

Maine Environment

PROTECTING THE NATURE OF MAINE



SPRING 2006

Of Birds, Beasts, and People

NRCM's Work Helping to Protect Maine's Ecologically Important, Legendary North Woods

By Jeffrey V. Wells, Ph.D.

Think of it as a 10-million acre balsam-draped jewel, its edges slowly being chipped away. Within this particular jewel lie thousands of lakes and ponds, and tens of thousands of miles of rivers and streams. Every summer, from its forests and wetlands spring forth billions of insects that provide food for millions of birds to raise their young—some having traveled from as far away as South America. More moose live here than anywhere else in the U.S. outside of Alaska, and this spectacular region is home to the largest remaining populations of wild, native brook trout.

This is Maine's North Woods.

The same North Woods Thoreau described when he wrote in 1864 that from the top of Mt. Katahdin he could see "Countless lakes—Moosehead in the southwest, forty miles long by ten wide, like a gleaming silver platter at the end of the table."

The same North Woods that were virtually roadless as late as 1940 when author Helen Hamlin wrote, describing a bush flight from Chesuncook Lake to Portage, that there was "nothing in between—no people, no habitation, no roads—nothing but what seemed like a thousand lakes and ponds."

"To lose such [the Plum Creek] battle for Moosehead would put the remaining North Woods at risk for additional sprawling development, destroying the lands that have for centuries nourished people and wildlife alike"

Countless people can tell similar stories of Maine's North Woods. It is a place deeply entrenched in the cultural fabric not only of Maine people but of citizens across the U.S.—millions, through the years, who have come to canoe, camp, fish, hike, work the forest, snowmobile, hunt, or watch birds and other wildlife.

These are the reasons why the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) and other groups have fought for decades to ensure that the North Woods remains our state's most significant and precious ecological resource for future-generations of Mainers.

NRCM led efforts to establish the Allagash Wilderness Waterway in 1970. NRCM stood on the front lines 30 years ago when the Dickey-Lincoln dam project threatened to flood more than 80,000 acres, including habitat that is home to the globally rare plant, the Furbish lousewort, and forever change the character of the St. John River. The organization stood firm against Great Northern Paper Company and its "Big A" dam proposed for the Penobscot's West Branch that would have spoiled the spectacular whitewater rapids of Ripogenus Gorge and ruined a first-class river. NRCM

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The North Woods is breeding grounds for many northern birds, including 20 percent of the nation's Black-throated Blue Warblers.

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NRCM Releases A Vision for the Moosehead Lake Region

In March, NRCM released *A Vision for the Moosehead Lake Region*, a publication showing how large-scale, permanent conservation can be paired with robust local communities in the Moosehead Lake area.

Seattle-based Plum Creek Real Estate Corporation submitted in April 2005 a major development proposal for Maine's Moosehead Lake region. The company's huge proposal included 975 houses in 30 subdivisions, 2 resorts, a marina, 3 RV parks, 4 sporting camps, and 116 rental cabins scattered across 29 townships on 424,000 acres surrounding Moosehead Lake.

NRCM's alternative vision for the region is centered on community and conservation. This approach would ensure permanent, broad-scale conservation while protecting the working

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The North Woods offers vast recreational opportunities that Mainers have enjoyed for generations.

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STAFF NEWS ■ ■ ■ ■

Welcome, New Staff



B. DIMOND/NRCM

Ryan Ewing, Action Network Coordinator

Ryan arrived at NRCM in February with a background in campaign organizing. He has undergraduate degrees in Theatre and Political Science from McDaniel College in Maryland and a master's in Political Management from The George Washington University. He can be found moonlighting as a town councilor in Brunswick's 6th council district. Ryan is an Eagle Scout who enjoys the great outdoors. He lives in downtown Brunswick with his significant other, Amy.



Alice Percy, Part-time Receptionist

Alice is a lifelong resident of Whitefield. In 2005 she received her B.A. in conservation biology from Colby College, where she focused her studies on agricultural issues such as farmland biodiversity and genetic drift. She is a board member and chair of the Public Policy Committee at the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association. She also writes for the Maine Organic Farmer and Gardener newspaper. She and her husband raise draft horses and organic hogs on her family's land.

Goodbye to Our Friends



NRCM FILES

Outreach coordinator **Jessica Griffin** left NRCM in December and has accepted a position as administrative assistant to the Ecological Services and Restoration Teams at Woodlot Alternatives in Topsham. She is looking forward to working for this company she has long admired, and to riding her bike to work!

Pinheads, l to r: Allison Wells, Becky Morse, Beth Dimond (Capt.), and Lynn Faria. Missing: Lynwood Morse.



NRCM / S. YINDRA

Neil Ward, part-time receptionist, moved on in February to become program director for the Androscoggin River Alliance. Neil has lived along the Androscoggin his entire life and is committed to seeing it cleaned up.

Good luck, Jessica and Neil!

Thank you, Randa and Amie!

Randa Capponi, a senior at Colby College majoring in Environmental Studies and



COURTESY R. CAPPONI

Italian Studies, spent the month of January as an intern at NRCM. A native of Standish, Randa did a terrific job on everything we asked of her, from research to spreadsheets to analysis of Maine's energy efficiency program.

Amie Coffin, who lives in Gardiner with her husband, daughter, and three precocious cats, pitched in as part-time advocacy assistant wherever she was needed during the



J. WELLS



B. DIMOND/NRCM

bush legislative session.

Staff Notes...

■ **Judy Berk**, advocacy communications director, spent a month in New Zealand, walking the "great walks" through forests of tree ferns, over alpine meadows, across the southern alps. She saw fur seals; dusky and bottlenosed dolphins; Fiordland Crested, Yellow-eyed and Blue penguins, and a gregarious brown forest parrot called a kea. "New Zealand is a mecca for nature-based travel and would serve as a good model for Maine's nature-based tourism efforts," says Judy.

■ North Woods Project Leader **Cathy Johnson** is serving on the board of the Maine Wilderness Guides Organization, formed to provide a unified voice for the profession of wilderness guiding while maintaining ethical, educational, and environmental standards and advocating for the preservation and restoration of remote woods and waters.

