



# Maine Environment



Natural Resources Council of Maine

Fall 2011

## NRCM Helps Launch Clean Energy Ballot Measure

Maine Citizens for Clean Energy measure will increase energy independence and reduce pollution

On October 27, the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) joined a diverse coalition of Maine business, labor, and environmental leaders in announcing the beginning of a signature-gathering campaign to put a clean energy ballot question on the November 2012 ballot. NRCM worked to develop this initiative to reduce Maine's dependence on dirty, imported fossil fuels and boost the amount of clean energy in Maine. If passed by voters, the initiative would build on existing successful clean energy policies. It will require

- electric utilities such as CMP and Bangor-Hydro to support and invest in all energy-efficiency improvements for customers that are cost-effective and that will reduce electricity bills.
- 20 percent of Maine's electricity to come from new renewable sources like wind and solar by 2020.

To get on the ballot, the initiative must result in acquiring roughly 60,000 signatures from registered voters by the end of January 2012. If successful, the clean energy question will go to voters in November 2012. First, however, there would be a public hearing before the Maine Legislature. At the hearing citizens will have an opportunity to testify, and the Legislature can choose to pass it outright, but they cannot reject the measure or take it off the ballot. Furthermore, legislators cannot pass other legislation in the 2012 session that might conflict with the measure.

### Clean Energy: A Bright Spot for Maine

"Maine is dangerously dependent on fossil fuels, at great cost to our environment, the state's economy, and energy security," says Dylan Voorhees,



A new ballot initiative supported by NRCM and a coalition of diverse groups and businesses aims for a cleaner, brighter energy future for Maine.

clean energy director for the Natural Resources Council of Maine. "Maine people spend more than \$5 billion every year on imported fossil fuels, including for generating electricity. By dramatically expanding investments in energy efficiency and in renewable sources such as solar and wind, this clean energy initiative will help protect Maine's environment and public health while improving the economy."

The clean energy sector is one of the bright spots in Maine's economy, says Voorhees, from local companies building, operating, and manufacturing components for wind farms and solar panels to those improving the energy efficiency of our homes and businesses. "Over the last decade, clean energy jobs in Maine have been increasing at seven times the overall

job growth rate," he notes, "Just as important, more energy efficiency and local renewable power sources will help lower energy costs, stabilize energy prices, and improve the bottom line for Maine's businesses and households."

"Our company has been doing roofing contracting in Maine for decades," says Kurt Penney from IRC Solar Roofing. "We've seized the opportunity clean energy offers in Maine by expanding into commercial scale rooftop solar power. We've hired four full-time employees this year and look forward to expanding further as we do our part to provide renewable energy with stable, long-term prices for our clients."

### Building on Current Success

The new initiative builds on Maine's successes. Over the past several years, Efficiency Maine has spurred public investments in energy efficiency

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## NRCM Endorses Feasibility Study

For more than 80 years, there has been talk of a new national park, in Maine's North Woods. But this year, NRCM hopes talk will turn into a thorough analysis of the possibility. Several months ago, former Burt's Bees owner Roxanne Quimby announced her wish to donate the 70,000 acres that she owns east of Baxter State Park, along the East Branch of the Penobscot River, to the National Park Service for a new national park. She has also offered an endowment of \$20 million and has agreed to help raise an additional \$20 million (totaling \$40 million) to fund operations.

Her offer raises a number of questions: Is this area worthy of national protection? Is a national park the best way to protect it? What would the impact of a national park be on local communities? Could a national park help diversify and strengthen the local economy? Before designating a new national park, Congress prefers that the Department of the Interior conduct a study to answer some of these questions. There are two kinds of studies:

1. **A reconnaissance study** This is a preliminary resource assessment that can be ordered by the Secretary of the Interior, but cannot cost more than \$25,000. No congressional authorization is required.
2. **A special resources study** This is what people in Maine, including NRCM, generally are referring to as a "feasibility" study. It requires congressional authorization. Such a study evaluates three major criteria:
  - a. National significance: Is the proposed area outstanding, does it offer superlative opportunities for recreation, is it a relatively unspoiled example of the resource, etc.?
  - b. Suitability: Does it represent a natural area or recreational resource not already represented in the national park system?
  - c. Feasibility: Is it of sufficient size, does it have willing landowners, is it logistically possible to manage, etc.?

