



# Maine Chapter of The Wildlife Society

*EXCELLENCE IN WILDLIFE STEWARDSHIP THROUGH SCIENCE AND EDUCATION*

## **Subject: MAINE CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY RESOLUTION ON GOVERNOR'S ACTIONS CONCERNING LAND FOR MAINE'S FUTURE PROGRAM**

**Date: APRIL 7, 2015**

- Whereas;** The Maine Chapter of The Wildlife Society is a scientific and educational organization comprised of professional wildlife biologists throughout Maine, and;
- Whereas;** The Mission of the Maine Chapter of the Wildlife Society is to foster excellence in wildlife and habitat stewardship through science and education among wildlife professionals within Maine, and;
- Whereas;** The Land for Maine's Future (LMF) program, established in 1987, has played a critical role in the conservation of some of the State's most special places, especially critical wildlife and fisheries habitat, and;
- Whereas;** Maine voters established the LMF program to secure public access for recreation, to conserve our most important habitats, to preserve Maine's farming traditions, and to protect the natural infrastructure vital to both our sense of place and our economic future, and;
- Whereas;** Maine voters have given the LMF program resounding support – overwhelmingly passing six separate bonds in 1987, 1999, 2005, 2007, 2010, and 2012, and;
- Whereas;** For every dollar LMF spends, three additional dollars of federal and private funds are brought in for land conservation, and without LMF funds, only meager state funding would be available to protect threatened resources, and;
- Whereas;** LMF projects represent partnerships with local sporting groups, towns, businesses, state agencies, and other non-government organizations as conservation partners, e.g. land trusts and many others, and;
- Whereas;** The LMF board, composed of state office holders and private citizens appointed by the Governor, reviews proposals from Maine citizens, municipalities, agencies, and land trusts and decides which proposals provide the greatest public benefits, and;
- Whereas;** The LMF program serves Maine's economy by protecting the backbone of our natural resource based industries and it serves Maine people by providing greater public access to Maine's outdoors and by protecting our heritage, and;

- Whereas; Actions by Governor LePage in 2010 and 2012 have withheld bonds worth over \$11 million that were approved by Maine voters for the LMF program, and;**
- Whereas; The \$6.47 million that voters approved in 2010 will expire if Governor LePage does not authorize those funds before the end of 2015, and;**
- Whereas; Governor LePage has claimed that he will look at them (projects) one by one and “Some will make it, some won’t”, a role that by law is not legally his to take and that undermines the comprehensive and thorough process already completed by natural resource professionals of the LMF Board, and;**
- Whereas; Governor LePage is allegedly withholding these voter-approved bonds in an attempt to influence the allowable timber harvest on public reserved lands in Maine, therefore be it**
- Resolved; That the Maine Chapter of The Wildlife Society, condemns the unnecessary and unprecedented actions of Governor LePage in withholding funds approved by Maine voters, and;**
- Resolved; That Governor LePage is urged to release all funds now being withheld, which undermines the 28-year program and disrupts current negotiations between conservation partners and landowners, and;**
- Resolved; That the Maine Chapter of The Wildlife Society admonishes Governor LePage for leveraging the fate of LMF projects for a completely unrelated policy initiative, and;**
- Resolved; That the Maine Chapter of The Wildlife Society will continue to monitor the Governor’s actions that have undermined the LMF program.**