Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental	primarily concerned with adaptation to climate change	*No response requested.*
Environmental	First of all, thank you for putting this meeting together. I've watched the entire presentation and it was thoughtful and very clear. I have one immediate request and that is for copies of the alternatives tables that Tim presented. Also, is there an updated alternatives matrix from the one I already have (2018)? Thanks again and I look forward to working with you all throughout the public process and beyond.	I attached the alternative matrix slides from the public meeting presentation. We are working on a more refined and detailed matrix, similar to the 2018 version, that will include larger box culvert options. Hopefully, we can provide this new matrix by the summer. Please let me know if you have an additional questions.
Environmental, Road/Design, Flood Protection	Rising water levels with big tides show that there's a need for higher roadway, or bridge. Potholes and stretches of patched holes, leaves the driver unable to drive straight without causing excessive wear to ones vehicle.	*No response requested.*
Environmental, Right of way, Flood Protection	I am in support of options that will improve fish passage and address sea level change. Already storms with heavy rain and wind from the south have resulted in seawater flowing over parts of the causeway. This will become more common as sea levels are increasing. Allowing more tidal flooding upstream of the causeway will reduce the negative impacts of sea level rise in the downtown area. Of course this is frustrating for the landowners north of the causeway, but not only will be be compensated for the loss of land, but probably we will all benefit financially by reducing the impact of sea level rise on the town.	*No response requested.*

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Right of way, Road/Design, Flood Protection	This project was already discussed in length to repair and replace with clappers. That's is what the many people who signed the petition wants. That is what was to be done in 2020. The gates continue to deteriorate ans more and more land gets flooded. Farmers can't cut their crops. Fish passage happened when the gates were working properly. The historic race track was deemed a historic landmark. It cannot be flooded. The road bed is collapsing because the gates have not been fixed correctly. Middle river is not considered a vital atlantic salmon habitat. Two old dumps would be backwashed if the sea is allowed to return. Bottom line: The clappers need to be fixed now to stop current flooding and erosion of cribbing. In section 2: I want to select all four items. Why limit it to 3?	Good afternoon: Thank you for viewing the Virtual Public Meeting. There have been multiple reports of sea run fish on the upstream side of the dyke making it evident that some fish passage is available currently. It is unknown how large the window available for fish passage is during the tide cycle. Through consultation with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, MaineDOT has identified the following historic properties within the Project Area (Area of Potential Effect): Machias Railroad Station - listed on the National Register of Historic Places Machias/Riverside Park Trotting Track - eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places While the track may be considered a local landmark, it is not on the list of National Historic Landmarks maintained by the National Park Service: https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/list-of-nhls-by-state.htm#onthisPage-19. MaineDOT will continue consultation and seek ways to avoid and minimize impacts to these historic properties. MaineDOT will consider the potential effects of each alternative, including the potential effects from flooding. If the project is found to have an adverse effect on historic properties, additional consultation and possible mitigation will be required. For more information regarding Section or to request official consulting party status, please contact MaineDOT's Historic Coordinator, Julie Senk, at Julie.Senk@maine.gov. MaineDOT is aware of the pavement settlement around Dyke Bridge. MaineDOT's bridge inspector made the following comment in the 4-28-2020 inspection: "The westbound and parking are sagged 8-12 over the bridge and previously patched, suggesting continued loss of fines through the timber culvert." MaineDOT is monitoring the pavement condition as part of the bridge inspections done every two years. In 2008, MaineDOT constructed a concrete slab over part of the bridge to minimize the loss of fine material (sand and/or gravel) through joints and openings in the timber culvert. We are also aware of the possibility of old dumps located upstream of Dyke Bridge. MaineDOT will investigate the possible impacts of additional flooding on the old dumps.
Environmental	Please tell me which studies are used to determine impact on fish? Don't get me wrong, I'm sure the culverts have some impact, I just believe it is minimal. We need a study to show us the truth. Too many opinions are being used to decide the impact on fish.	Thank you for viewing the Virtual Public Meeting. There will be multiple resources used when completing the biological assessment for the project, including studies found in the programmatic biological assessment and biological opinion. Those documents can be found here https://www.maine.gov/mdot/maspc/. The biological assessment is not due to be completed until later in the year.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Road/Design	This is a much needed project. After many of years of neglect and little or no attention this area of our community has been allowed to deterioate to its present deplorable condition.The dyke is a focal point of our community and our local vendors and residents and should be prioritized over the needs of he Atlantic Salmon Commisssion.	*No response requested.*
Environmental	Other than replacing the entire dyke with a bridge, volitional fish passage may never be realized. But installing a structure that allows unrestricted tidal flow would allow fish to access the Middle River. Particularly river herring accessing habitat in Marks, 2nd Marks and six-mile Lakes. Do the presented maximum water level rises take into account sea-level rise predicted over the next 50 years? The drag bar below that asks what level of support I have for this project is hard to address. If the plan is to replace in kind then I have little support. If the plan is to improve fish passage then lots of support.	Good afternoon: Thank you for viewing the virtual public meeting. The landward water levels presented in the alternatives tables in the presentation and in the aerial flooding graphic only depict normal daily tide and river flows. They do not include storm tides, peak river flows, storm surge, or raises in sea level rise.
Environmental	an inkind or as close to inkind of this project is best for this area. As an effected land owner and sportsman I feel we need to look at more than salmon habitat and look at deer and other game wildlife habitat being effected by this project. A large percentage of deer and other large game are born, raised and or harvested from this area.	*No response requested.*
Environmental, Road/Design	It is very important to recover wetlands and improve fish passage, while maintaining vehicular and trail passage,	*No response requested.*
None Provided	The dyke is historic. Don't remove it. Climate change is overblown. Not Salmon habitat. Might physically appose the construction of a bridge (lay down in front of bulldozers)	Response provided via phone.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Flood Protection	Will the high water impacts extend further north than the Middle river bridge on Rt 192? Will it affect the bridge on Ingalls Lane?	Thank you for viewing the virtual public meeting. Several of the alternatives presented at the meeting would restore tidal exchange at the Dyke Bridge on Route 1. These alternatives will impact the typical (daily) and storm surge tidal water levels at Stride Bridge on Route 192. The Middle River at Marshfield Flats Road is approximately 30 feet higher than the river adjacent to Stride Bridge. The Marshfield Flats Road and Ingalls Road bridges would not be subject to higher water surface levels from the potential restoration of tidal exchange at Dyke Bridge. Hope this answers your question.
