

Appendix B

Record of Public Input to the Plan

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Important Public Meeting

On the

Draft Management Plan for the Presumpscot River

Join us for a review of the Draft Presumpscot River Management Plan. Learn about the draft plan developed by the Steering Committee and add your suggestions, thoughts and visions for the future of the river.

When: Wednesday, May 7, 2003 from 5:30 - 8:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served.

Where: Portland Water District's new Jeff Nixon Training Center at 225 Douglass Street in Portland. Detailed directions at <http://www.pwd.org/info/directions.html>

Registration required – Please contact us either by email at cbep@usm.maine.edu or by phone at 228-8593 to register. Please tell us your name, address, phone number, email address, affiliation and the number in your party.

Organized by the *Casco Bay Estuary Project* and the *Presumpscot River Management Plan Steering Committee*



Presumpscot Falls, above the former site of the Smelt Hill Dam in Falmouth

The Presumpscot River Management Plan will provide a single source document to guide various uses and decisions that impact the Presumpscot River.

The plan provides a vision and recommendations for the river in three areas: **Fisheries, Cumulative Impacts, and Open Space.**

The plan was created over a three-year period by a broad representation of stakeholders and provides direction for these and other organizations.

**Be a part of the future of this wonderful river
right here in our own backyard!**

To get a copy of the **Draft Presumpscot River Management Plan Summary** after April 21, please visit www.cascobay.usm.maine.edu or call Alison Barker at 228-8593.

The University of Southern Maine provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. Please indicate if you need special services, assistance, or accommodations to participate fully in this event by contacting Beverly Bayley-Smith at 780-4306, or TTY 780-5646. Requests for reasonable accommodations must be made 48 hours before the event.

For Immediate Release 4/25/03

For more Information contact: Karen Young,
Casco Bay Estuary Project, 780-4820

Stakeholders Plan the Future of the Presumpscot River

Citizens are invited to share their vision for the future of the Presumpscot River on Wednesday, May 7, 2003 from 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. at the Portland Water District, Jeff Nixon Training Center, 222 Douglass Street. A *Draft Management Plan for the Presumpscot River*, developed over three years by the Presumpscot River Management Plan Steering Committee, will be presented for public input. The Steering Committee represents a range of interests including those of municipalities, state and federal government agencies, conservationists, citizens and businesses.

It was three years ago according to Casco Bay Estuary Project Director, Karen Young, that the Casco Bay Estuary Project recognized that the Presumpscot River was at a turning point. It was at the same time the State of Maine made a commitment to purchase and remove Smelt Hill Dam, the lowest of nine dams on the river. For the first time in over a century, the future of the Presumpscot River includes new possibilities for restoring migratory fishes to the Presumpscot River. The river was also undergoing significant improvements in water and air quality following the end of pulping discharges at the Westbrook mill. It was with these opportunities in mind, says Young, that the Casco Bay Estuary Project initiated this planning process by convening the Steering Committee to develop a management plan for the river.

The *Draft Presumpscot Management Plan* focuses on three critical issues: fisheries, open space protection, and cumulative impacts. Significant research was undertaken to develop credible information and analyses to lay the foundation for informed decision-making.

To obtain the draft management plan, background research, and public comment form or to register for the public meeting -- visit the Casco Bay Estuary Project web site www.cascobay.usm.maine.edu or call 207-228-8593.

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**Public Meeting on the
Draft Presumpscot River Management Plan
Wednesday, May 7, 2003, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.**

AGENDA

- 5:30 Welcome and Overview of Evening, Karen Young, Casco Bay Estuary Project
- 5:40 The Draft Plan – Process, Background Information, and Recommendations
Land & Water Associates
- 6:20 10-minute Break
- 6:30 Review of Ground Rules, Land & Water Associates
- 6:35 Open Space Recommendations – overview and public input
Nan Cumming, Portland Trails and Wayne Monroe, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- 7:00 Cumulative Impacts Recommendations – overview and public input
Forrest Bell and Fred Dillon, Presumpscot River Watch, and
Tamara Lee Pinard, Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District
- 7:25 Fisheries Recommendations – overview and public input
Kathy Eikenberg, Land & Water Associates and
Gail Wippelhauser, Maine Department of Marine Resources
- 7:50 Wrap-up
- 8:00 Adjourn

Ground Rules:

In order to insure that everyone has an opportunity to share their ideas and questions, we ask that you please respect the following guidelines for this evening's meeting:

- Please be quiet while others are speaking
- There are differing viewpoints on these issues; please be respectful of those with divergent viewpoints
- Everyone will have an opportunity to ask a question or make a comment in turn
- Please identify yourself before you speak
- Each person will have 2 minutes for their question or comment
- Time permitting, once we have heard from everyone, each person will have another chance to make additional comments

This is not your only chance to provide input on the Draft Plan!

You may submit written comments until May 30, 2003 to: Casco Bay Estuary Project, 49 Exeter Street, P.O. Box 9300, Portland, Maine 04104-9300 or, via fax to 780-4317. Please also fill out the survey form included in your packet and leave it with us. Thank you.

**The Draft Plan and all related documents and maps are available at:
www.cascobay.usm.maine.edu/Presumpscot.html**

Draft Presumpscot River Management Plan: Public Survey

You are part of the Presumpscot River Watershed! We want you to be part of the Presumpscot River Management Plan. Please help us by taking the simple survey below.

The Draft Plan provides a single source document to guide various uses and decisions that impact the Presumpscot River. The Plan delivers the vision for three major aspects of the river: Cumulative Impacts, Fisheries and Open Space. It was created over a three-year period by a broad representation of stakeholders and provides direction regarding the Presumpscot River for agencies, communities and citizens. As the Stakeholder Steering Committee moves forward with completion of the Plan, we want to include your priorities for the future of the river!

What do you consider the most important priorities for future work on the Presumpscot River? Please circle your top three choices:

Water Quality Fishery Management Recreational Opportunities Wildlife Habitat

Economic Development Historical Preservation Aesthetics Growth Planning

Other (explain) _____

Do you agree with the following goals for the Presumpscot River? Please score each statement below by circling the letter that most closely reflects your opinion:

AS = Agree Strongly A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree DS = Disagree Strongly

Restore self-sustaining populations of native fish, free-flowing water, and riverine habitat from Gambo Dam to Casco Bay.

AS A N D DS

Manage hydroelectric projects at Gambo, Dundee, Great Falls, and Eel Weir for maximum production of electricity and minimum impact on local ecosystems.

AS A N D DS

Preserve and enhance the riverine habitat for existing native and sea-run fisheries.

AS A N D DS

Assure the Presumpscot's waters are ranked at their highest practicable classification and are attaining these water quality standards.