In January, several brave staff formed the **NRCM Pinheads** and entered a local bowling league. The team placed among the top-scoring teams, but most importantly had a lot of fun!



COURTESY DAVID FOLEY

WASHINGTON WATCH: Short-changing the Environment

There is a very real threat looming for Maine's environment, but this time it's not coming from out-of-state smokestacks or sprawling subdivisions. It's in the Bush administration's proposed 2007 federal budget.

The budget slashes \$2 billion—a 13 percent cut from last year—in funding for our clean water infrastructure, public lands and national parks, and initiatives to promote clean air and clean up toxic pollution. Many of these cuts are to basic programs that ensure our drinking water is safe for our kids, our air is clean, and our public lands are adequately managed for recreational and economic activity. Even more damaging, the administration is proposing larger cuts through 2010, resulting in a 23 percent—or \$27 billion—cut to our country's funding for conservation and environmental protection.

If the budget is enacted as written, in Maine, federal funding for our clean water infrastructure will be reduced by \$14.7 million over the next five years. This cut comes after several consecutive years of shrinking federal support for clean water programs. These cuts go right to the heart of what our government is supposed to do: safeguard drinking water supplies and ensure that the recreational activities, wildlife habitat, jobs, and economic opportunities afforded by clean lakes, rivers, and estuaries are protected and promoted.

Also at issue is the proposed cut in funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), our nation's premier tool for creating and protecting parks, forests,

wildlife refuges, and open spaces for all Americans to enjoy. Despite the president's campaign promise to fully fund LWCF at \$900 million, only \$85 million is in his budget for LWCF. National treasures, from Acadia and the Everglades to the parks in our own neighborhoods, would suffer. These cuts are on top of a \$100 million dollar reduction in funding for our national parks and a proposal to sell off up to 800,000 acres of our nation's public lands to private interests.

As Mainers, we take great pride in our natural heritage. Our tourist economy is built on outdoor activities that rely upon a clean and healthy environment. Traditional activities such as hunting, fishing, canoeing, and hiking are enjoyed by generations of Mainers and visitors alike. Our natural resources are vital to the growth of our communities, essential for our businesses to create jobs, and provide the recreational opportunities we have long cherished.

By the time this goes to print, the budget debate could be over. NRCM will continue working to ensure that Maine's Congressional delegation works hard for adequate funding for protections for our environment and public health. Join us in urging them to advocate for a fair and balanced budget, one that protects our nation's natural treasures and public health, that promotes our resource-based tourism economy, and ensures necessary investments to conserve our natural heritage for future generations.

— **Matt Prindiville, Federal Policy Advocate**



Mangroves in the Everglades National Park.

BETTY HARTLEY

Maine Environment

Editor / Allison Childs Wells

Feature Writer / Jeffrey B. Wells, Ph.D

General Assistance / Beth Dimond

Design / Amy Fischer Design

Contributing Writers / Jennifer Andersen, Nick Bennett, Judy Berk, Bob Duchesne, Lynn Faria, Matt Prindiville, Allison Childs Wells

Editorial Board / Judy Berk, Lynn Faria, Gretta Wark, Allison Childs Wells

Executive Director, Natural Resources Council of Maine / Everett "Brownie" Carson

President, NRCM Board of Directors / Sharon Tisher

Maine Environment is provided four times a year to more than 9,000 members and supporters of the Natural Resources Council of Maine. NRCM is a Maine-based nonprofit membership organization working to protect, conserve, and restore our land, air, wildlife, and water, now and for future generations. Membership starts at \$28/year.

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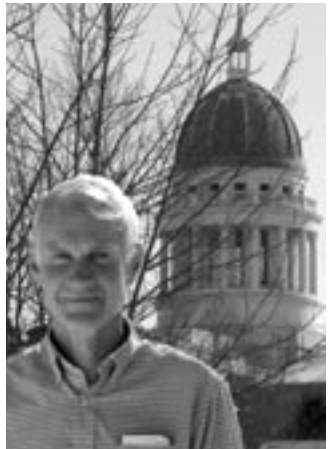


NATURAL RESOURCES COUNCIL OF MAINE

3 Wade Street, Augusta, Maine 04330-6317
800-287-2345 • FAX 207-622-4343
www.maineenvironment.org

A Vision for Conservation and Community-building

Forty-five years ago this summer, in 1961, I saw for the first time Moosehead Lake and the forests that surround it. One of my brothers and I paddled from Rockwood to Northeast Carry, made the nearly two-mile portage, then canoed down the West Branch of the Penobscot River. We took a side trip into Lobster Lake overnight, and saw our first moose early the next morning. We continued down the West Branch into Chesuncook Lake, fought fierce headwinds for most of two days, and finished a glorious, week-long trip near Ripogenus Dam.



B. DIMOND / NRCM

As a teenager, it never occurred to me that a place as remote and beautiful as Moosehead Lake might someday be put at risk by extensive real estate development. Like generations of Mainers and visitors who had explored this treasure for over 100 years, I simply assumed that it would be there for my children and grandchildren. However, as I have watched wild areas and undeveloped lakeshores transformed into subdivisions and resorts all over the country during the past several decades, I have learned that natural treasures must be safeguarded.

In my 22 years as Executive Director of the Natural Resources Council, I have seen much of Maine change dramatically, especially in our southern counties and along the coast. But NRCM, both during and before my time, has played a critical role in protecting some of Maine's true gems. We stopped the Army Corps from destroying the St. John River with the Dickey-Lincoln dam in the 1970s, and we were a leading member of the Penobscot Coalition that successfully defended the West Branch from Great Northern Paper Company's "Big A" dam in the 1980s.

Now, we face Seattle-based Plum Creek's proposal for large-scale development on and around Moosehead Lake. In April, 2005, the company submitted to the Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC) a plan for 975 house lots, two resorts, a marina, three RV parks, four sporting camps, and 116 rental cabins—too much development in the wrong places, with no proposed permanent conservation.

