

## **Girl Scouts, NRCM Team Up to Promote New Way to Safely Recycle Paint in Maine**

Statement of NRCM Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann

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I am so pleased to be launching this new partnership between the Natural Resources Council of Maine and the Girl Scouts of Maine. Today we are announcing a new patch program called Sustainable ME. Through this program, Girl Scouts will have new opportunities to learn about and take action to protect Maine's environment.

I owe a lot to my years in the Girl Scouts. I started in a troop at the age of eight, and stayed involved all the way through school and well into adulthood, eventually serving as a troop leader. I can still remember learning about nature in so many ways because of my years at Girl Scout camp. The Girl Scouts also taught me the importance of being an active citizen. I often think about the lessons I learned as a Girl Scout in my current role as the leader of the Natural Resources Council of Maine. NRCM is dedicated to making sure that there are safeguards for Maine's air, water, forests, and wildlife. Now I've come full circle by working with the Girl Scouts of Maine to get more girls involved directly in current environmental issues.

The Natural Resources Council of Maine worked with the coatings industry for several years to institute the new PaintCare program in Maine. The legislature passed this program in 2015, which has created a new, free system for recycling household paint. Paint and paint containers can now be recycled for reuse, plus there is much less of the hazardous materials in paint going into landfills. This is a win-win-win for the hardware and paint businesses that voluntarily participate; for residents who can get rid of old cans of paint easily anytime for free; and for the environment.

Like any new statewide program, it takes a while to get the word out. That's where the Girl Scouts come in. They are going to help spread the word across the state through their communities and schools about the PaintCare program and why it matters for the health of our environment. We want to make sure everyone knows about it, and partnering with the Girl Scouts is a great way to do that.