

Testimony in support of LD 2187 with amendment

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

My name is David Chittim and I submit this written testimony in support of [LD 2187](#) with a request that the bill be amended to include a classification upgrade of the segment of the Androscoggin River flowing between Lewiston and Auburn. As a Professional Engineer who has spent my entire career preserving and protecting the environment, I urge the committee to endorse the reclassification of that portion of the Androscoggin River between Lisbon and Lewiston from Class C to Class B.

I have lived most of my life in the Androscoggin River watershed and I vividly recall the brown foam floating under the Frank J. Wood Bridge in Brunswick and wafting into the air around the falls. Please prohibit any backsliding of this precious resource by reclassifying this river segment to Class B. This is not only of vital economic importance to the twin cities of Auburn and Lewiston but is also supported by water quality sampling.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

This 18.75-mile stretch of the Androscoggin River runs directly through the heart of Lewiston and Auburn and is the centerpiece of concerted economic development projects in both cities. Lewiston's Riverfront Island Master Plan represents a significant investment in the future of the city and focuses on the beneficial effects the river has on the community. Over the past 15 years, the urban riverfront has been transformed from industrial to recreational, with increasing numbers of people recreating on the river. Upgrading the classification will ensure that this resource will be protected for future users and will encourage investment in our communities.

WATER QUALITY JUSTIFICATION

During the past year, seven separate samples were taken from the river at each of 10 different points. Of these 70 discrete samples, only one (September 5th at sampling site A8 – 800 feet upstream of the Deer Rips Dam) fell below the 7 mg/l dissolved oxygen floor for Class B waters. Even at that, it exceeded 75% of saturation.

The other criterion for Class B waters caps the geometric mean of E. coli bacteria at 64 colony forming units between April 15th and October 31st. This standard was met at all sampling points save the two immediately below the discharge of the Lewiston Auburn Clean Water Authority treatment plant, which stops chlorinating/dechlorinating on September 30 per DEP permit requirements. I understand that new DEP discharge permit requirements will extend this process through October, thereby eliminating the Class B criteria exceedances.

Suggested language of an amendment is presented below.

38 MRSA §467

1. Androscoggin River Basin.

A. Androscoggin River, main stem, including all impoundments.

- (1) From the Maine-New Hampshire boundary to its confluence with the Ellis River - Class B.
- (2) From its confluence with the Ellis River to ~~Worumbo Dam in Lisbon Falls~~ Gulf Island Dam in Lewiston - Class C.
- (3) From ~~Worumbo Dam in Lisbon Falls~~ Gulf Island Dam in Lewiston to a line formed by the extension of the Bath-Brunswick boundary across Merrymeeting Bay in a northwesterly direction - Class B.

Thank you for your service to this great state.

David Chittim
Lewiston