NRCM was the first group to oppose Plum Creek's massive development scheme. We announced our opposition last June and then went to work creating an alternative vision for the area. We listened carefully to the hopes and concerns of residents in communities around Moosehead Lake, heard the comments of our members, and hired a land use planning firm, Terrence DeWan and Associates. *A Vision for the Moosehead Lake Region*, released on March 14th, is the product of these efforts.

We believe that such a vision is a necessary step toward encouraging Maine citizens and our leaders to conserve the natural resources and craft a sustainable economic future for the Moosehead area. As you'll read in this issue of *Maine Environment*, Maine's North Woods offer not only unique recreational opportunities but also is home to the largest populations of some of our most spectacular wildlife in the lower 48 states. In some cases, these are "source populations," ensuring the ongoing survival of populations elsewhere; for other creatures—lynx and American marten, for instance—the North Woods is the only place in the state where they can be found.

NRCM supporters know we have something special in the North Woods, which is why, together, we have beaten back some powerful threats in the region over many years. Now, once again, we have sent Plum Creek a clear signal that we will defend another of Maine's great treasures—Moosehead Lake. So Plum Creek has "gone back to the drawing board," and has yet (as of this writing) to submit a revised plan to LURC. But when it does, you can be certain that NRCM will be there to ensure that Moosehead—and the surrounding forests, lakes, and ponds—will be there for future generations.

Brownie

Brownie Carson, Executive Director

Tip of the Day

Turn It Off. Leaving your computer on overnight is less efficient than shutting it down and booting it up each day. Turning it off will decrease energy use, reduce mechanical stress, and prolong the computer's life.

For a "Tip of the Day" every day, visit our website at www.maineenvironment.org.

Federal Appeals Court Rules in Favor of Maine and Others in Clear Air Case

On March 17, a federal appeals court overturned a clean air regulation issued by the Bush administration that would have allowed many power plants, refineries, and factories to avoid installing new pollution controls. Maine was among a coalition of states and advocacy groups who had filed suit in opposition.

The United States Circuit Court for the District of Columbia Circuit (which has primary jurisdiction in challenges to federal regulations) said the "plain language" of the law required a stricter approach. The ruling is a defeat for the Environmental Protection Agency and industry, and a win for more than a dozen states—including Maine—and for advocates for environmental safeguards.



The case arose in 2003 when EPA issued a new rule to exempt many equipment modifications from what is known as "new source review" ("NSR"). The NSR section of the clean air act governs permits required at more than 1,300 coal-fueled power plants around the country and 17,000 factories, refineries, and chemical plants that spew millions of tons of pollution into the air each year. NSR requires that companies install up-to-date control technologies whenever they substantially modify existing pollution-emitting facilities. The Court recognized that the intent of the NSR provision was to ensure that pollution controls would be modernized along with the plants themselves. The Court's decision prevents the Administration from allowing companies to avoid this important requirement. Says NRCM's toxics project director Jon Hinck, "By blocking EPA's shameful retreat on clean air rules, the court has literally given Maine a breath of fresh air."

Comments? Suggestions?

Do you have comments or suggestions about our newsletter?

We want to know what you think! Although we don't have room to run comments in our newsletter, we may publish them online. Send your comments to Editor, Maine Environment, Natural Resources Council of Maine, 3 Wade Street, Augusta, ME 04330 or email them to allison@nrcm.org.

FAST Facts

Last year was the warmest on record, according to a Reuters news story. NASA's Drew Shindell attributed the rise to emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, methane and ozone, with the burning of fossil fuels being the primary source.



Warmer weather in Alaska resulted in the Iditarod Trail sled dog race having to be diverted from its traditional route to one farther north, where there was more snow, according to a Reuters report. Some scientists point to this as a sign of global warming, especially in Alaska and the rest of the Arctic, where the impact of rising temperatures can be amplified.



CLARKSON UNIVERSITY

Pacific Seafood, a wholesale distributor in Sacramento, in March became the first seafood processor in the nation to offer its customers the option of testing the level of mercury in the fish they purchase, Knight-Ridder reports. The computer-based testing system makes it fast and affordable to test fish for mercury levels before it leaves the processing plant on its way to grocery stores and restaurants.

MAINE'S "NORTH WOODS ADVANTAGE"

By Bob Duchesne

BIRDERS who live out-of-state know that Maine has an unfair advantage over its neighbors: We have the North Woods. In fact, you can fit both New Hampshire and Vermont into the northern Maine forest and still leave room for Rhode Island. And the birding here is bountiful, offering untapped resources for nature-based tourism.

Northern Maine is a transition zone between the northern forest and the boreal forest more typical of Canada. As a result, Maine has an explosion of warblers and other birds to offer nature-based tourists. It also has resident species rarely seen even in southern parts of the state.

Gray Jays (also known as "camp robbers" for helping themselves to any available food) and Black-backed Woodpeckers are found in areas of the boreal forest opened by logging and beaver flooding. Boreal Chickadees—look for a brown cap and listen for a wheezy, slower *chick-a-dee-dee* compared to the familiar Black-capped Chickadee—gravitate to thicker spruce stands. Spruce Grouse are specialists of conifer habitats and, for expert birders, are more coveted even than puffins. Olive-sided Flycatchers populate areas opened by logging, while Yellow-bellied Flycatchers occupy boggy areas protected from cutting. These same bogs support nesting Palm Warblers and Lincoln's Sparrows. The Bicknell's Thrush is highly prized and has only been recognized as a separate species from the Gray-cheeked Thrush since 1996. In Maine it is seldom found at elevations below 3,000 feet, and is more often heard than seen.

What other North Woods specialties would affluent birders pay good money to find, given some decent marketing? Crossbills, Northern Goshawks, Mourning Warblers, Blackpolls, and Northern Saw-whet Owls to name a few. Throw in a few moose and some intelligent conservation, and let the ecotourism cash register ring!

Bob Duchesne is a frequent Maine Audubon trip leader, a member of the state legislature, and the developer of the Maine birding trail at www.mainebirdingtrail.com



BIRDERS travel from afar to see Black-backed Woodpeckers, a specialty bird of Maine's North Woods.

BOB DUCHESNE

A Vision for the Moosehead Lake Region

Continued from page 1

forest, wildlife habitat, scenic resources, and the potential for remote recreation—an increasingly important component of nature-based tourism for the region.

