



Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
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AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

February 2, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

It is with great pleasure that I write to you in strong support of the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) and the Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) applications for funding through the USDOT FY2022 Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) Program.

Through their applications MaineDOT and DMR are seeking funding to assist in the replacement of twenty-three road stream culverts in fifteen communities located over three strategic locations in Maine. The culverts identified for replacement through this project are undersized and impact passage of native migratory fish, disrupt natural ecological processes, and cause ongoing maintenance and repair problems for local communities.

These projects in Central, Downeast, and the Sandy River area of Western Maine will significantly contribute to the habitat available for endangered anadromous fish species and their prey. The replacement of these twenty-three culverts will restore access to approximately forty-four total miles of habitat for the fish species native to each area, including the state and federally endangered Atlantic Salmon. These projects will also advance strategies outlined in Maine's award-winning climate action plan "Maine Won't Wait" by investing in climate-resilient infrastructure and reducing communities' vulnerability to climate change impacts.

I am pleased that MaineDOT and Maine DMR have partnered together on this effort. The identified projects will resolve long-standing fish passage issues, increase climate resilience, and address other community priorities in these watersheds. I fully support their efforts and request that you give their applications full consideration for funding.

Sincerely,

Janet T. Mills
Governor



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