

**Testimony in Support of LD 1763: An Act to Regulate Non-water-dependent
Floating Structures on Maine Waters**

Before the Committee on Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

April 30, 2025

Representative Hepler, Senator Guerin, Representatives Dill, Mason, and Perkins, and members of the Committee on Inland fisheries and Wildlife, my name is Sharon Young, and I have resided on the shores of Little Sebago Lake in Gray these past 28 years and before that summered on the shores of Great Pond in Belgrade for the first 20+ years of my life. As a child I simply enjoyed the multi-season recreation the lake provided, and as a young adult I began to recognize the beauty and develop appreciation of the natural environment and wildlife associated with the lake. For these last few decades, I have dedicated countless volunteer hours working to protect and preserve the lakes ecosystem so that there will continue to be healthy inland waters for future generations of homeowners and visitors to enjoy. I know firsthand the harm that overcrowding does, whether it be navigational safety, waters contaminated by human waste, or waterfowl and fish being crowded out by human inhabitants.

Here at Little Sebago residents and day visitors often enjoy any one of the many sandbars that abound on the lake and serve as public beaches. If unregulated NWFS moored in proximity to those sandbars, chaos would rain, and sanitation would be a huge concern. It is already difficult to discourage visitors from entering upon the privately owned islands that are often adjacent to the sandbars. There is concern about human and animal waste left behind by uninvited visitors on the islands. Fecal contamination leads to phosphorus entering the lake. Excess phosphorus leads to algae bloom, oxygen depletion, and harm to aquatic life.

The islands also provide ideal nesting territory for our loon population, a population that is already threatened by human activities, and the lead poisoning caused by abandoned lures, and the entanglements caused by abandoned fishing lines. Lake volunteers erect nesting rafts, place cautionary nesting signage, and hand out loon preservation literature each year in an attempt to give our loons a chance at reproductive success. It sometimes feels like a losing battle and if you throw in a few NWFS mooring near the loon territories and all that volunteer effort is for naught.

If the NWFS elected the ease of mooring in any one of the many shallow coves on the lake, or in close proximity to the public boat launch, navigation would become difficult for others. Already some areas have reported navigational difficulty navigating around moored boats while entering and exiting the docks and homes in congested areas.

There is very little undeveloped shoreline on Little Sebago as well as on many of our inland lakes, leaving few areas that NWFS could stay without infringing on the peace

and enjoyment of developed properties. Municipalities count on the inflated property tax revenues the waterfront homes provide. NWFS are not only untaxed, but they would also devalue property surrounding the lake and thus reduce revenue property tax for the towns.

For our safety, for our wildlife, for our municipal revenue streams, and for the health of the lake, I implore you to support LD 1763.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sharon Young

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