AS A N D DS

Strive to reduce or eliminate existing point-source discharges into the Presumpscot River and its tributaries.

AS A N D DS

Minimize the impact of non-point source pollution on the river and its watershed.

AS A N D DS

Protect meaningful areas of open space along the Presumpscot River and its tributaries to preserve or improve wildlife habitat and provide healthy riparian buffers.

AS A N D DS

Provide for additional public access and low-impact recreation along the river and its tributaries while preserving some lands for wildlife only.

AS A N D DS

Promote the economic, community and ecological benefits of a healthy river system.

AS A N D DS

We'd like to know more about you!

Name (optional)_____

Town/Affiliation_____

Comments_____

THE PRESUMPSCOT RIVER - BACKGROUND

Location: Cumberland County, Southern Maine, and flowing from Sebago Lake to Casco Bay through Windham, Gorham, Westbrook, Falmouth, and Portland.

Size Characteristics:

- Originally 27 miles long from White's Bridge at the top of Sebago Lake Basin, to Casco Bay.
- Watershed of 648 square miles
- Total drop of 270 feet

Regional Importance:

- Largest river in the Portland area, and largest freshwater input to Casco Bay.
- Water supply for Greater Portland.

Pre-development River of "Many Falls": The name "Presumpscot" has its origin from local native culture and means "many falls" or "many rough places." Before being developed with dams, the Presumpscot had at least 12 named falls along its length.

Early and extensive development with dams; one of Maine's most developed rivers:

- Earliest dam at Presumpscot Falls (site of recent Smelt Hill Dam) in 1732.
- No other river in Maine has had virtually all of its hydraulic head developed with dams: until the removal of the Smelt Hill dam in 2002, there were 9 dams impounding 22 of 27 miles of the river (**see attached Profile of the Presumpscot River**).
- Today there are 8 dams impounding 15 miles of the 20 miles above the Cumberland Mills dam. Dams (and their ownership and generation capacity) include:
 - Eel Weir dam (SAPPI) – 1.8 MW
 - N. Gorham dam (FPL) – 2.25 MW
 - Dundee dam (SAPPI) – 2.4 MW
 - Gambo dam (SAPPI) – 1.9 MW
 - Little Falls dam (SAPPI) – 1.0 MW
 - Mallison Falls dam (SAPPI) – 0.8 MW
 - Saccarappa dam (SAPPI) – 1.35 MW
 - Cumberland Mills dam (SAPPI) – 0 MW

Rich History Reflects competing Values for Development and Fisheries:

- Power from the river was fundamental to the economic development of the area from colonial times through the industrial era.. The Presumpscot was the site of Maine's first pulp mill, first hydroelectric project, and largest gunpowder mill.
- The Presumpscot River was the site of the first armed conflict between the settlers and Indians in Maine, in 1756, over the blockage of fish by dams (Chief Polin uprising). The Rockomeecook Tribe had settlements along the river where they harvested fish for food and fertilizer for corn.
- The first hundred years after the dams were built on the river, beginning in the 1730's and until around 1850, there were protests and filings to require fish passages at dams (some were built).
- Next 100 years (1850's – 1950's): River used for industrial waste; not suitable for fish. Industries included gunpowder, textiles, pulp and paper, and others. Cumberland and Oxford Canal built and operated 1829 – c.1870.
- Since 1970's: Clean Water Act; treatment of waste discharges; river begins recovery.
- Last decade: Flows to the Eel Weir bypass restored for trout and salmon fishery. SAPPI pulp operation ceases and Smelt Hill dam removed; spurs interest in restoring more of the river for fisheries.

THE PRESUMPSCOT RIVER - CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

What Are Cumulative Impacts?

Cumulative Impacts are **impacts resulting from development**, specifically **discharges** to the river, **land uses** in the watershed, and **dams**, which, although they may not individually be significant, combine to produce significant impacts to :

- the river (aquatic life, water quality and hydrology),
- its shorelands (as habitat for wildlife and areas for human recreation),
- the Casco Bay estuary into which it empties (affecting water quality and fisheries), and
- and, indirectly, the character and well-being of the general region (local and regional economy).

Why Are Cumulative Impacts a Concern?

Understanding how the river and its environs have been changed by development over time is important because:

- it provides an understanding of the character and values of the river that existed prior to changes from development, a **valuable context for understanding the potential of the river for improvements**;
- it provides the “big picture” context of the **full range of influences that need to be addressed** for efforts to improve the future of the river to succeed;
- it provides an understanding of **how improvements to the river indirectly affect the aquatic communities in Casco bay estuary, the wildlife community dependent on the river, and the human community using the river.**

How Have Water Resources Been Impacted?

Flow regimes have been altered due to flow regulation at Sebago Lake and dams impounding the river (see **attached hydrograph**):

- More consistent flows throughout the year; lower spring and higher summer flows.
- Decreased current velocity; change from a fast flowing river to a series of river impoundments.

Water quality has been degraded from pollution discharges, stormwater runoff, and land uses:

- more bacteria, suspended and dissolved solids, less oxygen due to direct discharges from industry and sewage treatment facilities;
- more sediment, fertilizers, pesticides, and other pollutants from stormwater runoff;
- warmer water temperatures resulting from clearing of forested land (eliminates shading of the river, and results in higher temperature runoff from watershed lands).

How Have River Fisheries and Other Aquatic Life Been Impacted?

Dams have altered the ecology of the River by:

- Blocking anadromous (sea-run) fish runs;
- Fragmenting river habitat for resident fish;
- Shifting the river from a fast moving coldwater riverine habitat favoring trout and salmon to a series of slower-moving impoundments more suited to (but not providing quality habitat for) bass and panfish. These impoundments function neither as rivers nor lakes.

Water quality impacts have reduced the suitability of the river for fish and other aquatic life.

How Have Threatened and Endangered Species Been Impacted?

- Reduced habitat for species associated with floodplain forests due to flooding by dams.
- Reduced habitat suitability for species that prey upon anadromous fish (e.g. bald eagles, osprey, and herons).

How Have Estuarine Resources Been Impacted?

Salinity - Natural seasonal variations in salinity have been dampened by flow regulation.

Chemistry of Estuarine Sediments - Higher levels of pollutants (PAHs, dioxins, furans).

Physical Character of Estuarine Sediments - More fines, less coarse sediments deposited in the estuary by river flows.

Water Quality - Changes may have eliminated eelgrass in the estuary as monitored in 1993-95.

Estuarine Animals - Reduced production of estuarine fish (in the tens of thousands of pounds) resulting from reduced spawning and reproduction in the Presumpscot River (resulting from blocking of runs by dams); reduced numbers and diversity of wildlife that are predators of these fish.