At the same time, the alternative vision would direct development to areas within two miles of towns and the existing ski area at Big Moose Mountain.

"This vision would bring new vitality and much-needed resources to the communities of Greenville and Rockwood," says NRCM Executive Director Brownie Carson. "It would sustain the wild and remote character that could make Moosehead Lake the premier gateway to Maine's North Woods Experience."

The "alternative vision" is based on the work of the local Moosehead Futures Committee, findings from more than 30 visits by NRCM staff with area residents over the past year, Greenville's town plan, the Land Use Regulation Commission's (LURC's) goals, citizen comments submitted to LURC, and available information about topography, soils, plants and wildlife.

A Vision for the Moosehead Lake Region can be downloaded at our website at www.maineenvironment.org, by calling us at (800) 287-2345, or by emailing us at nrcm@nrcm.org.

Of Birds, Beasts, and People

Continued from page 1

fought shoulder-to-shoulder with its partners beginning 20 years ago to pass the Land for Maine's Future bond that provided funds for purchasing large acreages of conservation lands now protected in the North Woods.

Now, NRCM is going head-to-head with Seattle-based Plum Creek, the nation's largest private landowner. On March 14, NRCM released *A Vision for the Moosehead Lake Region* to help ensure permanent conservation of most of the region, and with it, Maine's heritage. To lose such a battle for Moosehead would put the remaining North Woods at risk for additional sprawling development, destroying the lands that have for centuries nourished people and wildlife alike.

PROTECTING THE SOURCE

Research has shown that in general, the smaller and more isolated a forest patch, the less likely it will be able to support a self-sustaining population of animals. Without a steady supply of new individuals moving from large habitat patches ("source populations") to fragmented and isolated habitat patches, the populations in those small patches would eventually die out. As the largest uninterrupted block of forest east of the Mississippi, Maine's North Woods provides source populations for adjoining regions, supporting some of the largest populations of certain birds and mammals in the Northeast—populations that provide the only source of potential immigrants to areas where populations may be at higher risk of disappearing.

More than 130 species of birds nest in the North Woods. In 1995, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published a report estimating the percentages of the total populations of different songbird species that breed in each state. The report estimated that Maine supported five percent or more of the total populations of at least 12 species, more than all other northeastern states except New York. Some, like Black-throated Blue Warbler, are particularly reliant, with nearly 20 percent of the entire population estimated to breed in Maine, mostly in the North Woods. For species of conservation concerns like the Olive-sided Flycatcher and Bicknell's Thrush, the North Woods is especially important.

And there are the mammals. According to Karen Morris, a biologist with Maine Inland Fisheries & Wildlife (MIF&W), the North Woods harbors the largest moose population in the lower 48 states. It also supports significant populations of black bear, white-tailed deer, and bobcat. Data from the Maine GAP Analysis project, part of a national data assessment project, show that species like lynx, American marten, and the northern bog lemming occur nowhere else in the state but the North Woods.

SPACE INVADERS

Thousands of acres of southern Maine wetlands already have been overtaken by nonnative invasive species such as purple loosestrife, and a growing number of lakes are becoming choked with milfoil. But, says Maine Natural Areas Commission botanist Don Cameron, these introduced spoilers are still rare or nonexistent in the North Woods. That's because the best insurance against their spread is through the protection of large blocks of intact habitat. The North Woods is the last stand against many invasive species in the northeastern U.S. and adjacent Quebec.

The North Woods also protects our water supply. Much of the state's water starts in the North Woods. The headwaters of Maine's four largest rivers—the Androscoggin, Kennebec, Penobscot, and St. John—arise in the North Woods. The abundant flows of clean water that we take for granted in the upper reaches of our great Maine rivers are the result of protection of the North Woods watersheds—a legacy of NRCM.

The results of the recently published *Maine Damselfly and Dragonfly Survey* have documented that these waters host dozens of dragonfly species including some found nowhere else in the state, like sedge darner, Canada whiteface, ringed emerald, and Quebec emerald, all four of which have been proposed for placement in MIF&W's "special concern" category. GAP analysis data show these waters also hold the bulk of the state's mink frogs and almost all of Maine's native Arctic char, a species of fish.



P. DEMAYNADIER

RISKY BUSINESS

All of this is at risk because of the changing dynamics of ownership of the North Woods. The highest profits to landowners within the North Woods are increasingly coming through the sale of parcels for home and camp development. According to the Northern Forest Alliance, a regional conservation organization, the area is within a day's drive of more than 70 million people, many of whom can afford to purchase a second home in the "country." Plum Creek knows this, as evidenced by the massive Moosehead development proposal it announced in April 2005.

Fortunately, NRCM knows this, too, and has taken the bold step of creating an alternative vision for the region, one that would ensure the longevity of some of our state's most vulnerable wildlife. Conserving wildlife habitat will protect local communities that rely upon the nature-based economy it provides as well as ensure a healthy quality of life for everyone who treasures Maine's unique North Woods.

— Jeffrey V. Wells, Ph.D., is a widely published conservation biologist and ornithologist. Before becoming Senior Scientist for the Boreal Songbird Initiative, he served as Conservation Director for National Audubon and as Research Associate at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. A Maine native, he spent part of his childhood in northern Maine and now resides in Gardiner.



More moose live in the North Woods of Maine than in any of the other lower 48 states.

DEAN BENNETT



Above: Four species of dragonfly occur in Maine only in the North Woods, including the Canada whiteface. Left: Data show that the waters of the North Woods hold most of the state's mink frogs.

JOHN HUDSON

NRCM in Action

“Press”ing Issue—In January, NRCM generated widespread local and national news from our press conference in Portland about Maine’s first-in-the-nation manufacturer-funded program designed to capture hazardous electronic waste (“e-waste”) for safe disposal and recycling. NRCM staff were key in helping pass the legislation. Along with NRCM’s **Jon Hinck, toxics project director**, Portland Mayor Jim Cohen and new Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Dave Littell were among those who spoke at the event.



Portland Mayor Jim Cohen spoke at NRCM’s e-waste press conference in January.

