prioritize waters or watersheds for TMDL and other plan development (restoration and/or protection).

Ongoing Actions

- Biennially update NPS Priority Watersheds List.
- Every 5 years update Maine Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan.
- Biennially update the 303(d) list.

Aspirations

- Increase communication between monitoring and watershed management programs to target data collection to support identification of priority waters and restoration strategies.
- Evaluate lakes with TMDLs to identify locations to prioritize work.
- Increase coordination between the DEP Bureau of Water Quality and Bureau of Land Resources.
- Increase coordination between the NPS Program and the Marine Environmental Monitoring and Marine Vegetation Mapping Programs and increase NPS work on marine/estuarine waters.

B. Restoration Goal

Design TMDLs and other restoration plans to attain and maintain water quality standards, facilitate effective implementation, and drive restoration of impaired waters.

Ongoing Actions

- Issue grant funds to projects to develop Watershed-Based Management Plans.
- Issue grant funds to projects to implement Watershed-Based Management Plans.
- Provide water quality monitoring and assessment and technical support for the development and implementation of Watershed-Based Management Plans and other watershed management activities.
- Review Maine Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MEPDES) wastewater discharge licenses and provide technical support to the MPDES program.

Aspirations

- Enhance TMDLs by including implementation plans and/or stressor analyses.
- Review restoration actions that have been implemented under DEP guidance and evaluate their utility.
- Recognize the benefit to improving the water quality of impaired urban and agricultural streams, even if not fully meeting class.

C. Protection Goal

Develop protection plans to prevent impairments and improve water quality, as part of a holistic watershed approach.

Ongoing Actions

- Support development, review and approval of lake watershed protection plans.
- Continue work to develop/update Most Vulnerable Lakes list and associated criteria.
- Upgrade water classification for streams with best sea-run Atlantic salmon habitat through Triennial Review Process to prevent degradation of habitat for endangered salmon.
- Review Hydropower 401 Water Quality Certifications.
- Provide support for the development and implementation of state and municipal land use regulation that protects habitat and manages stormwater to minimize hydrologic and pollution impacts.
- Require onsite stormwater treatment for new development under Chapter 500 Stormwater Law.
- Continue to develop and adopt nutrient criteria for marine and estuarine waters and freshwater rivers and streams.

Aspirations

- Support development and implementation of Watershed-Based Management Plans for threatened stream watersheds.
- Expand communication with Maine Department of Transportation (DOT), municipalities, and other stakeholders to minimize environmental impacts of transportation projects in vulnerable areas, especially concerning road salt.
- Collaborate with Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) and municipal shellfish conservation commissions to minimize impacts on coastal wetlands.
- Collaborate with DMR to assess and minimize negative impacts from aquaculture on sensitive habitats like eelgrass.
- Establish a threatened streams list (including coastal streams) in Chapter 502, similar to the direct watershed of a lake most at risk from new development list.
- Support wetland protections for water quality improvements.
- Explore ways to recognize and credit land and wetland protection in permits and 303(d) program.
- Incentivize and explore funding mechanisms to protect critical upper watershed areas that can help protect downstream water quality.

D. Data and Analysis Goal

Facilitate data production and sharing, and effectively analyze data and information necessary to fulfill multiple functions.

Ongoing Actions

- Compile biennial Integrated Report to categorize waters based on water quality attainment status.
- Administer Volunteer River Monitoring program and Maine Healthy Beaches monitoring program and make data publicly available online.
- Provide water quality partners with QA/QC assistance to ensure data quality.
- Expand data management and analysis capabilities and skills of DEP staff. Maintain and continually enhance existing DEP sampling database.
- Implement SOP to transport, filter and store water samples for eDNA analysis.
- Collect fish for PFAS analysis from 35 sites across Maine. Collect fish for DDT analysis at four sites in Northern Maine. Collect fish for PCB analysis at four sites in Central Maine.
- Conduct water quality monitoring in inland and coastal river and streams and collect biomonitoring macroinvertebrate and algae data in rivers, streams, and wetlands using a rotating basin approach. Determine the attainment status of rivers, streams, wetlands, and estuaries.
- Monitor estuarine and marine conditions with water quality, biological indicator, and seagrass mapping efforts on a rotating shoreline segment basis to enable attainment determinations.
- Administer grants to Lake Stewards of Maine - Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program for base funding to maintain network of citizen scientists certified to collect water quality data from ~450 lakes.
- Conduct baseline lake monitoring each summer.
- Develop GIS tool comparing impervious cover change between 2001 and 2019 in small watersheds.

Aspirations

- Expand assistance to water quality partners to cover data collection, analysis, and management needs.
- Assist groups developing QAPPs to increase quality of data collection by outside groups.
- Use GIS screening tools and follow up field assessment to identify inland and coastal streams threatened with urbanization.
- Make DEP data available to the public via a website.
- Increase biomonitoring.
- Conduct more stream stressor analyses and support other organizations conducting these analyses.
- Assess data from expanded estuarine and marine monitoring to enable attainment determinations based on seagrass change over time.

E. Partnerships Goal

Meaningfully communicate and collaborate with other government programs and non-governmental stakeholders to effectively and sustainably restore and protect water quality.