How Have Recreational Resources Been Impacted?

- Reduced opportunities for whitewater boating and extended canoe trips; and loss of coldwater fishing opportunities, due to impoundments.
- Increased opportunity for flatwater boating and bass and panfish fishing.

How Have the Local and Regional Economy Been Impacted?

- Development of the river for water power and then hydropower provided the basis for the region's early industrial economy, and remains a contributor to the local and regional economy. Hydropower continues to be important to SAPPI's operation in Westbrook as it is low cost.
- Industrialization of the river reduced water quality, and degraded the aesthetics of the river, reducing its attractiveness for boating, swimming, and other forms of recreation, and virtually eliminated the native coldwater sport fishery. These activities generate economic activity.

- The polluted, industrialized river of the past reduced the attractiveness of the river for development and its real estate value; a cleaner, more attractive river is already attracting development and increasing real estate values.
- Water pollution has resulted in costs for water treatment, public health costs, loss of recreational opportunities.

How Does the Plan Address Cumulative Impacts to the Presumpscot River?

The Plan offers a **Vision for the Future of the River** that promotes management to achieve benefits for all communities, both human and ecological, through a careful balancing of all potential uses.

It also includes **Recommended Management Objectives and Actions** to improve water quality and reclassify the river to reflect improvements, address non-point sources of pollution, improve and restore fisheries, protect and enhance river corridor habitat and wetlands, improve stewardship through public education, and improve flood protection. It recommends a **Presumpscot River Council** be formed to coordinate efforts to implement the recommendations of the Plan.

THE PRESUMPCOT RIVER – FISHERIES ISSUES

Why Are Fisheries a Concern for the Presumpscot River?

Removal of the Smelt Hill Dam (restoring 7 miles of the lower river) and improvements to water quality, especially improvements due to the closure of the SAPPI pulp mill, offers new possibilities for enhancement of resident fisheries and restoration of migratory (sea-run) fisheries.

What Fisheries Currently Exist in the Presumpscot River?

- **A Managed Stocked Trout and Salmon** in the Eel Weir Bypass and Dam tailraces;
- **Bass, Perch, and Bullhead** in the impoundments;
- **American Eels** in the river and impoundments;
- **Alewives** - in the lower river, seasonal spawning migrations to Highland Lake, Knights Pond.
- **Other migratory fish** expected to return to the lower 7 miles of the river up to Cumberland Mills dam include river herring, striped bass, and possibly Atlantic salmon, sea-run brook and brown trout, Atlantic sturgeon, rainbow smelt, and tomcod.

What is the Potential of the River for Sea-Run Fisheries?

The Maine Department of Marine Resources estimates that fish **runs totaling over 800,000 fish** could be established if all habitat was available and suitable up to the North Gorham impoundment, including:

- **American Shad** – runs up to 136,000 fish
- **River Herring** – runs up to 450,000 fish
- **Alewives** – runs up 200,000 fish
- **Atlantic salmon** – up to 1,000 fish (Maine Atlantic Salmon Commission estimate)
- **Other migratory fish** – not estimated

What Are the State Fisheries Agencies' Goals for the Presumpscot River?

- **Restore sea-run fish in phases:** Phase 1: as far as Gambo Dam; Phase 2: continue up the river of the 3 fisheries agencies agree.
- **Stocking free flowing reaches with trout and salmon** for angling opportunities.
- **Provide angling opportunities for other resident fish** – smallmouth and largemouth bass, chain pickerel, and perch.

What Can Be Done to Improve Fisheries in the Presumpscot River?

- **Enhance resident fish** through increased stocking of trout and salmon; possible habitat improvements for bass and panfish.

- **Restore migratory fish runs with fish passage at up to 3 dams** (would restore runs of up to 56,000 shad and 187,000 river herring at a cost of \$1 – 8 million).
 - **Restore migratory fish runs by removing 3 dams (Saccarappa, Mallison, and Little Falls) and fish passage at up to 3 others** (would restore runs of up to 136,000 shad, and 450,000 river herring, at a cost of \$4 – 13 million).
- Recommended option.**

THE PRESUMPSCOT RIVER – RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ISSUES

Why Is There Concern for Protecting Open Space Along the Presumpscot River?

- **An undeveloped corridor:** 84% of the river shoreline is undeveloped at present.
- **New development pressures:** Cleanup of the river and improved air quality in the area are prompting new interest in development along the river.
- **Window of opportunity:** Having an undeveloped river corridor with significant public benefits located so close to Portland is an opportunity to be seized before it is too late.

What Are the Public Values of Open Space Along the Presumpscot River?

- **Fish and wildlife habitat:** 80% of Maine’s terrestrial vertebrate wildlife species use riparian areas as habitat at some point in their life cycle.
- **Habitat for rare or unusual plant species;** many plants that thrive in floodplain areas are now rare, in part because these areas have been flooded by dams.
- **Flood retention:** offers space needed to accommodate and absorb floodwaters;
- **Water quality:** is a buffer that helps maintain the water quality of the river;
- **Agriculture:** provides viable opportunities for agriculture in the areas that are “prime” soils for crops; and
- **Recreation/Education:** offers opportunities for outdoor recreation and education.

What Public Recreation Lands and Access Areas Exist Along the River?

- Presently there are **11 public water access sites** along the river:
 - 6 in Gorham
 - 3 in Windham
 - 1 in Portland (+ additional access through recent land acquisition)
 - 1 in Falmouth (+ additional access through recent land acquisition)
 - Westbrook has no sites providing access to the water (for boating, fishing or swimming) although it has trails and lands along the river
- There are **29 public recreation sites, amounting to 675 acres**. The largest of these are
 - the Portland Golf Course (263 acres);
 - Presumpscot River Preserve (48 acres) in Portland,
 - Westbrook River Trail (57 acres), and
 - Dundee Park in Windham (26 acres).
- Public recreation lands comprise **15% of the lands within 250 feet of the river**.

What Protections Exist for Open Space Along the Presumpscot River?

- **Resource Protection Districts:**
 - Many areas of the shoreline are zoned Resource Protection: (more than 60% of the shoreline in Gorham, Westbrook, and Falmouth; 40% of the shoreline in Windham and Portland)

- However, the depth of the zone is frequently less than 250 feet so that development may still be allowed in the shoreland zone.
- **Public or Quasi-Public Ownership:**
 - Total of **16% of the lands within 250 feet of the river** (includes Portland Golf Course, and Riverton Trolley Park, also zoned as open space/recreation).
- **Legal easements or deed restrictions:**
 - Comprise **2.8% of the lands within 250 feet of the river.**

How Does the Plan Address Protection of Open Space and Recreational Lands?

