



## ◆◆◆ NRCM SPECIAL REPORT ◆◆◆

# Governor LePage and Maine's Environment: A Dismal Record

Governor Paul LePage has announced that he's pursuing a "war" against the Natural Resources Council of Maine, but his real target is Maine's environment. For the past five years, the governor has supported the most anti-environment agenda of any governor in modern Maine history. He thinks Maine's environment and economy are in conflict and that we need to weaken Maine's environmental protections to create jobs—a false, outdated notion that no Maine governor has held in decades.

Unlike the governor, NRCM and the overwhelming majority of Maine people understand that a clean and healthy environment is essential for Maine's economy, our health, and quality of life. Maine's environment and economy go hand-in-hand.

We have produced this Special Report to compare the work that NRCM is doing to protect Maine's natural resources with the LePage Administration's record of undermining safeguards for our environment. The governor has attempted to weaken laws that bipartisan coalitions of Maine lawmakers have carefully put into place over the last 50 years. Maine people, organizations, businesses, and legislators have rallied to defeat the governor's misguided proposals. He is angry

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about his repeated defeats and has turned his anger toward NRCM.

Governor LePage says he is carrying out a "little war" against NRCM. We have never before seen such attacks from a sitting governor. Over the past few months, the governor has:

- ▶ attacked NRCM by name more than 80 times in nearly two dozen speeches, interviews, and written communications;
- ▶ displayed a "Wanted" poster at a town hall meeting featuring a photo of an NRCM staff member;
- ▶ declared that NRCM is an "enemy" and announced that the "Natural Resource [sic] Council of Maine has got to go"; and
- ▶ called NRCM "the anti-Christ of the state."

The governor also took the unprecedented step of directing his staff to look up the home addresses of NRCM members so that he could send them harassing letters. That was the last straw for us.

On June 2, 2016, we held a news conference to demand that the governor stop using Maine taxpayer dollars to hunt down the addresses of people who support NRCM, just because we disagree with his agenda. NRCM

Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann said, "Where does this stop? This tactic of creating enemy lists harkens back to something that Joseph McCarthy would have done in the 1950s, not a governor of the state of Maine in 2016."

We have filed a request to the governor's office for copies of all documents mentioning NRCM. It is important to determine the full extent to which the governor is using taxpayer funds to carry out his personal vendetta against NRCM.

We have become the target of the governor's rage because we have played a pivotal role in blocking his efforts to weaken Maine's environmental laws. But his "little war" is not working. NRCM will not stop bringing citizens

together to fight for clean air and water, renewable energy, wildlife habitat, conserved lands, and sustainable communities—and the jobs and lives that depend on a healthy Maine environment. If anything, the governor's attacks have strengthened our resolve.

The governor's efforts to weaken environmental protections are out of step with the facts, and with the views of Maine people. That's why bipartisan majorities have consistently voted against his anti-environment agenda in the Maine House and Senate.

Mainers and visitors to our state appreciate Maine's clean rivers, lakes, and streams. They value our conserved lands for recreation and wildlife habitat. They support efforts to make our communities more sustainable. They are glad that Maine lawmakers have passed strong laws that remove toxic chemicals from consumer products and promote recycling. And they support clean, renewable energy sources that reduce air pollution and the threat of climate change.

These are our goals. This is what NRCM staff and our 16,000 members and supporters work for each and every day. Despite any claims he may make, we have seen little evidence that Governor LePage shares these goals. But we know that Mainers everywhere do—those who reside in this beautiful state and those who hold a piece of Maine in their hearts and memories. NRCM supporters live in every corner of Maine, in 504 Maine communities. We remain strong in the face of Governor LePage's assault.

NRCM is not going anywhere but forward.

—NRCM Staff and Members of the Board of Directors

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WENDY WEIGER

## Nominate Your Hero!

**2016 People's Choice Award  
nominations are now open.**  
Deadline for nominations: August 5, 2016  
See Page 8



## Standing Up for What We Believe



It is high time to set the record straight on who is working to protect Maine's environment and who is attacking it. That is why we are devoting our annual legislative Report Card to the contrast between our work together with you as the Natural Resources Council of Maine and Governor LePage's relentless efforts to roll back and undercut our environmental laws.

Now, more than ever, we need to stand strong together. We do this work with you and because of you. NRCM

is not simply the staff in our Augusta office. We are thousands of people across Maine and beyond who care deeply about the environment and the economy of this state. We have worked together for generations to support laws that find the right balance between protecting the waters, woods, and wildlife of Maine that we love, and the jobs that sustain our families and communities.

NRCM has always been viewed as balanced, smart, science-based, and powerful. That's because for 57 years, NRCM staff and members have worked together so effectively. No one can deny us our right to stand up for what we believe. No one can make us disappear. We are strong in Augusta because you are strong in your resolve and engaged in action.

Please read this report carefully so that you understand the issues and can help counter the governor's obsessive rant against us all, and so that we can continue to work together as strongly as ever. Thank you for your outpouring of support. We know you are with us.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa Pohlmann".

