

June 2, 2010

Dear NRCM Member,

It is with a profound sense of gratitude that I write to tell you that I will be stepping down as executive director of the Natural Resources Council of Maine later in the year. When I joined the staff in December 1983, I could never have imagined how engaging and fulfilling my role as an environmental advocate would be. Leading NRCM has been much more than a job; it has been my life's work for 26 years.

My decision did not come easily, because I love this work and the people who are so much a part of it. But I have decided to spend more time outdoors, hiking the mountains, paddling rivers, cycling back roads, sailing the coast, and exploring the back country and parks of this beautiful state. My wife, Dana, who has supported my efforts over the years, shares this passion for exploring—in Maine and beyond. My desire to spend more time with our daughters, my two older brothers, and other family and friends also influenced this important decision.

E.B. White, a long-time member of NRCM, once remarked during an interview: “If the world were merely seductive, that would be easy. If it were merely challenging, that would be no problem. But I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve (or save) the world and a desire to enjoy (or savor) the world. This makes it hard to plan the day.”

As you might guess, I am not ready to call this step retirement. I have been an activist since the days after my Vietnam War experience. I hope to continue to help shape Maine's environmental policy through engagement with NRCM. I plan to be active on national climate and energy policy. And I can imagine becoming involved in the campaigns to stop mountain-top removal coal mining in Appalachia (near where I grew up in Virginia) and to protect the red rock wilderness areas of southern Utah (some of my favorite hiking territory).

There are many people who make NRCM the extraordinary organization we are today: a talented, committed and courageous staff; a diverse and dedicated board; and loyal and generous members like you, who are our partners in taking care of Maine. Thank you for all that you have done for Maine, and for being a part of my NRCM experience. It is a privilege to work with you.

I have every confidence in a strong and vibrant future for NRCM. The organization faced great challenges in its first 50 years, and achieved important successes that stand today as landmark accomplishments. We used skillful

advocacy and built strong constituencies in those early days to establish the Allagash Wilderness Waterway and help defeat the oil refinery proposed for Eastport. My first major campaign was protecting the West Branch of the Penobscot River from the Big A Dam, a seemingly impossible task. As a member of the Penobscot Coalition, NRCM played a key role in raising public awareness and encouraging citizen activism in our successful defense of the river. Citizen activism remains a hallmark of our advocacy today.

There are, of course, many unfinished projects for NRCM and for the broader environmental community. We must continue our efforts to conserve the North Woods; restore the ecological health of the Androscoggin, Penobscot, St. Croix and other rivers; protect our families from toxic contaminants; and create a clean, secure energy future. Farther afield, the challenges are truly daunting, as evidenced by the disastrous oil rig blow-out in the Gulf of Mexico and the unfortunate resistance of the U.S. Senate to address the threat of climate change. We must set a price for carbon and overhaul federal energy policy. Together, NRCM and our allies will meet the environmental challenges that lie ahead.

In his enclosed letter, Board President Bill Houston describes the search process, which we anticipate will take several months. In the meantime, I will continue to serve as executive director and be fully engaged with the important work that must be done for Maine's future.

Best regards,



Everett B. Carson
Executive Director