Environmental, Road/Design	The dyke was constructed to encourage growth of grasses that were not as salt tolerant. In planning, we tend to think of restoring natural flows as a positive thing, but it would seem like after this long a time the loss of freshwater habitat needs a close look as part of the environmental study. The most reasonable alternative is likely one that mimics the existing leakage and/or enables incremental adjustments to be made gradually over time to allow for species response.	*No response requested.*
Environmental	Any alternatives restoring full tidal range need to consider the impacts on the Machias River sediment accumulation due to the current design. Restoration of tides without consideration of dredging Machias river would be contrary to the intent of environmental restoration.	Thank you for viewing the Virtual Public Meeting. MaineDOT intends to quantify the volume and composition of sediment in the Middle River landward of the Dyke Bridge that could be mobilized by the bridge and culvert alternatives. The analyses would evaluate potential impacts to the Machias River seaward of the Dyke Bridge.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Road/Design, Flood Protection	In the context of global climate catastrophe environmental concerns and flooding of are my greatest concern, I would not be satisfied with any of the alternatives that fall short of bridging. Frankly, I think the 700 ft span is inevitable but will only be implemented after the failure of whatever gets built next. There needs to be room for water to go (other than downtown, fish passage and salt marsh restoration, and increased access to middle river are welcome outcomes. Currently it is not possible to get into middle river from the public boat launch because of the tide gates. The only public access is a poorly developed and difficult hand carry on DCC property.	*No response requested.*
Environmental, Road/Design, Flood Protection	The replacement needs to be higher, let some fish through, provide space for parking and commerce, and limit the amount of water landward. That being said, this might be the only time landowners who will be affected by SLR to be compensated for moving into a non-flood zone.	*No response requested.*
Environmental, Road/Design	Thank you for the work the department has done to date, and for considering local needs and public comments. The return of full tidal flow to the Middle River should be considered a top priority for this project. A graceful span across the river would add to the natural beauty of downtown Machias. Parking should be maximized at each end of the bridge, while space for market stands maintained along its route. The racetrack, while historic, is not as important as restoring the migratory path of native fish species.	Thank you for taking the time to review the project materials and provide your comments. We are considering parking and safety in our alternatives analysis for all the alternatives presented at the meeting. However, the bridge options may not have parking on the structures due to the resulting expanded width and how that would affect constructability, future maintenance, construction cost, and public safety.
Environmental, Road/Design	I would like to see an open span bridge installed at the machias dyke location. I feel that the current situation (lack of significant agriculture) does not supersede the environmental that would be realized by the installation of a bridge.	Thank you for viewing the virtual public meeting. Your participation is appreciated. Your comment will be considered as we continue to review alternatives for the Dyke Bridge.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Flood Protection	I feel that this region of the state needs to restore migratory fish populations back to close to historical levels. Finding an alternative to the dyke system as it exists now is critical. We also must adjust of infrastructure to anticipate sea level increases and storm impacts. Also I would like to see the flea market have its own space away from the lanes of traffic.	Thank you for taking the time to review the project materials and provide your comment. The relocation of the community flea market away from the Route 1 causeway is a local decision and not within the scope of the project. However, we will be examining potential safety improvements to improve the current parking condition.
Environmental, Flood Protection	My primary concern is that fish passage by itself is not sufficient unless the ecology of the upstream marshes is allowed to return to one that is primarily an estuary, not a fresh water river. In other words, I believe that it is necessary to allow a significant amount of tidal flow to pass above the current dyke and for sediments that have been deposited since the dyke was built to be flushed out, allowing not only fish passage, but restoration of the ecology that supports the fish populations. I recognize that this approach increases flood risk and cost, but not doing so reduces the likelihood of improving Atlantic Salmon restoration efforts.	*No response requested.*
Environmental, Flood Protection	Clearly a non spanning bridge creates more trouble with higher cost. Alternatives 2-4 seem to be in the best balance, at the current time with the information presented. What wasn't made clear was the balance of Landward aquatic species and Atlantic salmon/saltwater. Neither were flood predictions presented graphically in an attempt to predict flooding on the landward side for environmental/landowner/recreation purposes.Given perhaps some missing critical estimations/predictions it is not completely understand full impacts and best direction.	*No response requested.*

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Road/Design, Flood Protection	In keeping with the goal of restoring salt marsh health and full fish passage to the site, it is clear that one of the bridge span options is best, and undoubtedly not the smallest of those proposed. Clearly, the crossing needs to be replaced, so I am not opposed to the project, but would be strongly opposed to the continued limitations to natural tidal exchange presented by gated culverts or other culverts not allowing for relatively natural and full tidal exchange.	*No response requested.*