Lisa Pohlmann  
Executive Director



ORONO BOG BOARDWALK BY JEFF WELLS

## CONSERVED LAND AND HEALTHY FORESTS

**Every \$1 invested in land conservation through LMF returns \$11 in goods and services to the Maine economy.**

Maine is a special place, with a natural character that defines who we are as a people. We love our forests, parks, coasts, waterways, islands, mountains, farmlands, and wildlife. We have worked hard to protect Maine's quality of place through the work of land trusts, lake associations, and state agencies. Many communities have pursued local conservation efforts, and the people of Maine have strongly supported statewide conservation through the Land for Maine's Future (LMF) program—one of Maine's most successful and popular land conservation efforts.

NRCM has proudly supported the LMF program since it was created in 1987. As part of a broad-based coalition, we have worked to secure passage of LMF bond measures each time they have been proposed in the Maine Legislature, and we promoted their passage at the ballot box in 1987, 1999, 2005, 2007, 2010, and 2012. When Maine people have a chance to vote for LMF funding, they do so by an overwhelming margin. This is because LMF has done such a wonderful job protecting special places in all 16 Maine counties.

Land purchased with the help of LMF funds, along with required matching funds, provides guaranteed public access in perpetuity. This is extremely important because Maine has so little public land—one of the lowest percentages (about 6 percent) of any state in the nation.

Maine's public lands include state parks, Baxter State Park, Acadia National Park, White Mountain National Forest, the Appalachian Trail, and national wildlife refuges, as well as 600,000 acres of Public Reserved Lands in more than 30 separate parcels across Maine. The Public Reserved Lands are enjoyed for their outstanding hiking, camping, birding, fishing, and hunting opportunities. They include places like the Bigelow Preserve, Kennebec Highlands, Tumbledown, and Cutler's Bold Coast. For decades, Maine's Public Reserved Lands have been considered some of the best managed forests in Maine—with healthy stands of mature trees.

**Benefits:** Since 1987, LMF has protected more than 315,000 acres of working forestland, more than 1,200 miles of shorefront, land around dozens of lakes and ponds, scores of spectacular mountains, and hundreds of miles of trails throughout Maine for residents and visitors to enjoy. These conserved lands provide guaranteed public access to valued parts of Maine's landscape, and afford myriad benefits, both measurable (economic benefits, jobs) and immeasurable (quality of life, treasured memories).

In 2012, the Trust for Public Lands completed a study of the direct and indirect benefits of LMF titled *Return on the Investment in Land for Maine's Future*. The report found that every \$1 invested in land conservation through LMF returns \$11 in goods and services to the Maine economy. LMF has protected 24 working waterfronts that benefit nearly 1,300 Maine fishing families and 637 fishing vessels. It also has helped Maine farmers keep their land in farming through 40 LMF farmland projects across 10 Maine counties.

Maine's Public Reserved Lands and state parks also provide important benefits for hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, and other forms of outdoor recreation. Well-managed forests that include mature stands of timber support habitat for many species of birds, plants, and animals that make these areas prime destinations for wildlife watching and remote recreation. They also provide high-quality mature timber.

**Governor LePage's Record:** Governor LePage has repeatedly demonstrated his hostility toward land conservation, the Land for Maine's Future program, the Forest Legacy Program, and land trusts. He has pushed for a radical, unsustainable increase in timber harvesting on Maine's Public Reserved Lands. Over the past 30 years, land conservation has received strong nonpartisan support at the ballot box in all 16 counties, but the governor has aggressively tried to make it a partisan issue. In an unprecedented move, he refused to release \$11.5 million in citizen-approved LMF funds for 10 months (from March 2015 until December 2015). He finally relented in late 2015 in the face of massive public outrage and bipartisan pressure from lawmakers. Governor LePage doesn't value land conservation, but Maine people do because it provides guaranteed public access to special places in perpetuity and is integral to our nature-based economy.



## 2016 Legislative Session Summary

This was a challenging legislative session. Partisan tensions were high because it is an election year, and because Governor LePage vetoed so many bills that reached his desk. In a very positive development in January, lawmakers unanimously restored Land for Maine's Future funding that the governor had refused to release. At the end of the session, in a big disappointment and setback for clean energy, a comprehensive solar energy bill was defeated. Although the bill initially passed with strong bipartisan votes, it fell just a few votes short of the number needed to override the governor's veto. NRCM staff worked on dozens of other bills this session.

**Please see our website for a detailed analysis of the results of the 2016 legislative session.**



# CLEAN ENERGY AND CLIMATE ACTION

**We are missing out on hundreds of new solar jobs, and we are failing to transition from imported power to clean, local energy from the sun that must be a growing part of our energy future.**



RALLY AT THE STATE HOUSE FOR SOLAR BY J. BERKINSON

Mainers are overly dependent on dirty energy sources that contribute to the threat of climate change. We also spend too much money heating, cooling, lighting, and operating homes and businesses that needlessly waste energy. Although we generate a significant amount of energy from hydroelectric dams and grid-scale wind farms, we lag far behind other states in developing solar energy. In terms of solar energy per capita, we're in last place in the region. As a result, we are missing out on hundreds of new solar jobs, and we are failing to transition from imported power to clean, local energy from the sun that must be a growing part of our energy future.

