



**Sportsman's Alliance of Maine
Institute for Legislative Action**

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Joint testimony in support of LD 1312: An Act to Provide a Source of Revenue for School Construction and for the Land for Maine's Future Trust Fund

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, my name is David Trahan, Executive Director of the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine. I am speaking in support of LD 1312 on behalf of SAM ILA, The Nature Conservancy in Maine, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and more than forty other land conservation organizations who work in communities across the state.

For decades, sportsmen and women have been partnering with the land conservation community to support the protection of natural resources across the state. LD 1312 is the latest chapter in our collaboration, building on bipartisan legislation we have championed over the years. Most recently, we worked together to support an investment of \$40 million to be spent over 4 years into the Land for Maine's Future (LMF) program and enacted a bill two years ago that established the LMF Trust Fund.

As we approach 2026, the LMF program has spent or committed most of its existing funds. Over just the past four years, the program has demonstrated enormous success and 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 successful projects. Since Maine voters first approved funding for LMF in 1987, the program has protected:

- Over 650,000 acres of conservation and recreation lands with guaranteed access for traditional outdoor recreational opportunities, including hiking, hunting, wildlife watching, and fishing,
- 75 recreational water access sites for boating, fishing, and swimming,
- More than 158 miles of former railroad corridors available for ATV riders and snowmobilers,
- 43 farms totaling more than 10,000 acres,
- 31 commercial working waterfront properties from York to Eastport, and
- More than 365,000 acres of privately-owned working forestlands.

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 for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. More often each year, land trusts are also turning to LMF conserved projects to support the priorities of the communities they serve, working to address public health goals, ease food insecurity, improve K-12 education outcomes, build community cohesion, and expand economic opportunities.

We encourage the committee to support LD 1312, a fiscally sound proposal to ensure the LMF program can continue to make Maine a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Trahan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

David Trahan

7 Lakes Alliance
Arundel Conservation Trust
Blue Hill Heritage Trust
Boothbay Region Land Trust
Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust
Cape Elizabeth Land Trust
Coastal Mountains Land Trust
Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust
Crabtree Neck Land Trust
Downeast Coastal Conservancy
Falmouth Land Trust
Foothills Land Conservancy
Forest Society of Maine
Frenchman Bay Conservancy
Freeport Conservation Trust
Friends of Wilson Ponds
Georges River Land Trust
Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust
Great Works Regional Land Trust
Greater Lovell Land Trust
Harpwell Heritage Land Trust
Inland Woods & Trails
Kennebec Estuary Land Trust

Kennebunkport Conservation Trust
Kittery Land Trust
Loon Echo Land Trust
Mahoosuc Land Trust
Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust
Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Midcoast Conservancy
Moosehead Regional Land Trust
Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay
Pierce Pond Watershed
Portland Trails
Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust
Saco Valley Land Trust
Scarborough Land Trust
Somerset Woods Trustees
Sportsman's Alliance of Maine
The Conservation Fund
The Nature Conservancy
Three Rivers Land Trust
Trust for Public Land
Wells Reserve at Laudholm
York Land Trust