Both studies can consider alternative administrative designations (e.g. national park; other federal designations such as national preserve, national wildlife refuge, or national recreation area; non-profit ownership, state ownership, etc.). A reconnaissance study can be completed in a few months; a special resources study usually takes a couple of years.

A number of groups in the Millinocket region including the Town of Medway (both its selectmen and its citizens



NRCM joins other groups, including citizens in the Katahdin region, in support of a feasibility study regarding a national park in Maine's North Woods.

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## • THE BIG PICTURE •

# The Future of Maine's North Woods Depends on Us

The snap of a twig. The snort of a deer. The call of a bird heading south. The quiet chorus of nature feeds our souls. Yet, there are fewer and fewer places we can go to hear it. That's why I, like thousands of other hikers, hunters, paddlers, and fishermen, go to Maine's North Woods several times a year.



The future of our North Woods depends upon us. The decisions we make now will determine whether or not there is a 10-million-acre forest intact for future generations.

Forty years ago, Maine bipartisan policy makers took the important step to carefully balance conservation and economic development in the North Woods by creating the Land Use Regulation Commission. They were concerned that the few landowners who owned the North Woods at that time would chip away at one of our state's greatest assets—the largest continuous forest in the eastern U.S.—by putting profit ahead of Maine people.

Fast forward to 2011. There are now hundreds of owners of the North Woods, many with little or no tie to Maine, but they are shaping the state's future. Most of the paper companies that owned the lands for decades sold out to investment groups and wealthy individuals, and a few small segments have been sold to nonprofits. Development has continued apace. We believe some of the new owners have big development plans that would tear apart the landscape and threaten public access. Such fragmentation would be devastating to our wildlife and for the recreation economy. A decision body like the Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC), which provides a statewide perspective, remains Maine's best path forward.

Roxanne Quimby's offer to donate 70,000 acres for a national park east of Baxter State Park has heightened the debate about federal ownership in the North Woods. People from across the state are writing letters to Maine's congressional delegation and to U.S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar to request a feasibility study for the park. I hope you have written yours. At NRCM, we agree with folks in the Katahdin region who have come together in support of the study so we can make better decisions.

All Maine people need to understand the changing landscape of our North Woods—what has kept it intact and what could change it forever. NRCM has published a report on this issue, which you can order by visiting our website at [www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org) or by contacting us at [nrcm@nrcm.org](mailto:nrcm@nrcm.org).

Please stay informed. If you are a paddler or a sportsman and you love the quiet song you hear deep in our forests, then please weigh in. Your voices are essential if we are to protect the treasure that is Maine's North Woods.

—Lisa Pohlmann, Executive Director

## Clean Energy Ballot - Continued from page 1

that have saved Maine people and businesses almost half a billion dollars on electric bills. The initiative would require Maine power companies to help energy users tap into at least \$800 million *additional* cost-effective energy improvements that have already been identified. The Public Utilities Commission also has confirmed that Maine's Renewable Energy Standard works: it has begun to spur renewable energy development, without burdening ratepayers. The clean energy initiative would bring additional renewable energy investments to Maine, creating good jobs while reducing our use of polluting fuels and our vulnerability to volatile prices that are forever beyond Maine's control. "This clean energy ballot measure increases our energy independence and prosperity while protecting our clean air and water, reducing threats to our economy, and creating a brighter future for generations to come," says Voorhees. "More status quo dependence on dirty, imported fossil is a risky gamble with enormous costs to Maine people and businesses."