Reducing Risks—NRCM cosponsored “Climate Change in Maine: Reducing Risks, Reducing Costs, and Planning for the Future,” held on May 10 at the Southern Maine in Portland. The conference focused on the current science of global warming; political responses to global warming; reducing risks and costs by decreasing global warming pollution; and actions, incentives, and barriers to reducing global warming pollution.

Science, Policy, and the Environment—**Jennifer Andersen, energy project outreach coordinator**, participated in the Sixth Annual National Conference on Science, Policy, and the Environment: Energy for a Sustainable and Secure Future in Washington D.C. in February. Jennifer was a guest of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) and participated as a discussant at NWF’s break-out session, “Climate Neutral Campuses.” Jennifer spoke about Maine’s leadership on global warming policy, its first-in-the-nation climate legislation, and implementing Maine’s Climate Action Plan.

Governor Signs Executive Order Promoting Safer Chemicals

By Sharon Tisher

On February 22, Governor John Baldacci took a significant step forward for human and environmental health by signing an Executive Order promoting safer alternatives to toxic chemicals. Titled “An Order Promoting Safer Chemicals in Consumer Products and Services,” the Order is the culmination of more than a year’s work by NRCM and fellow member groups in the Alliance for a Clean and Healthy Maine. This is a bold step to end unnecessary use of dangerous chemicals in products used by Maine families and will help build a stronger economy through the development of safer alternatives.

In teaching environmental law and in my work on pesticides and toxics regulation in Maine, I have long been concerned that growing rates of certain cancers, asthma, learning and neurological impairments, and reproductive problems in the U.S. are related to the cocktail of toxic exposures that we inhale, eat, drink, and absorb through the skin in our everyday lives. The EPA now believes that one in six babies (up from one in 12 in 2004) in the U.S. may be born with enough mercury in their blood to cause learning disabilities, sluggishness, and other neurological problems. Just this year, for the first time, cancer exceeded heart disease as the number one cause of death in Maine.

The previous issue of *Maine Environment* drew attention to the pervasiveness of toxic chemicals in products ranging from nonstick cookware and waterproof clothing to pizza boxes and microwave-popcorn bags. In our “don’t ask, don’t tell” system of chemicals regulation, testing prior to marketing is not typically required. Consequently, less than 10 percent of the more than 80,000 chemicals in use nationwide have been tested for their effects on human health.

Governor Baldacci’s Executive Order gives Maine people cause for celebration. The Order strengthens the commitment of state government to educating the public to avoid toxic exposures in the home and workplace, to purchasing safer products, and to phasing out persistent bioaccumulative toxics such as mercury and lead. It mandates use of the least toxic method of pest control in state-owned and managed office buildings, requires Integrated Pest Management techniques, and bans use of pesticides for purely cosmetic purposes. For more specifics about the Executive Order visit NRCM’s website at www.maineenvironment.org.

One of the most important things the Order does is create a Task Force to “develop recommendations for a more comprehensive chemicals policy that requires safer substitutes to priority chemicals in consumer products and creates incentives to develop safer alternatives, on a state and regional basis.” It also notes that several Maine-based companies have successfully developed products and services that eliminate or minimize use of hazardous chemicals. Likewise, the University of Maine is an active participant in research and development efforts to develop sustainable bio-based chemicals and plastics derived from Maine forest and agricultural products such as potatoes. Promoting green technology and safer products is, in short, good for Maine’s economy as well as the health of its people.

I have been proud to serve on the Steering Committee of the Alliance for a Clean and Healthy Maine, along with NRCM staffers Jon Hinck and Matt Prindiville. We expect that NRCM will be an active participant in the work of the Task Force going forward, and that the process will address in a significant way the long-standing deficiencies in U.S. chemicals policy

Sharon Tisher is an attorney and teaches environmental law at the University of Maine. She is NRCM’s board president.



STEVE TAYLOR



NRCM and Other Groups Face Off with SD Warren

On February 21, the United States Supreme Court heard a case critical to the ability of the State of Maine and all states around the country to protect their rivers from the harmful impacts of hydropower. The case is SD Warren Company v. Maine Board of Environmental Protection (BEP).

The Natural Resources Council joined state-based and national groups in intervening in this case on the side of the BEP, which is represented by Maine’s Attorney General. For decades, states have had the authority to require such mitigating measures, but in this case SD Warren (owned by Sappi Corporation) claims that the State of Maine lacks any authority under the Clean Water Act to require that dams have fish passage, pass a minimum amount of water, or take any other methods to mitigate dams’ adverse environmental impacts. This is being driven by SD Warren’s opposition to Maine’s requirements to take steps to mitigate the company’s dams’ harm to the Presumpscot River.

If the Supreme Court rules in favor of SD Warren, then all states will lose the ability to require mitigation measures from dams that affect their waters. We anticipate the court will reach a decision on this critical issue some time in June. Some hopeful signs are that SD Warren’s appeals of the State of Maine’s requirements for their dams were overturned by Maine’s District Court and Law Court (Maine’s Supreme Court) and that the Bush Administration has also filed a brief in support of the BEP against SD Warren.

—**Nick Bennett, Staff Scientist and Watersheds Project Director**

Dental Patients Want “Informed Consent” for Mercury Fillings

In February, NRCM and the New England Zero Mercury Campaign released a poll showing that 87 percent of New England dental patients (92 percent nationwide) want “informed consent” about potential risks from mercury in dental fillings before treatment begins. It showed

- 54 percent believe mercury pollution is a serious problem in the environment;
- two-thirds would support banning mercury-containing fillings for children and pregnant women;
- 76 percent would choose alternatives to mercury fillings, even if they cost more;



According to the accompanying report, “What Patients Don’t Know: Dentists’ Sweet Tooth for Mercury,” dental clinics use 34 tons of mercury infillings annually.

Maine has taken steps to alleviate this, including passing a law to stop 98 percent of the dental mercury from being flushed down dentist office drains, and requiring educational brochures to be passed out to dental patients.

Read the full report at our website at www.maineenvironment.org.

MAINE PEOPLE SAY "PROTECT MOOSEHEAD!"

