



Testimony of
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**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to
LD 2118, An Act to Eliminate the Natural Areas Program and Reassign Certain
Responsibilities Under the Program to the Department of Inland Fisheries and
Wildlife and to Amend the Law Governing Administration of the Department of
Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Bureau of Resource Management**

Tuesday, January 27, 2026

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, my name is Dana Doran, and I am the Executive Director of the Professional Logging Contractors of the Northeast (PLC). The PLC is a regional non-profit organization that represents logging and associated trucking contractors throughout the Northeast, predominately in the state of Maine.

As background, the PLC was created in 1995 to give logging and associated trucking contractors a voice in a rapidly changing forest products industry. As of 2021, logging and trucking contractors in Maine employed over 3,000 people directly and were indirectly responsible for the creation of an additional 2,500 jobs. This employment and the investments that contractors make contributed \$582 million to the state's economy. Our membership, which includes over 200 contractor members in the state of Maine and an additional 125 associate members, is responsible for more than 80% of Maine's annual timber harvest.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to testify on behalf of our membership in support of LD 2118, An Act to Eliminate the Natural Areas Program and Reassign Certain Responsibilities Under the Program to the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and to Amend the Law Governing Administration of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Bureau of Resource Management. The PLC would like to thank the sponsor and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IFW) for introducing this legislation.

Maine loggers are particularly aware of the wide range of natural habitats present at each of their jobsites. They are fortunate to have the resources that are provided by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IFW), as well as the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) to help them determine where habit are located, with an emphasis around riparian areas as well as endangered, threatened and invasive

species. By utilizing each of these organization's online databases and staff resources, loggers can obtain an extensive amount of information to ensure Maine's natural resources are protected and preserved before they go to work.

Logging contractors have an extensive history of working with both agencies, and from our perspective, this legislation is a no-brainer to have MNAP under the IFW umbrella. By moving MNAP to IFW, it will provide an opportunity for two organizations that do similar work to create efficiencies and economies of scale. It will also ensure that similar information can be found in one location, with expertise that both organizations can maximize.

As an example, IFW has created an incredible GIS database of maps called Beginning with Habitat Maps. We feel that if MNAP could create similar platforms and house them in the same area, they would have powerful tools that the logging community could take advantage of.

Again, we believe that aligning MNAP with IFW will have a positive impact on the logging community and want to thank the departments for recommending the change.

Thank you for your consideration and I urge you to vote ought to pass on this bill

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.