

November 21, 2024

The Honorable Janet Mills

1 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Governor Mills:

I am a camp owner on Sebec Lake. Our camp is located at 0 South Shore, Bowerbank, Maine. I am writing you to express my extreme concern regarding the emergence of 'floating camps' on Maine lakes.

As you may be aware, these structures are completely unregulated. They can (and do) dump grey water and raw sewage into the lake they 'park' in/on. To the best of my knowledge there are only a handful of wastewater pump-out stations on Maine Lakes (Sebago, Moosehead), which means there is no place to dispose of wastewater for most of the 3,000 +/- Great Ponds . (>10 acres) in Maine. Maine lakes are generally phosphate limited, which means if phosphate is introduced (bathing in the lake with soaps containing phosphate) algae growth and invasive species can thrive. These actions certainly harm the lake, its wildlife and fisheries. Furthermore, they could be parked close to the shore near camp owners who are required to abide by regulations that protect the lake from such actions.

The presence of these structures will certainly decrease property values, leading to re-appraisals and lower property tax assessments / collections. A floating camp pays no taxes and no invasive species fees. And even if a system of 'registration leading to revenue' is implemented, the drop in property valuation, and subsequent drop in tax collection revenue, would likely dwarf any fee revenue to be collected.

As the price of lake front property in Maine continues to rise, more and more of these structures are likely to be seen on our lakes.

Maine lakes are special; plentiful, clean, and pristine in an overwhelming of cases. They need to be protected from these floating structures.

I ask that you introduce, or otherwise support legislation that bans these structures, including those already built, and that you not support any legislation that facilitates making them legal under any conditions or circumstances.

Respectfully,

Richard Davee, PE
30 Lady Slipper Lane
Yarmouth, Maine 04096

Richard Davee
Bowerbank, ME
LD 1763

To whom it may concern:

I am in favor of LD1763 to regulate non-water dependent Floating Structures on Maine Waters. I have attached a letter I sent to Governor Mills outlining some of my concerns with floating structures on Maine Lakes. As a Professional Engineer registered in the State of Maine let me summarize my concerns with Floating Structures on Maine Lakes:

- * Pollution - Even if the Floating Structures have holding tanks, there are very few places on freshwater lakes that have pump out facilities. The chance for human waste being discharged into Maine Lakes is quite high.

- * Invasive Species and Algae Growth - Maine Lakes are Phosphorus limited meaning if phosphorus is added (soaps from people bathing or washing dishes) to the freshwater lake, the Lake will have the nutrients it needs to promote algae growth and support invasive species.

- *Noise and Light Pollution: The Lake we are located on (Sebec Lake), is generally quiet and dark at night promoting a healthy environment for animals and good insects such as firefly's. We have seen some camps decide to light up their property like an amusement park. Even some of the pontoon boats are going over the top with lights (and music). There is a real concern of how much lighting and noise a floating camp may make.

Personally we have made a commitment to protect the water quality of Sebec Lake by purchasing 145 acres of upland property so it will not be developed. We also purchased a 12 acre shorefront lot with one camp on it built in 1895 to protect the Lake's water quality.

Unregulated Floating Camps are a bad idea for many reasons. I hope you will support LD 1763.

Thanks
Rick Davee PE