



Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
% Legislative Information Office  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

May 1, 2023

RE: LD 1473, An Act to Protect Certain Unfiltered Drinking Water Sources

Dear Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of LD 1473, An Act to Protect Certain Unfiltered Drinking Water Sources, on behalf of Maine Audubon and our 30,000 members, supporters, and volunteers.

Maine has exceptional water quality, benefiting Maine people and wildlife. Our clean, clear, cold waters support the iconic Common Loon, the last stronghold in the eastern United States for wild brook trout, and the only population of endangered Atlantic Salmon. These same waters benefit Maine people in a multitude of ways, including as public drinking water sources.

Nine waterbodies in Maine (of only 40 across the country) are of such quality that the federal Environmental Protection Agency has granted them filtration waivers. As a result, benefiting communities do not need to invest in expensive water filtration infrastructure. The quality of these water bodies is threatened by intensive development within their watersheds. Important legislation enacted by the 130th Maine Legislature (LD 2003) might have the unintended consequence of encouraging intensive development in these watersheds, perhaps resulting in deteriorating water quality and, as a result, the need for water filtration infrastructure.

LD 1473 would exempt watersheds with filtration waivers from the allowances for additional development resulting from LD 2003. Maine Audubon believes this is a common-sense approach to preserving water quality, as well as a cost-saving measure for impacted communities. We urge the Committee to support this bill.

Sincerely,

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

Eliza Donoghue, Esq.  
Director of Advocacy