

Leslie Ohmart
Brewer
LD 1763

My family and I are fortunate enough to share ownership in a camp located on Beech Hill Pond in Otis, Maine. To date I have not seen any floating camps on that body of water, and it is my sincere hope we never do.

I have heard horror stories from friends who rent camps on lakes in southern Maine in which they related having floating camps and rafts of boats anchored off the shore. They reported loud music, abusively drunk occupants of the floating structures and the inability to enjoy the camp that they spent their hard-earned money renting. As anyone can attest, sound carries exceedingly well over water, especially at night. We don't need more congestion to add to the din.

In relation Beech Hill Pond and other spring-fed lakes, I am very concerned that the presence of these structures would have on water quality. The water in spring-fed lakes is replaced, or turned over, very slowly compared to lakes with river and stream inlets and outlets. Thus, contaminants remain in the water for many years before being flushed out. Even those with more rapid turnover are at risk. Shore based structures are regulated as to discharges into bodies of water and are easily monitored. The same cannot be held as true for floating structures. To monitor them effectively would require expansion of IF&W law enforcement personnel further straining our state budget.

There is also the question of access to the use of the surface of the lake for recreation. Floating structures clogging the limited space available would make recreational activities like water skiing or sailing more difficult and perhaps even impossible if there was a no-pass zone around each floating structure. Furthermore, swimmers from the floating structures would be at risk from motorized watercraft.

We must protect the waters of Maine, the lakes alone which were valued at 14 billion dollars that the lakes alone were found to be worth. (<https://umaine.edu/news/blog/2024/06/03/maine-lakes-are-worth-14-billion-according-to-umaine-study/>) I urge you to vote ought to pass on this this bill and send it to the legislature for passage.