

Maine Environment

Bald Mountain, Aroostook County



Natural Resources Council of Maine

Fall 2013

Support Builds for a New National Park and National Recreation Area in Maine's North Woods By Cathy Johnson

East of Baxter State Park is an area that not many people have visited. It includes dramatic views of Katahdin, the East Branch of the Penobscot River with both spectacular rapids and quiet flat water sections, and lots of wildlife—moose, bear, pine martens, loons, eagles, colorful migratory songbirds, and more.

Welcome to what we hope will be the nation's next designated national park and national recreation area!

First National Park in the East in Decades

Elliotsville Plantation, Inc. (EPI), the non-profit organization created by philanthropist Roxanne Quimby to hold conservation lands, is proposing to donate land to the American people to create a new national park and national recreation area that would be up to 150,000 acres in size.

The national park would encompass the lands west of the East Branch, totaling about 75,000 acres. The park land would provide for the kinds of activities people expect at most national parks—for example, hiking, biking, camping, fishing, paddling, cross country skiing, wildlife



Mt. Katahdin from Salmon Stream Lake

"We are grateful for the work the Natural Resources Council of Maine has been doing to help ensure success for this project," says EPI President Lucas St. Clair.



Bicyclists on the Loop Road

watching, and snowshoeing. The park would also feature educational and interpretative programs. This huge undertaking would result in the first new national park created East of the Mississippi River in decades.

On the east side of the East Branch, up to 75,000 acres could become a national recreation area similar to those in other parts of the country. Here, in addition to national park activities, visitors could participate in other traditional North Woods recreation such as snowmobiling and hunting—uses that currently take place here. Officially designating it as a national recreation area would allow permanent protection to a section of the existing international snowmobile trail that crosses land EPI already owns. Hunting in the recreation area would be regulated in a manner consistent with Maine state law.

In addition to donating land, EPI also would donate \$20 million and raise an additional \$20 million for a total of \$40 million as an endowment to be used for maintenance and operation of the new national park and national recreation area.

The concept moved a step closer

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A Season for Climate Change Action



TIMES RECORD

In late September, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the scientific authority on the subject, concluded that human influence has been the dominant cause of climate change and that if humans do not make significant changes now to reduce carbon emissions, global warming will continue to be a serious threat, melting polar ice caps, raising sea levels, and fueling heat waves and changes in rain and climate patterns. The 2,500-page report is the result of collaboration among more than 800 experts worldwide. "Continued emissions of greenhouse gases will cause further warming and changes in all components of the climate system," explained Thomas Stocker, Co-Chair of the IPCC Working

Group. "Limiting climate change will require substantial and sustained reductions of greenhouse gas emissions." Around that same time, the American Meteorological Society released a report finding compelling evidence that human-caused climate change contributed to half of the extreme weather events studied that occurred in 2012.

There was hopeful climate news as well. On September 20, the U.S. EPA issued the nation's first-ever standards to limit carbon pollution from future power plants. Power plants are the largest source of carbon pollution in the nation, accounting for 40 percent of total emissions.

The proposed standards are a cornerstone of President Obama's Climate Action Plan and come as Mainers begin to feel the early effects of global warming. Lobstermen are seeing troubling changes to lobster fisheries. More people are getting tick-borne Lyme disease. Fishermen are reporting harmful warming in our trout streams, and people across Maine are dealing with costly increases in heavy storms and flooding.

The same week that the powerplant carbon rules were announced, Maine Senator Angus King gave a major speech on the Senate floor about the pressing need for action. During debate about an energy efficiency bill, King said the time for delay and procrastination is over and that scientific data clearly justify action. He called the President's carbon plan "an important first step."

