

Maine Environment

Natural Resources
Council of Maine

Fall 2012

Tar Sands: International Concern, Local Voices

By Dylan Voorhees and Emmie Theberge

Maine is currently facing an emerging plan to pipe tar sands oil across Maine through a 62-year old pipeline built to carry conventional oil. To understand the scope of this threat to our state, it's important to look first at its impact in Canada.

Tar sands oil is the dirtiest form of oil on the planet, causing massive environmental impacts across a widening expanse of western Canada and threatening to send global warming pollution out of control. The sprawling operation in Alberta is one of the most destructive energy projects in the world, destroying boreal forests that provide crucial habitat for endangered woodland caribou and breeding grounds for millions of birds. The boreal forest is the second-largest intact forest in the world, is one of the largest sources of freshwater in North America, and stores 11 percent of the world's carbon—a key line of defense against global warming.

Tar sands, or "bitumen," is an oily substance that is mixed in with sand and rocks—think of it as part-way between regular crude oil and coal. Extraction of tar sands oil permanently devastates Alberta forests and waterways. The cheapest method uses open-pit mining. Massive areas are clear-cut of trees, the peat layer of the earth is ripped out, and the underlying clay, silt, and gravel are removed. The material is trucked to a plant that uses enormous amounts of heat and water to begin to separate the tar oil from the sand. Another extraction process drills wells into the deposit and steam to heat and separate the tar oil before pumping it to the surface. Both are polluting the air, poisoning the water, and destroying the land.



The proposed tar sands pipeline passes through the Sebago Lake watershed, the drinking water supply for 200,000 Mainers in the 11 communities serviced by the Portland Water District. Evidence shows that tar sands pipeline spills are more frequent, toxic, and difficult to clean up than conventional oil spills, and thus pose a greater risk to our environment and economy.

In addition to wide-scale habitat destruction, the tar sands operation generates large volumes of air and water pollution. Tar sands oil is one of the most carbon-intensive forms of energy—substituting it for conventional oil (which is bad enough) *increases* global warming emissions by 20 percent, when we need to *reduce* emissions by that much or more in the near future. NASA climatologist James Hansen has said the full use of Canadian tar sands would mean "game over" for climate change. Extraction results in huge amounts of toxic soil and water dumped into massive waste ponds. In addition to all of this, tar sands pipelines have experienced hundreds of ruptures over the past decade, spilling more than one million gallons of tar

sands oil that has polluted rivers and wetlands and has threatened wildlife.

Big oil companies, which continue to show record-high profits, desperately want to export tar sands out of Canada—and need pipelines to do so. These big oil companies are planning to pump this toxic substance through an aging oil pipeline that was used to bring conventional oil north from Portland to Montreal for decades. Recent analysis has revealed that the majority owner of the pipeline is ExxonMobil, the biggest of Big Oil, and other companies also heavily invested in tar sands operations.

The pipeline runs across Maine's Lakes Region, past Sebago Lake to Casco Bay, where it would be shipped by tanker. Tar sands oil is typically pumped at higher temperatures and pressures than conventional oil, and includes corrosive and abrasive materials that increase the risk of ruptures. Because of this, evidence shows that tar sands pipeline spills are more

- Continued on page 2

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BRUNSWICK, ME
PERMIT NO. 65

Natural Resources
Council of Maine
3 Wade Street
Augusta, Maine 04330-6317

CHECK YOUR LABEL!
Please call NRCM with
address corrections
or duplicate mailings!

Big Promises, Harsh Realities: Open-pit Mining Threatens Maine

Join our online Action Network to stay informed!

In the final weeks of the 2012 session, the Maine Legislature passed a bill to weaken Maine's current mining regulations. J.D. Irving Limited, a huge Canadian conglomerate and the largest landowner in Maine, spent \$100,000 on lobbyists in a month to push this bill through. Irving wants to build a massive open-pit mine on its Bald Mountain property in central Aroostook County. The impacts of this could be enormous. Mining activities there would likely drain into the Fish River and the Fish River Chain of Lakes, which provide some of the best brook trout fishing in the country.

