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LD 1529

I write in support of LD 1529. Older growth forests once covered roughly 70% of the North Woods and now make up just 3% of Maine's Unorganized Territories. Without action, much of what's left will be gone in 35 years.

This bill would strengthen protections for some of Maine's most ecologically significant natural resources: remote, undeveloped ponds and rare stands of older growth forest that store carbon, support wildlife, and define the character of the North Woods. Maine's remote, undeveloped ponds support the last stronghold of native brook trout in the US and provide rare, quiet places for recreation. Many are already under development pressure.

LD 1529 takes a balanced approach to protect these natural resources: It directs agencies to create a statewide conservation strategy, improve tracking, and elevate protection through existing programs like Land for Maine's Future and the Land Use Planning Commission's Lake Management Program.

Thank you.