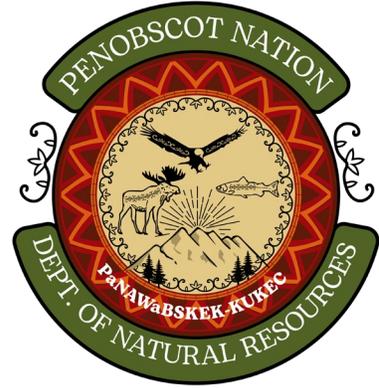


## **PENOBSCOT NATION**

**12 Wabanaki Way  
Indian Island, ME 04468  
(207) 817-7349  
FAX (207) 817-7466**



### **DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**CHARLES LORING JR, DIRECTOR  
charlie.loring.jr@penobscotnation.org**

**Re: LD 2070, “An Act to Prohibit Landfill Expansion into Wetlands”**

To: Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Committee:

My name is Chuck Loring, and I serve as the Natural Resources Director for the Penobscot Nation. I am writing in support of LD 2070, An Act to Prohibit Landfill Expansion into Wetlands.

Wetlands are working systems that protect water quality. They have the ability to reduce flooding and recharge groundwater. They support fish and wildlife beyond the footprint of the landfill operation that people across Maine depend on, including tribal people. Filling or otherwise compromising them results in their function being permanently diminished or lost. No amount of mitigation will be able to replace what is destroyed.

Wetlands are inseparable from the health of the Penobscot River watershed. Impact to the wetlands upstream, are not contained within a project. These impacts move through water which affects downstream communities, drinking water sources, fisheries, wildlife, medicinal plants, and habitats that are culturally, ecologically, and economically important. The Penobscot Nation is just one of these communities.

Landfills are long-term facilities with risks that extend far beyond their initial footprint. Expanding landfills into wetlands introduces additional uncertainty around leachate management, groundwater contamination, and system failure over time. This is magnified even more as Maine experiences increasingly intense storms, flooding, and changing hydrology due to climate change. These are the very systems that have brought issues surrounding this landfill before this committee, in the past. These risks affect both the host community, and everyone downstream.

LD 2070 draws a clear and reasonable line. It does not eliminate landfill capacity in Maine, but it does ensure that expansion does not occur in places that provide irreplaceable public and ecological benefits. Protecting wetlands is an investment that avoids far greater environmental and financial costs in the future.

For the Penobscot Nation, this issue is also about responsibility to future generations. Our relationship with land and water is based on stewardship. Policies that prevent avoidable harm to wetlands align with those values and serve the broader public interest.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to support LD 2070 and protect Maine's wetlands from landfill expansion.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your consideration of this important issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Chuck Loring

Natural Resource Director

Penobscot Nation