

Testimony of Dillon Mulhern in SUPPORT of LD 1661, An Act to Establish a Comprehensive and Interagency Approach to Invasive Species Management

Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

April 28, 2025

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and honorable members of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry committee,

My name is Dillon Mulhern, and I am a land manager at Kennebec Estuary Land Trust, a small regional land trust covering nine towns: Arrowsic, Bath, Bowdoinham, Dresden, West Bath Georgetown, Richmond, Westport Island and Woolwich. I am submitting this testimony in support of LD 1661, which seeks to create a more collaborative, comprehensive approach to invasive species management in order to protect and preserve Maine's natural resources and environment.

Managing invasive plants has been an increasingly pressing and labor-intensive function of my job. Non-native invasive plants have negative impacts on the ecologically unique areas that we manage, and in order to effectively control invasive plants on a large scale, we need to invest more resources into creating a comprehensive approach.

Since 2021, we have assisted Maine Natural Areas Program with management of an Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) species, Japanese stiltgrass on several properties in Georgetown, Maine. This species has a high potential for significant damage to the state's biodiversity and therefore is prioritized for management. Even with this prioritization, it has been difficult to manage a species which spread quickly across individual property owners boundary lines. The creation of the Maine Invasive Species Advisory Council and the Comprehensive Invasive Species Management Office is an important first step in effectively strategizing Maine's resources to more effectively control invasive species.

Please help us to protect Maine's unique biodiversity for generations to come, and vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 1661.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dillon Mulhern

Preserves Manager, Kennebec Estuary Land Trust