



Seven Islands Land Company

Testimony in Opposition of LD 1349

An Act to Review State Lands and Waterways That Have Sacred, Traditional or Other Significance to the Wabanaki People

January 30, 2024

Hannah Stevens, Seven Islands Land Company

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pleucker, and distinguished members of the Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry Committee. I am Hannah Stevens, a resident of Glenburn, and Land Use Director of Seven Islands Land Company. I am submitting testimony in opposition to LD 1349. This bill calls for a review of state-owned lands, which would include the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, and the development of a process to transfer certain lands and waterways to the tribes.

Since 1964, Seven Islands Land Company has managed the Pingree forest, a family ownership that has recognized the many important resources of the Allagash region throughout their long history of management. As development pressures began to grow in the time leading up to the establishment of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway (AWW), the family resisted numerous requests for private camps and commercial ventures for portions of Pingree-owned shoreline along the route and instead continued their long stewardship of the area that allowed for both scenic values and active forest management to coexist.

As the concept of the AWW became a reality, Seven Islands and the Pingree family worked cooperatively with the state through the 1960's to finalize the acquisition of those parcels which constituted the so-called restricted zone of the Waterway within the Pingree holdings. We pledged then to work with the state in the future to realize the goals of this important area, and we continue to this day to work closely with the Waterway staff as abutting land managers.

We are concerned that LD 1349 could bring uncertainty to this longstanding collaboration, which has allowed the Waterway to remain a unique public benefit, while the adjoining land continues to provide renewable resources and jobs which bring further benefit to Maine's citizens. The partnership between landowners and the state in this venture has been an overall success, with dedication from both sides in the establishment and continued stewardship of this unique resource.

We urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 1349. Thank you for your consideration.