Over the past 20 years, NRCM has been involved in essentially every policy discussion involving renewable energy, energy efficiency, and climate action. We played a pivotal role in establishing Efficiency Maine and the Efficiency Maine Trust, which manages the state's energy efficiency programs

with ambitious goals for reducing energy bills for Maine homeowners and businesses through cost-effective energy efficiency investments. We strongly advocate for increased investments through Efficiency Maine, which has already saved Mainers hundreds of millions of dollars in energy costs. We also helped secure passage of the legislation for Maine to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a globally significant market-based program that limits carbon pollution from power plants. The revenue from RGGI is used to support energy efficiency, including home weatherization and programs that reduce energy costs for Maine's largest manufacturers. RGGI has saved Maine people more than \$250 million in out-of-pocket energy costs.

Over the past year, NRCM played a central role in helping develop a comprehensive solar energy bill that would have created 650 new solar jobs in Maine and reduced ratepayer costs for residents and businesses. The bill was negotiated and supported by a broad group of stakeholders, including utility companies, Maine's Public Advocate (appointed by Governor LePage to represent ratepayer interests), solar installers, municipalities, conservation organizations, public health advocates, and many others. The bill received strong bipartisan majority votes in the House and unanimous support in the Senate. Despite this hard work and broad support across party lines, the governor killed it with a veto.

**Benefits:** Maine and the rest of the world are on a dangerous path toward severe climate disruption due to the burning of fossil fuels. Climate change poses serious threats to Maine's economy and way of life, from the decline of winter recreation to the potential collapse of some commercial fisheries. We face an unprecedented challenge to move rapidly toward low- and no-carbon sources of energy, and to waste as little energy as possible. The transition away from fossil fuels also creates economic opportunities because it keeps money in the pockets of Maine people and businesses instead of sending it out of state to buy energy supplied from other parts of the country and around

*continued on page 4*

## CLEAN WATER

**The Maine DEP had a nationally recognized lake protection program... but the LePage Administration has deliberately and systematically dismantled it.**

Maine has magnificent clean waters that are central to our economy, identity, and quality of life. Maine people and visitors cherish their time vacationing on our lakes, fishing our rivers and streams, and walking or boating along our coastlines. Maine's 6,000 lakes and ponds are the envy of the region, and our 30,000 miles of rivers and streams include some of the best trout habitat in the country. The water quality in Maine's major rivers has improved over the past 40 years due to reduced pollution and several dam removals. Huge numbers of sea-run fish have started to return to some of these rivers. The Kennebec and Sebasticook rivers now have the largest runs of river herring in the nation, and the Penobscot is rebounding quickly.

It is not an accident that Maine's waters are comparatively clean and healthy. Over the course of decades, countless Maine residents, organizations, businesses, communities, lawmakers, and state agency personnel have worked to achieve cleaner rivers, lakes, streams, and coastal waters.

Since our founding in 1959, NRCM has been a leading force in pressing for stewardship of Maine's rivers, lakes, streams and coastal waters. In the 1960s, we helped bring national attention to our polluted industrial rivers. In the 1970s, we created the Congress of Lakes Association and helped pass Maine's vital Shoreland Zoning Laws. In the 1980s, we helped pass the Maine Rivers Act, protecting 1,100 miles of Maine's outstanding rivers. In the 1990s, we played a lead role in the restoration of the Kennebec River by securing removal of the Edwards Dam in Augusta, followed by removal of the Ft. Halifax Dam in Winslow. We also were central to opening up the St. Croix to alewives and creating the successful Penobscot River Restoration Project, which maintained hydropower generation while creating improved access by sea-run fish to more than 1,000 miles of inland habitat.

**Benefits:** Maine's lakes generate more than \$3.5 billion annually for Maine's economy and sustain 52,000 jobs. Clean lakes maintain lakeshore property values, contribute to the economy of entire communities, provide safe drinking water for more than 400,000 people, and serve as magnets for tourism and recreation. As pollution has declined in Maine's major rivers, towns have made major new riverside investments in buildings, parks, trails, and housing; as a result, recreation and other revenue-generating activities are on the rise. Clean coastal waters are essential for Maine's clambers and our world famous shellfish industry, while sport fishing supports an estimated 6,600 jobs and generates \$349 million in retail sales and \$140 million in wages.



LONG POND, BELGRADE BY NRCM MEMBER JEFF WELLS

**Governor LePage's Record:** Until recently, the Maine DEP had a nationally recognized lake protection program, one that was the envy of other states, but the LePage Administration has deliberately and systematically dismantled it. From 2011 through 2013, the LePage Administration slashed staff and funding for DEP's lake protection work, terminated DEP's Education and Technical Assistance help for lake associations, blocked DEP's lake experts from participating in scientific conferences, scaled back enforcement of lake protection laws, and purged the DEP website of studies and other public information about Maine's lakes. It even refused to post on the DEP website a report demonstrating that Maine's Shoreland Zoning Law has been highly successful. In 2013, NRCM released "Troubled Waters," an investigative report documenting these attacks on DEP's Lake Protection Program.

