



Native Fish Coalition  
PO Box 10  
Pownal, ME 04069

February 19, 2026

Sen. Denise Tepler and Rep. Victoria Doudera  
17 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Sen. Tepler, Rep. Doudera, and members of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Maine chapter of Native Fish Coalition (NFC) to express our support for an amendment of LD 2187 that will upgrade classification on the Androscoggin River between Worumbo dam and Gulf Island Pond dam from Class C to Class B. During intensive water sampling by Friends of Merrymeeting Bay (FOMB) in 2025, often under drought conditions, this section of river exceeded Class B minimums 100% of the time. These results support years of data by various parties showing Class B conditions met most of the time.

Native Fish Coalition (NFC) is a non-profit conservation organization whose mission is to protect, preserve and restore wild native fish. We are a 501(c)(3) conservation organization with members, partners, volunteers, supporters and chapters in 21 states.

The water quality of the Androscoggin River sections proposed for an upgrade exceed the current classification and meet those of Class B. This request to upgrade from C to B is meant to lock in current ambient water quality conditions and is supported by the State's antidegradation policy as cited below:

38 M.R.S.A. § 464 (F) (4)

*"When the **actual quality** of any classified water exceeds the minimum standards of the next highest classification, **that higher water quality must be maintained and protected**. The board **shall recommend** to the Legislature that water be reclassified in the next higher classification."*

The Androscoggin River is home to several native fish species, including wild native brook trout and is also critically important in the recovery of the nation's last remaining federally endangered Atlantic salmon.

Senator Muskie used the Androscoggin as his poster child for the Clean Water Act. Unfortunately, it is sadly lacking relative to Maine's other large rivers in clean-up efforts and native fish restoration efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments.

Sincerely,

Larry Bastian, Chair Maine Chapter Native Fish Coalition

CC: Bob Mallard, NFC Executive Director  
Emily Bastian, NFC National Chair  
NFC Maine Board