But the risk of open-pit mining and the environmental devastation it can bring extend beyond Bald Mountain. There are many other places in Maine where metal deposits could attract mining interests—Cobscook Bay and Moosehead Lake, to name two. NRCM has conducted extensive research into the mining issue, reviewing promises from mining companies over time and across the country. Over and over, the companies break their promises. It's not uncommon for taxpayers to get stuck with tens of millions of dollars in cleanup costs from a single mine, and the poisoned rivers and streams could be doomed to remain that way for centuries. We encourage you to read our in-depth white paper on this topic at our website at www.nrcm.org.

This spring, the Department of Environmental Protection will be drafting mining rules for the new mining law. We encourage you to stay informed of this issue, including notices about notices of public hearings the DEP will eventually schedule. Join our Action Network today to stay up-to-date on the mining issue and our other work to protect Maine's environment. The 2013 legislative session will soon be here. Be ready! Sign up at <http://nrcm.kintera.org/ActionCenter>.



Callahan mine, Brooksville, Maine, a U.S. EPA Superfund site



• THE BIG PICTURE •

A “Triple Threat” to the Maine We All Love

by Lisa Pohlmann, NRCM Executive Director

Picture this: An 800-foot pit in the ground where beautiful Bald Mountain used to be, in the heart of Maine’s North Woods. Goopy, black tar sands oil spilling into the Crooked River and Sebago Lake, killing the fish, and fouling the water and woodlands. A mile-wide gash through the middle of Maine’s North Woods for an East-West highway that many local people do not want.



These are the images that haunt my days now. Dramatic? Absolutely. Reality? I certainly hope not.

To ensure that our environment is safe, healthy, and intact for generations to come, we need to stand together to fend off the “triple threat” we are currently facing. Recently weakened laws make it easier to mine for metals such as copper and zinc in deposits across the state. New rule-making to weaken groundwater protections comes next. The immediate focus is on Aroostook County’s Bald Mountain, but similar deposits exist along the coast, at Moosehead Lake, and through the western Maine mountains. These minerals are buried in sulfide rock that forms sulfuric acid when exposed to air and water during mining. That acid mine drainage contaminates surface and ground waters while the mine is in operation—and for thousands of years after it closes.

If Bald Mountain were to become an open-pit mine, pollution there would likely drain into the Fish River and Fish River Chain of Lakes, which provide some of the best brook trout fishing in the country. The fish wouldn’t stand a chance. NRCM is educating the public across the state about the dangers of open-pit mining so that citizens are ready to speak out at the public hearing on the new rules next spring.

The tar sands oil in open-pit mines in Alberta, Canada’s boreal forest may seem remote to us here in Maine, but if Big Oil has its way, this dirty oil will be headed right for us. Exxon Mobil—the biggest of Big Oil—and other oil giants want to pump dirty, corrosive tar sands oil via Montreal through an aging oil pipeline that crosses some of Maine’s pristine watersheds and ends up at Casco Bay. Tar sands oil is far more toxic, thicker, and more acidic than regular oil, and is piped at much higher pressures and temperatures, tripling the risk of a spill—and when tar sands oil spills, as it did in the Kalamazoo River in 2010, it is almost impossible to clean up. This emerging plan puts our fisheries at risk and threatens communities and drinking water along its path. We are organizing communities along the pipeline to take a stand locally, and working at the national level on policies that can stop tar sands from coming to Maine.

The third threat is the East-West highway, a recurring proposal that won’t die despite previous studies that show it to be unfeasible, and against the vehement opposition of many Maine citizens with land near the proposed route. Its current champion, Cianbro Corporation, proposes to build a 220-mile private highway and utility corridor across the middle of Maine, threatening wetlands, wildlife, and waterways. This road would appease Canadian trucking interests but provide little benefit to Maine people. We are meeting with concerned landowners in northern Maine and working to make the highway plan transparent to the public.

These initiatives have a harsh environmental price. The terrible images these proposals have planted in my mind don’t have to become reality, but we must stand together to protect the Maine we love and enjoy and want to leave for those who come after us. Thank you for your financial support, for coming out to events, and for staying engaged. As we head into the coming year and a new legislative session, we will keep you informed and ready for action.

