



Lady slippers and bunchberries, by Jewell Childs Hurd

MAINE Environment



“NRCM is going to continue on this road no matter what, and today we have a new sense of optimism about what Maine can accomplish.”

—Lisa Pohlmann, NRCM CEO



At Long Last, Maine Will Lead Again on Climate Change

BY LISA POHLMANN, NRCM CEO

Maine people understand the negative impacts of climate change. We live our lives and run our businesses close to the land and the sea. Our springs are rainier; summers are hotter; ticks and associated diseases are spreading; coastal flooding is more prevalent; beaches are eroding, and lobsters are moving north in search of cooler waters.

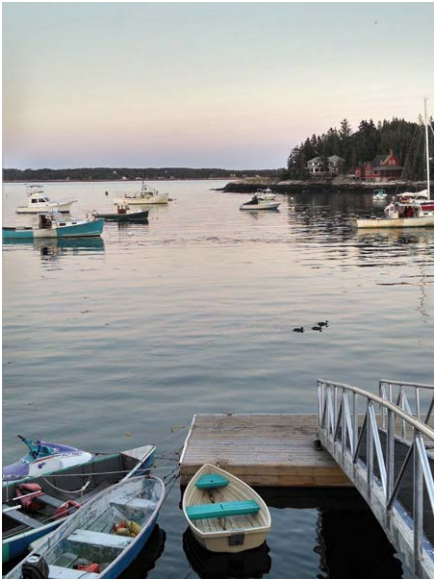
Because we are so close to the natural world in our work and play, Maine had been leading the states in actions to tackle climate change head-on. It has helped a lot that we also have an outstanding climate science institute at the University of Maine. We were the first state to put greenhouse gas reduction goals in statute and to develop a statewide climate action plan in 2003-2004. We joined the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) in 2007, and it has helped us reduce our energy costs and carbon pollution ever since. We hit a road block with the previous administration’s eight-year reign of climate change denial. During this time, almost every attempt we made to move forward was undermined.

Fortunately, the sands have shifted again, and a new day is emerging. Our new leader in Maine, Governor Janet Mills, has made addressing climate change a central part of her platform, and good things are already happening.

A measure that was put into place by the previous administration to undermine the proliferation of solar energy—referred to as gross metering—has been quickly repealed. Governor Mills has joined the U.S. Climate Alliance, recognizing that it takes regional, national, and global commitment to cut down on carbon emissions. Governor Mills has introduced a framework climate initiative that is moving through the Legislature now. This would set carbon pollution reduction targets; create a new statewide climate action plan (the first since 2004) through an inclusive process overseen by a new Climate Council in state government, and ensure that multiple agencies of state government continue implementing this plan no matter who is in the Blaine House.

The new Climate Council would include members from around the state and all walks of life so that a full range of interests are considered as we move forward. This initiative joins other efforts and ideas under consideration by

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Five Islands, Georgetown, by Beth Comeau

Development in Maine’s North Woods

Maine’s North Woods lie in the heart of the largest and most intact area of temperate forest in North America—perhaps the entire world. For the last 50 years, the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC) (or its predecessor, the Land Use Regulation Commission [LURC]) required all commercial, industrial, and residential subdivision development to be located within one-mile-by-road from existing development of a similar type and scale. This “adjacency rule” ensured that new development did not sprawl out across the North Woods. No more. Despite overwhelming opposition to the draft rules at a public hearing in January and 95 percent opposition in written comments, LUPC has thrown out this rule. Under entirely new framework adopted by LUPC, close to one million acres have been designated as “primary” or “secondary” development areas. New or greatly expanded development areas now surround an unknown number of lakes. And large-lot subdivisions, a sprawling type of development that eats up forests and wildlife habitat, will once again be allowed.

NRCM is very concerned about the impact these new rules will have over time. Under the new framework, development could be miles and miles from existing development. It would fragment this largely unfragmented forest, allow development in areas that have traditionally been used by Maine people for backcountry hunting, camping, fishing, and hiking, and would disrupt fish and wildlife habitat—particularly harmful for those species such as pine marten and many migrating songbirds—that need large unfragmented forests to thrive.

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• THE BIG PICTURE •

This year, the Natural Resources Council of Maine is proudly celebrating 60 years of protecting the nature of Maine. How fortunate we are that in 1959, a handful of people came together to protect the Allagash River from a dam project that would have spoiled the region forever. Saving that special place was the first of many victories over the next six decades. Helping restore the Kennebec and Penobscot Rivers, helping establish the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, and just weeks ago, helping Maine pass the first-in-the-nation ban on polystyrene food containers—these achievements help keep Maine the state we love.