"We have safeguards to protect people from mercury, soot, and other dangerous power plant pollution, but there have been no federal limits on the carbon pollution that is responsible for climate change," said NRCM's Lisa Pohlmann. "That's wrong, and the EPA plan will fix it. We thank Senator King for his leadership in calling for action on climate change now. The EPA has a plan that deserves the support of Maine's entire delegation." —by Judy Berk, Communications Director

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A Diamond in the Rough

by Lisa Pohlmann, NRCM Executive Director

I have had the great pleasure to make three visits this fall to the lands proposed for a new national park and national recreation area. It has been very exciting to bring NRCM staff, board, and members to see this magical place and for all of us to be in on the ground floor of this once-in-a-lifetime project.

The three wilderness rivers that flow through this land—the East Branch of the Penobscot, the Sebois, and Wassataquoik Stream—carry the sound of moving water that is so fundamental to Maine: bubbling over rocks, rushing down small falls, whispering on its way to the sea. Great Blue Herons lift from the marshes. A stately Bald Eagle watches from the top of a pine.



Lisa Pohlmann is at the stern and Energy Outreach Coordinator Emmie Theberge is at the bow on the East Branch of the Penobscot River during the staff's visit to the proposed park lands.

The Loop Road provides stunning views of Mount Katahdin. From a scenic overlook, I saw that majestic mountain blanketed in billowing clouds one day and rising above an autumn-colored carpet of unbroken forest another. We hiked a trail to a remote pond where pitcher plants hide in the marshes. We crossed rushing streams over small bridges built to allow salmon and other fish to make

their way to spawn. We spied a moose walking down the road past us as we chatted over lunch. At night, the black skies were thick with stars.

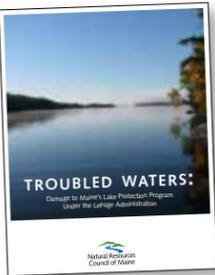
One day we saw a mountain biker pedaling along the Loop Road. Another day, we shared stories with local picnickers at the scenic overlook. The recreational opportunities are phenomenal, and a big part of what the National Park Service is seeking these days.

This is the Maine we love, well worth preserving so generations to come can enjoy it. It also is a great economic opportunity for a region that needs a boost. No wonder more and more people who live in nearby towns are joining the effort. One innkeeper said to us, "We'll do anything we can to get this park open." Maine Quest Adventures provided our canoe rentals. Local contractors built and graded the Loop Road. We gassed up in Medway and bought some snacks for the long drive home.

I think about what it would mean if several thousand additional people started doing the same every year, stopping also in Millinocket, Patten, Staceyville, Smyrna, and other towns to spend money at shops, restaurants, lodging, galleries, and the museum, and on canoe rentals and shuttles, guides, and equipment purchases. An economic study last winter showed how a 150,000-acre national park and national recreation area could help the local and regional economy. It makes sense.

This is the beginning of a new chapter and a new discussion. I hope many people will go to see this special place for themselves and join our effort to make this project a reality.

NRCM Releases Two Investigative Reports Blowing Whistle on DEP



We've just released two investigative reports documenting the harm the LePage Administration is doing to Maine's environment through the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). **Troubled Waters** details damage being done to DEP's lake protection program including reducing staff, funding, and programs to the lowest levels in decades. The report also shows that DEP has not been enforcing a law that protects Maine's lakes from the risk of phosphorous pollution that

can cause algae blooms that kill fish and can make lakes unfit for swimming.

Bald Mountain Mining Risks: Hidden from the Public

shows that the DEP has documents revealing that an open-pit mine at Bald Mountain in Aroostook County is likely to pollute rivers, lakes, and streams with sulfuric acid runoff and arsenic pollution. Yet the agency did not share these documents with legislators when they were considering a proposal to weaken water protections related to mining. The bill passed, but it might not have if legislators had known the risks.



Download a copy of these investigative reports at our website, or call (207) 622-3101 for a copy.

National Park - Continued from page 1

to reality in early September when EPI opened a loop road to the public on the west side of the East Branch, in the area that would become a national park. NRCM staff and our Board of Directors visited the Loop Road this fall, as have many others, and it was clear to us all that this area could be a



Wassataquoik Stream

spectacular draw for visitors to a part of the state that could benefit from the economic boosts that towns near national parks experience nationwide.

