



Maine Forest Products Council

The voice of Maine's forest economy

Testimony in Opposition to LD 1985

“An Act to Authorize Removal of Requirements of Forest Certification Systems from the State’s Forest Management Plans”

April 3, 2024

Patrick Strauch, Executive Director

Good morning, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pluecker and members of the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. I’m Patrick Strauch, the Executive Director of the Maine Forest Products Council. The Maine Forest Products Council is an organization representing more than 300 members from all facets of the forest products industry. We also have more than 8 million acres of dues paying members, many of which are certified under one or both major sustainability programs.

I am testifying in strong opposition to LD 1985, “An Act to Authorize Removal of Requirements of Forest Certification Systems from the State’s Forest Management Plans.”

Over the last three decades, independent conservation organizations have developed and implemented voluntary third-party certification programs as a tool to promote and enhance sustainable forest practices. Maine has led the way in this endeavor with 8.3 million acres of forestland certified under one of the three nationally recognized programs, Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Forest Stewardship Council and American Tree Farm. Maine ranks 2nd in the nation for most certified acres.

The vast majority of these certified acres are owned by private landowners who, along with other landowners, have made a commitment to stewarding Maine’s natural resources for future generations. The attached map demonstrates the extent of certified forestland in Maine. Participation in these certification programs is voluntary, but the positive impacts on Maine’s forests, wildlife and ecosystems have been significant.

Additionally, strong private and public participation in these programs has positioned Maine well as we work to attract new forest-based manufacturing businesses to our state. Attracting new forest-based manufacturing businesses has been a top priority for six years now through a public/private collaboration called FOR/Maine. This collaboration is supported by Maine’s federal delegation, along with the University System, private industry, rural communities, and non-profit organizations.

Companies represented on the MFPC Board

A & A Brochu Logging
American Forest Mgmt.
Baskahegan Co.
BBC Land, LLC
Columbia Forest Prod.
Cross Insurance
Family Forestry
Farm Credit East
Fontaine Inc.
H.C. Haynes
Huber Resources
INRS
J.D. Irving
Katahdin Forest Mgmt.
Key Bank
Kennebec Lumber
LandVest Inc.
Louisiana Pacific
Maibec Logging
ND Paper
Nicols Brothers
Pingree Associates
Prentiss & Carlisle
ReEnergy
Richard Wing & Son
Robbins Lumber
Sappi North America
Southern Maine Forestry
Stead Timberlands
St. Croix Tissue
St. Croix Chipping
TD Bank
Timber Resource Group
Timberstate G.
Wadsworth Woodlands
Wagner Forest Mgt.
Weyerhaeuser
Woodland Pulp

