

Testimony in Support of LD-209 “An Act To Make Supplemental Appropriations And Allocations From The General Fund And Other Funds For The Expenditures Of State Government And To Change Certain Provisions Of The Law Necessary To The Proper Operations Of State Government For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025”

**Acadian Timber – Katahdin Forest Management
2025/01/22**

We urge you to vote “Ought to Pass” for LD 209 PART U SPRUCE BUDWORM FUNDING

Dear ACF Committee Members:

The Spruce Budworm has the potential for devastating Maine Forests. If populations are allowed to rise to epidemic levels, there will be impacts felt by all the people of Maine. Through feeding on new growth, several years of defoliation can reduce the growth and kill balsam fir and spruce trees. This could result in significant reduction of raw materials needed to support the sawmills, pulp mills and specialty plants across the State. The impacts of this would be felt for many years, impacting the livelihoods of the forest industry workers and others in the communities dependent on a forest-based economy. In addition, a spruce budworm outbreak would potentially leave hundreds of thousands of acres of standing deadwood which would pose a substantial fire threat for the State.

Acadian Timber/Katahdin Forest Management manages 300,000 acres in Maine. These lands have a long history of providing timber to regional mills as well as recreational opportunities for the people of Maine. These forests have a significant amount of balsam fir and spruce timber, the species most susceptible to the spruce budworm.

Funding through this request of the supplemental budget supporting an Early Intervention Strategy (EIS) will be a benefit to the entire forest industry and the communities of Maine. The Maine Forest Products Council has provided some great information sheets that are attached for your convenience.

In previous outbreaks reactionary actions to mitigating the impacts of spruce budworm were used to protect the foliage after SBW populations reached epidemic levels. Taking a proactive approach through EIS reduces forest protection costs by targeting the insect early and ensuring its populations don't explode. You need look no further than comparing the approaches in the neighbouring jurisdictions of Quebec and New Brunswick. The forest industry of Maine has been monitoring the results in New Brunswick in preparation for using a similar approach. The forest industry has been sampling SBW populations in the State and determining treatment plans in cooperation with UMaine and the Maine Forest Service.

How is EIS different from previously used approaches to spruce budworm control?

Program Aspect	Foliage Protection	Early Intervention
Control method	Foliage protection when populations have exploded	Population control at low levels to prevent population explosion effect

Program Aspect	Foliage Protection	Early Intervention
Industry Involvement		Systematic surveys for L2 counts
Detection Methods	Visual Aerial Surveys Defoliation must be visible	Ground surveys to detect rising populations before defoliation is visible.
Insecticide volume to apply	High	Low
Larvae (L2 stage) count per branch to begin treatment	> 22	> 7
Treatment Area	Large	Small

It would be a beneficial to take this opportunity to prevent a spruce budworm epidemic through participation in an Early Intervention Strategy.

We encourage you to vote "Ought to Pass" for LD 209 – part U.

Sincerely,



John Steward
Vice President – Maine Timberlands