Governor LePage has also supported "takings" bills that would undermine water quality protections. He has backed a bill to weaken Maine's oil spill reporting law and pushed for weakening rules that protect Maine waters from metal mining pollution. Metal mining is the largest source of toxic pollution in the U.S. and one of the greatest threats to water quality. [See Mining Sidebar] His deliberate attempts to undermine protections for some of Maine's most valued economic and ecological assets—our lakes, rivers, and streams—demonstrates a deep-seated lack of understanding about the relationship between the environment and Maine's economy.



## CLEAN ENERGY -continued from previous page

the world. The transition also creates permanent, good-paying energy efficiency and clean energy jobs that cannot be exported.

Efficiency Maine reduces energy costs for Maine people and businesses, and cuts unhealthy air pollution from energy generation. Efficiency Maine has already produced \$1 billion in lifetime savings in energy costs for Maine people, and the Public Utilities Commission recently approved a three-year spending plan for Efficiency Maine that will save Mainers at least \$625 million on energy bills.

Much of Efficiency Maine's funding comes from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), of which Maine is a founding member. Independent economic studies show that RGGI has substantially reduced carbon pollution while lowering Maine's energy costs, providing jobs, and boosting Maine's economy. From 2012 to 2014, RGGI added \$122 million to Maine's economy and created 80 new jobs.

As for solar, we need only look to nearby states to see the benefits that we are missing. Massachusetts had more than 15,000 solar jobs in 2015, up from 9,400 the year before. Vermont had 1,397 solar jobs in 2015, up from 1,000 in 2014. In Maine, however, the number of solar jobs is declining, falling from an already-low 400 in 2014 to just 330 in 2015. We are in last place, and dropping farther behind, while last year the number of U.S. jobs in solar energy overtook those in oil and natural gas extraction for the first time. Employment in the U.S. solar business grew 12 times faster than overall job creation. By failing to enact a comprehensive solar bill, Maine is also failing to save ratepayers money.

**Governor LePage's Record:** Governor LePage seems to despise solar energy—and renewable energy in general—and energy efficiency. Over the past five years, he has proposed multiple bills to weaken Maine's renewable energy programs, undermine energy efficiency investments made with RGGI funds, and politicize the Efficiency Maine Trust. His actions are making it more difficult for Maine people, towns, and businesses to pursue solar energy. This year, he vetoed the comprehensive solar bill that would have created 650 new jobs and saved more than \$58 million in electricity costs for ratepayers who don't have solar. By killing the bipartisan solar bill, the governor undermined his claim about wanting to create good jobs for Maine people, and sent a strong message that he is not interested in a clean, independent energy future for Maine people and businesses or the good jobs this would create. In a similar move, the governor in 2013 chased away hundreds of millions of dollars of investment and hundreds of jobs for Maine people when he caused the Norwegian company Statoil to abandon their offshore wind power project in Maine. The company now is pursuing a \$228 million project off the shore of Scotland instead.

## Working Together for Maine's Environment

The governor's attack on NRCM has broad implications for everyone who cares about the stewardship of Maine's natural resources. His attack on Maine's environmental laws is an assault on everyone who is part of the collective effort to protect and strengthen our economy and our environment in a balanced way. Countless organizations and individuals contribute time and resources toward protecting Maine's natural heritage. The governor's misplaced rage is directed at all of us, and at the natural resources we value.



MOOSEHEAD LAKE BY JASON HEINDEL

**Lake water quality** benefits from the work of the Maine Lakes Society, more than 145 Maine lake associations, and the volunteer efforts of more than 1,200 active volunteer water quality monitors who gather data on more than 500 lakes statewide.

**State environmental policy** is advanced by members of the Environmental Priorities Coalition, consisting of 31 environmental, conservation, and public health organizations representing more than 100,000 members.

**Land conservation and trails** are conserved through the work of more than 90 Maine land trusts, local nature centers, and dozens of organizations that build and maintain recreational trails.

**Coastal water quality** is the focus of the Citizen Stewards Water Quality Monitoring program in Casco Bay, where volunteers have produced more than 250,000 water quality measurements since 1992.

**Community character** is enhanced through the efforts of Maine's 42 garden clubs, whose members adhere to a Conservation Pledge "to protect and conserve the natural resources of the planet Earth and promise to promote education so we may be caretakers of our air, water, forest, land and wildlife."