NRCM continues to use policy, legal, and scientific expertise in combination with grassroots engagement across the state. Our staff experts are in constant contact with our elected officials and other decision makers, trying to figure out what path to take next to protect our environment. They work with many other nonprofits and with businesses, too, who understand that a healthy environment is good for our people and our economy. We also need our 25,000 members and supporters from across the state and the country to make your voices heard. Maine would not be the place it is today without NRCM, and NRCM is all of these people speaking up over the last 60 years.

At times these days, our country seems mired in confusion. Our differences can create divisions so raw that I worry sometimes if they can ever be healed. But if our experience in Maine is any indication, there is a lot of hope and opportunity still. It is truly a new day in Augusta. We are having productive conversations about how to move forward work on climate, clean water protections, our land conservation program, and how to stop the scourge of plastic pollution. Civility is returning, and we are becoming stronger as we hold each other up, regardless of where we live or where we come from. That is the Maine I love. And it gives me hope for the rest of the country.

What have we learned in 60 years? Your voice matters. You can change the course of history and help others do the same. Don't allow partisan-dividers to win. Reach out to your neighbors and listen to their stories. Talk to them about what matters to you. Find common ground. If nowhere else, you are likely to find it during a walk in the woods. Embrace the ideas of *all* Mainers—new Mainers, old Mainers, young Mainers, Mainers who struggle with economic security, and so on. Political administrations come and go. Hot button issues come and go. But we are all still here and need to make sure we are working together. Keep the fire inside of you burning by taking care of yourself, especially by enjoying all that Maine has to offer. The trees and woods and waters will be here, too, if we take good care of them. —Lisa Pohlmann, CEO

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the Legislature as I write, and we are confident that with Governor Mills' leadership, strong action from legislators, and continued engagement from NRCM members and many others, Maine will enact significant climate-related legislation and take its place as a leader in the nation once again.

There is much more we need to do to meet the governor's goal of reducing carbon pollution. We need to push ourselves to a higher renewable energy standard by increasing our Renewable Portfolio Standard. There is a legislative initiative now to increase the amount of renewable energy Maine ultimately uses from 40 percent today to 80 percent by 2030. We need a comprehensive solar initiative to take advantage of Maine's considerable solar energy resources. Such an initiative is once again in the legislative arena, and NRCM is actively leading a diverse coalition to get us moving again on this kind of renewable energy. Many businesses, towns, and communities recognize clean energy as a critical avenue for keeping our young workers in Maine, reducing the economic burden of importing \$5 billion of fossil fuels each year, and reducing our carbon pollution, too.

Maine has made good progress on energy efficiency—the “low-hanging fruit” of carbon reductions. Over the last decade, Maine households have saved well over \$1 billion thanks to efforts to tighten up homes and businesses with help from RGGI proceeds and other funding deployed through Efficiency Maine. We can and must do much more. A decade ago, we had in statute a requirement for efficiency measures in new building construction, but that was weakened. We are now trying to re-establish that fundamental standard.

By joining RGGI, Maine recognized the importance of tackling the number one emitter of carbon pollution in our region: power plants. We are making progress there, and now it is time to address the other major emitter of carbon pollution: transportation. There are initiatives in the Legislature now to build more electric vehicle charging stations in Maine and to make electric vehicles affordable for more Maine people. There is also a promising new regional dialogue about tackling transportation emissions together, as we did with RGGI. This is a long-term effort, but we recognize that an electric “grid,” fueled by renewable energy, can power our cars, lights, heating, cooling, and other needs on into the future. Some have predicted that our gas-fueled car will be soon be relegated to history, just like the horse and buggy was.

It is a great relief that Maine now has an administration willing to act on climate change, the gravest environmental threat we face today. Governor Mills understands that this is what Maine people want, and NRCM is proud to have helped build public awareness and eagerness for action for the last two decades, even when there was little forward motion.

This is a difficult road ahead. There will be disagreements about how best to proceed, but, hopefully, we have left behind the debate about whether to proceed on climate action at all. NRCM is going to continue on this road no matter what, and today we have a new sense of optimism about what Maine can accomplish. The strong leadership we have seen so far this session will be needed for years to come if Maine is to do its part in the regional, national, and global arenas of addressing climate change. Our economy, our health, and our way of life depend upon it.

Check page 5 for an update on the CMP transmission corridor.

