

William Carpenter
Campaign to Protect Sears Island
Testimony on LD226
Cross Building
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My name is Bill Carpenter, I'm a retired COA teacher, I live year round in Stockton Springs, I'm with the Campaign to Protect Sears Island and I am testifying in support of LD 226, to place the entire island under permanent conservation easement. Thanks for your thoughtful consideration of this visionary proposal.

I've been hiking and birding on Sears Island since they built the causeway. I've watched a pair of ospreys living on the entrance buoy, a pileated woodpecker drilling its nest cavity near the Green trail, and a family of seven blue herons on the dune facing Mack Point -- as well as the spectacle of the spring warbler flight. I'm supporting this bill as a way to protect a major migratory bird corridor from industrial disaster. According to Cornell's bird lab, 3 billion North American birds have disappeared since 1970, one-third of the total, primarily from human-caused habitat destruction. At peak migration, 250,000 birds cross Waldo county in a single night. They end their ocean passage at the head of Penobscot Bay. To the west, the birds face a tank farm, to the east there's a chemical plant and a wall of condominiums. But directly below them is the wild and natural green forest of Sears island, where they make their landfall and pass through the causeway foliage like an electric current.

The scale of the proposed wind turbine factory with its 800' cranes and 24 hour noise and light would be incompatible with wildlife preservation anywhere on the island, not just in the transportation zone. It would decimate the resident species and close the migration corridor forever. It would restrict people's access to Sears Island and alter the balance of nature and industry that has been Searsport's identity since the shipbuilding days. In the name of one environmental goal it would destroy another. In the Vietnam days they said "we had to destroy the village in order to save it." Saving one aspect of the environment by sacrificing another is not the answer. In light of the recent setbacks to Maine Offshore Wind, the state should limit its aspirations to the existing industrial site on Mack Point and keep the Sears Island ecosystem intact, a place of refuge and healing for both wildlife and human beings. Habitat protection and clean energy can coexist without one annihilating the other. We have to learn that or we'll have nothing left. Thank you.