

*Lewiston, Maine, Sunday, May 21, 2006*

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## **Letters to the editor:**

### **More efficient, profitable mills**

Concerned citizens from Berlin, N.H., to Casco Bay are celebrating the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's recent draft of new pollution limitations on the Androscoggin River. The new recommendations call for mills along the river to meet minimal Clean Water Act standards within three years. Many people and organizations can take credit for this forward-looking document, not the least of whom is Gov. Baldacci.

Reportedly, International Paper is squawking about the unfairness of this plan. But we should remember that IP has actually met the new standard already and is now merely demonstrating its persistent, tired pattern of resisting any effort to verify that quality in the Androscoggin will reach minimum Clean Water Act standards.

Since IP has already indicated a desire to sell its facilities in Maine, we can reasonably ask why the company should complain so vociferously now. It appears that the most likely reason is that it is losing an opportunity to sell out to a company which might have an even worse environmental philosophy than it has.

Many concerned citizens have pointed out that it would be economically sound strategy for IP to look forward rather than backward as it tries to deal with its pollution problem. Technology is available to make the mills not only cleaner, but more efficient and more profitable.

Preservation of mill jobs depends on the company's making continued investment in upgrading its facilities to incorporate modern technologies. That way we can have both jobs and cleaner water in the Androscoggin.

*Greg D'Augustine, Greene*