"For the past two years, NRCM staff members have been meeting with residents of the greater Katahdin region about the proposed national park and national recreation area," says NRCM Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann. "We have heard their questions and concerns and have worked with Lucas St. Clair, the president of EPI and Roxanne Quimby's son, to answer these questions and address concerns. We are excited about the proposal now taking shape and believe it would be good for the local and state economy by providing a full range of recreational opportunities while conserving a spectacular part of Maine."

A Boost for the Region

In February 2013, Headwaters Economics, an independent economic consulting firm, released two studies about the potential economic benefits that a new national park and national recreation area could have in the Katahdin region. The authors of the study looked at counties surrounding national parks and national recreation areas across the country that were roughly similar in size and location to the area east of Baxter State Park. They found that those counties had higher personal income and more job growth over the last 40 years than what Piscataquis and Penobscot counties have experienced, and also higher growth than the national average.

Additional research has shown that the proposed national park and national recreation area would not adversely impact existing paper mill and forest products activities, and could be fully compatible with any new manufacturing facilities that might want to move to the area. "We were pleased that the research showed that a 150,000-acre national park and national recreation area can co-exist well with the forest products industry," says Pohlmann.

Work to further explore the conservation values and recreation potential of the area is ongoing. In addition to the Loop Road, short trails have been created by EPI to provide access to wildlife-watching spots along pristine ponds. Thirty-five miles of the International Appalachian Trail crosses the property, and there are three lean-tos and multiple campsites along the trail. Other day-hiking trail opportunities are being explored. Paddlers can enjoy a multiday, whitewater trip on the East Branch of the Penobscot from Matagamon to Medway, with spectacular rapids and good portage trails and campsites, as well as flat water day trips. The lower reaches of the Sebois River also cross the property and provide day or multiday trips on quieter water. Wassataquoik Stream, draining out of Russell Pond in Baxter State Park, provides remote wild trout fishing opportunities. The Loop Road and the former logging road system in the proposed national park provide exciting opportunities for mountain bikers, and plans are afoot to provide winter access for cross country skiers and snowshoeing enthusiasts.

While the area includes spectacular scenery and recreation opportunities, the proposal for a national park and national recreation area is still in the exploratory phase. Therefore, the land does not have the smooth roads, restrooms, fully maintained trails, interpretative information, or other amenities of an established national park. But it could have all of these amenities one day, if support continues to build to realize EPI's proposal.

For now, EPI is inviting the public to come explore and help shape the proposed national park and national recreation area. "We are grateful for the work the Natural Resources Council of Maine has been doing to help ensure success for this project," says EPI President Lucas St. Clair. "They have shown real leadership in the conservation community in committing to this project at an early stage. We appreciate that NRCM staff have engaged their members for their input and ideas. We now hope NRCM members and supporters will participate in the next phase—visiting this beautiful area."

We, too, encourage you to go for a visit and also to communicate your support for this concept to Maine's Congressional delegation. After all, it isn't every day that you have the chance to get in on the ground floor of the creation of a new national park and national recreation area! To visit, contact Eliza Donoghue, North Woods Policy Advocate and Outreach Coordinator, at eliza@nrcm.org or 207-430-0118. —Cathy Johnson, NRCM North Woods Project Director and Senior Staff Attorney

Meet Our 2013 Environmental Award Winners

On October 16, NRCM presented its 2013 Environmental Awards. Presented at NRCM's annual meeting, the awards are given each year to people and groups who have made a real difference at the local, regional, or state level protecting the health and beauty of Maine's environment. This year's annual meeting was at USM in Portland and was followed by a special event, *Conversation about Climate*, featuring climate scientist Michael Mann and a panel of experts. For more about the event, and to read the Environmental Award citations, visit www.nrcm.org.

