

**TESTIMONY OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE  
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND  
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

**In Opposition to L.D. 1448**

**“An Act to Provide Winter Access to the Bog Lake Public Boat Launch in  
Northfield”**

**Presented by** Senator MOORE of Washington. (BY REQUEST)  
**Cosponsored by** Representative TUELL of East Machias.

**DATE OF HEARING: Monday, April 14, 2025**

Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Diano Circo the Chief Planner at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IFW), speaking on behalf of the Department in opposition to L.D. 1448 - An Act to Provide Winter Access to the Bog Lake Public Boat Launch in Northfield.

This bill requires the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to ensure the gate to the Bog Lake public boat launch in the Town of Northfield is open from January 1<sup>st</sup> to March 15<sup>th</sup> each year.

The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife owns and manages 182 water access sites across the state. These facilities provide critical public access to Maine’s publicly held waters during all seasons. The Bog Lake property was purchased in 2001 and developed in 2013 after a lengthy and extensive permitting process. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection Stormwater Permit for the facility required substantial design and construction detail that resulted in a considerable stormwater management system that parallels the over ½ mile long gravel access road to the launch.

To prevent damage to the access road and stormwater infrastructure, the Department closes the Bog Lake gate prior to the first significant snowfall each winter and reopens it in the spring when staff have determined the road is dry and firm enough for larger vehicles. In the winter, parking is provided next to the gate and anglers can access the site by foot, ATV or snowmobile. This is consistent with how the Department manages other water access facilities with significant stormwater infrastructure of this type and many of our Wildlife Management Area road systems.

As an example of the importance of the gate, in the winter of 2021, the gate at the Bog Lake facility was opened without authorization. This resulted in damage to the road that required \$5,000 in repairs, and ongoing challenges for maintenance of the stormwater system that has increased yearly maintenance costs going forward.

For these reasons we are opposed to this bill and would ask the Committee to carefully consider these concerns.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.