The Plan recommends or promotes:

- **an initiative to identify and protect lands with high public values**, including:
 - Areas important for rare, threatened or endangered species of both plants and animals;
 - Significant wildlife habitats, which include but are not limited to the above;
 - Wildlife viewing areas which in many cases overlook, but may not be located in, significant wildlife habitats;
 - Significant botanical resources, which include but are not limited to occurrences of rare, threatened or endangered species;
 - Scenic areas;
 - Recreational resources, including recreational access points, fishing areas, opportunities for trails, and others;
 - Cultural resources; and
 - Educational resources (e.g., areas which allow study of geological features or biological systems).
- **dedicating existing public lands permanently to open space** through deed restrictions.
- **development of both a water trail and a land trail** for the length of the river.
- **creation of new access sites** along the river.
- **improvements to the Riverton Trolley Park**
- **renovations to portions of the Cumberland and Oxford Canal towpath.**

Fisheries Options

Option 1: Enhance the Resident Fish

Option 2a: Restore migratory fish runs by providing fish passage at 1-3 dams (Cumberland Mills, Saccarappa, and Mallison Falls dams)

Option 2b: Restore migratory fish runs by removing three dams (Saccarappa, Mallison, and Little Falls dams) and providing fish passage at 1-3 others + downstream fish passage at the North Gorham dam

Open Space Options (1-3)

1. Conserve open space parcels with a focus on high value areas
2. Seek permanent protection to open space for areas which are already publicly owned but not permanently protected
3. Seek expansion of local Resource Protection Districts to include the entire floodplain as it is being remapped by the U.S. Geological Survey

Open Space Options (4-6)

4. Educate landowners and other watershed residents about the benefits of conserving and enhancing the shoreline (riparian buffers) of the Presumpscot River.

5. Develop a water trail the length of the river.

6. Develop a land trail the length of the river.

Open Space Options (7-9)

7. Create new public access points to the river
8. Renovate portions of the Cumberland and Oxford canal as a historic/recreational resource.
9. Assist with improvements to Riverton Trolley Park.

Cumulative Impacts Options

Water Quality:

1. Support comprehensive stormwater management efforts.
2. Reclassify the river from Class C to Class B from Saccarappa Falls to tidewater
3. Extend monitoring of toxics in sediments to include more sites at the mouth of the Presumpscot River.
4. Identify potentially inadequate treatment of point sources where they exist.

Cumulative Impacts Options

Non-point source pollution:

1. Erosion control training for communities
2. Educate municipal officials about non-point source pollution
3. Identify non-point sources of pollution and remediate
4. Provide landowners technical assistance with erosion control

Cumulative Impacts Options

Fisheries:

1. Restore riverine habitat below Gambo Dam
2. Mitigate for loss of migratory fish runs
3. Encourage area citizens to get involved in stream habitat walks in the Presumpscot River tributaries

Flood protection:

1. Develop a flood mitigation program for the Presumpscot River watershed.

Cumulative Impacts Options

Habitat Improvement:

1. Re-establish forested shoreline buffers and site development appropriately
2. Protect significant wetlands areas
3. Work with communities to develop protected wildlife corridors

Cumulative Impacts Options

Stewardship/Public Education:

1. Support natural resources education in schools.
2. Educate property owners about the negative impacts of using pesticides.
3. Inform the public about fish advisories

First	Last	Affiliation	
Dick	Anderson	Coastal Conservation Association	other non profit
Bob	Barancik		citizen
Alison	Barker	Casco Bay Estuary Project	other non profit
Beverly	Bayley-Smith	Casco Bay Estuary Project	other non profit
Forrest	Bell	Presumpscot River Watch	other non profit
Phil	Boissoneault	Portland Water District	PWD
S & M	Canon		citizen
Mary	Cerullo	Friends of Casco Bay	other non profit
Sandy	Cort	Friends of Presumpscot River	other non profit
Nan	Cumming	Portland Trails	land trust
Richard	Curtis	Gorham Regional Land Trust	land trust
Fred	Dillon	Presumpscot River Watch	other non profit
Marylee	Dodge	GSLRLT, Fr. Of Presumpscot R.	land trust
Kathy	Eikenberg	Land & Water Associates	consultant
Carl	Eppich	Asst. Planner, T. of Kennebunk	municipal
Dusti	Faucher	Friends of the Presumpscot	other non profit
Lewis	Flagg	Maine DMR	state govnt
Charlie	Frechette	Sebago Lake Marina	business
Alec	Giffen	Land & Water Associates	consultant
Kathleen	Glick	Portland Trails	land trust
MaryLee	Haughwout	DEP - Maine Stream Team	state govnt
Karen	Herold	Canoeist, hiker	citizen
Tom	Howard	Sappi Fine Papers	business
Cheri	Juniewicz		citizen
Don	Kale	DEP	state govnt
Jack	Kartez	USM - Muskie School	citizen
Guy	Labrecque		citizen
Jan	Labrecque		citizen
Gordon	Lane	Portland Phoenix	media
Sandra	Lary	USFW	federal govnt
Nancy	Lightbody		citizen
Ben	Lubbers	DEP - Americorps	state govnt
Sharon	McHold	Yarmouth Land Trust; Friends of Royal	land trust

		River	
Heather	McLennan	Friends of Casco Bay	other non profit
Kevin	Mendick	NPS	federal govnt
Larry	Miller	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	federal govnt
Wayne	Monroe	Natural Resources Conserv Serv	federal govnt
Brooks	More	City Planner, Westbrook	municipal
Mike	Parker	Presumpscot River Watch	other non profit
Tamara	Pinard	Presumpscot River Watch	other non profit
Will	Plumley	Friends of the Presumpscot	other non profit
David	Poitier		citizen
Paul	Reed		citizen
Lynda	Reed		citizen
Mark	Robinson	Windham Parks and Rec	municipal
Gordon	Russell	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	federal govnt
Phil	Stevens	Windham Nat. Res. Comm.	municipal
David	Stevenson	US NMFS, Habitat Conserv. Div.	federal govnt
David	Travers	North Deering Neighborhood Assoc.	citizen
Holly	Travers	North Deering Neighborhood Assoc.	citizen
Jeff	Varrichione	DEP Biologist	state govnt
David	Welch	NR Commission, Windham	municipal
Terri	Welch	NR Commission, Windham	municipal
Gail	Wippelhauser	Maine DMR	state govnt
Karen	Young	CBEP	other non profit