WATER SAMPLING IN CASCO BAY BY KEVIN MORRIS



LOON AND CHICKS BY DANIEL AND GINGER POLESCHOCK

## PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP AND ADVANCED RECYCLING

**The DEP issued a report recommending that the Legislature consider terminating Maine's product stewardship laws. Documents gathered by NRCM through Maine's Freedom of Access Act demonstrated that the governor's agenda was the result of closed-door meetings with lobbyists representing out-of-state manufacturers.**

Over the past 20 years, Maine lawmakers have worked hard to reduce toxic pollution in our environment. One of the top targets for attention has been mercury, a toxic heavy metal that causes brain damage and heart problems. Mercury persists and accumulates in the environment and in wildlife, where it causes developmental and neurological harm, attacking the brains of developing babies. Levels of mercury in Maine fish, loons, and eagles are among the highest in North America. All of Maine's inland waters have a fish consumption advisory due to mercury contamination levels, and a 12.5-square-mile area at the mouth of the Penobscot River is now closed to lobstering due to mercury contamination.

Much of the mercury in Maine's environment blows in from upwind coal-fired power plants, but in-state sources of mercury are also a problem. Starting in 2000, NRCM worked with lawmakers to pass several bills that required manufacturers of mercury-containing commercial products to help pay for the retrieval and recycling of those products at the end of their useful life. With strong bipartisan votes, the Legislature enacted product stewardship laws to help reduce mercury pollution from fluorescent light bulbs, thermostats, automobile light switches, and electronic waste (e-waste). In 2014, Maine passed a product stewardship law for unwanted paint. NRCM is a strong advocate of product stewardship because we believe manufacturers should help pay for recycling their toxic and problematic consumer products. Otherwise, the burden falls to the environment, human health, towns, and taxpayers.

**Benefits:** Maine's product stewardship laws have been highly successful, eliminating hundreds of pounds of mercury and lead that otherwise would have ended up in the environment. Maine's e-waste program has diverted more than 58 million pounds of waste from Maine landfills and incinerators and saved money for taxpayers and municipalities. The thermostat recycling program has collected more than 450 pounds of mercury. The compact fluorescent lamp program has gathered nearly one million bulbs, and more than 64,000 mercury auto switches have been collected from vehicles before they are scrapped, removing 140 pounds of mercury.

**Governor LePage's Record:** On January 24, 2011, Governor LePage released a 63-point anti-environment agenda that would have terminated or weakened many of Maine's most important environmental laws, including all of our product stewardship laws. His "Phase I Regulatory Reform Proposals" called for a new policy "that ensures that manufacturers do not have to pay to recycle their consumer products." Lawmakers understood that this proposal was designed to benefit out-of-state corporations, at the expense of Maine people and the environment, so they defeated it—but the governor refused to let go. In December 2011, the DEP issued a report recommending that the Legislature consider terminating Maine's product stewardship laws. Documents gathered by NRCM through Maine's Freedom of Access Act demonstrated that the governor's agenda was the result of closed-door meetings with lobbyists representing out-of-state manufacturers. The Legislature again rejected the proposed termination of our product stewardship laws. These laws became models for similar laws adopted in many other states.



# Governor LePage's **VETO** Legacy: Bad for Business and the Environment

Governor LePage has become a highly disruptive force in the legislative process. He prefers to put legislation at risk through his vetoes, and threatened vetoes, than to work with lawmakers to find common ground before a bill reaches his desk. He has vetoed 450 bills, far more than any other governor in Maine history. This includes many important environmental bills that passed the House and Senate with strong bipartisan majorities, but fell short of the two-thirds vote needed to override the governor's objection. These vetoes thwart the will of the majority of Maine people by requiring a supermajority threshold in order for a bill to become law. Lawmakers have overridden a high percentage of his vetoes, including some environmental and energy bills, but his threat to veto legislation also has had the effect of blocking bills before they even leave legislative committees. He even vetoes bills sponsored by his own agencies.

## **Defeated by a LePage Veto**

**Coordinating Resource Agencies:** In 2012, the LePage Administration dismantled Maine's State Planning Office. As part of this misguided action, the Administration eliminated the Land and Water Resources Council that facilitated coordination across Maine's natural resource agencies. The Legislature in 2013 passed a bill (LD 1427) to recreate this valuable coordinating body, but the governor vetoed the bill and the Senate failed to override the veto by three votes.

**Preparing for Climate Impacts:** In 2013, Governor LePage vetoed a bill (LD 825) aimed at reducing the impacts of climate change on our communities and economy. The bill would have restarted a climate adaptation planning process that was stopped by the LePage Administration in 2011. The bill passed the House and Senate with strong initial votes, but the House failed to override the governor's veto by *one vote*.



GARDINER LAKE, EAST MACCHAS, BY ALISON WELLS

**Protecting Maine Lakes:** In 2014, the Legislature passed a bill (LD 1744) to strengthen DEP's lake protection programs and reduce pollution to Maine lakes by restricting the application of fertilizers within 25 feet of Maine lakes—as exists, for good reason, in New Hampshire and Vermont. Lake advocates from across Maine testified for the bill. Almost nobody testified against it, but the governor vetoed the bill and it died.

**Releasing Voter-Approved Land for Maine's Future Funding:** In 2015, a bill (LD 1378) was introduced requiring the governor to release bonds that have been approved by Maine voters. The bipartisan bill was initiated in response to the governor's refusal to release \$11.5 million in LMF funds approved by voters in 2010 and 2012. The bill passed the House and Senate with veto-proof bipartisan majorities, but was killed on the last day of the session. The Senate voted to override the veto (25-9), but the House fell five votes short (91-52).

