



Testimony in Support of LD 2187, AN ACT TO UPDATE CERTAIN WATER QUALITY STANDARDS AND TO RECLASSIFY CERTAIN WATERS OF THE STATE.

Jeff Reardon, 3/3/2026

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

On behalf of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, we offer this testimony in support of LD 2187, AN ACT TO UPDATE CERTAIN WATER QUALITY STANDARDS AND TO RECLASSIFY CERTAIN WATERS OF THE STATE.

ASF supported the proposed upgrades in this bill in testimony to the Board of Environmental Protection and does so again today. ASF and a numerous other conservation organizations have worked with local communities, state and federal agencies, tribes, and private landowners to conserve land in many of these areas, and to reconnect and restore river and stream habitat in these rivers and streams. Tens of millions. of dollars have been spent to protect and restore the high-quality, coldwater fish habitat in these watersheds and upgrading their water quality classifications will help ensure that this investment will have long-lasting benefits for Atlantic salmon, brook trout, and myriad other native fish and wild species in these watersheds. We support this entire proposal and respectfully request that the Committee reconsider additional upgrades in the Sandy River, Temple Stream, Lower Androscoggin watersheds.

Sandy River: In addition to the proposed upgrades from Class A to Class AA for Mount Blue Stream and tributaries, and from Class B to Class A for Sandy River tributaries in Avon, we respectfully request that the entire Sandy River and tributaries from Phillips to Farmington be included in the upgrade from Class B to Class A. DEP staff believe that additional evaluation is needed for the mainstem Sandy and other tributaries in this reach, but as laid out in testimony from the Natural Resources Council of Maine, we believe the evidence supports Class A attainment throughout this reach.

Temple Stream: ASF appreciates the inclusion of the portion of Temple Stream above Edes Brook and the tributaries to and outlet of Drury Pond from Class A to Class AA. However, we believe the evidence in the record shows that remainder of the Temple Stream watershed also meets Class A standards and should be included in this upgrade.

Androscoggin River: We support the proposal from Grow L+A to upgrade the Lower Androscoggin from Class C to Class B. ASF has long-supported this upgrade, and we hope that the Department will finally support this reclassification given the large amount of data that shows this stretch of the Androscoggin almost always meets or exceeds Class B standards.

Finally, ASF requests that the Department continue to evaluate the proposals from the Midcoast Conservancy to reclassify a portion of the mainstem of the Sheepscot River from Class B to



Class A, and from the Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation District to reclassify the Upper Union River and tributaries from Class A to Class AA, for consideration and inclusion in the next Triennial Review. These stretches of the Sheepscot and Union Rivers are vitally important for Atlantic salmon, as they support a large amount of spawning and rearing habitat, as well as important

coldwater refugia. The Sheepscot supports the southernmost, genetically distinct population of Atlantic salmon remaining in North America and upgrading the water quality classification for this stretch of the river will help in the effort to prevent the extinction of this extremely valuable salmon population.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on LD 2187.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Burrows". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

John R.J. Burrows
Vice President, U.S. Operations
Atlantic Salmon Federation