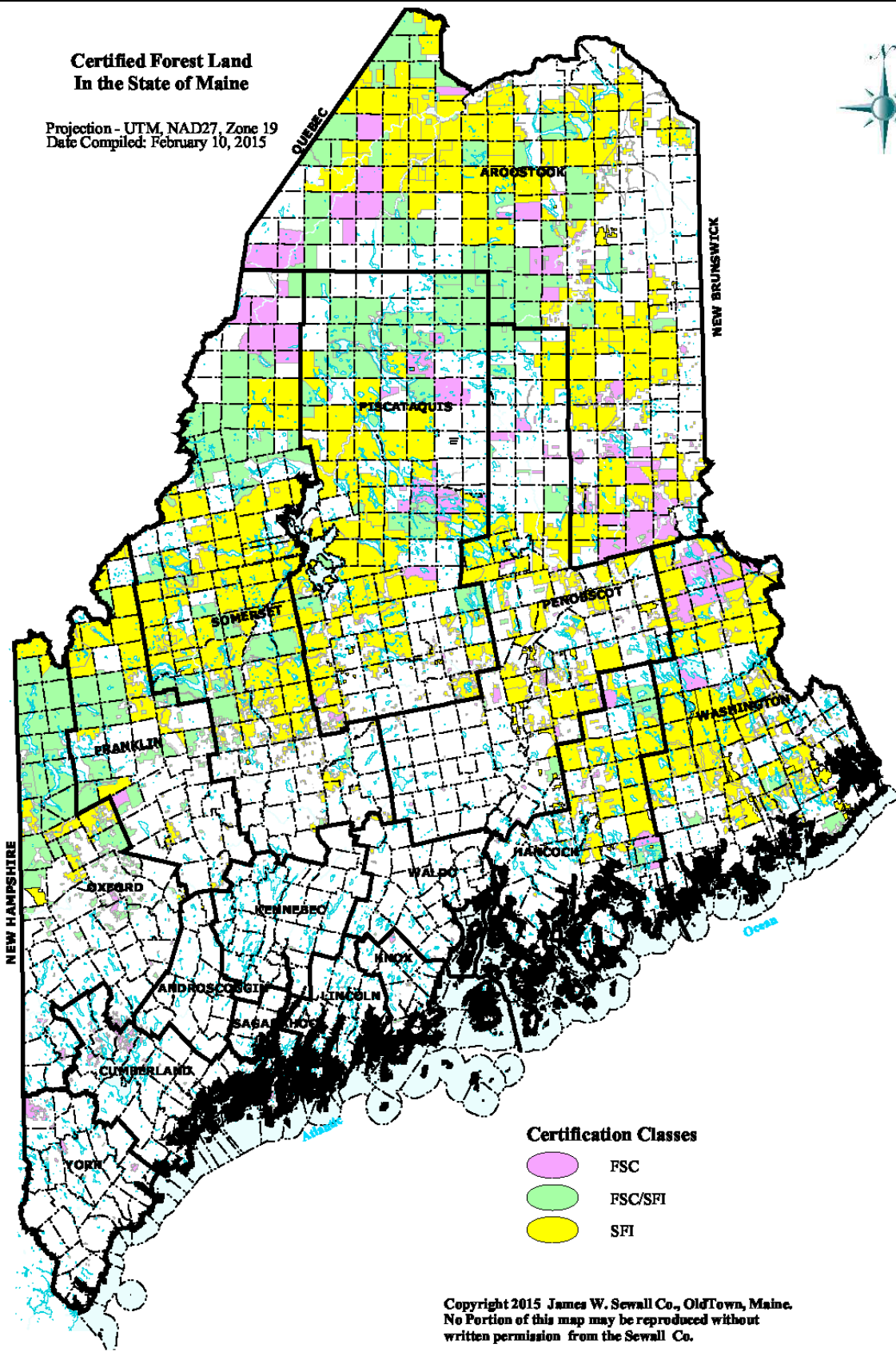
The Maine Forest Products Council is one of the founding members of this collaboration. FOR/ME is a volunteer-driven initiative with a goal of diversifying the state's wood products businesses, attracting capital investments and developing greater economic prosperity for communities impacted by mill closures. As you will see on the FOR/Maine marketing slide below, Maine's strong participation in third party certification programs is a key talking point as we solicit investments for our industry.

Discouraging participation of either private or public landowners will hinder these recruitment efforts. Demand for certified fiber sources is driven by markets, giving Maine a competitive edge for businesses looking to expand or re-locate. It would be unwise for the state to discourage participation or exert undue influence over independent third-party programs that are utilized on a global scale.

For these reasons, please vote **'Ought not to pass'** on LD 1985. Thank you for your consideration.

Certified Forest Land In the State of Maine

Projection - UTM, NAD27, Zone 19
Date Compiled: February 10, 2015



Certification Classes

-  FSC
-  FSC/SFI
-  SFI

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Investment Driver Highlights



Resource Sustainability

- 17 million acres of hard and softwoods
- 90% of Maine's forests under private ownership
- 13 million sustainable tons harvested each year
- Highest percent of certified forests in the United States
- Sawlogs, pulp logs and residuals available for new industry entrants



Market Access

- Easy access to New England's \$1.2 trillion GDP economy
- 75 million people reside within 1000km of Central Maine
- Growing demand for new wood construction materials
- Emerging markets for biomaterials and fuels



Infrastructure

- 5,000 miles of highways
- High-capacity private road network
- 7 Class I II and III railroads
- 4 seaports
- 4 freight airports
- 2 intermodal terminals



Financing

- Stable macro-economic environment
- Renewable chemicals and fuels tax credits
- Innovation grants available
- Banks with long history in forestry credit markets



R&D Partnerships

- Growing ecosystem of partners
- University of Maine
- Maine Technology Institute



Workforce

- 30,000 people employed in the forest industry
- Professional logging contractors
- Workforce development community college training programs
- Skilled talent available from premier forestry programs