This initiative will help Maine do its part to reduce climate-changing pollution. Power plant pollution is one of the largest contributors to global warming pollution in the region, and our changing climate threatens many of Maine's most important assets. Sea-level rise washes away our coastline and coastal homes. Changing water temperatures damage our lobster fishery. Flooding damages our towns and roads. Increased smog and heat harms the health of Maine people. NRCM has helped form the Maine Citizens for Clean Energy coalition to gather signatures and manage an overall campaign to educate voters and different stakeholders about the initiative. Sign up to gather signatures near you! Send an email to [Emmie@nrcm.org](mailto:Emmie@nrcm.org) or call her at 430-0105.

## Feasibility Study - Continued from page 1

through town meeting vote), the Katahdin Region Chamber of Commerce, the Millinocket Downtown Revitalization Committee, and four different local snowmobile clubs have endorsed a study. A newly formed citizens group, the National Park Regional Citizens Evaluation Committee (NPCC), is spearheading the effort to build support locally. They and others in the community have asked NRCM to support a study.

NRCM's board carefully considered the issue. With the growing local support for a study, the proposed donation of land by Roxanne Quimby, and the precarious situation of the local paper mills, NRCM's board concluded that the time is ripe to push for a study. NRCM voted to support a reconnaissance and/or a feasibility study on those lands where the landowner is supportive of having his, her, or its land studied.

It will take active involvement of all of NRCM's members in order to secure a study. We need to convince both Secretary of the Interior Salazar and Maine's congressional delegation. Contact us at (800) 287-2345 or at [nrcm@nrcm.org](mailto:nrcm@nrcm.org) for their contact information. Please join in and write to them today! **Contact Interior Secretary Salazar** to urge support for this feasibility study: Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C Street, N.W. Washington DC 20240; Phone: (202) 208-3100; Email: [feedback@ios.doi.gov](mailto:feedback@ios.doi.gov)

—Cathy Johnson, North Woods Project Director

# 2011 NRCM Environmental Award Winners

Each year, NRCM presents an environmental award at its annual meeting, which is covered in Lisa Pohlmann's brief introduction.



Brownie Carson with NRCM Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann and Board President Bill Houston

## Brownie Carson - 2011 NRCM Environmental Award for Lifetime Achievement

For 27 years, Brownie Carson was the heart and soul of the Natural Resources Council of Maine as well as the face of Maine environmental advocacy. Brownie's successes while NRCM's executive director include many of the hardest and longest-fought battles of our time—beating the Big A dam and Bucksport coal plant, and pushing for sensible legislation for recycling beverage containers, phasing out toxics chemicals in consumer products, safe collection of electronic waste, investing in energy efficiency improvements, and so much more.

Perhaps Brownie's biggest achievement, however, is his ability to inspire and galvanize people from across our state to take action. Brownie has been a seemingly ever-present force of nature, for nature, a constant reminder that Maine's rivers and wilderness and the clean air, water, and wildlife for which our state is known and loved should not, *must* not be relegated to profit and loss columns of polluters who would—and have—pilfered and exploited these spectacular natural resources. His decades with NRCM built this organization into the "go to" group that harnesses the power of Maine people who want their elected officials to vote for safeguards that protect our air and water, woods and wildlife, and to vote *against* legislation that would roll back environmental protections and forever destroy the Maine we know and love today.



NRCM Board President Bill Houston and Zip Kellogg, who accepted the award on behalf of the family for his sister Judy Kellogg Markowski

## Judy Kellogg Markowsky - 2011 NRCM Environmental Award for Lifetime Achievement

Juliet "Judy" Kellogg Markowsky grew up in the Bangor area along the Kenduskeag River embracing the natural world—a passion she shared with her family, friends, and thousands of students of all ages. Hired by Maine Audubon in 1987 to run its "Secrets of the Forest" program for school children, she opened students' eyes to birds, insects, plants, and other creatures. She helped establish the Fields Pond Audubon Center in Holden and was its founding director from 1997 to 2009. Throughout the years, Judy supported efforts to conserve and restore important natural features in the Penobscot Valley, and she played an important role in the campaign to project the Penjajawoc Marsh from development.

