

LD 1363 Additional comments for work session.

- Lithium is a metal. Spodumene (the mineral that contains lithium) will be processed to yield lithium. This proposed bill tries to ignore this reality. Unlike granite, spodumene is not the final product. Spodumene goes through extensive processing to produce its end product the metal lithium. The value of spodumene is basically in the lithium it contains.
- Section 5 of LD 1363 allows for the levels of sedimentation and turbidity to violate water quality standards. As this committee knows from previous work, violation of sedimentation and turbidity standards can have devastating consequences.
- Multiple large open pits up to 100 acres are allowed in section 6.E.(6) “at any one time”. Each open pit could be nearly twice as big as the Maine Mall (55.16 acres). The lithium miners testified that open pits will be much smaller. Then LD 1363 should reflect that such vast open pits will not be allowed.
- “Flooded areas” are mentioned in section 6.E.(3) but there is no definition, description, or limitation in this bill or in the Chapter 200 rule. Could one or more open pits, in contact with ground and surface water, be flooded? This ambiguous mention of “flooded areas” for the first time in relation to any type of mining project is very concerning. Flooded areas should either be prohibited or further delineated.
- The Androscoggin River is threatened by the provisions in this bill. The rivers and brooks that drain Mount Plumbago empty into the Androscoggin. This bill allows harmful sedimentation and turbidity from the lithium mining operation and the associated open pits and flooded areas to contaminate the Androscoggin River.
- In testimony before this committee, hazardous chemical and high heat beneficiation will not be employed. The bill must reflect that this polluting process will not be used.

Lithium is vital. As opposed to sulfide mining, lithium does not generate toxic acid mine drainage. However, LD 1363 allows for other very harmful effects to occur. Lithium, or any metal, should be mined without producing these dangerous effects. In testimony, the lithium miners did not say these dangerous provisions were needed.

LD 1363 should not pass as written.

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