None Provided	open span structure is the only way to go if fish migration is to be considered	Thank you for viewing the virtual public meeting. Several open span structure alternatives are being considered to enhance fish migration. We recognize that open span options are the alternatives that likely allow the most opportunity for fish passage. However, alternatives that include culverts and variations of tide gates are also important to analyze to meet some of the secondary project goals. All options are also being weighed for increases in landward water levels, potential for transport of deposited sediment from the area landward of the dyke, and several other factors.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Road/Design	The importance of this project to the communities of Washington County can not be understated. I hope the state will understand the impact this project will have, and hopefully, it can be a positive one. With impending sea level rise, this factor has to be at the forefront of plans and design. To do anything less in order to save costs would be flat-out stupid and short-sighted. In addition, an open, bridge-design should also be paramount to this project in order to allow for anadromous fish passage, wading bird habitat, and the protection of the salt marshes in Middle River. Maine is losing it's salt marshes at a rapid rate, and we don't need to lose more by human error or as a money-saving function. If you've driven the roads in Washington County, you'll know that there is an improper allocation of road funding to our region. I get - we don't have enough people up here to move the needle in Augusta (see the Route 1 stretch in East Machias, which should be criminal!), but this bridge infrastructure project is critical to the local economy and environment. Please don't scrimp and save and create a design that will need to be re-examined in 20 years. Build a raised, open bridge that will have a lasting positive impact, well into the future. Thank you for your time.	*No response requested.*
Environmental, Road/Design	I THINK THAT THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE MACHIAS AND THE STATE OF MAINE ARE BEST MET BY REPLACEMENT OF THE dyke WITH A SPAN BRIDGE.	*No response requested.*
Flood Protection	What is the scope of the project?	Thank you for viewing the virtual public meeting. The scope of the project is rehabilitation or replacement of the Dyke Bridge. The various alternatives are presented in video #3: Alternatives Presentation.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Road/Design, Flood Protection	Thank you for the presentation. This is superior to doing it all in person. Great preliminary for in person meeting. Thank you. Enjoyed all presenters. Kristen Chamberlain needed full volume to be heard; initial audio too low. I appreciate all the parameters considered and the cost implications for the bridge/dyke and attendant property impacts. Can't comment on much of that w/o knowing what Machias is planning to do w/ dyke and sea level rise. I favor a solution w/ full fish passage, advection and volitional, and a good view of the surrounding river and marshlands.	*No response requested.*
Environmental, Road/Design, Flood Protection	Please keep me updated as the project continues, thank you	*No response requested.*
None Provided	I'm pretty sure that my comments didn't get upload but it's an impressive and clear description of the issues, process and options. We'd like to simply be on the record strongly in favor of the full span bridge options because of its value for fish passage and ecological health. We support restoring the site's the natural hydrologic functions, and believe this can have great benefits for migratory fish species. That's it!	*No response requested.*

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Road/Design, Flood Protection	As I see it, the alternatives that fit with the Town's project, that improve fish passage, and withstand sea level rise achieve most of the goals listed. The alternatives that are most interesting to me are bridge or many culverts that are open all the time. Advection level fish passage is a minimum option in my view. Replace-in-kind is an unacceptable option. Why not more than 4 culverts that are open all the time? Couldn't a design with more open culverts achieve volitional fish passage without building an expensive bridge? Why were the 2 sea level rise scenarios chosen, why not include a larger sea level rise? What is the projected lifespan of culverts versus the lifespan of a bridge? Will there be movement of sediment with more water moving up Middle River, and what would the consequences of that be?	Thank you for viewing the Machias virtual public meeting. Project studies have identified that providing volitional landward/upstream fish passage with culverts would require hydraulic capacity similar to the hydraulic capacity of a bridge. Construction of a large number of culverts would not necessarily be less expensive than building a bridge at Dyke Bridge due to complex subsurface conditions with timber cribbing and boulder infill and tidal exchange through the causeway itself that greatly complicates dewatering to work in the dry. The Sea Level Rise (SLR) scenarios were selected in accordance with Maineâ€™s Climate Action Plan developed by the Maine Climate Council. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee recommends the State commit to manage for 1.5 feet of relative sea-level rise by 2050 and 3.9 feet of relative sea-level rise by 2100. The Plan, entitled Maine Won't Wait, A Four-Year Plan for Climate Action, can be found here: https://www.maine.gov/future/initiatives/climate/climate-council/reports Highway structures such as bridges and concrete box culverts are designed for a 75-year design life. Culverts generally require less maintenance than bridges. MaineDOT intends to quantify the volume and composition of sediment in the Middle River landward of the Dyke Bridge that could be mobilized by the bridge and culvert alternatives. The analyses would evaluate potential impacts to the Machias River seaward of the Dyke Bridge.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
None Provided	Questions -- so, if the Machias project were decided to be a bridge, where would the bridge portion begin? Would it be on either side of the river, maybe starting by the current dyke? I ask because someone with the town though there would be a place for vendors still, but I believe you said no, the bridge can only carry trail and Route 1 traffic. Second - the town is talking about supporting a bridge idea IF the state would dredge the Machias and Middle Rivers both to improve fish habitat and reduce flooding. Is that a possibility?	*Question received and responded to via email.*
None Provided	I appreciate the work you're putting into the Machias dyke/Bridge project and thank you. In addition to US Rt 1, Calais Branch Rail Corridor, and the Down East Sunrise Trail, the levee is also part of US Bike One and the East Coast Greenway stretching from Key West, Fl to Calais. Mentioning that might help generate interest and maybe, (just maybe), help w/ funding.	Thank you for viewing the Machias virtual public meeting. Good point about the East Coast Greenway. I will keep that in mind for future presentations.