Paul Bisulca of Oxford

for exceptional efforts to reopen the St. Croix River to alewives



Paul Bisulca flanked by NRCM Board President Tony Owens and Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann

Thanks But No Tank

People's Choice Award for exceptional efforts mobilizing and engaging citizens to protect Searsport and surrounding coastal communities from potential harm posed by a proposed LPG tank and terminal



Members of Thanks But No Tank with NRCM Board President Tony Owens (left) and Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann (right)

Tar Sands Citizen Groups in Casco, Waterford, Harrison, Otisfield, and South Portland

for their hard work defending against the risks to air, land, and water by leading efforts in their communities to pass municipal resolutions in opposition to sending tar sands through Maine's crude oil pipeline



Members of the tar sands citizen groups with (fourth and fifth from left in back row) NRCM Board President Tony Owens and Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann

Tune into Time for Action in Washington



Mainers speak out in support of Senator King's call for climate action on the Senate floor. Watch excerpts from Senator King's speech and hear from Mainers who call on Maine's Congressional delegation to act now to protect Maine—and the nation—from climate-changing pollution. Tune in at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AymEa42bQPs>



Stay Informed!

Sign up for NRCM's Action Network, the best way to get the latest info about issues NRCM is working on. You'll be among the first to hear about the release of our latest investigative findings, news stories on our issues, and big victories at the State House like this year's passage of paint

recycling and energy efficiency bills. With the click of a button, you can send a message urging your elected officials to support bills that protect Maine's land, air, water, and wildlife. You decide which issues you stay informed about, and when and how you take action. You'll also receive invitations to our hikes and paddles, Citizen Action Day, and other NRCM events. Sign up today at http://nrcm.kintera.org/Action_Network_signup.

Taking Stock at Year-End ... and Giving It

The stock market has rebounded in recent years, and many people now own appreciated stock—stock that has risen in value over time. For example, "Nancy" has a stock account with a well-known brokerage company. One of her stocks has grown from \$15 a share to \$75 a share over the past few years. If she asked her broker to sell the stock, she would owe tax on \$60 of appreciation for each share that was sold.

However, if Nancy gave the stock to NRCM, she would avoid the tax on the appreciation and receive, instead, an income tax deduction on the full value of the stock.

Let's say Nancy decided to give 100 shares of this stock as a year-end gift to NRCM. In making the gift, she would obtain a charitable income tax deduction of \$7,500, even though she only paid \$1,500 for these shares originally. If she happens to be in the combined federal and state 31 percent tax bracket and claims the deduction on her itemized returns, she could possibly save \$2,325 in taxes—more than she paid for the stock in the first place!

A win for Nancy, and a win for Maine's environment.

Historically, year-end is a popular time for making stock gifts. Most stock gifts occur during the fourth quarter of the year. Many donors review their portfolios to select those stocks that have appreciated the most (and, critically, have been held for more than a year). These donors give stock instead of cash because they have discovered the value—and enjoyment—of increasing their impact by giving the appreciated value.

Have you considered making a gift of appreciated stock to NRCM? It may be better for you than making a gift of cash. Your CPA or investment advisor can advise you on whether such a gift makes sense for you.

To make a gift of stock, please contact Gretta J. Wark, Senior Director of Development, at (207) 622-3101 ext. 208 or Matt Scease, Major Gifts Director, at ext. 230.

Unique Giving Opportunity for Donors 70½ or Older—But Only Until December 31, 2013

The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 extended a little known giving opportunity for donors who are 70½ or older. Known as an IRA charitable rollover, the qualified charitable distribution allows a donor to make a payment from an IRA (other than an ongoing SEP or SIMPLE IRA) directly from the IRA to a qualified charity.

The same qualified charitable distribution can be used to satisfy any IRA required minimum distributions for the year. The donor may contribute up to \$100,000 from an IRA. The donor may give to one or several charities, and the cumulative payment is excluded from the donor's gross income for the year. Because the donor excluded the contribution from his or her gross income, the donor cannot take a charitable contribution deduction for the gift. (That would be double-dipping!)

Your CPA or investment advisor can advise you on whether such a gift makes sense for you.

For more information about tax-wise gifts, please contact Gretta J. Wark, Senior Director of Development, at (207) 622-3101 ext. 208 or Matt Scease, Major Gifts Director, at ext. 230.



