



Testimony in support of LD 362
An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Replenish the
Land for Maine's Future Program

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, my name is Kaitlyn Nuzzo. I am the Government Relations Director for The Nature Conservancy in Maine, speaking in support of LD 362 on behalf of TNC, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and fifty-two other land trusts who work in communities across the state.

Four years ago, Governor Mills worked on bipartisan legislation to invest \$40 million in the Land for Maine's Future (LMF) program, \$10 million a year for four years. As we approach the end of the fourth year, the LMF program has spent or committed most of these funds. In the process, the program is on track to:

- Expand public access for traditional outdoor recreational activities on more than 80,000 acres of land, at more than 50 destinations throughout Maine;
- Preserve more than 29,000 acres of working forestlands;
- Protect more than 9,000 acres of critical deer habitat in Northern Maine;
- Conserve a dozen productive farms and agricultural areas;
- Protect seven working waterfront properties; and
- Secure five new recreational water access sites.

These recent accomplishments build upon a nearly four-decade track record of success. Since Maine voters first approved funding for LMF in 1987, the program has protected:

- Over 640,000 acres of conservation and recreation lands with guaranteed access for traditional outdoor recreational opportunities, including hiking, hunting, wildlife watching, and fishing; 73 recreational water access sites for boating, fishing, and swimming;
- More than 158 miles of former railroad corridors available for trail users, including ATV riders and snowmobilers;
- 42 farms totaling nearly 10,000 acres;
- 30 commercial working waterfront properties from York to Eastport; and
- More than 365,000 acres of privately-owned working forestlands.

It is not surprising that Maine people continue to look toward LMF as a critical tool for supporting key natural resource-based industries including fishing, farming, forestry, and tourism, as well as securing public access to special outdoor places of regional and statewide importance that make our state a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

We encourage the committee to support LD 362 and ensure LMF can continue to benefit our people, our economy, and our quality of life.

7 Lakes Alliance

Androscoggin Land Trust

Arundel Conservation Trust

Blue Hill Heritage Trust

Boothbay Region Land Trust

Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust

Cape Elizabeth Land Trust

Chebeague and Cumberland Land Trust

Coastal Mountains Land Trust

Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust

Crabtree Neck Land Trust

Downeast Coastal Conservancy

Downeast Salmon Federation

Falmouth Land Trust

Foothills Land Conservancy

Forest Society of Maine

Freeport Conservation Trust

Frenchman Bay Conservancy

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay

Georges River Land Trust

Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust

Great Works Regional Land Trust

Greater Lovell Land Trust

High Peaks Alliance

Holdon Land Trust

Kennebec Estuary Land Trust

Kennebec Land Trust

Kennebunk Land Trust

Kennebunkport Conservation Trust

Kittery Land Trust

Laudholm Trust

Loon Echo Land Trust

Mahoosuc Land Trust

Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust

Maine Coast Heritage Trust

Midcoast Conservancy

Moosehead Regional Land Trust

Momentum Conservation

Oceanside Conservation Trust

Pierce Pond Watershed Trust

Pleasant River Wildlife Foundation

Presumpscot Regional Land Trust

Royal River Conservation Trust

Sanford-Springvale Mousam Way Land Trust

Scarborough Land Trust

Sebasticook Regional Land Trust

Somerset Woods Trustees

The Conservation Fund

The Nature Conservancy

Three Rivers Land Trust

Upper Saco Valley Land Trust

Vinalhaven Land Trust

Woodie Wheaton Land Trust

York Land Trust