**Preparing for Sea-level Rise:** In 2015, the House and Senate enacted a bill (LD 408) to help coastal communities plan for the impacts of sea-level rise through their comprehensive planning process. The bill died, however, when it was vetoed by the governor and fell short of the votes needed for an override.

### **Creating Solar Jobs and Clean Energy:**

In 2016, the House (91-56) and Senate (unanimously) voted for an amended solar energy bill that would result in an eight-fold increase of solar installations in Maine over the next four years, creating 650 new solar jobs. The governor vetoed the bill, and the House fell two votes short of the number needed for an override. He also defeated a solar incentive bill in 2014 by vetoing it.



PHOTO BY JOHN CAPRON

**Protecting Public Reserved Lands:** In 2016, lawmakers unanimously approved a bill that would have implemented recommendations of the Commission to Study the Public Reserved Lands Management Fund. The study clarified that revenues generated from logging in Maine's Public Reserved Lands cannot be raided by the governor to be used for other purposes. The bill that the governor vetoed would have also required better public information about harvesting levels on Public Reserved Lands to ensure that the lands are managed sustainably. The House fell short of the votes needed to override the veto.

# A NEW NATIONAL MONUMENT: Governor LePage Is Ignoring the Will of Maine People

Governor LePage opposes the establishment of a new National Monument on 87,500 acres of land east of Baxter State Park. Elliotsville Plantation, Inc. would like to donate this land to the American people along with a \$40 million endowment for operations. The governor does not consider the land special enough to be protected. He doesn't appreciate that it will create many jobs in a region that is experiencing serious economic hardship. He also doesn't understand the broad-based support for the proposal from across Maine, including in the communities of the Katahdin region. Here are some key facts:

- Jonathan Jarvis, Director of the National Park Service, said that the land is "absolutely worthy" of being included in the National Park System. He notes its outstanding natural resource values—including extraordinary wildlife, waterways, and forests—and also its cultural and historical values, including Native American history and the history of Maine's logging industry.
- Multiple studies have conclusively shown that national monuments and national parks create jobs and strengthen local and regional economies by attracting visitors who spend money at local businesses. For example, a study by BBC Research and Consulting, released in April 2016, found that national monuments created over the past seven years alone were already generating \$156 million per year in total economic impact.



ORIN FALLS BY ETHEBERGENICMI

- Since Governor LePage was elected, five paper mills have shut down, and thousands of mill workers have lost their jobs in Maine. No credible expert believes that the shuttered and dismantled mills will return. But even if the forest products industry finds ways to reinvent itself, there is nothing about the National Monument proposal that threatens Maine's remaining logging industry. National parks and monuments co-exist with wood products and paper mill operations all across the country.
- Public opinion surveys over the past five years have shown that the overwhelming majority of Maine people support a new National Park in the Katahdin region. Most recently, a survey in October 2015 showed that Mainers across the state support a new National Park by a 3:1 margin.
- Residents of the Katahdin region strongly support a new National Monument, as an interim step toward creation of a National Park. The Katahdin Area Chamber of Commerce, representing 140 businesses, has endorsed the proposal.
- When Congressman Bruce Poliquin held a listening session on June 1, 2016, for local input on the National Monument proposal, supporters from the area outnumbered opponents 48 to 12.

People throughout the Katahdin region strongly support the National Monument proposal because it would provide economic diversification for an area that has been hard hit by the collapse of their paper mills. It also would have far-reaching positive economic benefits for the state. Governor LePage's strident, ideological opposition to the proposal is out of step with the views of those who are working the hardest to create a positive future for the communities in the Katahdin region, and for a long-term, sustainable economy for Maine.



# NRCM Members Respond to Governor LePage's Letter

NRCM supporters were outraged when they learned that Governor LePage hunted down the addresses of 200 of our members and sent them a harassing letter. Many contacted the governor's office directly to protest his actions. Others increased their donations, renewed their memberships, or joined NRCM for the first time. Notably, new members joined from every part of the state, including rural communities in northern, western, central, and Downeast Maine. The overwhelming response demonstrated that the governor's attempt to discourage NRCM supporters has hugely backfired. The wonderful, affirming responses we received directly, and the ones sent to the governor's office with copies to us, show that Maine people reject the governor's war on Maine's environment and his false notion that our environment and economy are in conflict. We are pleased to share with you a few of the responses.

## TO GOVERNOR LEPAGE:

"I haven't donated to NRCM in a long time...But after your outrageous letter writing campaign against them, I'm sending another..."

—NRCM member in Waldo County

"As a full-time resident of Maine and a proud member of the Natural Resources Council of Maine, I would like to invite you to join us in our effort to put the very basis of our life and prosperity here in Maine—our water, air, and earth—at the forefront of your agenda."