Judy was a member of NRCM for 25 years. For decades, Judy spoke in fierce defense of the Penobscot River, and she understood the tremendous ecological benefits of reopening more 1,000 miles of the watershed to Atlantic salmon and other native sea-run fish. She spoke out at public meetings and invited the staff of the Penobscot River Restoration Trust to participate in events at Fields Pond. Although Judy passed away this past summer, her legacy of environmental protection in Maine will endure.

# Taking the Plunge: Meet NRCM Member and Activist Ben Lake



The weather is turning colder. The nights are getting longer. The summer tourists are headed home. It must be...time to start planning for this year's Polar Dip and Dash (see page 4). I recently spoke with Ben Lake, one of our polar plungers from last year. Ben lives in Portland and was happy to share his experience and some valuable

advice for first-time participants. —Beth Dimond, Public Affairs Coordinator

## Beth: In Maine, it's cold in December, as you know. Why did you decide to take the plunge last year?

A friend of mine had done the plunge the previous year and raved about what an experience it was. Then last year a co-worker signed up and issued a friendly invitation to the rest of the office to join her. Winter happens to be one of my favorite seasons, and so I suppose I have a warm spot in my heart for cold-weather antics.

## Beth: Will you be joining us again this year?

I certainly hope so, especially now that NRCM decided to add a 5K to the event.

## Beth: Let's be honest here. What are your least favorite, and favorite, parts of the event?

Well, the whole event is pretty fun, but I guess the least-enjoyable part is waiting before it starts—the anticipation building, and wondering how cold the water will really be. The best part is definitely the post-plunge afterglow—you're out of the water, towed off and heating up fast, drinking a hot beverage, eating a tasty snack, and celebrating with everyone else who just jumped into the Atlantic Ocean in December. It's like the pleasure of sitting around a fireplace after coming in from the winter weather—the colder it is outside, the more you enjoy warming up.

## Beth: You also have participated in other NRCM events. Can you talk a little about that?

I've been to a couple of NRCM's Open Mic nights at the Liberal Cup in Hallowell, which are a lot of fun. It's a great chance to see some of the staff and volunteers from NRCM, and learn about what everyone's up to. The fact that the music, food, and drink are all top-notch doesn't hurt, either. I also attended NRCM's annual meeting at USM, where I had the pleasure of hearing Senator George Mitchell relate some inspiring and funny stories about his own impressive environmental work.

## Beth: Are there specific areas of NRCM's work to which you feel most closely connected?

I'm a strong supporter of NRCM's past and current work, and glad that there are so many diverse issues that the organization is able to tackle. Due to my own work and personal interests, I think I feel most closely connected to NRCM's efforts to address waste and recycling issues, from toxic e-waste to product stewardship and extended producer responsibility. Having Maine being at the forefront on some of these issues is really exciting.

## Beth: What do you feel are some of the most important issues of concern related to Maine's environment today?

Well, given our northern location and expansive coastline, climate change and sea-level rise are definitely my greatest concerns for Maine's environment in the future. Uncontrolled development in some of our more wild places (like Moosehead and the North Woods) is also a major concern, and a challenging one to address. Mercury pollution in our air and water, coming from both out-of-state coal power plants and improper disposal of electronics, CFLs, and thermostats, is a threat to our own health and the health of our environment.

## Beth: As a now-experienced polar plunger, what is your most important piece of advice for anyone who is doing this year's plunge for the first time?

Don't convince yourself that it will be easier if you waded in slowly—it's not. Definitely better (and more fun) to run in up to your knees, and then just dive in headfirst. That way you end up invigorated, rather than chilly. They don't call it a plunge for nothing.



Hand-made polar bear mugs made by artist Malley Weber—one of several prizes to be awarded during the NRCM Polar Dip & Dash (see page 4).