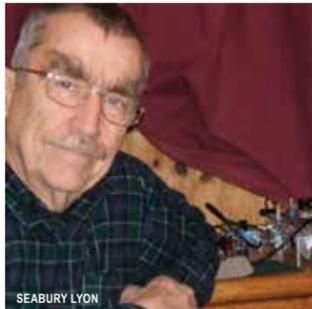
Tar Sands - Continued from page 1

frequent, toxic, and difficult to clean up than conventional oil spills, and thus pose a greater risk to our environment and economy. The oil companies involved (including Enbridge, the company responsible for a massive tar sands spill into the Kalamazoo River in 2010) have histories of pipeline failures that have contaminated rivers and streams here in the U.S. and across Canada. Maine has everything to lose and nothing to gain from this proposal.

Please join NRCM and Mainers across the state in taking action to stop tar sands oil from coming through Maine. Learn more and join the effort at: www.nrcm.org/TarSandsAction.asp

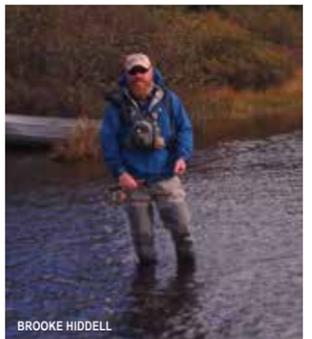
Dylan Voorhees is NRCM’s energy project director, and Emmie Theberge is the project outreach coordinator.

Local Concern about the Tar Sands Pipeline



“I’m a partner in a business that, along with many others here, is utterly dependent on the quality of natural resources unique to our region. The 60-year-old pipeline travels along the Androscoggin for over 13 miles, crossing it twice. An oil spill would directly jeopardize area businesses and the very fragile economy of our entire region.”

—Seabury Lyon, business owner, Bethel



“I’ve been guiding on the Crooked River and other pristine Maine waters for years. Maine’s large outdoor recreation industry depends on clean, healthy waters for salmon, brook trout, and other species—and an increased risk of an oil spill into these waters from tar sands oil being forced through Maine’s aging pipeline infrastructure would be devastating to the entire Sebago Lake watershed.”

—Brooke Hiddell, Registered Maine Guide

“Tar sands is not like conventional oil that is currently being pumped through our backyards. I’m concerned that Sebago Lake, which is the heart of our economy, could be filled with toxic tar sands.”—Nadia Herмос, resident, Casco



“As a mother of two living in Windham, I often take my children to the Black Brook Nature Preserve in Windham. The existing pipeline runs underneath the hiking trails and ponds at the preserve. A tar sands oil spill here would be ruinous for the ecology of this preserve, and for families like mine who enjoy the recreational opportunities that it provides.”—Helyne May, mother, Windham

“It doesn’t take a whole lot of toxic pollution to close a clam flat. Without excellent water quality, 2,000 Maine clammers are out of business. An increased risk of a spill from tar sands oil in this pipeline is a real threat to our jobs and livelihood. If our coastal waters are not clean it’s impossible, for all Maine fisheries, not just the clamming industry, to market the Maine brand.”—Chad Coffin, President, Maine Clammer’s Association

Good News on the St. Croix



The Joint Tribal Council of the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point and Indian Township passed a unanimous resolution in support of full alewife restoration in the St. Croix River. This an important step toward stopping Maine’s destructive policy of blocking alewives from 98 percent of their habitat in the St. Croix River. Learn about NRCM’s

efforts on the St. Croix http://www.nrcm.org/issue_cleanwaters.asp.

Maine Environment

Editor / Allison Childs Wells, Senior Director of Public Affairs

Design / brightredbicycle design

Contributors / Emmie Theberge, Dylan Voorhees, Gretta Wark, Allison Childs Wells

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

Executive Director / Lisa Pohlmann

President, NRCM Board of Directors / Tony Owens

Vice President, NRCM Board of Directors / Norton H. Lamb, Jr.

