STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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December 7, 2010

Stephen S. Perkins
Office of Ecosystem Protection
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region 1
5 Post Office Square Suite 100
Boston, MA 02109-3912

RE: Maine's 2010 §303(d) list and Integrated Water Quality Report

Dear Mr. Perkins,

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection hereby submits our final draft 2010 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as required of Sections 305(b) and 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, and in fulfillment of the reporting requirements of 38 M.R.S.A. Section 464.3.A of the State of Maine's Water Classification Program.

Descriptions of the listing methods used by the Department are presented in Chapter 4. Specific surface waterbody attainment and impairment assignments are found in the Appendices (a separate document and electronic file). The appendices are broken into three waterbody types: rivers/streams, lakes, and estuarine/marine waters.

Summary of Significant Findings

- Seventy-seven river and stream miles are delisted from Category 5 for the 2010 cycle. As noted below, most of the decrease in Category 5A is due to approval of the Maine Statewide Bacteria Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL).
  - In September of 2009 EPA approved a Statewide Maine Bacteria Total Maximum Daily Load that resulted in the removal of 205 bacteria-impaired segments from Category 5A and 5B to Category 4A or Category 2. The TMDL addressed bacteria impairments caused by Escherichia coli in freshwaters and Enterococcus in estuarine and marine waters. These 205 segments are located in 13 of Maine's 21 major watersheds (8-digit hydrologic unit code basins). Sixty-two of the delisted waterbodies are river and stream segments.
  - 143 bacteria-impaired estuarine and marine assessment units have been delisted in the Statewide Bacteria TMDL.
- Additional estuarine acreage has been moved to Category 3 for prioritized monitoring in the Piscataqua River Estuary due to concerns over eelgrass losses.

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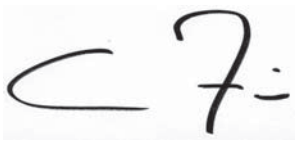
- Increases in Category 2 waters occurred due to new TMDL monitoring data that confirmed that certain segments are now attaining uses. TMDL monitoring confirmed attainment of bacteria criteria for five previously listed waterbodies.
- Category 5A and Category 4B miles are added on the Penobscot River for 2010. More intensive analysis of 2007 Penobscot River monitoring data has confirmed that additional river segments exceeded draft nutrient criteria and showed excursions of dissolved oxygen criteria in 2007.
- Lakes and ponds of Maine were relatively stable (as a percent of total assessed waters) with respect to their listing categories during the 2008 to 2010 time frame. This period saw a major reduction in lake Category 3 and an increase in lake Category 2, 4a and 5a waters.
- All freshwaters in Maine are listed for an impaired Fish Consumption Use caused by mercury from sources beyond the region. These waters are in Category 4A because of US EPA's approval, on December 20, 2007, of a Regional Mercury TMDL. Many mainstem river segments are listed in Category 5D for non-attainment of the fish consumption use due to legacy PCB contamination of fish tissue.
- The 2010 Integrated Report, for the first time includes provisional assessments of attainment of wetland aquatic life uses, based on wetland biological assessment. Maine DEP began development of a biological monitoring and assessment program for freshwater wetlands in 1998 and wetland numeric biocriteria are currently being developed.
- The Groundwater Program is described in Chapter 6. A significant portion of Maine's ground water may be threatened by contamination, particularly in unforested areas, which comprise approximately 11% of the State. Important sources of ground water contamination in Maine include disposal activities such as septic systems and landfills, leaking storage facilities, agriculture, spilled hazardous materials or previously unregulated activities.

We greatly appreciate the outstanding support and professionalism of Jennie Bridge, and her prompt, accurate and insightful reviews of the Report. Her attention to detail high-lighted a number of flaws in earlier drafts and greatly improved the final version.

We look forward to EPA's review of this final version of Maine's 2010 Integrated Report.

Sincerely,



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Andrew Fisk, Director
Bureau of Land and Water Quality