



Committee on Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
c/o Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

January 27, 2021

Dear Chair Dill, Chair Landry, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce myself and Maine Audubon to the Committee. My name is Eliza Donoghue and I am Director of Advocacy and Staff Attorney for Maine Audubon.

Maine Audubon is a wildlife conservation non-profit organization. We fulfill our mission to “conserve Maine’s wildlife and wildlife habitat” by engaging people of all ages in nature through a science-based approach to education, conservation, and advocacy. Examples of our work include:

- Providing hands-on, experiential nature programs designed to excite curiosity and introduce the concept of wildlife stewardship to over 8,000 students a year, from preschoolers to adults.
- Promoting public awareness of lake ecology issues through our annual statewide Loon Count, along with other citizen science projects.
- Monitoring and managing the breeding habitat of endangered Piping Plovers and Least Terns (shorebirds), in collaboration with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, municipalities, and countless volunteers.
- Advocating for local, state, and federal public policies that benefit wildlife and protect important and high-value habitat.

We’re proud to be the state’s oldest and largest wildlife conservation organization; Maine Audubon traces our roots to the Portland Society of Natural History in 1843. We own eight wildlife sanctuaries from Ellitsville Plantation to Cape Elizabeth, have 10,000 members, have about 30 staff members, are aided by 2,000 volunteers, and serve over 50,000 people annually.

Maine Audubon maintains a regular presence during the legislative session. In addition to this Committee, we are most often before the Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry Committee; the Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee; and the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. Maine Audubon is strongly committed to our science-based approach to conserving wildlife and habitat. I am a part of a team that includes biologists and ecologists; our positions are based on their expertise in their respective fields.

There are a number of matters that will come before this Committee this session that we will be watching and likely engaging in, including:

- A bill having to do with lead ammunition;
- Bills that touch on Maine’s endangered species act; and

- Bills pertaining to the impact of watercraft on wildlife.

Outside of this jurisdiction of this Committee, but no less pertinent to your work, Maine Audubon is working diligently on implementing Maine's Climate Action Plan, with a focus on how confronting and mitigating the impact of climate change on wildlife and habitat. Our areas of focus include increasing land use planning capacity and specificity across the state so that wildlife may adapt to a changing climate; conserving high-value habitat; and balancing the need to build-out renewable energy infrastructure against impacts to wildlife, from solar, to transmission, to offshore wind.

Please view Maine Audubon as a resource, particularly to draw upon our natural resource science knowledge and long tenure as a State House advocate. I welcome calls my cell phone ((207) 712-4359), as well as emails (edonoghue@maineaudubon.org).

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eliza Donoghue".

Eliza Donoghue, Esq.
Director of Advocacy