

# Protecting Maine's rivers for our health, economy and natural legacy

Maine's rivers are the lifeblood of our state and a focus for our towns, providing beauty, drinking water, homes for plants and animals, and business opportunities for Mainers.

Every few years, DEP reviews its classifications to determine the legal level of protection for waterbodies. For rivers, the highest level of protection is Class AA: pristine, wilderness rivers. Class C is the lowest classification, and DEP can license polluters to discharge large amounts of pollution to Class C rivers.

This session, DEP will submit a river reclassification bill (Bill title: **An Act to Change the Classification of Certain Waters of the State**) that increases protections for a number of outstanding waterbodies, including:

- **The Crooked River**

This spectacular river provides the vast majority of spawning habitat for Sebago Lake's famed landlocked salmon. It also provides 35% of the water to Sebago Lake, which is the drinking water supply for 200,000 Maine people. The bill would extend AA protection for this river's entire length, as is deserved.



- **Alder Stream**

The Nature Conservancy recognizes this stream as one of the best examples of its ecological type in Maine. Its watershed is heavily forested, and it will provide potential spawning habitat for Atlantic salmon once the planned dam removals and fish passage improvements are complete on the Penobscot River.



- **The Basin**

The Basin is a coastal waterbody in Sagadahoc County that features some of the best clam flats in the State, with an average yield of 53 bushels per acre. The Basin is also a recreational boating magnet, providing a sheltered and beautiful harbor surrounded by one of the largest unfragmented forests in the Midcoast. The bill would upgrade protection for its 214 acres and 6.7 miles of shoreline from SB to SA (SA is the highest level of protection for salt water).

**We urge the Legislature to support the upgrades in protection for these and other waterbodies in DEP's reclassification bill.**

**For more information, please contact:**

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