Treasurer, NRCM Board of Directors / Christopher Bond

Secretary, NRCM Board of Directors / Lois Winter

NRCM Board of Directors /

Elisa Boxer
Victoria M. Devlin
Marion Freeman
Maroulla S. Gleaton
Jeanne Gulnick
Patty Hager
Karen Herold

Henry R. Heyburn
Warren C. Kessler
George Lapointe
Susan MacKenzie
Didi Manns
Rondi Nelson
Ken Olson

Jeff Pidot
Russell B. Pierce, Jr.
Kathy Rimmel
Kate Rush
R. Stewart Strawbridge
Thomas Tietenberg

Cover Banner / Rangeley Overlook, a My Maine this Week photo by NRCM member Tony Nazar. Send us your photos to use as a My Maine this Week feature at nrcm@nrcm.org! Learn more at www.nrcm.org



3 Wade Street
Augusta, ME 04330-6317
(207) 622-3101 • (800) 287-2345
FAX (207) 622-4343
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.

Copyright 2012. All rights reserved. Maine Environment is printed on processed chlorine-free, post-consumer recycled paper.

A “Moment” with Ann Flewelling By Gretta Wark

Walk through the front door at NRCM’s office building in Augusta and you will find yourself stopping in the entryway to admire stunning photographs of the Bagaduce River and other Maine waterways. They are from the book, *A Moment of Water*, by Ann Flewelling, a member of NRCM’s Wintergreen Society. Development Director Gretta Wark spoke to Ann about her love of Maine and her support for NRCM’s work protecting the waters she loves.



Ann Flewelling grew up in Aroostook County in the '50s and '60s. She lived much of her childhood outdoors, exploring meadows, streams, and woods near her family’s farm in Crouseville, along the Aroostook River. She enjoyed canoeing and swimming at her family’s camp at Cross Lake. It’s no wonder she developed a profound appreciation for the natural world—an appreciation that has only deepened with time.

College and a brief marriage took Ann from Maine to Atlanta, Georgia. “I started out in nursing in New England, then ended up in Atlanta where I worked to expand the availability of healthcare providers by developing the physician assistant program at Emory University,” says Ann. “One day I realized that I could only continue that career if I remained in large cities with major hospitals. But I did not thrive in urban communities. I needed a profession that I could take with me back to my homeland in rural Maine.” Ann began fleeing the city most weekends to hike and camp in the Cohutta Wilderness and nearby mountains. There, she found peace and beauty. She made a decision.

Ann returned to her first love, psychology, and was accepted into a graduate program in Atlanta. Upon earning her doctorate, Ann moved to a mountain in the Georgia highlands to start her practice and to serve as clinical director of a north Georgia regional mental health center serving a 2,000-square-mile rural area. While there, she met and married teacher Charles Read, who grew up in Massachusetts and summered in Maine. The couple began returning to Maine frequently to visit Ann’s parents and to



Bluff Head along the Bagaduce River

paddle, hike, and camp. “Charles and I were debating what to do next, how to make some incremental step closer to Maine, when one day he said, ‘Let’s just move there. Let’s move to Maine.’ He didn’t have to say it twice.”

After scouting the coastline, they chose the Blue Hill peninsula. Ann was familiar with the area. “My parents didn’t travel to

Florida for the good life—they went to Blue Hill!” Charles and Ann built a farm

JOIN THE WINTERGREEN SOCIETY



YOU can protect Maine’s environment for years to come by including the Natural Resources Council of Maine in your estate plans. Your gift becomes a legacy of vibrant forests, healthy rivers, and diverse wildlife that will nurture future generations. NRCM created the Wintergreen Society to recognize and honor donors who have named NRCM in their estate plans, whether through bequests, gifts of life insurance or retirement plan designation, or as beneficiaries of life income gifts, such as charitable gift annuities or charitable remainder trusts.

Benefits of membership in the Wintergreen Society include:

- An annual reception and other events of interest
- Recognition in published materials (with your permission)
- A complimentary one-year membership to NRCM for the family, school, or library of your choice

We welcome gifts of all sizes. All gifts are confidential. To learn more about gift planning at NRCM and the Wintergreen Society, please contact Gretta J. Wark, senior director of development, at (207) 430-0108 (direct) or gwark@nrcm.org.

along the Bagaduce River in Sedgwick in the late '90s. Their home, with its attached barn and wrap-around porch, harkens back to 19th century Aroostook County farmhouses. Worn paths and impromptu benches around the property signal the couple’s favorite spots. The place looks like Ann and Charles have been there forever.

