



**Testimony on L.D. 983 –  
An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Promote Land Conservation, Working Waterfronts,  
Water Access and Outdoor Recreation**

**SUPPORT  
April 26, 2021**

Senator Breen, Representative Pierce, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, I am Jeanne Christie, the President of the Maine Wilderness Guides Organization, and I am providing testimony in support of LD 983.

The Maine Wilderness Guides Organization consists of over 90 registered Maine guides, sporting camp and lodge owners, and their supporters. Our mission is to provide a unified voice for the profession of wilderness guiding while maintaining the highest professional, educational, and stewardship standards for the conservation of remote woods and waters. We are dedicated to the protection of habitat and natural resources in the areas we guide in for our livelihoods, our clients, the fish and game we pursue, and for future generations.

MWGO members are small businesses that rely on open, wild spaces and abundant fish and wildlife populations for our businesses to prosper. Land for Maine's Future (LMF) is the state's most effective program for funding the acquisition of conservation and recreation lands. By protecting habitat, the program supports populations of fish and wildlife that guides seek and prevents development from displacing the areas where we guide. Public lands are vitally important to us and access to forests, ponds, rivers, streams, and the ocean enable us to stay in business while helping create high-quality, memorable experiences for our clients.

There are multiple examples of valued protected areas across Maine that are used by guides and are made possible by LMF, including but not limited to:

- Gulf Hags-Whitecap: The Appalachian Mountain Club used LMF funding to help with the purchase of the 100-Mile Wilderness along the Pleasant River in northcentral Maine. The property protects a significant corridor along Gulf Hags, one of the most outstanding natural areas in New England.
- Cold Stream Forest Project: Cold Stream near The Forks is publicly owned and has some of the best native wild brook trout habitat in Maine as well as the strongest trout population in northern New England. Brook trout are prized by anglers and support our guiding businesses. This project protects fish habitat as well as whitetail deer wintering habitat and provides excellent recreational opportunities.

LMF is a highly successful conservation program that Maine Wilderness Guides and related business heavily rely on. The program badly needs refunding and passing a bond would be a wise investment in our state's future.

We respectfully urge the Committee to vote ought to pass on LD 983. Thank you for your time and consideration of our views.