

**Statement by Neil Ward of the Androscoggin River Alliance.  
Given on Thursday, February 7, 2008  
in front of the Maine Board of Environmental Protection**

I am representing CLF, ARA, ALIC, & Maine Rivers in the absence of our attorney, Steve Hinchman; who is on a much deserved family vacation.

Verso has made an objection on the grounds of due process: Let's put due process into perspective.

In 1941 the public collectively stood for the first time and asked that something be done about our river because of its polluted state.

That was 66 years ago!!

In response to the public out cry the State hired a firm from Boston, Metcalf and Eddie, to study the river. They found that from Berlin, NH to Lewiston the river had virtually no dissolved oxygen.

My Father was a 5 year old little boy growing up on a farm on the banks of the Androscoggin in Durham in 1941. He is now 72 years old and retired. And here we are still at odds over the water quality of the Androscoggin River.

In a 1972 speech, Senator Ed Muskie said "there is no comfortable way to do the job of cleaning up streams like the Androscoggin River in Maine. You have got to spend money. You have got to impose standards and you have got to enforce them. There is no easy way to do it."

I was 12 years old when Senator Muskie gave that speech. And in a few weeks I will turn 48; and here we are still at odds over the water quality of the Androscoggin River.

We believe that the citizens of Maine who live down stream of those discharging should finally receive their due process.

Verso has had more then two years to raise this objection. They did not!!

When we filed our appeal my son was a 3 year old toddler; he is now 6 years old and in school. And here we are still at odds over the water quality of the Androscoggin River.

My son should not have to wait his entire childhood or his lifetime to receive his due process.

So I asking on behalf of my son and the citizens of Maine who live downstream that this, the Board of Environmental Protection, take a stand and tell everyone that the time has come for a decision and in Muskie's own words: impose standards and enforce them.