When it comes to protecting Maine's treasured Moosehead Lake region, the people of Maine speak up! Below, a sampling of sentiments from Mainers from all 16 counties, taken from comments provided along with the more than 5,000 petitions NRCM delivered to LURC in April.

Franklin: "As a fervent environmentalist, I worry about what developments do to wildlife and clean air." —Ruth and John Adams, Wilton

Oxford: "I hope the people of Maine will see that the best interests for themselves and their descendants is to maintain—not destroy—our natural woodland." —Joanne C. Morse, Waterford

Sagadahoc: "I have hunted and fished in the Moosehead Lake region ever since 1962. I believe Plum Creek's plan will destroy all that I cherish." —John R. Vinton, Phippsburg

Somerset: "There are a lot of landowners waiting to see how this goes. You can't say yes to one and no to another." —Ray Reitze, Canaan

Aroostook: "I am against giant corporations who push and bully their way around to get their way." —Ronald Prather, Caribou

Piscataquis: "As a 91-year-old Maine citizen, I have enjoyed many wonderful days hunting and fishing in the Moosehead area. It would be a shame to spoil this area with buildings that the ordinary Maine citizens could not afford." —Eugene Coffin, Guilford

Penobscot: "It would be horrendous for Plum Creek to ruin the serene beauty of Moosehead Lake by making a playground for rich people. The thought is almost too much to bear." —Elizabeth Folsom Ames, Lagrange

Washington: "This is not in the best interest of the people or the land." —Larkin McGarvey, Eastport

Hancock: "The best growth is an orderly growth in response to the needs of the people of the area." —Kristin Cook, Ellsworth

Waldo: "I want my grandchildren to have the opportunity to know the beauty of wilderness...an ever decreasing resource on our planet." —Jane Dineen Panek, Palermo

Lincoln: "Plum Creek's irresponsible proposal for the Moosehead Lake...would destroy northern forests, wildlife, and ecosystems. The entire wild heart of our state would be devastated." —Louise A. Stanley, Newcastle

Kennebec: "Moosehead has been a sanctuary and haven for me since I was a child. Just because it is possible to exploit a resource does not mean we should." —Cassie Julia, Waterville

Knox: "If all these special outdoor places are tamed and turned into fancy expensive residences, then the people of Maine will lose a big part of what is special about our state — its wild and natural elements." —Lisa Cummings, Hope

Cumberland: "So many of the people who come to the area now come for the very reasons that [Plum Creek's] proposal is not. Who wants a cookie-cutter, corporatized Moosehead?" —Matthew Brunner, Westbrook

York: "The wilderness of the Maine woods should be more than a distant memory for future generations of Mainers." —John S. White, Kennebunk

Androscoggin: "As we farmers have so often said, 'Asphalt is the last crop.'" —Mary M. Briggs, Turner

"An Ache in My Heart..."

A native Mainer now living in Alaska shares her love of Moosehead

I was born and raised in Maine, and my family has treasured the North Woods for several generations. I have worked, camped, canoed, fished, and hunted in the Moosehead region for many years. I am a wildlife biologist with a master's degree in biology from the University of Maine and have spent many field seasons in the North Woods studying lynx and black bear. That wasn't enough. I returned on weekends and throughout all the seasons of my young life to bask in the quiet glory and special quality of the quiet waters and woods around Moosehead. I now live in Alaska, but will return home to Maine as soon as I have completed my work here.

I learned of Plum Creek's proposal a few months ago and have been following the issue closely. I literally have an ache in my heart when I think about the sprawl, development, and loss of wild country that is being proposed. Our greatest assets, as Mainers, lies in the freedom bestowed by wild country, the ever-rare rustic character of our woods, and the healthy fish and wildlife populations that thrive there. We hunt, we fish, we camp, and we are good neighbors to the land and to our communities.

We cannot jeopardize this by allowing an out-of-state real estate trust to make millions. Such an entry into Maine's North Woods would be one of many. We must take a stand for Maine. Our natural heritage is at stake.

— Deborah Perkins, Anchorage, AK



The Many Voices of Moosehead - Mainers Speak Out About Plum Creek's Proposal for Moosehead Lake

Watch videos

Tune in to "Moosehead Views"

How do Moosehead-area residents feel about conservation and development in the region, including the implications of Plum Creek's proposal? Find out for yourself by tuning in to "Moosehead Views," a collection of short video testimonials from people who live and work in the Moosehead Lake region. Visit the "Moosehead Views" Video Gallery at our website at www.maineenvironment.org.

Mainers Register Opposition to Plum Creek's Proposal NRCM Delivers Record Number of Comments to LURC

More than 5,000 people formally registered their opposition to the massive proposal Seattle-based Plum Creek submitted in April 2005 to the Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC). Brownie Carson, NRCM executive director, handed the citizen comments to Catherine Carroll, LURC commissioner, during a press conference in Augusta. "Plum Creek has said they have gone 'back to the drawing board' to revamp their oversized and poorly-sited development proposal," said Carson at the press conference. "In any new proposal they may put forth we urge Plum Creek to take to heart the comments that we are delivering today from citizens from across the state who love the Moosehead Lake region." The event also featured two-minute videotaped interviews with Moosehead Lake area residents (see sidebar) sharing their concerns about the impact Plum Creek's proposed development would have on their towns and surrounding areas.



H. BELL/NRCM



Katahdin Lake

Remembering Alison Lawrence Strekalovsky

On January 18, 2006, we lost a member of our NRCM family, Alison Lawrence Strekalovsky, who died peacefully at her home on Cousins Island in Yarmouth. Mrs. Strekalovsky was a faithful supporter of NRCM for over twenty years. She held a strong love for Maine, wildlife, and the outdoors.

Mrs. Strekalovsky was born April 21, 1912 in Boston, MA, the daughter of Gwendolyn Whistler and Percy D. Haughton. She married Hasket Derby in 1931. They moved to Falmouth with their two children, Alison and Sarah, in 1941 when Derby enlisted in the Navy and was stationed in Portland.

An enthusiastic sports fan, she particularly enjoyed baseball and football, having been influenced by her father Percy Haughton. She could throw a spiral pass better than most men. Her keen and continuing interest in the Red Sox was recently manifested by her outrage at Johnny Damon for selling out to the hated Yankees. But, she lived to see her beloved Red Sox win the World Series.