"I have done several contributions out of my IRA this year. The process is very straightforward. And by using the IRA charitable rollover, I was able to double a few charitable gifts."

—Buzz Lamb, NRCM Board Member



KATHLEEN HESELTINE

DIP N' DASH WITH NRCM!



MAINE RUNNING PHOTOS

Polar bear dashers Jacqueline MacNeil and Sunita Sharma

On Tuesday, December 31, 2013, NRCM will host our 6th Annual Polar Bear Dip & Dash in Portland's East End! Push yourself outside your comfort zone and join us for a Polar Bear Dip at noon at East End Beach on New Year's Eve day! To warm up for the dip, run or walk in our 5k around Portland's Back Cove trail. There will be prizes, and you can get your picture taken with one of our "polar bears." All funds raised go to NRCM's work curbing climate change. With Maine's sea-side communities, increasing prevalence of Lyme disease, and nature-based recreation and economy, our state is especially at risk. Special thanks to our media sponsor 98.9 WCLZ for helping us get out the word about this fun event for a great cause. Sign up today at <http://nrcm.kintera.org/dipdash> to dip, dash, or both. You'll earn bragging rights for years to come!

Green Tip of the Day

Give Thanks for Local Farms This Thanksgiving, don't waste transportation energy by loading your table with imported food. You can find locally grown cranberries, potatoes, pumpkins, apples, cabbage, and more at your local farmer's market. You'll support local farmers and reduce your carbon footprint, too! For a green tip of the day every day, visit NRCM's website at www.nrcm.org. And tune in to WCLZ 98.9 FM on your radio dial (web stream) to hear a new Maine Green Minute, every week day, four times a day!



If you "Like" us on Facebook... you'd have seen the comment Senator Angus King posted to our Wall praising our event and linking to our video. You can watch the video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AymEa42bQPs>

Follow us on Twitter! Search for NRCMenvironment.



Rachel's Run a Big Success



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A huge thanks to all who joined us for the 2nd Annual Rachel's Run & Kids' Fun on October 6th. Your efforts raised awareness and more than \$3500 for our work to reduce toxic pollution! Congratulations to our top fundraisers: Emily Parker (\$335), Jennifer Jespersen (\$255), and Kate Rush (\$155). Amazing work—thank you so, so much! For a list of race winners, visit www.nrcm.org where you can also view our slide show. And a special thank you to our generous sponsors:

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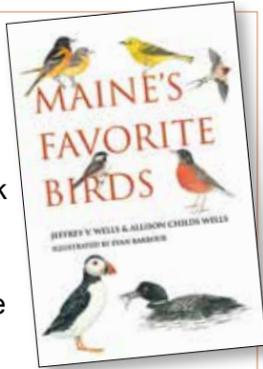
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Douglas W. and Nancy Verzi

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For every NRCM gift membership you give, you or your recipient will receive the best-selling book *Maine's Favorite Birds*, by NRCM's own Allison Wells and her husband, Jeff, FREE. Call or send in your payment with the code "Newsletter Favorite Birds 2013" Now through January 31, 2014



My Maine This Week



"This is a photo taken at Runaround Pond in Durham. The swamp maples were at their peak."

—NRCM member Peter Simmons of Brunswick, Maine

Send Us Your "My Maine This Week" Do you have a photograph of Maine you'd like to share? A short poem? Send your submissions to beth@nrcm.org. Visit "My Maine This Week" online at www.nrcm.org.

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Editor / Allison Childs Wells, Senior Director of Public Affairs

Design / brightredbicycle design

Contributors / Judy Berk, Beth Comeau, Cathy Johnson, Gretta Wark, Allison Childs Wells

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

Executive Director / Lisa Pohlmann

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Cover Banner / Bald Mountain by NRCM Outreach Coordinator Todd Martin. NRCM is working to protect the watersheds near Bald Mountain and throughout Maine by speaking up for strong mining rules that protect Maine's waters from pollution from open-pit mines.



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

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