

February 20, 2026

Dear Sen. Tepler, Rep. Doudera, and members of the Jnt. Stand. Comm. on Environment and Natural Resources,

My name is Karin Hoppenbrouwers (Brunswick) and I'm testifying in support of LD 2187 with the caveat that a reclassification upgrade amendment of the upper lower Androscoggin River be included. Clean rivers are the life blood of Maine and water quality upgrades benefit all of us, providing a healthy environment and economy and improving quality of life in Maine.

When the actual quality of the water exceeds that of its classification, this leaves room to pollute while still meeting the lower existing classification. This is the situation on the upper lower Androscoggin River from Worumbo dam in Lisbon Falls to Gulf Island Pond dam in Auburn. Because intensive sampling last summer by Friends of Merrymeeting Bay at ten sites in this section of river showed easy Class B compliance 100% of the time, I'm asking you to please support amendment language to lock in the improved water quality.

Here are some reasons why I believe this amendment is important and why I'm requesting your support for it:

1. It's the law! Actual Class B water quality conditions have been met in the Androscoggin below GIP dam for years, and Maine statute requires that they be upgraded and maintained.
2. Anti-degradation language in the Clean Water Act prohibits backsliding in water quality.
3. A cleaner river has well-documented economic, ecological and quality of life benefits.
4. Besides aquatic species, 70-80% percent of terrestrial wildlife species inhabit or utilize river corridors and benefit from high water quality.

2022 marked the 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act championed by Maine Senator Ed Muskie in large part with the then foul Androscoggin as poster child for the Act's necessity. Now the Androscoggin is the only major Maine river mostly relegated to Class C status. Anniversary of the Act marks an appropriate time to finally recognize, honor and lock in improvements made over the last half century.

Please support an Androscoggin amendment reclassifying the section from Worumbo to Gulf Island Pond from C to B and then vote **"Ought to Pass on LD 2187 as amended"** ensuring the Lower Androscoggin Upgrade remains a part of the bill and locking in existing water quality.

Thank you!