None Provided	I'm a reporter with County Wide News in Machias. I have CC'd a publisher in this email. I am developing an article about the Machias Dyke-Bridge project. I viewed the introduction and alternatives' videos on this project's "virtual public hearing" pages this afternoon and took copious notes. Are there printed documents, either PDFs or Doc files, available for each of these videos? If so, where can I find and download these documents? Thank you very much for your consideration.	*Question received and responded to via email.*
Environmental	I would favor a response (bridge or large, open culverts) that makes significant progress toward restoring fish passage and a more natural tidal regime north of the road.	*No response requested.*

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Flood Protection	We would appreciate consideration to limit tidewater entering the dyke as much as possible.	*No response requested.*
Environmental	Allowing adequate and free flow from the sea into the estuary is vital to the health of the Middle River and to all of the anadramous/catadromous fishes that reside there.	*No response requested.*
Environmental	There are several concerns. The SMELL! Better water circulation throughout the wetland is needed (in my view) the tides and currents in that area would probably help with this IF the bridge portion of the dyke was large enough to allow more water to enter the wetland, and exit in low tide condition. Also the wild life would profit. The wetland is right now de facto cut off from the river, the existing opening does not allow fish to pass through in those numbers that would enhance the spawning within the wetlands, and other wildlife. As for the public area in the widened road across the dyke I believe it is also of vital interest to the people in and around Machias as it is a reason for out of state and local people to stop the car for a while, shop, decide to go to a restaurant nearby, etc. This is of VITAL INTEREST. AND not getting overwhelmed by the foul stink of sludge deposited by the sewage treatment. A small park across from Helen's with lawn area, benches and trees with nice NATURAL landscaping (not cement and blacktop) would invite people to take a break from driving and stay in town for a bit. The flea market needs to be enhanced, and not regulated to death. People want to see NATURAL ORGANIC type of things and events.	*No response requested.*
Road/Design	I only wish to emphasize/request that the new Dyke continue to provide Flea Market space for our community.	Thank you for viewing the Machias virtual public meeting. The relocation of the community flea market away from the Route 1 causeway is a local decision and not within the scope of the project. However, we will be examining potential safety improvements to improve the current parking condition. However, the bridge options may not have parking on the structures due to the resulting expanded width and how that would affect constructability, future maintenance, construction cost, and public safety.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Road/Design	I believe strongly that restoring the Middle River and it's salt marsh has to be the highest priority. The benefits that will come from restoring anadromous fish to the Middle River should not be squandered. I support any of the bridge options. Option 10 would be fine if the cost becomes a driving concern.	Thank you for viewing the Machias virtual public meeting. The primary purposes of the project are to improve the condition of the Machias Dyke Bridge and to preserve the Calais Branch Rail Corridor. Other secondary goals of the project include improving fish passage through the structure and minimizing inundation of land upstream from Dyke Bridge that may result from increased tidal exchange.
Road/Design, Flood Protection	Build a bridge because the dyke keeps flooding	*No response requested.*
Environmental, Flood Protection	Totally concur with allowing fish passage - preferably volitional. Would hope the planning would be VERY forward thinking regarding sea level rise. Get rid of the clapper gates. Thinking you should go with a bridge alternative.	*No response requested.*
Environmental, Road/Design	Please keep the Dyke intact.	*No response requested.*
Right of way, Road/Design	We request that any design or structure to replace the causeway contain a 10 ft wide off road path to accomidate The Downeast Sunrise Trail which presently uses the right of way of the Calais line rail road which crosses the estuary on the existing causeway. This path should line up verticlly and horizontally with the R)W at both the eastern and western ends of the new structure.	Thank you for viewing the Machias virtual public meeting. The Calais Branch Rail Corridor is preserved under the State Railroad Preservation Act. All alternatives presented at the meeting accommodate the Calais Branch Rail Corridor and the associated Downeast Sunrise Trail.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental	I'm a property owner directly on middle river. I would stand to lose a substantial amount of pr operty if the flappers were to be replaced with a bridge and/or bridges. The bridge would floo d our meadows out of existence. Generationally owned land and working farms that supplies h ay and grass fed beef to many will be lost. Grass is a rare commodity in this area, it is a traditio nal heritage that has been in existence since shortly after the civil war. The dyked grasslands ar e written about in a book called â€œagriculture of Maine 1869â€. The settlers of this land cam e here for the harvest of hay and we are currently still harvesting that hay in 2021! Local busine sses depend on our dyke hay to sustain their businesses. There are very very limited supplies of this type of hay anymore, and yet here we are, still harvesting it. The thousands of bales of dyk e hay that we harvest each year is used for a variety of purposes such as covering on local blue berry lands and covering for new job sites as well as sold to a local hardware store and also sold to local farmers. This grassland has supported some of the best deer populations in Washingto n county. We have personally harvested many deer on our property. Every spring we watch a variety of migratory birds return and nest their babies here. This is more than a transportation issue, this is more than a fish passage issue. This is a property rights, traditional use and food s ecurity issue. What is EPA going to do when the salt water reaches the old Machias landfill and all the pollution starts leaking out? According to your design, the water will definitely reach the landfill, I canâ€™t imagine the junk and pollution that will seep out when this happens. What is going to happen if you open up middle river and the sediment that has been laying here for hu ndreds of years flows out into Machias river and the ocean? What sort of pollutants will that ca use? Our family has fished the middle river for many many years. We have seen elver eels, Stri ped bass, salt water trout and other salt water fish swim up this river and continue to do so. W e have a pond on our property and the eels make their way to our pond