And forever is very much on Ann’s mind. In the early 90’s, she’d served on the founding board of directors of the Georgia Mountain Conservation Trust, formed to protect the Oglethorpe Mountain and its watershed. Upon moving to Maine, she joined the Bagaduce Watershed Association. “I know that we can’t take natural areas for granted,” Ann says. “Development pressures are too great.”

Despite her strong commitment to her local community, Ann felt out of balance. She actively supported local Down East land trusts and the pristine places they protected near where she lived, but was concerned about shifting political winds and state environmental policies. Furthermore, she wanted to do what she could to ensure protections for her cherished childhood landscape in Aroostook County. “NRCM gives me a way to help protect northern Maine, too. It advocates for sound policies to protect lakes, rivers, and streams statewide, and to manage development in remote areas.”

Ann included NRCM in her will shortly after joining the organization. “We had been working on our estate plans. I knew that I wanted to leave a legacy that would benefit the state, a place we love so much. NRCM was a logical choice for me. Maine is my natural habitat. I am attached to it from birth and by a repeated experience of a connectedness, a sense of well-being within Maine’s pristine places. A healthy habitat seems to support healthy people. From this perspective, the decision to include both local land trusts and NRCM in my estate planning was clear.”

A talented photographer, Ann leaves another legacy: hauntingly beautiful images of the waters, plants, wildlife, and woods of Maine. Visit her website at www.annflewelling.com/a-moment-of-water.html.

2012 NRCM Environmental Award Winners

Each year, NRCM presents its Environmental Award to a few outstanding individuals who have put their passion for Maine’s environment into extraordinary action. This year’s awards were presented September 27 at our annual meeting at the University of Southern Maine in Portland and featured keynote speaker Ramsey Hart of MiningWatch Canada, who spoke on mining’s broken promises and the resulting environmental devastation. Watch videos of the keynote address, NRCM Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann’s opening remarks, words from NRCM Board President Tony Owens, and the full citations along with words from our award winners at our website www.nrcm.org.



Sam Day, Hallowell, 2012 Environmental Award for his exceptional efforts to raise awareness about issues threatening Maine’s watersheds and native fisheries and for his effective lobbying and testimony at the Legislature to protect Maine’s wetlands and waterfowl.



Mark Stadler, Camden, 2012 Environmental Award for his decades of service protecting Maine wildlife as leader of the Wildlife Division at Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and for his invaluable efforts in the Legislature and before the Board of Environmental Protection that helped defeat extreme rollbacks of strong protections for Maine’s inland wading bird and waterfowl habitat.



Representative Bob Duchesne, Hudson, 2012 Environmental Award for his tireless and skilled leadership across a broad range of legislative issues, bringing passion and humor to the job of defending Maine’s environment through the passage and defense of strong laws.



Bob Iles, Bethel, 2012 People’s Choice Award for exceptional efforts preserving the summit of and maintaining trails on Whitecap Mountain in Rumford, and for continued work to obtain public access to area lands and waterways as a member of the board of the Mahoosuc Land Trust.

Polar Dip n' Dash with Us!



Registration is now open! Join us midday New Year's Eve for a 5k walk/run and/or polar bear dip into Portland's East End Beach. It's a WILDLY fun way to raise funds to support our efforts to curb climate change! **Special shout out to 98.9 FM WCLZ radio, our rockin' media sponsor again this year!** FMI visit www.nrcm.org/dipdash.



WCLZ's Victoria Foley, left

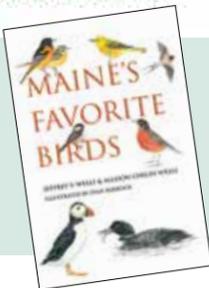
"I'm thrilled to participate in such a fun, well-organized event to raise awareness about an important issue! Last year I dashed but watched everyone enjoying the dip. This year I may even take the plunge myself! A great way to end the year!" —Victoria Foley, WCLZ DJ and Dip 'n Dash participant

Stop the "triple threat" to Maine's environment posed by tar sands, open-pit mines, and the East-West highway!

