

Ron Fluet
7 Lakes Alliance
LD 296

I live on Messalonskee Lake for much of the Spring, Summer and Fall. My wife is very active in our Lake Association (Friends of Messalonskee) and I am on the Board of 7 Lakes Alliance. We see the many challenges Maine Lakes are facing. Friends of Messalonskee has been trying to manage the proliferation of Variable Leaf Milfoil (VLM) for decades. Plant fragments are constantly washing up on shorelines and rooting in coves due to boat traffic in the lake inlet (Belgrade Stream). Belgrade Stream is loaded with VLM. As much as we annually pull VLM plants with divers or cover it with benthic barriers, it has always been an uphill battle. We are developing plans with the DEP to manage the problem with a bigger hammer (herbicide treatment). Our Lake association cannot raise the funding necessary for this scale of a solution. Maine Lakes are a shared resource that are enjoyed by many people. Residents of Maine and visitors alike have access to our lakes. The State of Maine is ultimately responsible preserving and managing our lakes. The funding in LD 296 is needed for managing large scale invasive plant infestations, algae blooms and other problems that are getting worse due to climate change. Please support this bill to keep our lakes as one of the crown jewels of our state.

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