annually! Clearly the c urrent, dilapidated flappers are still allowing some fish passage, imagine how much better the p assage would be with better and improved flap gates. When this plan was originally present a t UMM years ago, there was mention that the wet lands of Maine were being depleted in south ern Maine and therefore wetlands needed to be restored in other areas of the state to try to ev en the score. Is this another example of us paying the price for southern Maineâ€™s issues? Is the damage of hundreds and hundreds of acres of woodland, farm land, hay land, hunting, migr atory land and personal property really worth trying to sustain a salmon population that isnâ€™ t even currently sustainable in the Machias river anyway. If a large, striped bass can make its w ay up the old flappers, then it stands to reason that a salmon could as well! The salmon argume nt doesn't justify this bridge proposal. For all the reasons Iâ€™ve listed, and many more, we pr opose that the flappers be safely replaced. We do NOT support the needless construction of a bridge and/or bridges, that will waste so much money, ruin properties and change the way of li fe for not just us, but for all the community.	Thank you for viewing the Machias virtual public meeting. MaineDOT is aware of the potential inundation of land, including agricultural land, upstream from Dyke Bridge that may result from increased tidal exchange. The secondary goals of the project were developed to balance the competing needs of the transportation ass et including improving fish passage through the structure and minimizing inundation of land upstream from Dyke Bridge that may resul t from increased tidal exchange. These alternatives and potential changes to water levels will be explored further as the study progress es. If necessary, we will work with property owners to compensate for substantial impacts after we have identified a preferred alternat ive and the environmental review is complete. MaineDOT intends to quantify the volume and composition of sediment in the Middle River landward of the Dyke Bridge that could b e mobilized by the bridge and culvert alternatives. The analyses would evaluate potential impacts to the Machias River seaward of the Dyke Bridge. We understand that there are different opinions on the critical nature of the Middle River/Machias River for Atlantic salmon; howeve r, the both rivers are officially listed as Critical Habitat for Atlantic salmon and are afforded certain regulatory protections. â€¯â€¯The cr itical habitat listing can be found here: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/critical-habitat-gulf-maine-dps-atlantic-salmon MaineDOT is aware of the possibility of landfills and other waste disposal sites located upstream of Dyke Bridge. The study will inve stigate the possible impacts of additional flooding on landfills and other waste disposal sites. Transportation projects often result in unavoidable impacts to wetland and the functions and values they provide. State and federal wetland regulations require mitigation, which refers to a project or effort to restore lost functions and values (e.g., fish and wildlife ha bitat, water quality improvement, etc.). There are several tools MaineDOT and other developers use to provide mitigation when it is re quired. Sometimes wetlands can be restored, enhanced, or created close to the project area. In some cases, wetlands can be restored, enhanced, or created off-site but within the same region. Maine also has the Maine Natural Resources Compensation Program (MNRCP), which allows applicants to pay a fee for wetland impa cts. The funds are managed by DEP and the Nature Conservancy and put towards projects that create, enhance, restore, or preserve re sources in the same region as the impacts. Wetland mitigation banking refers to an effort to complete wetland restoration, enhanceme nt, creation, or preservation project not associated with a development project to obtain â€œcreditsâ€. The credits are put into a bank available for use or purchase to meet regulatory mitigation requirements for future projects that are located in the same geographic re gion. MaineDOT is not currently pursuing wetland mitigation bank sites. MaineDOT is not considering banking of any wetland creation that may occur from increased tidal exchange. The Machias Dyke Bridge project will require review of all potential natural resource impacts . Project-specific mitigation, if it is required for the preferred alternative, will need to occur in close to the project area (for example, sit es in the immediate vicinity or in the same watershed). There have been multiple reports of sea run fish on the upstream side of the dyke making it evident that some fish passage is availabl e currently. It is unknown how large the window available for fish passage is during the tide cycle. Currently all options are under consideration. However, in September 2020, MaineDOT received comment from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The NMFS administers the Endangered Species Act for Coastal Species as well as other laws that guide marine conservation and management. NMFS stated that the agency had substantial concerns about the in-kind replacement alternative statin g that it would provide even less opportunity for fish passage than exists now and would likely have detrimental effects on physical and biological features of critical habitat for Endangered Atlantic salmon. The Endangered Species Act requires federal agencies to ensure t hat their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of any listed species. Actions may not destroy or adversely modify any desig nated critical habitat. In response to these comments, MaineDOT and FHWA are re-considering alternatives that include options to im prove fish passage.
Environmental, Right of way, Road/Design	It is to bad that the plan agreed upon in the past is still not valid.	*No response requested.*
Environmental, Right of way, Road/Design	Please make certain that Dyke flea-market availibility is maintained !	The relocation of the community flea market away from the Route 1 causeway is a local decision and not within the scope of the project. However, we will be examining potential safety improvements to improve the current parking condition.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Flood Protection	Keep the dyke, and fix the clappers to save 300 acres of grassland that is grazed by local farmers and good deer habitat.	MaineDOT is aware of the potential inundation of land, including agricultural land, upstream from Dyke Bridge that may result from increased tidal exchange. The secondary goals of the project were developed to balance the competing needs of the transportation asset including improving fish passage through the structure and minimizing inundation of land upstream from Dyke Bridge that may result from increased tidal exchange. These alternatives and potential changes to water levels will be explored further as the study progresses. If necessary, we will work with property owners to compensate for substantial impacts after we have identified a preferred alternative and the environmental review is complete.
