



TOWN OF FAIRFIELD

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February 28, 2022

Environmental and Natural Resources Committee
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Sirs,

The Fairfield Town Council humbly requests that you accept this testimony in support of LD 1979, An Act to Sustain Good-paying Jobs in the Forest Products Industry by Ensuring Consistency between Comprehensive River Resource Management Plans and State Water Standards.

In the Spring of 2021, the Fairfield Town Council submitted testimony regarding the Maine Department of Marine Resources Rule-making Proposal for Chapter 60 Section 10; "Kennebec River Fish Restoration Management Plan". The basis of their testimony was that DMR's statement within the Notice of Agency Rule-making Proposal that the **FINANCIAL IMPACT ON MUNICIPAL OR COUNTIES (if any): None.** This accusation was, and still is, disheartening and false. The DMR's Proposal required that the Shawmut Dam on the Kennebec River be removed.

The removal of this dam is the very epitome of Title 5 §8071, 2, B(2) ...reasonably expected to result in a significant increase in the cost of doing business, a significant reduction in property values, the loss or significant reduction of government benefits or services. If this section had been a part of the existing law when the DMR submitted the Notice of Agency Rule-making Proposal in the winter of 2020, the financial impact of the proposed rule should have clearly indicated the real financial impact to the effected municipalities and counties.

The Fairfield Town Council strongly believes the most important segment of LD 1979's proposal is to add the following section to Title 12 §407.

4.Rules. A comprehensive river resource management plan and any amendment to a comprehensive river resource management plan adopted under this section are major substantive rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, sub-chapter 2-A

As a result of the passing of this bill, the citizens of Fairfield will be assured that:

1. river management plans developed or amended by state agencies **will** consider existing uses, including the Somerset Sappi Mill and existing renewable energy facilities which are industries that support family-sustaining jobs and local property tax revenues.
2. any new or amended river management plans be reviewed by the Legislature to allow a more deliberative approach to determinations with wide-reaching impacts; and,

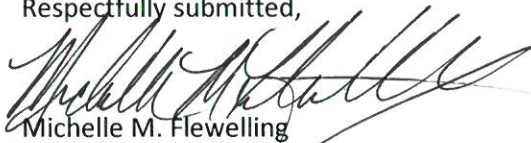
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3. decisions limited to water quality certification of hydropower resources, be determined by the federal agencies tasked with the protecting of the federally listed species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act

The Fairfield Town Council requests that the Committee recommend the passage of LD 1979 so that the economic and financial interests of not just our community, but communities throughout the State of Maine, receive the appropriate level of attention they deserve when such an economically distressing proposal is put forward.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle M. Flewelling

Fairfield Town Manager