Ongoing Actions

- Provide extensive outreach regarding data submission for preparation of biennial 303(d) list, and widely announce public comment period for the list.
- Host annual Watershed Managers Roundtable.
- Work with NRCS on the implementation of the National Water Quality Initiative in Cross Lake and Sheepscot River watershed.
- Coordinate with Long Creek Watershed Management District partners to develop a strategy for the next permit cycle and updated watershed management plan.
- Partner with organizations through the DEP Salmon Habitat program to protect and restore salmon habitat, including: Atlantic Salmon Federation, Downeast Salmon Federation, Maine Department of Marine Resources Division of Sea-Run Fisheries and Habitat, Midcoast Conservancy, NOAA Fisheries Service, Project SHARE, US Fish and Wildlife Service, University of Maine at Farmington, Penobscot Nation, University of Southern Maine.
- Participate in NRCS/SWCD Locally Led Workgroup and State Technical Committee meetings.
- Collaborate with the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership through participation in the Casco Bay Monitoring Network to facilitate the dissemination of data and monitoring priorities among partners. Serve on the Management Committee to support policy direction, management, and priorities for the Partnership.
- Coordinate a study of bioaccumulation of PFAS in brook trout with Maine IF&W, Maine CDC, Harvard University, and the University of Rhode Island.

Aspirations

- Convene a '303(d) Program Vision Workgroup' of interested partners to maintain a dialogue about restoration and protection priorities.
- Consider creating regional focus groups to assist in determining regional priorities.
- Develop and expand partnerships to increase restoration and protection work.
- Expand collaboration within and across state agencies on related work efforts.

F. Environmental Justice (EJ) Focus Area

Actively consider environmental justice in assessment, listing, TMDLs, and other restoration and protection plans to address disproportionately high and adverse environmental, water quality, climate-related, and other relevant impacts on underserved communities.

Ongoing Actions

- DEP program review of avenues for incorporating EJ into program activities.
- Development of EJ map tool for use in targeting watershed management activities and awarding CWA 604(b) and 319 grants.

- Develop a new Environmental Justice section in the biennial Integrated Report and include specific EJ information in existing categories as available.
- Addition of salmon streams to NPS priority list to include more economically depressed regions of the state.
- Utilize a rotating basin approach for biomonitoring and marine monitoring.

Aspirations

- Expand DEP's understanding of EJ issues in Maine to better target EJ activities.
- Increase water quality monitoring activities in EJ communities.
- Develop Advance Restoration Plans and Protection Plans in EJ communities.

G. Climate Change Focus Area

Consider strategically how to account for the impacts of climate change, and address climate resiliency or vulnerability, in water quality assessment, impaired waters listings, and the development of TMDLs and other plans consistent with water quality standards.

Ongoing Actions

- Include climate change in new and updated Watershed-Based Management Plans.
- Continue funding and expanding long-term stream temperature monitoring network.
- Implement the Maine Community Resilience Workbook 2023 Edition, which includes in the stormwater section best practices, decision-support tools, and case studies to address stormwater under a changing climate.
- Utilize the 2017 Maine DEP climate change survey of programs that clarifies ways the Department's work is affected by climate change and identifies proactive efforts to respond within jurisdictional responsibilities.
- Implement Stream Crossing Upgrade Grants Program
- Implement DEP Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund, loan principal forgiveness for development of Climate Adaptation Plans and Stream Crossing Resilience Surveys.
- Produced 2023 Climate Migration report.
- Increased support for monitoring of ocean acidification.

Aspirations

- Expand DEP's understanding of climate change issues in Maine to better address climate change impacts.
- Assess the likely effects of climate migration driven population growth on both impaired and unimpaired waterbodies and their watersheds and modify restoration and protection strategies to address these impacts. Consider using climate migration as a criterion to prioritize work in watersheds.
- Protect cold water fish habitat.
- Coordinate with existing stormwater working groups, or establish new stormwater working groups, to translate MS4 stormwater coordination model to communities that do not have MS4s.

- Support actions that reduce nearshore contributions of pollution from point and nonpoint source pollution to reduce drivers of ocean acidification.
- Consider whether new water quality standards should be developed, or existing standards updated, including temperature for freshwater and pH for marine waters.
- Regularly review and modify, as needed, Department quality management documentation and Consolidated and Assessment Listing Methodology content to account for shifting physical, chemical and biological baselines and new monitoring methodology.
- Consider support/funding for private culvert upgrades.
- Coordinate with State of Maine's GOPIF (Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future) goals.
- Consider ways to discourage and disincentive development in locations of sea level rise and climate change impacts.

H. Tribal Water Quality and Program Development Focus Area

Help interested tribes administer the CWA Section 303(d) program, assess waters, and plan for restoration and protection of tribal waters; ensure meaningful government-to-government consultation opportunities; and otherwise enable tribes to engage with EPA, states, and others on program activities relevant to tribal interests.

Ongoing Actions

- Include Maine tribes in outreach activities (data submission request, public comment period) related to the biennial Integrated Report.

Aspirations

- Share results of water quality data collection and assessment activities with affected tribes.
- Solicit and incorporate tribal priorities for restoration and protection efforts.
- Collaborate with tribes on data collection and monitoring efforts to increase knowledge exchange.

I. Program Capacity Building Focus Area

Expand and build upon existing activities and resources to improve understanding of program foundations, familiarity with tools and various approaches to regular tasks and complex circumstances, and ability to accomplish statutory responsibilities and Vision Goals more efficiently and effectively.

Ongoing Actions

- Develop documentation on program activities, encourage cross-program collaboration and continued education (webinars, workshops, conferences).
- Expand staffing level at Maine DEP.
- DEP working group for R program use.

Aspirations

- Assist local partners with local capacity building, including understaffed partners and partners without sufficient knowledge and resources to identify, assess, and address problems.
- Create additional working groups between and within state agencies or other organizations to encourage tool-sharing and skill development.