



Petition to Michael S. Regan, EPA Administrator and Martin Suuberg, MassDEP Commissioner, from the Taunton River Watershed Alliance (TRWA) urging reissuance of the long overdue Somerset and Fall River CWA permits with Effluent Limitations Needed to Protect Water Quality

This petition requests that EPA and MassDEP issue public notices and commence the process to reissue the last two long overdue CWA permits, Somerset (13 years and 6 months overdue) and Fall River (16 years and 4 months overdue). These obsolete treatment plants cause and contribute to algae pollution, as well as dissolved oxygen and nutrient Massachusetts water quality criteria violations in the Taunton River estuary and Mount Hope Bay.

The Taunton River was designated a Wild and Scenic River in 2009. The Taunton River estuary and Mount Hope Bay are part of the bi-state (MA and RI) Narragansett Bay, designated an estuary of National Significance in 1985. Because of its low gradient, lack of main stem dams and over 5,000 acres of Alewife and Herring spawning area, the Taunton River estuary and watershed supports a large anadromous fish nursery essential to the offshore commercial fishing industry.

From 2013 to 2015 the EPA and MassDEP put on public notice, and subsequently issued, five of the seven major Clean Water Act (CWA) wastewater discharge permits in the Taunton River watershed. These permits required upgrading of obsolete treatment plants and addition of nitrogen and phosphorus removal to the extent needed to meet water quality standards. In 2016 the effort was stopped before the last two permits in the watershed for Somerset and Fall River were put on notice.

Now is the time to move forward with these permits to improve this critical resource, to make it more resilient to climate change and to promote fairness to the users of the 5 previously upgraded plants. These users will not see the full environmental benefit of their environmental investment in the estuary and river until these last two plants are upgraded. An additional benefit to starting the plant upgrades now is to access any available Build Back Better funding to supplement the State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan program, which helped fund the previous five permits.

PRINT NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE



TAUNTON RIVER WATERSHED ALLIANCE

A VOICE FOR THE RIVER SINCE 1988

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