

# REGION 1 Fact Sheet

Internal deliberative pre-decisional - FOR USE BY 2024 PRESIDENT-ELECT TRANSITION TEAM MEMBERS ONLY

## GEOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

**States:** Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont

**Tribes:** Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Narragansett Indian Tribe, Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians - Indian Township Reservation, Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indians - Pleasant Point Reservation, Penobscot Indian Nation, Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), Aroostook Band of Micmacs, Mohegan Tribe, Mashpee Wampanoag

## LOGISTICS

**Regional Office Headquarters:** Boston, MA

**Field Offices:** N/A

**Laboratory:** Chelmsford, MA

**Staff:** FY24: FTE ceiling 612.2 / Projected utilization 501.0

## TOP ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES

### GE-Housatonic River Cleanup in MA

The comprehensive cleanup of PCB contamination in the Housatonic River in Massachusetts and Connecticut is being performed pursuant to a Consent Decree entered by the court in 2000. In 2016 the Region issued a RCRA Permit Modification selecting a cleanup plan for the “Rest of River,” a nearly 125-mile stretch of the Housatonic River from the confluence of the East and West Branches of the River in Pittsfield to just before Long Island Sound in Connecticut. (b) (5)

### Eastern MA Stormwater Petitions

In 2019 and 2020, EPA received three petitions from environmental groups asking the agency to find that a wide range of commercial, industrial, institutional, and multi-family residential properties in the Charles, Mystic, and Neponset River watersheds are significant contributors of pollutants and are causing or contributing to a violation of water quality standards in those rivers and should be required to obtain Clean Water Act (CWA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for their storm water discharges.

In 2022, in response to these petitions, EPA exercised its residual designation authority and designated certain commercial, industrial, and institutional properties with one or more acres of impervious surface in these three watersheds as needing an NPDES permit. On November 2, 2022, the petitioners filed a complaint in the U.S. District Court for Massachusetts claiming EPA failed to fulfill its obligations under the CWA and Administrative Procedure Act (APA) through the timely issuance of a permit(s) to accompany the designation. The court around that time stayed the case until September 9, 2024.

The draft permit is scheduled to be released for public comment in the fall of 2024. Approximately 3500 commercial, industrial, and institutional property owners will be subject to requirements to control and reduce stormwater pollution on their properties. On September 18, 2024, the court continued the stay until November 29, 2024, to allow sufficient time for EPA to complete its work on the draft permit and fact sheet.

### **PCBs in Schools and Buildings**

PCBs in building materials, particularly in schools, continues to be a focus of political and press attention and heightened community concern in New England. Buildings and other structures identified with PCBs in manufactured building materials pose potential risks to building inhabitants including risk from exposure to unacceptable levels of PCBs in indoor air. (b) (5)

. In 2021, Vermont passed Act 74 requiring that all schools (~320) built before 1980 test indoor air for PCBs and, if found above state action levels, address the associated risk.