None Provided	Would full tidal restoration of the Middle River provide flood protection for downtown Machias?	Responded via phone. We discussed that Current Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood hazard information indicates that the base flood elevations (BFE) is at a NAVD88 elevation of 11 feet (ft) in the Middle River landward (upstream) from Dyke Bridge and at an elevation of 10.7 ft in the Machias River seaward (downstream) from Dyke Bridge. Information developed by FEMA indicates that these BFEs were developed using detailed study methods. FEMA flood hazard mappings suggest that flooding in downtown Machias results from high water surface elevations in the Machias River seaward from Dyke Bridge and full tidal restoration in the Middle River is therefore not anticipated to provide flood protection to downtown Machias. Higher flood elevations in the Machias River due to sea level rise would result in increased flood risks to downtown Machias regardless of future actions at Dyke Bridge.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Road/Design	PLEASE, do not destroy the grassland, farms and property by taking out the dyke and building a bridge or any other structure that will flood the meadow. People raise cattle, hay there and have since 1866. It is some of the best deer habitat in Washington Co. PLEASE build up and refurbish the dyke and install good functioning clappers. This is our heritage in this area. Do not destroy a way of life. Middle River has never been more than a nominal Atlantic salmon stream and at that the few young fish in there were able to negotiate the clappers when they were working properly. Also searun brook trout and striped bass. I spent 28 years protecting salmon and would love to see them thriving but the reality is despite millions of dollars poured into their management they continue to decline. The Machias and East Machias rivers are true salmon rivers right nearby, the fish have those. When we electro fish we find young salmon in many little brooks in the area. This does not make them potential salmon runs. Grass is a precious resource in this area. It allows us to produce food for local families in the area. Thank you.	MaineDOT is aware of the potential inundation of land, including agricultural land, upstream from Dyke Bridge that may result from increased tidal exchange. The secondary goals of the project were developed to balance the competing needs of the transportation asset including improving fish passage through the structure and minimizing inundation of land upstream from Dyke Bridge that may result from increased tidal exchange. These alternatives and potential changes to water levels will be explored further as the study progresses. If necessary, we will work with property owners to compensate for substantial impacts after we have identified a preferred alternative and the environmental review is complete. We understand that there are different opinions on the critical nature of the Middle River/Machias River for Atlantic salmon; however, the both rivers are officially listed as Critical Habitat for Atlantic salmon and are afforded certain regulatory protections. The critical habitat listing can be found here: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/critical-habitat-gulf-maine-dps-atlantic-salmon
Environmental, Road/Design, Flood Protection	I strongly encourage the DOT to choose Alternative 10A because it satisfies both the ecological issues (fish passage, sediment transport) and the societal issues (vendor parking and coastal resilience).	*No response requested.*
Environmental	The DOT must address the passage of endangered Atlantic salmon under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, as amended. Only alternatives that allow for volitional fish passage adequately address this. Alternative 10A or 11A should be selected.	MaineDOT and our federal partners have had multiple discussions regarding the Endangered Species Act and the Machias Dyke project. The department will continue to explore methods to improve fish passage through the structure. We understand that Endangered Species Act consultation is very important in the direction of the project.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Right of way	All affected landowners for this project are contesting land that is located within the FEMA 100-yr floodplain of the Middle River and, therefore, have no standing in regard to the project outcome, other than being compensated at fair-market value. If you own land in a floodplain, you should not be surprised when it floods. It is time to restore the full tidal flows to the river. Please select Alternative 10A or 11A.	*No response requested.*
None Provided	I wanted to send you an email regarding the plans for the Machias dyke replacement. I want to voice my opinion on the mater. This project will DIRECTLY effect me as a commercial property owner; along with many of my family, friends, and neighbors. I am requesting the DOT to remove and REPLACE the Machias Dyke floppers! Installing a bridge in this location will DRASTICALLY/ NEGATIVELY effect my property. I have worked hard to purchase this property and business here in and I would be overjoyed to not lose 1/4 minimum of what land I do have here. The bridge proposal does not make sense to me. I believe it is best for the community if the floppers are to be replaced as they are and have been for many, many years. Installing a bridge will immediately and adversely effect thriving habitats such as: Marsh Land/ Hay Fields/ Fish Habitats/ Migratory Bird Habitats/ Livestock Pastures.. just to name a few. Between myself and my parents, we would lose 20-30 acres of land at the minimum. This is land that provides local people with hay for their livestock. I believe it is a direct threat to my town and its people if a bridge is installed in the Machias dyke! Please consider my thoughts on this matter, there are hundreds more reasons I could give you in an argument AGAINST the bridge proposal. The rising of Middle River would threaten many homes with flooding in the rainy months! This bridge would turn our beautiful marshlands in the center of Machias into dirty stinky tidal mud flats! The Machias sewer plant is within a few hundred yards of where the water would rise! I believe the Machias Dyke Floppers have been doing their job and doing it well for the past many years. If the state so chooses to repair/ replace them, I believe that would be the best possible outcome for all the wonderful people of Machias and Marshfield. I look forward to hearing from you and speaking with you more about this matter.	MaineDOT is aware of the potential inundation of land, including agricultural land, upstream from Dyke Bridge that may result from increased tidal exchange. The secondary goals of the project were developed to balance the competing needs of the transportation asset including improving fish passage through the structure and minimizing inundation of land upstream from Dyke Bridge that may result from increased tidal exchange. These alternatives and potential changes to water levels will be explored further as the study progresses. If necessary, we will work with property owners to compensate for substantial impacts after we have identified a preferred alternative and the environmental review is complete. Currently all options are under consideration. However, in September 2020, MaineDOT received comment from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The agency administers the Endangered Species Act for Coastal Species as well as other laws that guide marine conservation and management. NMFS stated that the agency had substantial concerns about the in-kind replacement alternative stating that it would provide even less opportunity for fish passage than exists now and would likely have detrimental effects on physical and biological features of critical habitat for Endangered Atlantic salmon. The Endangered Species Act requires federal agencies to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of any listed species. Actions may not destroy or adversely modify any designated critical habitat. In response to these comments, MaineDOT and FHWA are re-considering alternatives that include options to improve fish passage.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
