

# SUPPORT

## **LD 154 – An Act To Change the Classification of the Lower Androscoggin River**

**Sponsor:** Senator GOODALL of Sagadahoc

**Cosponsors:** Reps. BERRY of Bowdoinham, BOLDUC of Auburn, CLARKE of Bath, DUCHESNE of Hudson, PRESCOTT of Topsham, and ROTUNDO of Lewiston; and Senators CRAVEN of Androscoggin, GERZOFSKY of Cumberland, and SAVIELLO of Franklin.

**Summary:** This bill upgrades the segment of the Androscoggin River from Lisbon Falls to Merrymeeting Bay from Class C to Class B.

**Explanation:** Maine's water quality classification system has four classes for rivers and streams: AA, A, B, and C. AA is the highest and C is the lowest. There is a very big difference between a Class C river and a Class B river. A Class C requires relatively low dissolved oxygen levels and does not provide very good habitat for aquatic creatures that are sensitive to pollution. In contrast, a Class B river requires higher levels of dissolved oxygen and provides good habitat even for pollution sensitive aquatic creatures. The proposed upgrade of the Lower Androscoggin River to Class B is a very significant development in the history of restoring health to the Androscoggin river. The proposal in LD 154 reflects good data that shows the river is cleaner than previously thought. Upgrading the classification from C to B will help make sure that the river remains at its current level of improved water quality, on route to eventually even healthier levels in the future.

**NRCM supports LD 154.**