## Art of Local Food Online Art Sale



"Surry Estuary" by Leslie Anderson (oil)

We have teamed up with Maine artists to present an incredible display of Maine-inspired art from the Art of Local Food and Art Sale. The online sale consists of more than 50 10"X10" pieces, in different media, and each is priced at \$215 (price includes tax and shipping). All pieces will be sold on a first come-first served basis and will be available only through the holiday season. To view the art, visit [www.nrcm.org/artoflocalfood\\_slideshow.asp](http://www.nrcm.org/artoflocalfood_slideshow.asp). (Please note: Not all images of the art are as clear as we would like due to glare.) To make your purchase, go to <http://supporters.nrcm.org/artsale>.

resents its Environmental Award to a few individuals or groups who have gone to extraordinary lengths to protect Maine's environment. The awards are presented at our which was held this year on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and featured keynote speaker Senator George Mitchell (to hear Senator Mitchell's inspiring speech as well as Executive Director Lisa introductory remarks, visit [www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org)). Congratulations to this year's winners!



Sandra Wright (right) with NRCM Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann

## Sandra Wright - Environmental Award

This past legislative session, it became obvious, very quickly, that laws protecting Maine's environment were under attack. It also quickly became clear that these safeguards—were going to need to be defended by Maine citizens if they were to survive the session intact. Maine people responded, speaking out against efforts to roll back everything from the bottle bill put in place in the 1970s to the Kid-safe Products law passed just two years ago. Among many people taking action, Sandra Wright was a stand-out.

Sandra knows that the voices legislators most want to hear are those of their constituents, which is why she has a strong track record of speaking out on issues that matter to her. This past session, Sandy and her husband Chuck hosted two meetings in their Mt. Vernon community, with Senator Tom Saviello and Representative Dennis Keschl. They were joined by dozens of friends and neighbors.

Senator Saviello, Chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, played a key role in leading bipartisan efforts to defeat some of the worst rollback bills. Likewise, Rep. Keschl took a strong stand against legislation that would have eviscerated shoreline zoning, which is important for protecting water quality and wildlife habitat. By putting her passion into action, Sandra set an example for all citizens who care about the kind of Maine we want to leave for our children and grandchildren.



Members of the Belfast Co-housing and Ecovillage, with NRCM Board President Bill Houston (lower right)

## Belfast Co-housing and Ecovillage - People's Choice Award

This year's People's Choice finalists included Ed Friedman of Bowdoinham, for his work protecting Merrymeeting Bay and the Lower Kennebec River area, and Hank Tyler of Hallowell, for promoting recycling initiatives in his community and for his stewardship of Vaughan Woods, a local natural treasure in Hallowell. Congratulations to both!

The third finalist, and winner by popular vote, is Belfast Co-housing and Eco-Village, a diverse group of individuals and families working since 2007 to create a residential community based on neighborhood cooperation, affordability, and ecological sustainability with clustered housing and shared infrastructure, located in Belfast. The community is just two miles from town, an easy walk or bike trip. House walls, a barn, even items like kayaks and lawnmowers are to be shared. Home heating requirements will be 90 percent less than that of standard new construction, with passive solar design and no fossil fuel deliveries to the homes—no oil burners or propane stoves. Their plan includes maintaining the fields, forests, and waterways around them in as natural a state as possible, and incentives for farmers to settle in the community. Participation by co-housing members at January's Regulatory Reform Committee meeting in Belfast helped expose and put the brakes on the many half-truths being used by the LePage Administration to promote environmental rollbacks. Congratulations to all members of this dedicated group!

## NRCM Polar Bear Dip & Dash: Run, Walk, Make a Splash!

A benefit for NRCM's work to reduce climate-changing pollution!