None Provided	Thank you for the response. I understand your agency must be compliant with the Endangered Species Act. My concern is this: how can NMFS have substantial concern with an in-kind replacement when the dyke has been existing in peace with its floppers in place for hundreds of years? All the while, allowing healthy runs of salmon and sea run trout? I have lived on this river all my life. I have caught many native fish here. I am concerned with the negative effect substantial rising salt water will have on their habitat? How will it effect these fish and their habitat when the spring time waters rise too close to the Town of Machias Dump Landfill? I believe the risk to the people of Marshfield and the risk to the fish population and habitat are much higher with a new bridge installation! How about installing a fishway along with new floppers? That sounds like a much better compromise to all involved, without destructive/negative impacts on landowners who would rather keep their land than "be compensated for lost property". I, myself, am not willing to lose 3/4 of my property. I sincerely hope we can find a common solution. I know many others like myself that will not willfully allow this mass loss of property.	I understand your concern with the alternatives that restore varying levels of tidal flow. However, NMFS considers the Middle River historical critical habitat for Atlantic Salmon. We will continue consultation with NMFS as we review all alternatives. MaineDOT is aware of the possibility of landfills and other waste disposal sites located upstream of Dyke Bridge. We will investigate the possible impacts of additional flooding on landfills and other waste disposal sites. Finally, installation of fish ladders (technical term is "fishways") was are not being not evaluated as a component of the evaluated alternatives at Dyke Bridge. Previous project studies identified that design and operation of a fishway at Dyke Bridge was not practical due to regular variations in water surface elevations seaward and landward from Dyke Bridge and range of swimming capabilities for fish species that could be targeted for upstream passage. Project Previous studies did also evaluated whether "fish-friendly" self-regulating tide gates (SRTs) could be a potentially feasible alternative to manage flow and water levels while providing upstream fish passage. It was determined that SRTs, including fish-friendly SRTs, were not feasible at Dyke Bridge.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
None Provided	If you look at the tax map I have highlighted my property. Since I have a stake in this project I would like to recommend my choice. I would like to see one that has an open tunnel for migratory fish with far less water depth open full tide. I thought that there already fish ways, they should have already been there. Look at the Columbia river in Washington at the fish ladders, maybe we could do something similar Since this dyke system has been in place for 150 years I am concerned about erosion and the actual depth the river will normally be flowing in terms of inside or outside the current banks, since I have a dock down there that I fish from. One other question is how does brine and/ or brackish water have on beavers and other mammals and birds living there now? My choice would be either option 8 or option 9 or which ever is the partially gated culverts. Hope we can work this out for both the animals here now and the migratory fish.	Currently all options are under consideration including alternatives that combine culverts with tide gates and culverts without gates (2019 Alternatives 2, 3 and 4) to provide for fish passage. Installation of fish ladders (technical term is "fishway") was are not being not evaluated as a component of the evaluated alternatives at Dyke Bridge. Previous project studies identified that design and operation of a fishway at Dyke Bridge was not practical due to regular variations in water surface elevations seaward and landward from Dyke Bridge and range of swimming capabilities for fish species that could be targeted for upstream passage. Project Previous studies did also evaluated whether "fish-friendly"" self-regulating tide gates (SRTs) could be a potentially feasible alternative to manage flow and water levels while providing upstream fish passage. It was determined that SRTs, including fish-friendly SRTs, were not feasible at Dyke Bridge. The introduction of saline water may have an effect on the wildlife using the marsh currently. The saline water is likely to cause some changes in vegetation community, which in turn is likely to cause some changes in wildlife uses. The introduction of more sea run fish may also attract different bird species to the area. Beavers generally live in freshwater habitats; however they are able to survive in salt water.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
None Provided	Mr. Howard, I am writing to express my concern about the potential of MDOT replacing the Machias dyke with a bridge. It is my opinion that there is no reason the floppers cannot be replaced and other repairs made rather than putting in a bridge that will destroy homes and farmland. Perhaps this seems like an easier option for the MDOT, but it is significantly more costly to the taxpayers and very destructive to the town of Machias. This destruction reaches all the way into pastureland in Marshfield. It destroys homes, as you are surely well aware. It serves no purpose. Please stop the bridge proposal and move forward with a plan to replace the existing floppers to keep the Machias dyke in place.	Currently all options are under consideration. However, in September 2020, MaineDOT received comment from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The agency administers the Endangered Species Act for Coastal Species as well as other laws that guide marine conservation and management. NMFS stated that the agency had substantial concerns about the in-kind replacement alternative stating that it would provide even less opportunity for fish passage than exists now and would likely have detrimental effects on physical and biological features of critical habitat for Endangered Atlantic salmon. The Endangered Species Act requires federal agencies to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of any listed species. Actions may not destroy or adversely modify any designated critical habitat. In response to these comments, MaineDOT and FHWA are re-considering alternatives that include options to improve fish passage. MaineDOT is aware of the potential inundation of land, including agricultural land, upstream from Dyke Bridge that may result from increased tidal exchange. The secondary goals of the project were developed to balance the competing needs of the transportation asset including improving fish passage through the structure and minimizing inundation of land upstream from Dyke Bridge that may result from increased tidal exchange. These alternatives and potential changes to water levels will be explored further as the study progresses. If necessary, we will work with property owners to compensate for substantial impacts after we have identified a preferred alternative and the environmental review is complete.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Road/Design, Flood Protection	From: Downeast Coastal Conservancy April 29, 2021 Subject: Rehabilitation and Replacement Of Machias Dyke Bridge Downeast Coastal Conservancy is a nonprofit, tax-exempt land trust based in Machias, Maine. It has been active in coastal land conservation in Washington County for over 30 years. DCC has more than 350 members and owns more than 40 conservation preserves in the county, including Middle River Park in Machias that has significant shore frontage on the Middle River near the current dyke bridge. DCC strongly believes that a replacement of the current dyke bridge must be designed to allow free fish passage up stream on the Middle River for diadromous fish such as Atlantic salmon, smelt and alewife. The Middle River is in designated critical spawning and rearing habitat for the endangered Atlantic salmon. Fish passage on the Middle River was historically in place and should be restored with the necessary tidal flow. Restoration of fish passage is important and has been supported by MDOT in other Maine locations. It should be supported in Machias as well. Downeast Coastal Conservancy	*No response requested.*
None Provided	I am a home owner In Machias and we do NOT want a bridge built. Keep the dyke, and fix the clappers to save 300 acres of grassland that is grazed by local farmers and good deer habitat. Lots of local vendors use the dyke to sell their goods as well. We need that space and the land that a bridge would ruin.	Thank you for viewing the Machias virtual public meeting. The relocation of the community flea market away from the Route 1 causeway is a local decision and not within the scope of the project. However, we will be examining potential safety improvements to improve the current parking condition.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
