

Members of the IF&W Committee,

I am writing to urge you to support LD 394 “An Act to Protect Maine’s Loons and other Wildlife in the Issuance of a Permit to Hold a Regatta, Race or Boat or Water-Ski Exhibition.”

As both a Registered Maine Guide and a Citizen Volunteer for Common Loon Monitoring, I am concerned that races could be hazardous to loons on certain bodies of waters. Boat strikes are already recognized as the leading cause of loon deaths in Maine. I believe that the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is in a good position to consider the impacts on wildlife before deciding if a permit should be issued. It is unfathomable to me that IFW would be in a position to issue permits without consideration of wildlife. Recreation, boating and tourism are all important for Maine. But I do not believe that a Regatta, Race or Boat or Water-Ski Exhibition should occur at the expense of our wildlife. There must certainly be a way to have such activities while considering wildlife, and I believe LD394 should be supported for this purpose.

I am also an avid boater and would never expect to be allowed to boat in any old way I see fit without a consideration of wildlife. I boat in different ways on different types of water and understand my responsibility in keeping out wildlife safe. I think IFW should have the ability to make sure sponsored events have the responsibility to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kristi Sarchi