REGISTERED, DID NOT ATTEND

Michael	Bobinsky	Dir., Dept. Public Works	municipal
Jeanie	Campbell	Portland Trails	land trust
George A.	Clark	Presumpscot River Watch	other non profit
Judy	Curtis	Gorham Regional Land Trust	land trust
Mike	Doan	Friends of Casco Bay	other non profit
Dick	Dufour	Portland Trails	land trust
Jean	Dufour	Portland Trails	land trust
Kathy	Early	Eng. Mgr., Dept. Public Works	municipal
Susan	Gillam	USM - Student	citizen
Jessie	McDougal	DEP	state govnt
Don	Sicotte	Sebago Lake Anglers	other non profit

Fisheries Options

(public meeting participants placed one dot next to their preference – total # for each in parentheses)

Option 1 -- Enhance the resident fish (3)

Option 2a -- Restore migratory fish runs by providing fish passage at 1-3 dams (Cumberland Mills, Saccarappa, and Mallison Falls dams). (0)

Option 2b -- Restore migratory fish runs by removing three dams (Saccarappa, Mallison , and Little Falls dams) and providing fish passage at 1-3 others + downstream fish passage at the North Gorham dam (21)

Option 2c -- Provide fish passage at 1-4 dams (Cumberland Mills, Saccarappa, Mallison + Little Falls) (8)

Open Space Options

(public meeting participants had five dots to place one each next to their highest priorities – total # for each in parentheses)

Option 1 -- Conserve open space parcels with a focus on high value areas (26)

Option 2 -- Seek permanent protection to open space for areas which are already publicly owned but not permanently protected (14)

Option 3 -- Seek expansion of local Resource Protection Districts to include the entire floodplain as it is being remapped by the U.S. Geological Survey (14)

Option 4 -- Educate landowners and other watershed residents about the benefits of conserving and enhancing the shoreline (riparian buffers) of the Presumpscot River (24)

Option 5 -- Develop a water trail the length of the river (16)

Option 6 -- Develop a land trail the length of the river (11)

Option 7 -- Create new public access points to the river (16)

Option 8 -- Assist with improvements to Riverton Trolley Park (0)

Option 9 -- Increase swimming opportunities (1)

Cumulative Impacts Options

(public meeting participants had five dots to place one each next to their highest priorities – total # for each in parentheses)

Non-point source pollution --

1. Erosion control training for communities (2)
2. Educate municipal officials about non-point source pollution (5)
3. Identify non-point sources of pollution and remediate (16)
4. Provide landowners technical assistance with erosion control (5)

Habitat Improvement --

1. Re-establish forested shoreline buffers and site development appropriately (17)
2. Protect significant wetlands areas (19)
3. Work with communities to develop protected wildlife corridors (11)

Water Quality --

1. Support comprehensive stormwater management efforts (12)
2. Upgrade the river from Class C to Class B from Saccarappa Falls to tidewater (Don't have to be in compliance to upgrade) (20)
3. Extend monitoring of toxics (PCB's, PAH's, metals) in sediments to include more sites at the mouth of the Presumpscot River (How would wastewater treatment plant be affected? Increased stringency? Maybe...) (7)
4. Identify potentially inadequate treatment of point sources where they exist (4)

Stewardship/Public Education

1. Support natural resources education in schools (9)
2. Educate property owners about the negative impacts of using pesticides (8)
3. Inform the public about fish advisories (0)
4. Engage the public and communities in financial planning for implementing recommendations (4)

Flood Protection --

1. Develop a flood mitigation program for the Presumpscot River watershed (0)

The following summarizes comments and the number of responses for each survey question on the Draft Presumpscot River Management Plan. Surveys were distributed at the public meeting and were available on our website along with all documents for public response in writing during May, 2003

*

What do you consider the most important priorities for future work on the Presumpscot River? Please circle your top three choices:

Water Quality (25)

Fishery Management (10)

Recreational Opportunities (18)

But no more recreational-swimming parks. River is too small and narrow to support these. Dundee is biggest "pond" or lake. So emphasize River water Trail.

Wildlife Habitat (13)

Economic Development (2)

Historical Preservation (2)

Aesthetics (2)

Growth Planning (5)

We must keep developers away.

Other (2)

Fishing & Power

Preservation & Enhancement of + Protection of Riparian Areas

Restore self-sustaining populations of native fish, free-flowing water, and riverine habitat from Gambo Dam to Casco Bay.

AS (18) A (6) N (1) D (1) DS (1)

Manage hydroelectric projects at Gambo, Dundee, Great Falls, and Eel Weir for maximum production of electricity and minimum impact on local ecosystems.

AS (9) A (7) N (1) D (1) DS (8)

"Maximum production of electricity" - not needed

Take them out

"Maximum production" - less important; "minimum impact on local ecosystems" - more important

Preserve and enhance the riverine habitat for existing native and sea-run fisheries.

AS (16) A (7) N (1) D (2) DS (1)

Assure the Presumpscot's waters are ranked at their highest practicable classification and are attaining these water quality standards.

AS (16) A (9) N (1) D (0) DS (1)

Strive to reduce or eliminate existing point-source discharges into the Presumpscot River and its tributaries.

AS (16) A (9) N (1) D (0) DS (0)

Reduce

Minimize the impact of non-point source pollution on the river and its watershed.

AS (19) A (9) N (0) D (0) DS (0)

Protect meaningful areas of open space along the Presumpscot River and its tributaries to preserve or improve wildlife habitat and provide healthy riparian buffers.

AS (19) A (8) N (0) D (0) DS (0)

Provide for additional public access and low-impact recreation along the river and its tributaries while preserving some lands for wildlife only.

AS (14) A (10) N (0) D (2) DS (1)

"Low-impact" - Boat launch sites, small paths by trails, water trails ok

I have recently walked some of the new trails along the River in Portland and Falmouth put in by Portland Trails. These are my friends who sit on the board and I know they are well intentioned; however it made me ill. There is already erosion and people running their dogs off leash (I love dogs, I have two myself, but I don't think they are compatible with wildlife habitat). It truly saddened me to see cigarette butts along what used to be a deer trail. The mountain bikes are already chewing up the slopes. Please limit the trails running along the river! Leave something for the wildlife! There is a lot to be said for being able to just know that there are areas where nature can live undisturbed, unobserved and unstressed by human activity. Please rein in Portland Trails!

Promote the economic, community and ecological benefits of a healthy river system.

AS (13)
(0)

A (11)

N (3)

D (0)

DS

I see great value in maintaining a healthy wildlife habitat. I think that the sheer beauty of undisturbed natural settings are valuable to a community. I don't feel that a lot of human access is a good thing in the long term. I give as examples the horrendous swath cut through what was previously beautiful undisturbed wetlands in the Stroudwater area of the Fore River and the devastation and overuse of the Saco River.

