

**Power of the People
Natural Resources Council of Maine
2007 Annual Report and Beauty of Maine Calendar**

POWER OF THE PEOPLE

“As its world-famous brand declares, Maine has—in its vivid small towns and waterfronts, its lakes and fields and rocky coastline—exactly the sort of authenticity and quality of place that can set a place apart.”

This observation, made in a report on Maine’s economic potential by The Brookings Institution, a nationally respected think tank, describes some of the special qualities of our state that the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) must defend. As Maine’s leading advocacy organization working for clean air, healthy waters, and vast, unbroken forests, we are fierce protectors of the “Maine brand.” That responsibility has never been more compelling than this past year. We thank you for standing with us through this especially challenging time. Your support—the power of the people—has never been stronger.

Plum Creek felt once again the strength of many voices—your voices and ours—coming together with one clear message: We will not let you spoil Moosehead Lake forever. No doubt the company’s executives expected their \$5 billion corporation to easily roll over Maine people, including NRCM, a nonprofit organization with fewer resources. But over the past three years, we have never retreated, and we continue to expose Plum Creek’s false promises, shadowy negotiations, and track record of poor corporate citizenship. With you standing with us, we will not stop.

When NRCM helped lead efforts to ban from televisions and other household products the toxic flame retardant Deca in favor of safer alternatives, we found ourselves fending off a well-funded ambush by the chemical industry. We won because we built a powerful alliance of public health, environmental, and fire safety organizations, and because of the involvement of concerned citizens like you who sent a clear message to legislators that they should vote in favor of protections.

NRCM is committed to a much more aggressive statewide program of clean power sources and energy efficiency. We continue to be a bold advocate for appropriately sited wind power in Maine. Yet even amid the growing global warming crisis, we face opposition to projects that would provide clean, renewable energy close to home. Your voice, and your family’s voice, and the voices of your friends and neighbors, hold the power to advance a new energy future for our state—and help set an example for the rest of the country.

Success in these campaigns—for protection of Maine’s iconic landscape, for safer consumer products, for clean energy—is essential if we are to preserve our quintessential “Maine brand.” They will also help ensure the long-term health and prosperity of our people. Such battles can—and often do—take years, and they are never easy. Powerful

corporate interests have access to tremendous resources. But NRCM's perseverance, and the strong voices of our members and friends, proved this year, as in years past, that the power of the people is greater still.

Protecting Moosehead, One of Maine's Most Treasured Places

In 2007, Seattle-based Plum Creek's complete proposal for massive resort and second-home development in the Moosehead Lake region finally reached the Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC). NRCM worked closely with local residents, camp owners, area businesses, and environmental partners to evaluate the proposal, educating the public about the scope of the plan and the threats to Maine's North Woods. Through our efforts, thousands of people across the state shared their concerns with LURC. We also recruited land-use planners to develop an alternative vision demonstrating that Maine can protect fragile habitat, ensure public access, and conserve Moosehead's unique qualities through conservation of high-value habitat and well-sited development.

Body of Evidence

The more we know about the threat of toxic chemicals in consumer products, the better action we can take against this threat. That's why in 2007, NRCM and our partners in the Alliance for a Clean and Healthy Maine published a ground-breaking report, "Body of Evidence." Our report puts the spotlight on this serious issue and is helping serve as a springboard for chemicals reform legislation to help protect the health of our families and our environment.

Safeguarding Existing Environmental Laws

Maine's strong environmental protections make this state one of the best places to live and raise a family. NRCM helps to enact many of these protections, and we respond immediately to efforts to weaken existing environmental regulations. In 2007, we defeated efforts to water down protection for wildlife habitat and tie the hands of government agencies charged with protecting our environment.

