

Bill Gilman
Freeport Maine

Dear Committee Members

I am writing as a resident of Freeport Maine in support of LD 89 although I feel it's not restrictive enough and to also state I am fully against LD 114 - Both Acts are to Address Airboat Operations in the State.

I believe the State, County and Town should be the only entities to use airboats for any investigative or emergency needs.

I have no issue with the fisherman using traditional 2 or 4 cycle engines to propel their boats in the river as this has been the case for many many years.

I believe that commercial and recreational airboats should be banned -at the latest- by January 1, 2023. This would allow the current airboat owners the ability to use and then sell their boats.

From the present date until airboats are banned, airboat noise should be limited to less than 65 db, 24/7.

Over the past two years, airboats operating on the Harraseeket River have become exceedingly loud; these airboats interrupt the once-peaceful and quiet of the total Freeport waterfront - at all times of day and night, depending upon the tides.

Many Freeport residents including me are brutally awakened from peaceful sleep, and are unable to hear conversations in their own homes. This affects everyone on or near the Freeport waterfront. I have personally recorded numerous times db levels over 105 from inside my home.

This noise pollution does not only impact those living near the water but also thousands of campers at Winslow Park. These campers have been awakened in the early morning to 90+ db airboat noise since water access from the boat ramp is part of Winslow park.

I would think that all of you would agree that we'd much rather have tourists visiting Maine commenting to their out of state friends on the sounds of the wildlife as opposed to being awoken at 5- 5:30 AM by an airboat.

Besides the residents and tourists, the local ecosystem should also be under consideration. For the 17 years I have lived in Freeport I have enjoyed seeing ospreys and bald eagles soaring over the Harraseeket River from my home.

The noise levels of these airboats are definitely affecting the nesting of these and other estuary birds.

I also feel that the access by these airboats to formerly isolated clam flats should be another environmental concern. Our current clam flats may be weakening, and any type of recovery may depend upon these undisturbed estuary areas. It therefore makes no long term sustainability sense to harvest these portions of the Harraseeket River.

I want to also echo all of the other Freeport residents who are opposed to LD 114 which frankly ignores all of the db data collected on the airboat noise trials.

Why have trials at all if you are not going to use the results of the trials in creating your laws?

Thank you for all the time and effort that has spent on this issue and I am hopeful that your review of all the collected data that has been submitted will bring you to the correct decision on this matter.

Sincerely,

Bill Gilman
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