Overall Comments:

1. You mention Cultural Resources - The C&O Canal and the Oriental Powder Mills... did you solicit or have any input in the Planning Process from the 1) Historic Preservation Commission? (Earle Shettleworth), 2) the C&O Canal Association (Joel Eastman & Maurice Whitten). A complete plan should have this. Both of those resources are on the federal National Register of Historic Places and are afforded protection from any detrimental effects from projects which have any federal financial support.

2. There were not enough options in the fisheries section. Options 1 and 2a sounded ineffective. Yet we don't have enough information on the impacts to downtown Westbrook (flooding, stream width) if Saccarappa dam is removed under option 2b.

3. NGO's have done great work on plan

Fisheries should have emphasis on increase opportunity as well as population improvements.

Access/rec opportunities should be should be given more emphasis.

4. The Presumpscot River provides an excellent opportunity to enhance riverine fisheries and riverine recreational opportunities in a high use urban environment.

5. Swimming opportunities would be one of the best recreational uses, in my opinion.

6. A great turnout. Wish IF+W had participated though.

Also you designed an efficient process for soliciting opinion

7. I'd really like to see more public access, and recreational opportunities on the river. Let's enjoy our Natural Resources! (-:

8. The Presumpscot River has been a part of me my entire life. I have seen the miracle of its comeback over the years. I would hate to see this tremendous opportunity to preserve a beautiful wildlife habitat pass us by because of good intentioned recreational uses. I would very much like to see a carefully considered balance.

9. Sorry I can't be with you Wed. So... fish passages - how about canoe portages and riverfront access also - like PARKS!

10. I would like to see jet skis banned from the river especially at Dundee Pond. My wife and I live on the upper Dundee portion down from Great Falls Dam. We enjoy the wildlife flora and fauna of our property along the river and Otter Brook. This area is popular with canoes and

kayaks. It also has a very strong population of ducks of many species, bald eagles, great blue herons, otters, deer turkey, kingfishers, hawks, tree swallows, osprey, loons, Canada geese, and turtles, not to mention the fish. I have seen a change with the brook after many houses were built far upstream. The brook as it neared the river became choked with an unfamiliar weed last summer. I believe run from lawns was a factor in the growth.

11. Great - Thanks!

Results of the Public Survey on the *Presumpscot River Management Plan*

Includes Public Comments and Responses from the Steering Committee

What do you consider the most important priorities for future work on the Presumpscot River? Please circle your top three choices (scores are in parentheses)

Results:

Water Quality (25)

Fishery Management (10)

Recreational Opportunities (18)

Wildlife Habitat (13)

Economic Development (2)

Historical Preservation (2)

Aesthetics (2)

Growth Planning (5)

Other (2): Fishing and Power (1), Preservation and enhancement and protection of riparian areas (1)

Comment: "But no more recreational-swimming parks. River is too small and narrow to support these. Dundee is biggest "pond" or lake. So emphasize River water Trail."

Response: **The Plan recommends the creation of a water trail, a land trail and enhanced public access (including boat launches and portaging) as needed and appropriate. These are fully described in the *White Paper Protecting and Enhancing Open Space Along the Presumpscot River*, pp. 43 – 45.**

Comment: "We must keep developers away."

Response: **Opportunities for preservation and protection of high value open space vulnerable to development are discussed in the *White Paper, Protecting and Enhancing Open Space Along the Presumpscot River*, Section IV.**

Do you agree with the following goals for the Presumpscot River? Please score each statement below by circling the letter that most closely reflects your opinion:

AS = Agree Strongly A = Agree N = Neutral D = Disagree DS = Disagree Strongly

(Scores are in parentheses)

Restore self-sustaining populations of native fish, free-flowing water, and riverine habitat from Gambo Dam to Casco Bay.

AS (18)	A (6)	N(1)	D(1)	DS (1)
Manage hydroelectric projects at Gambo, Dundee, Great Falls, and Eel Weir for maximum production of electricity and minimum impact on local ecosystems.				
AS (9)	A (7)	N(1)	D (1)	DS(8)

Note: Please note that several respondents stated that the wording of this goal was confusing because they perceive the goal of maximizing energy production to be inconsistent with the goal of minimizing impact to local ecosystems. As a result, they were not sure if responding with “agree strongly” meant that they supported maximum energy production or minimum ecosystem impact. For example, one member of the public wanted to express strong support for minimizing ecosystem impact but wasn’t sure whether a response of “agree strongly” or “disagree strongly” represented their viewpoint. As a result, the responses to this goal were not given the same weight as the responses to the other goals.

Comments:

“Maximum production of electricity not needed”

“Take them out”

“Maximum production less important; minimum impact on local ecosystems more important.”

Response: The White Paper *Fisheries Conditions, Issues and Options for the Presumpscot River* recommends removal of Sacarappa, Mallison and Little Falls dams with passage at Cumberland Mills and possibly Gambo and Dundee dams. These recommendations are based on an assessment of habitat suitability and the estimated potential spawning runs for migratory fish (see pp. 24 – 28) and are consistent with the goals of the Draft Fishery Management Plan for the Presumpscot River Drainage (Maine Department of Marine Resources, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Maine Atlantic Salmon Commission, included as Appendix C of the White Paper). Following removal of the downstream dams, the cost/benefits related to the remaining upstream dams including their economic benefits and their impacts to fish habitat and the water quality of the river should be evaluated.

Preserve and enhance the riverine habitat for existing native and sea-run fisheries.

AS (16)	A(7)	N(1)	D(2)	DS(1)
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Assure the Presumpscot's waters are ranked at their highest practicable classification and are attaining these water quality standards.

AS (16)	A(9)	N(1)	D(0)	DS(1)
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Strive to reduce or eliminate existing point-source discharges into the Presumpscot River and its tributaries.

AS (16)	A(9)	N (1)	D (0)	DS(0)
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Minimize the impact of non-point source pollution on the river and its watershed.

AS(19)	A (9)	N (0)	D(0)	DS(0)
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Protect meaningful areas of open space along the Presumpscot River and its tributaries to preserve or improve wildlife habitat and provide healthy riparian buffers.

AS(19)	A (8)	N (0)	D(0)	DS (0)
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Provide for additional public access and low-impact recreation along the river and its tributaries while preserving some lands for wildlife only.

AS (14)	A(10)	N(0)	D(2)
DS(1)			

Comment: "Low-impact - boat launch sites, small paths by trails, water trails OK"

Response: The Plan recommends the creation of a water trail, a land trail and enhanced public access (including boat launches and portaging) as needed and appropriate. These are fully described in the *White Paper Protecting and Enhancing Open Space Along the Presumpscot River*, Section V., Recommendations A., B. and C.

