

Anthony Wilson
Belgrade
LD 164

Dear members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Anthony Wilson and I live in Belgrade. I am writing to urge your support for LD 164: An Act to Fund the Lake Restoration and Protection Fund.

As you know, the effects of climate change, warming waters, longer growing seasons, larger rain events that create more runoff, and increased development pressure are putting our lakes at greater risk with each passing day. Funding for lake protection projects, including implementation of erosion-control Best Management Practices, replacement of failing septic systems, stronger invasive species management programs, and treatment of lakes with chronic algal blooms are desperately needed to safeguard lake health in the coming decades.

Funding support is especially important for a community such as Belgrade, whose boundaries touch five of the seven lakes in the Belgrade Lakes watershed. Those lakes are quite literally the lifeblood -- economically, culturally, recreationally and aesthetically -- not only of Belgrade, but of Rome, Mount Vernon, Smithfield, Sidney, Oakland and Mercer. The importance of preserving Maine's lakes cannot be overstated on a statewide basis, as well. If Maine is to remain Vacationland, we must invest in the protections that will continue to ensure the lakes are a magnet for visitors and for folks like my wife Christina and I. When we moved here three years ago, we were so taken with the beauty of the lakes that, while visiting a friend's camp, I said to her, "We've got to get us one of these." Last year, we realized that dream when we purchased a Belgrade camp. We hope to leave that as a legacy for our children and grandchildren. But the enjoyment of these natural wonders by future generations will be possible only if we proactively seek to protect them today.

Please invest in the healthy future of Maine's lakes today to protect local economies, outdoor tourism, sporting, and recreation businesses, drinking water supplies, wildlife habitat and so much more for all who use lakes in the future. Thank you for your consideration.

Anthony Wilson
Belgrade, Maine