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I support an upgrade of the lower Androscoggin River through either LD 676, An Act to Reclassify Part of the Androscoggin River to Class B or through the DEP's Triennial Review process. Given the concurrent review and legislation, plus our desire to work with wastewater operators and accomplish the reclassification, we'd like to point out the need to finesse the timing of an upgrade as the following paragraph details-

I support LD 676, but with a caveat. Because of timing issues, I recommend passage of an upgrade bill be delayed until second half of session and the DEP has renewed 2020-expired discharge permits for Lewiston/Auburn, Lisbon and Brunswick wastewater plants at the current C classification. This will allow for the legally required upgrade to Class B while providing 5 years for dischargers and the DEP to formulate and enact any possibly necessary plans to meet Class B conditions.

As long as the actual quality of the river (now B) exceeds that of the current classification (still C), there is ample room for degradation while still meeting the current classification. This violates statute and should not be allowed to stand.

38 M.R.S.A. § 464 (F) (4)

"When the actual quality of any classified water exceeds the minimum standards of the next highest classification, that higher water quality must be maintained and protected. The board shall recommend to the Legislature that water be reclassified in the next higher classification."

If you have not, I suggest you read the testimony submitted by Friends of Merrymeeting Bay on this bill and consider the 40-exhibit upgrade proposal they submitted with Grow L+A as part of the Triennial Review and which can be found at the third plus sign down in the Chemical section of the FOMB Cybrary.

Thank you.