None Provided	I spoke with a stakeholder by phone on 4/28/2021. He had my phone number from the 2018 public meeting. He wanted to know if MaineDOT was moving ahead with the replacement in kind alternative. I told him that MaineDOT is now investigating a range of alternatives including bridge replacement alternatives that would return tidal flow upstream. He asked why MaineDOT was not going ahead with replacement in kind. I told him that MaineDOT received a letter from the environmental regulators with serious concerns about replacement in kind. He preferred replacement in kind and wanted to protect his property for flooding. He cuts hay on his property, which is located on the west side of the Middle River. He said his wife did put a lengthy comment on the public meeting website for this project. He said he did not get a post card about the public meeting.	*No response required; this comment was received via phone.*

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Road/Design	I support any option that improves fish passage and retains community uses of the dyke. My preferred option is 10A (I think), which is a smaller bridge with retention of parking. I also am interested in another design option that I suggested years ago. This would involve the use of a form of roll dam under the dyke instead of gates. This would prevent the Middle River from emptying (many people were concerned about the smell), would limit the entry of seawater to only higher tides, and would provide open fish passage at those higher tide stages when the roll dam is overtopped. This is obviously a very rough description but I assume the engineers can picture what I'm describing. Please respond if you would like further description. Finally, I would like to suggest a realignment of the various uses on the dyke following whatever improvements are made. I suggest the following order of uses from landward to seaward: railbed/DEST; shoulder; Route 1; shoulder; parking. This essentially swaps the placement of Route 1 and the parking area. The purpose of this is to consolidate the transportation corridors to the north and provide a more isolated parking/vending area directly on the Machias River shorefront.	Thank you for viewing the Machias virtual public meeting. I forwarded your proposed solutions to the engineering team.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Road/Design, Flood Protection	As a historian genuinely interested in the preservation of historic structures that have significant value to a community, I would normally be opposed to the removal instead of restoration of a 155-year old dyke. However, I also recognize that with each human-imposed structure, especially one as large and consequential as this dyke, we alter our environment in ways that negatively affect other community members and the ecosystems on which we depend. The construction of this dyke 155 years ago did just that. A select group of property owners whose land bordered the Middle River marshes petitioned the state legislature to build a dyke in order to improve the value and quantity of hay generated from the surrounding marsh allotments. They received permission to tax other salt marsh owners whose lands also bordered Middle River in order to fund the dyke's construction. Not all property owners along Middle River approved of the project or the imposition of new taxes. The construction of the dyke imposed unwanted changes on many other community members and users of the river. Fishermen lost access to migratory salmon, alewives and other diadromous fish; clammers lost access to the extensive tidal mud flats; and boatmen lost access to the river for transportation and the movement of goods. In short, the dyke was a taking of numerous public resources for the temporary benefit of a few. Indeed, while the quantity of harvested hay did increase briefly, its marketable value declined precipitously when expanding railroads brought better hays from the Midwest to eastern markets. Shortly after the dyke was constructed, Machias hay was no longer a marketable export item. The dyke, overtime, has generated a few other benefits: a briefly operated racetrack in place of one salt marsh area, the aesthetically pleasing pond created upstream of the dyke, and a well-used parking area for local sellers of fish, hand-made goods, and second-hand items. One upstream farm that still pastures cattle will lose some of its historically dyked lands to the higher tides. If the Middle River is returned to its original tidal flow, the former benefit would likely be submerged during high tides; the second would be available during high-tide periods. The third might as well be available to local community members if construction funds for a new bridge were sufficient. Opening the natural tidal flows of Middle River would resolve over time the significant siltation now accumulated upstream since damming. A bridge would reduce the threat of flooding of valuable structures and buildings in downtown Machias during sea level rise and storm surges as well as reduce the need for and cost of the wall proposed to protect Machias in the future. A bridge would permit fish access to upper reaches of the river and enhance local restoration of endangered-salmon habitat. Those increased	*No response requested.*
Environmental, Right of way	The baffles should be fixed and maintained. The negative impacts to residents and their property are unacceptable. In addition response times for emergency services are going to be increased to the detriment of lives and safety.	*No response requested.*

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Right of way, Flood Protection	Ruining/Flooding landowners property is ethically and morally wrong. The dyke should be improved and maintained in a way to be the least intrusive to peoples property. We are ruining bird, deer, and other wildlife habitat to better the flow of fish (i.e Atlantic Salmon that will NEVER come back in numbers enough to be worth spending even a single dollar on). Leave peoples property alone and use the least intrusive method of fix. Not to mention the major barrier this is going to create for emergency vehicles coming from the Eastern part of the county. This will significantly delay emergency responder which could result in loss of life when second mean everything.	*No response requested.*
Right of way	It seems the existing apparatus installed has sufficiently sustained the needs of the area since the time of it's inception. I fail to comprehend the necessity of interrupting the area transportation, to include emergency transportation to the local hospital which serves as the primary emergency care facility for towns to the east as far as 25 miles away. It seems there would be a much more cost feasible means to allow fish to swim upstream a few more feet.	Currently all options are under consideration. However, in September 2020, MaineDOT received comment from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The agency administers the Endangered Species Act for Coastal Species as well as other laws that guide marine conservation and management. NMFS stated that the agency had substantial concerns about the in-kind replacement alternative stating that it would provide even less opportunity for fish passage than exists now and would likely have detrimental effects on physical and biological features of critical habitat for Endangered Atlantic salmon. The Endangered Species Act requires federal agencies to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of any listed species. Actions may not destroy or adversely modify any designated critical habitat. In response to these comments, MaineDOT and FHWA are re-considering alternatives that include options to improve fish passage.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Environmental, Road/Design	Ideally, I would like to see Middle River restored while maintaining the character, as much as possible, of the dyke/bridge where people congregate to socialize and to sell local goods... along with, the Sunrise Trail. In other words, free the river and preserve the social/community spaces.	*No response requested.*
Environmental, Road/Design, Flood Protection	As land owners along the Middle River, we understand the need to allow the upstream migration of fish to increase their numbers, however we are concerned for our neighbors with lower elevation homes. We are also concerned about the cultural impact of removing parking on the dyke, which has become in integral part of our community. If parking must be removed, an alternate location should be found where the weekend marketplace can continue with the same exposure to seasonal customers.	*No response requested.*
None Provided	Phone message from a stakeholder: He could lose 50 acres. Does not believe bridge is needed. He has caught salmon and striped bass in the Middle River behind the Dyke.	*No response requested.*