—NRCM member in Lincoln County

"I am a retired military veteran living in rural western Maine. I strongly oppose your attacks on our environment, natural resources, wildlife, and preservation of our lucrative hunting and fishing resources."

—NRCM member in Oxford County

"You cannot shake our support and we will stand firmly with NRCM. The environment is not the enemy of our economy, it is critical to it, now and in the future. Your failure to understand this is one of your greatest weaknesses."

—NRCM member in Franklin County

"By declaring war on the NRCM you have declared war on the citizens of Maine that fight to keep Maine's environment beautiful and safe for all living creatures."

—NRCM members in Piscataquis County

"I hope you can come to understand that protecting our natural resources is the single most important thing we can all do to assure the future economic health of our state. Whether you are a hunter, fisherman, farmer, factory worker, craftsman or politician, you will be healthier and more invested in your home and your state if you know that by working together we have done all we can to protect the extraordinary wildlife and environment that we are so blessed to have. It is this forward thinking attitude that will attract the best businesses to invest here because they are so cognizant of the natural riches that folks like NRCM have worked to preserve."

—NRCM member in Hancock County



LACY TOM BOG, MOOSEHEAD REGION; BY NRCM MEMBER STEVE CARTWRIGHT



BUTTERNUT STREAM, WILLIMANTIC BY STEVE TATKO

## TO NRCM:

"A gift in response to Governor LePage."

—NRCM member in Androscoggin County

"Just read about Gov. LePage's letter to NRCM members and it moved me to donate!"

—NRCM member in Washington County

"I read the article today in the *Bangor Daily News* about Paul LePage harassing your donors so I immediately decided to donate. You can thank the governor for my donation."

—NRCM member in Piscataquis County

"A gift inspired by the governor!" —NRCM member in Aroostook County

"The environment is an important part of why people want to visit and live in Maine. Were it not for the work by organizations such as the Natural Resources Council of Maine, and their members, we would have neither the quantity nor quality of natural resources that make Maine what it is, and contribute to the perception of Maine as a special place."

—NRCM supporter in Cumberland County

"I recently became a member of NRCM, specifically to show my support in light of Governor LePage's outrageous attacks on the organization. I hope many others will consider doing this as well...Business success and strong environmentalism do not have to be mutually exclusive. Thank you for the work you do!"

—NRCM member in Oxford County

"I've been meaning to be a supporter for many years. Our governor just convinced me to step up and support NRCM. Keep up the important work."

—NRCM member in Franklin County

"I want to thank our governor for emphasizing to me the importance of joining your organization. It's been on my 'to do' list for a while, but hearing yesterday's news item on the radio finally lit the fire. I appreciate all the work you have done on my behalf."

—NRCM member in York County

"We have never donated to your organization before but when we heard the governor's comments, we wanted to show our support. Keep up the good work!"

—NRCM member in Hancock County



# Value of Maine's Environment

Maine's brand identity is tied to a healthy environment. Our natural resources are the power behind a vibrant tourism industry and a way of life that draws people here from across the country and beyond. Maine's woods and waters support outdoor recreation opportunities that result in jobs and business sales. Our clean lakes support higher lakefront property values, playing a vital role in municipal budgets. Investments in energy efficiency save homeowners and businesses on their energy bills—leaving money in the Maine economy. Here are just a few examples of how protecting our environment creates jobs and strengthens our economy:

**Maine tourism** supports 98,932 jobs (about 15% of Maine employment)—greater than the populations of Portland and Augusta combined.

- ▶ Tourism jobs generated more than \$2 billion in household income in 2015.
- ▶ Maine benefitted from more than \$5.6 billion in tourism (nearly \$15 million/day) in 2015.
- ▶ Nearly 16 million nonresident tourists visited Maine in 2015.

**Wildlife watching** supports more than 15,000 jobs and generates \$575 million in retail sales and \$286 million in salaries and wages.



BIRDING AT ACADIA NATIONAL PARK. CREDIT: A WELLS/NRCM

**Sport fishing** supports 6,600 jobs and generates \$349 million in retail sales and \$140 million in salaries and wages.



FLYFISHING, EAST OULET OF THE KENNEBEC. NRCM FILE

**Hunting** supports 4,000 jobs and generates \$217 million in retail sales and \$81.4 million in salaries and wages.

**Maine lakes** provide an estimated \$3.5 billion in economic benefit to Maine annually, supporting 52,000 jobs.

**Energy savings** In 2015 alone, Efficiency Maine funding supported 5,835 energy-saving projects in businesses, installation of 7,499 heat pumps, and more than 3,800 air sealing and insulation projects, which created 544 jobs and saved enough energy to power 36,514 homes. Total 2015 Efficiency Maine funding will avoid \$248 million in wasted energy costs.

## WEAK MINING RULES Governor LePage is Wrong to Support Them

Governor LePage is angry with the Legislature, and with NRCM, because strong bipartisan majorities defeated his proposal to weaken Maine's mining rules in 2014 and 2015. Canada-based Irving Corporation pushed these rules so it could pursue a 400-acre open-pit mine at Bald Mountain in Aroostook County. This mine would result in so much pollution that Irving sought weaker regulations. The governor has convinced himself that people in Aroostook County support the Bald Mountain mine, but Aroostook County residents led the effort to defeat his weak mining rules.