Comment: "I have recently walked some of the new trails along the River in Portland and Falmouth put in by Portland Trails. These are my friends who

sit on the board and I know they are well intentioned; however it made me ill. There is already erosion and people running their dogs off leash (I love dogs, I have two myself, but I don't think they are compatible with wildlife habitat). It truly saddened me to see cigarette butts along what used to be a deer trail. The mountain bikes are already chewing up the slopes. Please limit the trails running along the river! Leave something for the wildlife! There is a lot to be said for being able to just know that there are areas where nature can live undisturbed."

Response: The White Paper *Protecting and Enhancing Open Space Along the Presumpscot River*, explores the various, and sometimes competing, important values of riverine open space along the Presumpscot (e.g., wildlife habitat, plant habitat, flood protection, maintenance of water quality, agriculture, recreation, historic and cultural values; see Section I.). Recreational uses (including swimming, riverfront access, creation of trails, canoe portage and parks) must be carefully balanced with the preservation of habitat for wildlife. Protection of habitat and maintenance of low-impact usage of the river's resources while providing recreational opportunities to a major urban population center will be a challenge requiring careful planning and management. Protection and conservation of valuable open space parcels will be an important step in meeting this challenge. See Section IV. and Section V., Recommendation E. of the White Paper for a more detailed discussion of conservation of high value open space.

Promote the economic, community and ecological benefits of a healthy river system.

AS (13)
DS(0)

A (11)

N(3)

D(0)

Comment: "I see great value in maintaining a healthy wildlife habitat. I think that the sheer beauty of undisturbed natural settings are valuable to a community. I don't feel that a lot of human access is a good thing in the long term. I give as examples the horrendous swath cut through what was previously beautiful undisturbed wetlands in the Stroudwater area of the Fore River and the devastation and overuse of the Saco River."

Response: Please see the response to the previous comment.

Other Survey Comments (11 individual commenters):

1. "You mention Cultural Resources - The C&O Canal and the Oriental Powder Mills... did you solicit or have any input in the Planning Process from the 1) Historic Preservation Commission? (Earle Shettleworth), 2) the C&O Canal Association (Joel Eastman & Maurice Whitten). A complete plan should have this. Both of those resources are on the federal National Register of Historic Places and are afforded protection from any detrimental effects from projects which have any federal financial support."

Response: The cultural resources of the Presumpscot, including the C&O Canal and the Oriental Powder Mills, are discussed in some detail in the White Paper *Protecting and Enhancing Open Space Along the Presumpscot River*, Section I. B. 2. The White Paper includes a discussion of the role of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission in protecting the significant historic and archeological sites in Maine and provides a list of the sites near the Presumpscot which appear on the National Register of Historic Places (p. 25).

2. "There were not enough options in the fisheries section. Options 1 and 2a sounded ineffective. Yet we don't have enough information on the impacts to downtown Westbrook (flooding, stream width) if Saccarappa dam is removed under option 2b."

Response: Regarding the potential for downstream flooding after dam removal, the White Paper *Cumulative Impacts to the Environmental Conditions on the Presumpscot River and its Shorelands*, discusses this issue in general in Chapter II. pp. II-6 - II-7. As with the Smelt Hill Dam removal project, before actual removal of any additional dam along the Presumpscot, the removal proponent would have to fund a scientific and engineering study of the impacts of removal. The study would include the predicted changes in flow and peak water surface elevations.

3. "NGO's have done great work on plan."

"Fisheries should have an emphasis on increase opportunity as well as population increases."

“Access/recreation opportunities should be given more emphasis.”

Response: Restoration of the Presumpscot fish populations is expected to greatly increase the opportunities for high-quality recreational fishing on the river. Chapter IX pp. IX-2 - IX-3 in the White Paper *Cumulative Impacts to the Environmental Conditions on the Presumpscot River and its Shorelands* describes the state of the existing fishery and discusses the impacts that the dams have had on the abundant coldwater fishery of the past.

Access and recreation opportunities are explored more fully in the White Paper *Protecting and Enhancing Open Space Along the Presumpscot River*. The Plan recommends the creation of a water trail, a land trail and enhanced public access (including boat launches and portaging) as needed and appropriate. These are fully described in the White Paper as Recommendations B, C and D in Section V.

4. **“The Presumpscot River provides an excellent opportunity to enhance riverine fisheries and riverine recreational opportunities in a high use urban environment.”**

Response: Recommendations which address these opportunities are fully developed in the White Papers *Enhancing Open Space Along the Presumpscot River* and *Fisheries Conditions, Issues and Options for the Presumpscot River*.

5. **“Swimming opportunities would be one of the best recreational uses, in my opinion.”**

Response: On p. 14 of the *Draft Plan for the Future of the Presumpscot River, Executive Summary*, swimming is included in the list of important open space recreational activities along the Presumpscot River.

6. **“A great turnout. Wish IF+W had participated though.”**

Response: While not present at the Public Hearing, Francis Brautigam, Maine Inland Fish and Wildlife, participated in the Steering Committee during the preparation of the Plan.

7. **“I’d really like to see more public access and recreational opportunities on the river. Let’s enjoy our natural resources.”**

Response: Access and recreation opportunities are explored more fully in the White Paper *Protecting and Enhancing Open Space Along the Presumpscot River*. The Plan recommends the creation of a water trail,

a land trail and enhanced public access (including boat launches and portaging) as needed and appropriate. These are fully described in Recommendations B, C and D in the White Paper in Section V.

8. “The Presumpscot River has been a part of me my entire life. I have seen the miracle of its comeback over the years. I would hate to see this tremendous opportunity to preserve a beautiful wildlife habitat pass us by because of good intentioned recreational uses. I would very much like to see a carefully considered balance.”

Response: As noted earlier, the White Paper *Protecting and Enhancing Open Space Along the Presumpscot River*, explores the various, and sometimes competing, important values of riverine open space along the Presumpscot (e.g., wildlife habitat, plant habitat, flood protection, maintenance of water quality, agriculture, recreation, historic and cultural values, Section I.). Recreational uses must be carefully balanced with the preservation of habitat for wildlife. Protection of habitat and maintenance of low-impact usage of the river’s resources while providing recreational opportunities to a major urban population center will be a challenge requiring careful planning and management. Protection and conservation of valuable open space parcels will be an important step in meeting this challenge. See Section IV. and Section V., Recommendation E. of the White Paper for a more detailed discussion of conservation of high value open space.

9. “Sorry I can’t be with you Wed. So...fish passages – how about canoe portages and riverfront access also – like PARKS.”

Response: The White Paper *Protecting and Enhancing Open Space Along the Presumpscot River*, includes a recommendation to *Create New Public Access Points to the River, Where They are Needed and Appropriate* (see Section V. D.). The recommendation includes a discussion of the need to analyze where and what types of access are needed (including canoe portages) and what facilities/amenities should be offered (parking, boat launches, picnic facilities, etc.).