**Saturday, December 31, 2011**, East End Beach, Portland, Maine  
Walk or run a 5k, plunge into the Atlantic Ocean, or both! Join NRCM for this fun way to raise awareness about the threat of global warming on Maine's coastline, and in raising funds for our energy work to help prevent the threats from becoming reality. Every cent you help us raise will go toward our energy efficiency and renewable energy work. **Listen for news about this special event on 98.9FM WCLZ radio—Maine's first carbon-neutral radio station—our media sponsor, as the date approaches!** Sign up now at

[www.nrcm.org/dipdash.asp](http://www.nrcm.org/dipdash.asp).



**NEW!** Watch our new Insider video, "Man Trapped in Polar Bear Costume," promoting this great event!



Special thanks to our media sponsor 98.9 WCLZ Radio. Tune in to the station for upcoming promotions!

## Art of Local Food a Big Success!

Thanks to everyone who joined us October 30<sup>th</sup> for the Art of Local Food at Point Lookout in Northport. Delicious food, beautiful artwork, fabulous views of Penobscot Bay, great music, and best of all, a chance to meet and visit with so many of our members and supporters—thank you so much for attending! If you're interested in artwork but were unable to choose a piece at the event, you still have opportunity—please see page 3.

### Our very special thanks to these Maine businesses for sponsoring this event:

Coyote Moon • The Free Press • The Green Store • Liberty Graphics  
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### Our warm thanks also to these participating restaurants and culinary partners:

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## Green Tip of the Day

**Buy Locally** Buying local produce and other items supports your community—and uses less energy to get to market. *For a green tip of the day every day, visit NRCM's website at [www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org).*

## Maine Environment

Editor / Allison Childs Wells, Senior Director of Public Affairs

Design / brightredbicycle design

Contributors / Beth Dimond, Cathy Johnson, Lisa Pohlmann,  
Dylan Voorhees, Allison Childs Wells

Editorial Board / Judy Berk, Beth Dimond, Stacie Haines,  
Gretta Wark, Allison Childs Wells

Executive Director / Lisa Pohlmann

President, NRCM Board of Directors / Bill Houston

Vice President, NRCM Board of Directors / Tony Owens

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Rondi Nelson

Ken Olson

Jeffrey Pidot

Kathy Rimmel

Kate Rush

R. Stewart Strawbridge

Thomas Tietenberg

Cover Banner: Bass Harbor Marsh by NRCM member Richard Bailor



3 Wade Street  
Augusta, ME 04330-6317  
(207) 622-3101 • (800) 287-2345  
FAX (207) 622-4343  
[www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org)

*Maine Environment* is provided four times a year to more than 12,000 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. Join online at [www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org). Copyright 2011. All rights reserved. *Maine Environment* is printed on processed chlorine-free, post-consumer recycled paper.

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William and Marilyn Hartman in honor of Karen & Larry Turner  
Susanne K. Meidel and Philip O. Yund in memory of Wangari Maathai  
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New members of **PARTNERS IN MAINE'S FUTURE** Program, our monthly giving club. Members' automatic donations help us save on administrative costs, including paper. Special thanks to these members!

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- Protection of the nature of Maine, so future generations of our families can enjoy Maine as much as we do!

### Special Offer! Now through January 31, 2012!

Give one new gift membership to NRCM and give another FREE! All gift memberships include our popular 2012 Nature of Maine calendar!

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MaineShare makes it easy for you to donate to statewide progressive organizations through workplace giving. MaineShare receives year-round payroll deductions that provide groups like NRCM, who are working everyday to make Maine a better place to live, with a steady flow of income to keep important programs going. Sign up to give to NRCM through MaineShare at your workplace today!



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## "My Maine This Week"

"I took this photo on Columbus Day weekend from my cove on Wilson Lake in Wilton."

—Nancy Prince, Wilton, Maine



**Send Us Your "My Maine This Week"** Do you have a photograph of Maine you'd like to share? A poem? Send your submissions to [beth@nrcm.org](mailto:beth@nrcm.org). Visit "My Maine This Week" online at [www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org).

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