



# SIERRA CLUB

## MAINE CHAPTER

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To: Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
From: Philip E. Mathieu, Maine Chapter Vice Chair  
Date: January 27, 2025  
Re: **Testimony in Support of L.D. 65: An Act to Update the Definition of "Coastal Wetlands" Under the Natural Resources Protection Act**

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Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and the members of the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

I am submitting the following testimony on behalf of Sierra Club Maine, representing over 22,000 supporters and members statewide. Founded in 1892, Sierra Club is one of our nation's oldest and largest environmental organizations. We work diligently to amplify the power of our 3.8 million members nation-wide as we work towards combating climate change and promoting a just and sustainable economy. To that end, we urge an "ought to pass" report on L.D. 65: An Act to Update the Definition of "Coastal Wetlands" Under the Natural Resources Protection Act.

Mainers up and down the coast depend on the resources and approval processes outlined by DEP to ensure both the health of our coastal ecosystems and the safety and resiliency of their homes and other developments. This update allowing DEP to use NOAA's comprehensive determinations, rather than relying solely on published tide tables, will provide more consistent and long-range data for coastal wetland determinations. While this change may require some initial adjustments for landowners and developers, it will ultimately provide greater certainty and predictability in the permitting process while better protecting our coastal resources. As we face increasing impacts from climate change and sea level rise, basing our coastal wetland determinations on NOAA's highest astronomical tide prediction will help ensure our coastal development decisions are based on conservative and accurate estimations of the tidal zone.

Sincerely,

Philip E. Mathieu  
Portland, ME  
Vice Chair, Sierra Club Maine