

Dear Maine Legislators:

We are Gary and Eliane Markoff. We own a home in Sebago, Maine overlooking Sebago Lake, and we frequent and enjoy other lakes and rivers in the area. We often wake up to the soothing morning calls of loons. They add so much to the bucolic environment and ecology of the Maine country side; and they need our protection. Bill LD 394 will help preserve these precious and beautiful birds. It will empower the Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) to consider the impact boat racing will have on loons and other wildlife, wildlife habitat, and water quality. Unfortunately, these considerations are not presently taken into account when racing permits are issued. Boat racing often results in as many as four boats abreast invading the loons' nesting areas at speeds as high as 70 mph. No wonder boat strikes are the leading cause of loon death in Maine. In one particularly tragic incident two years ago on Watchic Lake in Standish, a banded adult male loon was sliced across the back during a weekend of high-speed boat racing. Since then, a Loon Advocacy Task Force has been working with the Maine Audubon Society, Maine Lakes, Loon Conservation Associates, and other wildlife advocates to empower MDIFW to consider wildlife dangers in the permitting process. This is a state-wide issue. Without this bill, any race event could be held on any lake or river in Maine, regardless of the size or depth of the body of water, and regardless of how devastating the event may be to resident wildlife.

One does not need to be a radical environmentalist to appreciate the common sense of LD 394. We enthusiastically support the passage of Bill LD 394. Loons and other wildlife that we cherish need protection. This piece of legislation is critically important in that regard.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Gary and Eliane Markoff
19 Eagle Crest Rd.
Sebago, Maine
617-877-9414

Gary Markoff
Sebago

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