10. “I would like to see jet skis banned from the river especially at Dundee Pond. My wife and I live on the upper Dundee portion down from Great Falls Dam. We enjoy the wildlife flora and fauna of our property along the river and Otter Brook. This area is popular with canoes and kayaks. It also has a very strong population of ducks of many species, bald eagles, great blue herons, otters, deer turkey, kingfishers, hawks, tree swallows, osprey, loons, Canada geese, and turtles, not to mention the fish. I have seen a change with the brook

after many houses were built far upstream. The brook as it neared the river became choked with an unfamiliar weed last summer. I believe run-off from lawns was a factor in the growth.”

Response: In Maine, towns have the authority to regulate jet ski use through passage of a town ordinance. The commenter is correct that development upstream in a brook can lead to water quality impacts downstream. Nonpoint source runoff increases with development and can lead to changes in water quality. The issue of fertilizer-laden run-off from lawns leading to enhanced weed and algal growth is discussed in the White Paper *Protecting and Enhancing Open Space Along the Presumpscot River* in Section I.A.5. Recommendations in the Plan that address the issue of polluted runoff are found in the White Paper *Cumulative Impacts to the Environmental Conditions on the Presumpscot River* on p.XIII-5 (Identify Nonpoint Sources of Pollution), p. XIII-19 (*Protect and Enhance the Riparian Corridor by Re-establishing Forested Buffers and Siting Development Appropriately*) and p.XIII-26 (*Educate Property Owners of Negative Effects of Pesticides*) and in the White Paper *Protecting and Enhancing Open Space Along the Presumpscot River* in Section V.H. (*Educate Landowners and Other Watershed Residents About the Benefits of Conserving and Enhancing Riparian Lands Along the Presumpscot River and its Tributaries*).

11. Great- Thanks!

Additional Comment Letter Received

Comments Presumpscot River Management Plan

By Paul Mitnik, P.E., MDEP [I would like to check with Paul to be sure he is comfortable with us publishing his name associated with these comments since we didn't publish anyone else's name]

Overall, I was impressed by the report and found it very interesting and informative. Good Job!! Here are some minor comments.

Page 3 - The report states that municipal and nonpoint discharges have increased since the 1960's. In the Presumpscot River Timeline (Summary of Cumulative Impacts to Environmental Conditions on the Presumpscot River and its Shorelands, page 4) it is stated that the Westbrook treatment plant came on line in 1976. This would support the case that municipal waste has dramatically decreased since the 1960's with the requirements of secondary or Best Practical Treatment (BPT) for all discharges. Much has been learned about waste treatment since the 1970's which has resulted in most plants statewide performing today at levels much better than the minimum requirements of BPT. Hence even though population in

Westbrook may be increasing, the municipal pollutant loads have probably continually decreased since the 1970's. Recent combined sewer overflow abatement at Westbrook has resulted in additional pollutant reductions.

Response: The commenter is correct that municipal treatment is providing improved pollutant removal efficiencies as compared to the 1960's and that overall point source loading of pollutants from municipal wastewater has decreased. The volume of point source discharges, however, has increased as the population has increased. In addition, with increased development and accompanying expansion of impervious surface in the watershed, the volume and pollutant load from non-point sources have increased. Impacts to water resources are addressed in Chapter II of the White Paper *Cumulative Impacts to the Environmental Conditions on the Presumpscot River and its Shorelands*. As noted on p. XIII-5: *The Presumpscot River Watch and Maine DEP have identified nonpoint sources of pollution as a major contributing factor to the degradation of Presumpscot River quality. The Maine DEP's 1998 Water Quality Assessment reports that continued progress toward cleanup of point sources in Maine has been tempered by the discovery of significant nonpoint sources of pollution such as stormwater runoff.*

Page 5 - It wasn't obvious in the report if the lack of eelgrass in the Presumpscot estuary is good or bad.

Response: The White Paper *Cumulative Impacts to the Environmental Conditions on the Presumpscot River and its Shorelands*, p.III-4, notes that the extent of eelgrass beds is used as an indicator of estuarine water quality. Photographs from the 1960's indicated that eelgrass was present at that time but was absent during the 1993-1995 survey, likely due to a decline in water clarity. Because the clarity of the water in the estuary has improved since 1995 due to the cessation of the pulping operation at the SAPPi mill, eelgrass may now be reestablishing itself in the estuary.

Page 11 - Another benefit of option 2B (removing three dams) would be improving dissolved oxygen levels on these three impoundments from non-attainment to attainment status. All three impoundments are current on Maine's 303d list of non-attainment segments.

Response: *The commenter is correct that elimination of the impoundments would improve dissolved oxygen levels in the impoundments. Impacts of the dams on dissolved oxygen levels in the impoundments are discussed in the White Paper Cumulative Impacts to the Environmental Conditions on the Presumpscot River and its Shorelands, pp. II-13 - II-14.*

Page 11- As a casual observer not wearing my DEP hat, it wasn't clear to me why the removal of the Saccarappa, Mallison Falls, and Little Falls dam is preferred to the removal of Cumberland Mills, Saccarappa, and Mallison Falls dam. Clearly the report is not recommending removal of all of the dams as an attempt to balance fisheries and hydropower interests. But if you were going to remove three dams, wouldn't you want to remove the next three up from the former Smelt Hill dam so that there could be 16 continuous miles of free flowing river? Even with the removal of Saccarappa, Mallison Falls, and Little Falls, the likelihood of restoring migratory fish here hinges on obtaining effective fish passage at Cumberland Mills. Also Cumberland Mills currently is not retrofitted with hydro, so there would be more balancing of the hydropower interest. Is there another reason (dam needed to support industrial supply pond , fire protection) that would be impacted with its removal? If so, you may want to explain this in the report. If there isn't, it would seem that society and perhaps SAPPI could better live with the removal of Cumberland Mills where no power is being produced.

Reponse: As the commenter correctly points out, *the successful restoration of migratory fish hinges on effective fish passage at Cumberland Mills dam.* Unlike the three dams recommended for removal, Cumberland Mills dam is not a hydropower dam and not licensed by FERC. Authority to require fish passage on the Cumberland Mills dam rests with the Maine Commissioner of Inland Fish and Wildlife. The Plan strongly supports implementation of that authority. The White Paper *Fisheries Conditions, Issues and Options for the Presumpscot River* p. 44 clarifies the position of the Plan regarding possible removal of the Cumberland Mills dam as follows: *A detailed evaluation of this dam would be needed to determine the best option for fish passage. In other similar cases passage has been accomplished with partial removal of the dam; this would be optimal for fish passage. If this were not feasible, a fish passage could be installed.*