**Here are a few facts about the mining issue:**

- Aroostook County residents strongly oppose the governor's proposal to weaken Maine's mining rules. At the February 2015 public hearing, 24 citizens from Aroostook County testified against the proposal, and no Aroostook County citizens testified in support. The only supporters were lobbyists for Irving and consultants that would benefit from mining.
- Since 2012, Irving and other mining advocates spent more than \$389,000 pushing weak mining rules that would leave Maine taxpayers paying for clean-up costs for closed mines that would pollute our water forever.
- The Bald Mountain site in Aroostook County has extremely high concentrations of sulfur and arsenic. Any mine in this location would cause massive water pollution that could destroy local trout fishing and recreation jobs. A Bald Mountain mine would require clean-up operations in perpetuity, at a cost of millions of dollars to Maine taxpayers.
- Two companies that owned the Bald Mountain site in the 1990s determined that a mine there would not create many jobs; one firm estimated 80 to 130 temporary jobs from a full-scale open-pit mine; another estimated 75 jobs from a smaller mine. A high percentage of these jobs would likely go to out-of-state mining professionals. Irving's claim that a mine at Bald Mountain would create a large number of jobs is false.
- The governor's weak mining rules would apply statewide, not just to Aroostook County. Thus, many parts of the state, including areas near Moosehead Lake and in pristine coastal areas, would face the prospect of massively polluting mines if his rules passed.
- Maine taxpayers have spent more than \$8 million on clean-up of the Callahan mine on the Blue Hill peninsula in Brooksville, which closed 40 years ago. The largest part of the clean-up has not even started yet, so costs will continue to climb.
- Bipartisan majorities in the House (109-36) and the Senate (26-8) overwhelmingly defeated the governor's proposed weak mining rules last year. Legislators from every county in Maine, including Aroostook, voted against the weak rules.

The governor is simply wrong to assert that the Legislature defeated his mining rules "because the people in Cumberland and York counties voted it down." Legislators from across Maine agreed with Aroostook County residents and voted the rules down because the facts demonstrated that the governor's weak mining rules were bad for Maine's environment and Maine taxpayers.



FISH RIVER FALLS, NEAR BALD MOUNTAIN, AROOSTOOK COUNTY BY ANN FLEMING



# What You Can Do To Help Protect Maine's Environment



- ✓ Become a member of NRCM, if you're not already one. Give a gift membership, if you are.
- ✓ Join NRCM's Action Network by selecting the "Stay Informed" button at [www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org). We'll alert you when it is time to contact your elected officials.
- ✓ Support your local land trust, nature center, garden club, or other group that makes protecting the environment part of its mission.
- ✓ Take actions in your everyday life that support sustainability. Visit the NRCM website for ideas.
- ✓ Speak up in your town for local initiatives to protect the environment, or get an initiative started. See our Sustainable Maine Community Toolkits at [www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org) for ideas.
- ✓ Get out and enjoy the special places that define the character of Maine.

**Thank you for taking action to help keep Maine a special place!**

## Maine Environment

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Maine Environment is provided five times a year to more than 16,000 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 \$35/year. Join online at [www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org).  
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Now Accepting Nominations for NRCM's 11<sup>th</sup> annual

## People's Choice Award

- Help us honor someone (or a group) who has gone above and beyond to protect a special place, helped pass a particular safeguard for Maine's environment, or worked to stop polluting companies from contaminating our state—a volunteer who has devoted their time to making sure future generations will be able to enjoy the Maine we love today.

- **Make your nomination by Friday, August 5!** We'll compile the nominees and post finalists on our website, where through Monday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, you, your friends, and your family can vote for the person you think most deserves this year's People's Choice Award. (Please note: We cannot consider someone currently sitting on a regulatory board or who is in the Legislature, or who is or was serving in a paid position while carrying out the work for which you feel they should be nominated. The People's Choice Award honors volunteers.) *If you nominated someone in the past and they were not selected, please feel free to nominate them again.* The winner will be honored at our Conservation Leadership Awards on Wednesday evening, October 19, at Maple Hill Farm in Hallowell. Send us your nomination today!

Candidate's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

- Please describe below why you believe this person deserves the 2016 People's Choice Award (include any of the nominee's organizational affiliations). Be as specific as possible about this volunteer's accomplishments for Maine's environment. Include additional information on a separate paper, if you wish.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

- **Thank you!** We will notify you and your nominee, if that person is selected as a finalist for NRCM's People's Choice Award. Please return this form to Beth Comeau, NRCM, 3 Wade Street, Augusta, ME 04330-6317. You can also nominate online at [www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org).

### Tired of the Attacks on NRCM by Governor LePage?

Show the world you stand with us! We have NRCM hats, t-shirts, bike shirts, mugs, and totes that you can purchase to wear your support. Make your statement today! Visit our store at [www.nrcm.org](http://www.nrcm.org).