Donate Now

Your year-end gift will help protect Maine's environment for generations to come.

Get a free copy of *Maine's Favorite Birds*, co-authored by NRCM's own Allison Wells, with every new and gift membership! **Now through January 31, 2013**



LMF at NRCM



RANGELEY REGION

Looking for a great place to hike, bike, birdwatch, and otherwise enjoy Maine's great outdoors? Visit the new Land for Maine's Future section on our website. LMF has protected hundreds of places in all Maine 16 counties. Visit our new web feature and start planning your visit to one today! Involved in an LMF partnering group? Review your sites at our new web

feature and send us any photos and updates you have—we'll be happy to make them! Visit www.nrcm.org/LandforMainesFutureProjects.asp.

Green Tip of the Day



Save Your Gas—And Your Sanity.

With the holidays approaching, avoid running errands during rush hour traffic. Idling in a long line of cars burns lots of fuel and gets you nowhere. For a green tip every day, visit NRCM's website at www.nrcm.org.

Special Memberships Given August 1, 2012 to October 31, 2012

Honoraria and Memorial Gifts

Ann H. Norsworthy in honor of the marriage of Sara Lovitz and Jon Slason
Elizabeth W. Hague in honor of Bart Hague
Peter M. Beckerman in memory of Carol Cole
Brownie Carson and Dana Porter in memory of Carol Cole
John Rousmaniere in memory of Carol Cole
Betsi Taylor and Howard Hatch in honor of Carol Cole
Marie E. Whited in honor of Carol Cole
Mr. and Mrs. C.P. Williamson Jr. in memory of Carol Cole
Stephen J. Donahue in memory of Dr. Cheever J. Lyden
Harriet H. Spagnoli in memory of Dr. Kenneth Smith
Dag, Linda, Erik and Kyle Holmsen in memory of Joseph Anthony
Rod and Carole Driver in honor of Joseph G. Anthony

Gift Memberships

Isabel Mackenzie from Susan Mackenzie and Michael Donihue
Susan Feller from Mary Williams

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!

George F. and Mary Balbo
Susan Gile-Daniels
Lisa Hanley
Bruce A. Irish

Jaremy P. Lynch
Jay Pendleton
Ruth C. Poland
Jaye R. Stanley

Thanks for a Great "Run"



A big salute to the dozens of participants who helped us launch Rachel's Run on September 29 in Augusta's Capitol Park—in the rain! Your efforts raised awareness and more than \$1,000 for our work to reduce toxic pollution. Thanks to our sponsors, too:

Gold Sponsors:

Kennebec Savings • Evolo Energy

Silver:

Bay Wrap • Lamey Wellehans
Mainely Gymnastics • On Top Designs

Bronze:

BagelMainea • brightredbicycle design • Harvest Time Natural Foods
Malley Weber • Ricker's Orchards

Honorable Mentions: Lisa's Legit Burritos, T's Golf



If you "Like" us on Facebook... you'd have been among the first to learn that ExxonMobil is an owner in the proposed tar sands pipeline for Maine. "Like" us on Facebook today!

Follow us on Twitter! Search for NRCMenvironment.



Give to NRCM through MaineShare

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!



MaineShare

PO Box 2095
Augusta, Maine 04338

207-622-0105
giving@maineshare.org

www.maineshare.org • Giving at work to make Maine work better

Sunrise Savings

NRCM is pleased to be included in the *SunriseGuide*, Maine's resource and coupon book for healthy, earth-friendly living. It's packed with info to keep you informed, plus nearly 300 coupons to local businesses—restaurants, garden supplies, health & fitness, and more, including to NRCM! Look for the NEW, 2013 edition of the *SunriseGuide* (filled with more than \$5,000 in coupons) at natural food stores, bookstores, and other retail outlets. FMI visit the website at <http://thesunriseguide.com/>

