

Maine's Environmental Watchdog

The Natural Resources Council of Maine is not just an organization of 23 staff located in Augusta. We are a community of more than 12,000 members and activists who care about protecting Maine's environment. We are an extended web of relationships with elected officials, business leaders, public health professionals, and technical experts. We are a member of – and in many cases the lead organization in – more than a dozen coalitions working to protect Maine's forests and waters, reduce toxic risks to Maine people and the environment, and promote clean energy and climate action. We are an instigator of action, and a mobilizer of people. And we are Maine's leading environmental watchdog.



These roles have been a key to our record of accomplishments over the past 50 years, and they are what define us as Maine's leading environmental advocacy organization. We are advocates – for the air, water, forests, and wildlife; for a society free of toxic risks to human health and the environment; and for clean energy and a sustainable Maine economy.

The Year Ahead

Responding to a New Political Landscape: The November elections have ushered in a new governor and major changes in the Maine Legislature. NRCM is the one environmental organization able to rapidly connect with newly elected lawmakers, work with leadership to influence committee assignments, and become a resource to elected officials and the Administration. NRCM has five staff members who spend time at the State House building relationships, helping draft bills, testifying, lobbying lawmakers, and sharing information. We are seen as the “go to” organization for expert opinions on a broad array of environmental issues.

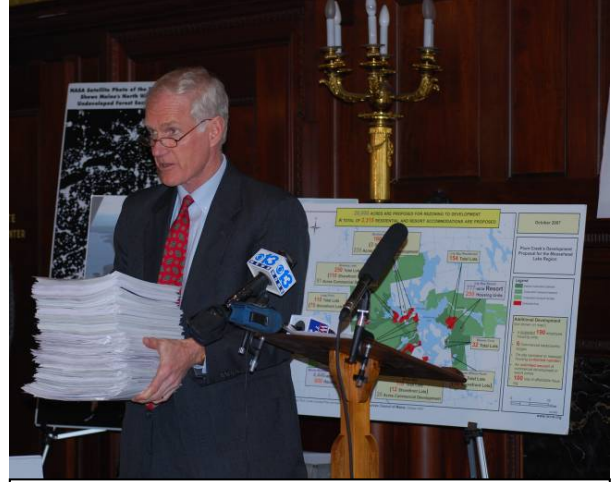
Defeating Bad Bills: NRCM reviews every bill that is introduced, with a watchful eye for any that might pose a threat to Maine's environmental protections. We already know that there will be a batch of “bad bills.” There always are, as lobbyists attempt to get bills through to create new loopholes for polluters, weaken environmental standards, or roll back entire laws. Defeating these bills takes time, grassroots involvement, and careful legislative strategy. The year ahead will be no exception, and some believe we may face an onslaught of efforts to weaken Maine's environmental laws.

Mobilizing Public Opinion: NRCM members and activists live in towns throughout the state, and they are poised to help affect the outcome of the policy process and administrative proceedings. We know from lawmakers that even a handful of communications from constituents can affect how they vote. And we know from experience that our work to encourage a high volume of public comments to the Board of Environmental Protection and Land Use Regulation Commission can have a major impact on the outcome. During the year ahead, we will ratchet up our grassroots efforts with a new program for those NRCM members who are prepared to take action reliably, across the full range of our agenda.

NRCM Staff and Supporters in Action



Toxics Project Director Matt Prindiville, with daughter Tula, waits to testify at August 17, 2010, hearing to designate bisphenol-A as a priority chemical for regulation in consumer products. More than 70 supporters attended the hearing and dozens of activists have flooded the Board of Environmental Protection with comments.



Brownie Carson at March 18, 2008 news conference showing 2,000 public comments opposed to Plum Creek's development. The Land Use Regulation Commission received only 100 comments in support of the massive proposal.

Citizen Action Day

NRCM hosts a training and lobby day every year to build citizen support for our top environmental priorities. Participants (below) learn about pending legislation and meet with lawmakers and the governor. Join us for Citizen Action Day on April 5, 2011 in Augusta.



Maine business leaders joined Deputy Director Lisa Pohlmann at a March 23, 2010 news conference to announce that 500 businesses had signed a petition to Maine's senators, calling on them to pass climate and clean energy legislation.

