



Maine Forest Products Council

The voice of Maine's forest economy

Companies represented on the MFPC Board

American Forest Mgmt.
Baskahegan Co.
BBC Lands LLC
Bradbury Forest Mgmt.
Columbia Forest Prod.
Cross Insurance
Family Forestry
Farm Credit East
Fontaine Inc.
H.C. Haynes
Huber Resources
Innovative Natural
Resource Solutions
J.D. Irving
Katahdin Forest Mgmt.
Key Bank
LandVest Inc.
Limington Lumber
Louisiana Pacific
Maibec Logging
ND Paper
Nicols Brothers
Pingree Associates
Pixelle Specialty Sol.
Pleasant River Lumber
Prentiss & Carlisle
ReEnergy
Richard Wing & Son
Robbins Lumber
Sappi North America
Southern Maine Forestry
Stead Timberlands
TD Bank
Timber Resource Group
Timberstate G.
Wadsworth Woodlands
Wagner Forest Mgt.
Weyerhaeuser

Testimony opposing LD 471 An Act To Require Legislative Approval for Certain Leases of Public Lands

March 18, 2021

Patrick Strauch, Executive Director

Senator Dill, Representative O'Neill, and distinguished members of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee, I am Patrick Strauch, executive director of the Maine Forest Products Council, which represents more than 8.5 million acres of private working forestlands located in Maine.

These parcels of land are part of a mosaic of ownerships that are all dependent on an interactive transportation system that requires flexibility in the granting of right of ways and infrastructure maintenance (e.g. bridges, communications towers, etc.)

The inclusion of roads and bridges in the new section of law that defines activities that "substantially alter the uses of land" as defined in the Title 12, section 598-A is unacceptable. In the new section of law that defines activities that "substantially alter the uses of land" as defined in the Title 12, section 598-A. These are standard and customary uses of land that all managers must deal with on a daily basis.

However, just as the roads and bridges are part of the landowner network of infrastructure, transmission lines, pipelines and facilities are also part of the normal interaction of landowners in the region. To tie up networks of services and opportunities for development among landowners in a region through the creation of additional layers of bureaucracy will erode the unique way in which Maine manages its public lands and the surrounding community of landowners will be increasingly limited in infrastructure development because of the private ownership structure (e.g. no public roads or right of ways.)

The Bureau of Public Lands (BPL) has an exemplary public management process in the development of its regional management plans and has done a remarkable job of balancing public values. We think this stewardship should be trusted and not interfered with in the interest of greater political control of land management decisions.

The National Forest System is an example of where government intervention in the day to day activities of the forests has greatly hindered them from functioning as important regional sources of sustainably managed wood.

Politicizing land management activities of the BPL will result in diminished management options available to professional managers, and in fewer opportunities that are needed to fund the exceptional management of the public's resource.

Nor is setting a retroactive date of 2014 a good policy or a good message to send to businesses looking to invest in Maine.

The Council recommends that you vote ONTP.

Thank you for your consideration,

Gordon Gamble
Maine Forest Products Council

Please replace earlier testimony sent this morning. It contained an error.