In addition to sports, Alison had a life-long interest in interior and landscape design, and her memory lives on in the many gardens she designed for friends. Over the years, she spent days combing the corners of Maine for unusual plants, and collaborated with a number of landscape designers. She had an original way of combining materials, and people loved to visit her garden.

In 1959, she married Nicholas Strekalovsky, a Russian émigré and artist, who had lived for several years in Egypt after escaping from the Soviet Union. After their marriage, he did many wildlife sculptures and paintings, including covers for the L.L. Bean catalogs.

Mrs. Stekalovsky was an ardent supporter of humane societies throughout the state. She loved animals and kept quite a variety of them during her life. She enjoyed animals and farms so much that she contemplated buying an alpaca farm when she was 91.

She also loved open space. She witnessed the conversion of southern Maine from a rural environment to a suburban landscape, a transformation that fueled her strong belief in the necessity of the conservation of open space and wildlife habitat. She would have loved the addition of Katahdin Lake to Baxter State Park.

Mrs. Stekalovsky was elegant, engaging, and witty, and often offered humorous observations about a wide variety of subjects. She was loved by those who knew her for her honesty, warmth, and generosity. She took pleasures in exploring and adventuring with family and friends.

"It was always fun and interesting to visit with Ailie," noted Brownie Carson. "She embraced life with a deep passion and enthusiastically shared her affection for family, friends, and the natural world."

To honor Mrs. Strekalovsky's life, her family requested that, in lieu of flowers, contributions be made in her memory to the Natural Resources family for this lasting tribute. We here at NRCM memorialize Mrs. Strekalovsky's life and her love of Maine, nature, and wildlife.

—Lynn Faria, Membership Manager

Take the Maine Global Warming Challenge!

It's easy! Reduce global warming pollution and save money by reducing your energy use!



- 1) Go to our website at www.maineenvironment.org.
- 2) Choose from our menu the actions you will take.
- 3) Follow the easy sign-up instructions, and let the savings begin!

Signing on to the Maine Global Warming Challenge will also help NRCM reach its goal of reducing 600,000 pounds of global warming pollution over the next year.

Sign on today: www.maineenvironment.org or (800) 287-2345!

Thank You for Buying at Bay Wrap!



NRCM Member
Susan Adams

A big thank to all who bought lunch at Bay Wrap, located at 1 Hichborn Street in Augusta, during February. Your purchase not only got you a tasty, healthy lunch but also helped support our mission, since Bay Wrap donated a portion of proceeds to NRCM.

Thank you, Bay Wrap,
for choosing NRCM as your featured community nonprofit for February. And thank you, NRCM members and supporters!

NRCM Action Network

Attention NRCM Members!
Looking for a Way to Get More Involved?
Join NRCM's Action Network today!

By joining the NRCM Action Network, you can

- Influence crucial decisions at the State House and beyond
- Join with people who share your values in protecting the nature of Maine
- Receive email action alerts when legislation is pending and your legislators need to hear from you
- Take part in our annual Lobby Day and other opportunities to get more involved

You choose how and when to help! You can

- Make phone calls or send emails to your legislators and other decision-makers
- Write letters to the editor of your local paper
- Submit comments or testify at public hearings on issues that are most important to you and your family
- Volunteer for the Natural Resources Council of Maine

Join online at www.maineenvironment.org, email us at takeaction@nrcm.org, or call us at 800-287-2345 ext. 243. Make your voice heard!

Your voice is the most important one lawmakers need to hear.

Sign Up to Receive e-News Updates!

Would you like to hear about news relating to our work as it happens? Get the "inside scoop" on what issue-related books NRCM staffers are reading? Receive tips on green products you might want to buy? Sign up for our e-News Updates! Just go to our homepage at www.maineenvironment.org.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

Do you have thoughts you would like to share about any of our issues? About your love for Maine's environment? About why you support NRCM? We've created "Share Your Thoughts" as a special place on our website for member voices. Send your thoughts to beth@nrcm.org. Please put "SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS" in the subject line.

Special Gifts in Honor of People or Events

Gift from Amy Caterina in honor of Matt Sease's birthday

Gift from Allison Wells in honor of Jeff Well's birthday

Gift Membership for C. Walker Pierce from Johan and Patricia Erikson

Gift in Memory of Kay and Nathan Davis from: C. Kendrick Capon
and Ms. Susan Emery

Gift in Memory of Christopher Makins from Ms. Elisabeth S. Porter

Gifts in Memory of Alison Strekalovsky from:

Peggy I. Shattuck
Zareen Taj Mirza
Mr. and Mrs. Dorsey Smith
Joan S. Hayden

Roger Gilmore and Elizabeth Lameyer Gilmore
Joan P. Tilney

Fletcher and Charlotte Brown
Ross Martindale
Christopher T. Barrow
Richard Olney III



Apple Acres Bluegrass Festival, South Hiram, ME.

My Maine This Week

Do you have photographs that shows your love for Maine? A poem? Short prose? We'd love to feature it on our new homepage feature, "My Maine This Week."

Send your submissions to beth@nrcm.org. And visit our website often at www.maineenvironment.org to see the latest "My Maine This Week."

PARTNERS IN MAINE'S FUTURE

Join the Natural Resources Council of Maine's monthly giving program!

When you become a Partner in Maine's Future, you provide extra protection to Maine's environment, helping NRCM to respond to challenges more quickly. It's easy—instead of one annual membership contribution, you authorize your bank to transfer automatically a fixed amount to NRCM each month. For as little as \$5 per month you can:

- Increase the value of your gift to Maine's environment by providing a reliable and predictable stream of funding to the NRCM's programs.
- Save trees and money, eliminating paper renewal notices, postage, checks, and bank fees.
- Reduce NRCM costs for processing donations.
- Spread your tax-deductible contribution over the entire year.

To join Partners in Maine's Future, simply complete the information below, enclose a check for your first month's contribution and account verification, and return to the NRCM. Thank you for taking this important step!