Working for Wind Power

Wind power is one of the safest sources of power for our environment and people, and Maine has the highest wind energy potential of all New England states. NRCM continues to lead efforts toward our goal for Maine to acquire 5 percent of its electricity through appropriately sited wind power projects. In 2007, our state's first large-scale wind farm—the largest in New England—powered up clean, renewable energy from Mars Hill. NRCM also brokered an opportunity to protect ecologically sensitive Redington Mountain while supporting a clean, renewable wind project on nearby Black Nubble. We know that renewable energy is a high-priority for our members, and wind power will continue to be an area of strong focus for NRCM.

Investing in Maine's Future

Quality of life in Maine means guaranteeing access to our spectacular coastal areas, lakes, rivers, and forests. NRCM helped put a \$35.5 million natural resources bond on the November '07 ballot aimed at leveraging investments in Maine's increasingly revitalized waterfront communities and in the popular Land for Maine's Future program (LMF).

Investments like these have conserved lands in all 16 Maine counties, have helped Maine's working farms, and have protected access to mountain summits, rivers, lakes, forests, and shorelines.

Tackling the E-Waste Problem

In January 2007, Maine implemented one of the nation's first electronic waste recycling laws. NRCM and our supporters led efforts to require manufacturers to fund consolidation centers where municipalities can send obsolete computer monitors and televisions for safe recycling. In another victory, retailers who sell cell phones are required as of January 2008 to accept—free of charge—used cell phones for recycling. “E-waste” is a growing problem and these laws will keep hazardous materials, such as lead and arsenic, out of Maine's environment.

Reducing Global Warming Pollution

With more than 3,500 miles of coastline, Maine is especially vulnerable to the impacts of sea-level rise caused by global warming. Global warming pollution also is contributing to Maine's high asthma rate. In 2007, NRCM provided strong leadership resulting in a bill to cut global warming pollution. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative will reduce pollution from power plants by almost 20 percent by the year 2019. It also boosts funding for energy efficiency programs that will benefit Maine businesses and consumers. It is a crucial step toward protecting Maine's coastal communities and our families' health from harm caused by global warming pollution.

Lake Quality Protection

Clean lakes swimming, paddling, and for wildlife habitat are one of the qualities that define Maine as a special place. Yet phosphorous from detergents and fertilizers pose a serious threat to the water quality of Maine's lakes. NRCM worked hard in 2007 to help pass a law requiring sellers of high-phosphorous products to post information that will help consumers make environmentally sound choices.

Protection from Toxic Chemicals

Toxic chemicals in consumer products pose a serious threat to the health of Maine families, wildlife, and environment. In the face of high-priced chemical industry lobbying, NRCM and our allies helped pass a bill banning toxic Deca, a harmful flame retardant found in televisions and other home products. Safer alternatives exist, which is why the bill was supported by fire safety professionals, children's advocates, and more than 50 Maine groups.

Progress on Renewable Energy and Efficiency

Emissions from oil and other nonrenewable energy sources threaten the health of Maine's natural resources. NRCM was part of several initiatives in 2007 promoting alternative energy and efficiency. One promotes energy efficiency in town buildings and schools; the other ensures that by January 1, 2010, all electricity used in state-owned buildings comes from renewable sources. By working for policies like these, NRCM and our supporters help keep Maine a special place to live, work, and play.

Protection for Maine's Wildlife

Maine is home to extraordinary wildlife, including some species that need special protection. NRCM participated in a scientific process that identified 14 birds, mammals, butterflies, and other creatures to be added to Maine's endangered or threatened species list. The 2007 list includes Short-eared Owl, New England cottontail, juniper hairstreak (butterfly), and others. Identifying species that need help is an important step in protecting them. Thanks to your ongoing support, NRCM will help ensure such protections.

Power of the People for 2008

Being effective against well-funded lobbyists and powerful special interests means taking bold actions. That can include taking a stand when others won't. Since 1959, NRCM has remained Maine's leading advocacy organization working for clean air, healthy waters, and vast, unbroken forests. Thank you for standing with us. We look forward to standing together with you—the power of the people—throughout the coming year.