Yes, I want to be a Partner in Maine's Future

I agree to make a monthly contribution of:

\$5 \$10* \$15 \$20 \$25 Other \$ _____

*qualifies you for membership in Landmark Society. In recognition of your support, you will receive special quarterly update reports from the executive director and invitations to special events.

Our special thanks . . .

When you become a Partner in Maine's Future, you will receive a Council tote bag free.

Questions?

Call Joyce Gracie at (800) 287-2345.

[] I authorize my bank to transfer the amount indicated from my checking account to the Natural Resources Council of Maine. The amount will appear on my bank statement, which will serve as my monthly receipt. To change or stop my gift, I will contact NRCM.

Important: Please enclose a check for your first month's contribution and for account verification.

Signature _____

Date _____



Welcome, New Members!

New members January 1, 2006 through February 28, 2006

David Adams
Dr. Thomas Anderson
Jean Anderson
Paul and Claudia Andrews
Ann Austin
Richard and Ruthann Bates
Stuart Beattie
William Bellows
Lawrence Benedict
Ms. Martha Bentley
Arnold and Riva Berleant
Michael Berman
Ralph Berube
Edward Bishop
John Bly
Deanna Bonner-Ganter
Janet Booth
Inez Boyd
David Boyer
Hope Brogunier
Mrs. Dianne Brown
Ellen Brown
Susan Browning
Leonard Busby
Marvin and Dee Caldwell
C. Christopher Cambridge
C. Kendrick Capon
Susan Emery
James and Dorothy Carey
Elliot and Marianne Carlin
Sue Carter
Violet Cheal
Margaret Chester
Deborah Clague
John Clark
William Colbath
Brian Conklin-Powers
Olive Conley
Evelyn Cookson
S.M. Copenhagen
Elizabeth Corning
Wayne Reynolds
Mr. and Mrs. David Cowan
Daniel Crewe
Ben and Sandra Crites
Adreth Crowerackliff
Carol Curran
Patricia Curtis
Carl Danielson
Jon Darrell
George Dawson
Mary Day
Judith Day
L. Daniel and Jo-Ann Dearborn
Janet Decker-Smith
George Deibler
Martha Dickinson
Patricia Dooen
James and Valerie Doran
Weldon Doran
Richard Dubocq
Thomas and Lynn Duby
Anne Dunbar
Natalie Dunlap
Scott and Liz Dupre
Jeanne Eaton
Jeff Eilenberg
Beth Eldridge
David Adams
Peter and Marsy Elkins
Ann Ertman
Sally Faulkner
G. David Fenderson
Audrus Ferguson
Beth Fisher
Katherine Fiveash
Edward Fletcher
Phyllis Forward
Russell Dupree
Gina Fry
Charles Grey
Susan Gallant
C. Edwin Gallant
K. A. Gannon-Janelle
Amey Garber
Kenneth and Linda Geringer
Ellen Gerlitz
Mr. Christopher Germer
Ms. Claire Moore
Rita Gilbert

Clifford Ginn
Mrs. Esther Ginsberg
Michael Glazner
Kathleen Glick
Lydia Goetze
Martha Gould
Eric and Virginia Graebert
Stewart Graham
William Granacki
Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Griffin
Kathryn Grover
Katherine Grover
Elliot and Dinny Gruen
Erick Hagmann
Anne Hahn
Jeremy Hammer
Lee Hanson
Penny Harris
Peter and Kathleen Haskell
Janet Heeley
Eric and Sarah Herndon
Kenneth Higgins
Lawrence Hinkley
Guy and Janice Hitz
Sara Hopkins
Janet Hornberger
Betsy Hoskin
Beth Houle
Helen Hughes
Kim Humphrey
Mr. Thomas A. Hunt
Mrs. Susan M. Hunt
Charles Hyde
Margaret Hydorn
Sra Ingraham
Charles Jacobs
Linda Smith
Merel and Audrey Jaggars
Mr. Ward Jarman
Douglas and Barbara Johnson
Keith Jones
Doug Juers
Mark Kiefner
Nancy Bogg
Ted and Jan Kimball
Barbara King
Laura Anne Kisburg
John Klosenski
Nancy Kolovitz
Dexter Kozen
Wayne Kronenfeld
Richard and Jane Kuntz
Ann Laliberte
Norton Lamb Jr.
Robert and Mildred Langevin
James and Monique Leamon
Mr. and Mrs. Preston L. Leavitt
William Leete
Mary Leger
Elihu Leifer
Nicholas Leighton
Dana Leonard
Alison Levine
Betsy Levine
Mark Libby
Sara Lindsay
Paul Rawson
Eric and Kymara Lonergan
Mrs. Allister MacDormand
Barbara Malm
Eleanor Mann
David Marshall
Florence and Paul Marstaller
Jaye Martin
Karen MacDonald
Dorothy Martin
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Brian McCowan
Ms. Marian McCue
The McFarlane Family
Scott McNaney
Rory McQuillan
William and Lori Meisle
Joan Melvin
Edward Miccio
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Lucien and Bonnie Miller
Warren and Joanne Mitchell
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Daniel Morast

Ralph and Susan Morrell
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Eric and Jennifer Van Horne
Ms. Sarah Vanderslice
Darlene Ventrella
Michael and Mary Vogel
Malcolm Von Saltza
Daniel Walker
Karol Walker
Patricia Warner
Sonja Watson
Julie Weaver
Carnes Weeks Jr.
Mr. Robert Weiss
Ms. Stephanie Welcomer
Mr. Mark E. Haggerty
Jim Wellehan
Don White
Carol Wilson-Smith
David Woolsey
John Wyatt
Deborah Ryan
Ms. Valerie Wyman
Christopher York
Michael and Karen Young
Peter Zack
Peggy Zorach

Save the Date!

NRCM's Community Night at O'Naturals

Monday, May 15th 4:00-8:00pm
Exchange Street, Portland

*O'Naturals will donate 10% of sales
to NRCM! Enjoy healthy fast food
for a good cause!*

Gubernatorial Forum

Thursday, October 12, 2006
Eastland Hotel, Portland

More information to follow!

*Check our website for a full list
of upcoming events:*

www.maineenvironment.org