North Woods - from Page 1

This legislative session, a bill (LD 1561) was introduced to address the most damaging provisions in the new rules and to guide future development,



Square Lake in Square Lake Township, by J. Monkman/NRCM

where appropriate, into adjacent communities where there are unused industrial sites, empty commercial storefronts, and unoccupied homes. LD 1561, as well as a related bill (LD 586), was crafted also to change the process for appointing LUPC Commissioners to ensure that among the Commissioners there is a broad statewide perspective and a diversity of expertise. Because the new adjacency rules are very complicated, NRCM worked hard to provide background information for legislators less familiar with the LUPC agency and its rules, and to connect legislators with citizens in their districts who can help explain the importance of strong adjacency rules. Many legislators, unfortunately, have never spent any time in Maine's spectacular North Woods.

Although the Committee was almost evenly divided over these issues, even a much amended version of the bill failed to pass. NRCM will continue to pursue these issues, both in the legislative process and outside of the Legislature. Maine's North Woods are globally significant and close to the hearts of many Maine people. NRCM will continue to advocate for their protection from sprawling development.—Cathy Johnson, NRCM Forests and Wildlife Director and Senior Staff Attorney

When an Elder Person Dies, a Library is Lost

BY GRETTA WARK, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF PHILANTHROPY

I and other staff members love meeting NRCM supporters and hearing their stories. They are as diverse and interesting as any tidal pool in Maine. Too often, though, we get to know NRCM members better after they pass, in short notes from a family member or in their obituaries.

We lost several long-time members recently, including two who generously included NRCM in their estate plans. In discussions with their family members, I learned how deeply they loved Maine's environment and how they shared their commitment to protecting the natural world with the next generation.



Courtesy of Susan Chafee Welch estate

Susan Chafee Welch passed away last summer at 91 years old. She moved to Sorrento in recent years to be close to one of her children, Hilly Crary. Before that, she lived in Brunswick and was a driving force behind Brunswick's move to regulate single-use plastic bags.

As her children noted in Sue's obituary, she "loved her family, her friends, this Earth and this country. She was a passionate environmentalist and concerned citizen. She was an avid reader and loved to discuss ideas and politics. She was troubled by our changing climate, overpopulation and any environmental damage. When she remarried and moved to Brunswick, she enjoyed being on the Earth care team through her church, and on that town's recycling and sustainability committee. She disliked waste and was a strong advocate for banning plastic bags. Being a child of the Depression and a New

Englander, her favorite quote was: 'Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.'"

Her concerns for her family, her country, and this Earth never wavered, and thankfully she kept her inquiring and caring mind until the very end. We know she wanted us to remember and learn from history, and to vote in November. And please bring your reusable bags every time you shop!

Bill McConnell was 102 when he passed away last November. He lived through the Depression, World War II, enormous social changes, and even greater technological advances. Throughout his life, he was a true steward of the land.

His niece, Nanci Little, is open in her admiration for her uncle. "I am in my sixties and for all of my life, Uncle Bill (as he was known to all who knew and loved him) advocated for sustainable living. He grew his own food on a small plot of land in Presque Isle, hunted deer and partridge for his own meat as was his family tradition, and let nothing go to waste. He installed compost bins at our camp in the North Maine Woods, and advised us all in their proper use. I was much the beneficiary of his wisdom. He was a gift to us all.

"I know that NRCM [was] dear to his heart. He embraced the lifestyle; walked the walk and when it was a welcome subject, talked the talk. He was a man of the land, and I embrace the legacy he left us. They say when an elder person dies, a library is lost. That is certainly true in his case. He knew more about living from the land than anyone I have ever known."

Bill shared some of his wisdom with readers of *Echoes: The Northern Maine Journal of Rural Culture*. "Memories of Dad" is a poignant memory of his childhood and a snapshot of the life of a traditional Maine Guide. It is reprinted here with permission from *Echoes*.

It started when she gave him a choice
To get breakfast or dress the kids.
When we were able to dress ourselves
He still made breakfast anyway.
I'd come down to hear him threatening
That he'd apply the hot pancake turner
To an obvious portion of her anatomy
If she didn't get up and get dressed.

Years spent guiding in the back-country
Had turned him into a good cook.
Complimented on some dish, he'd say
'I must have made a mistake.'
Once he made a cornbread
And left out part of the leavening.
He said, as he served the sorry thing
'I must have done everything right.'

In the late 20s he'd be gone a month,
Guiding hunters for V.E. Lynch,
At the Forks, Spectacle, and the Owl's Roost.
One day he'd come in the door,
With his rifle and big leather pack,
Bewhiskered, smelling of tobacco and sweat.
A kiss for Mother, while clasped to each leg,
The littlest children welcomed him home.

Leave a Legacy for Maine's Environment

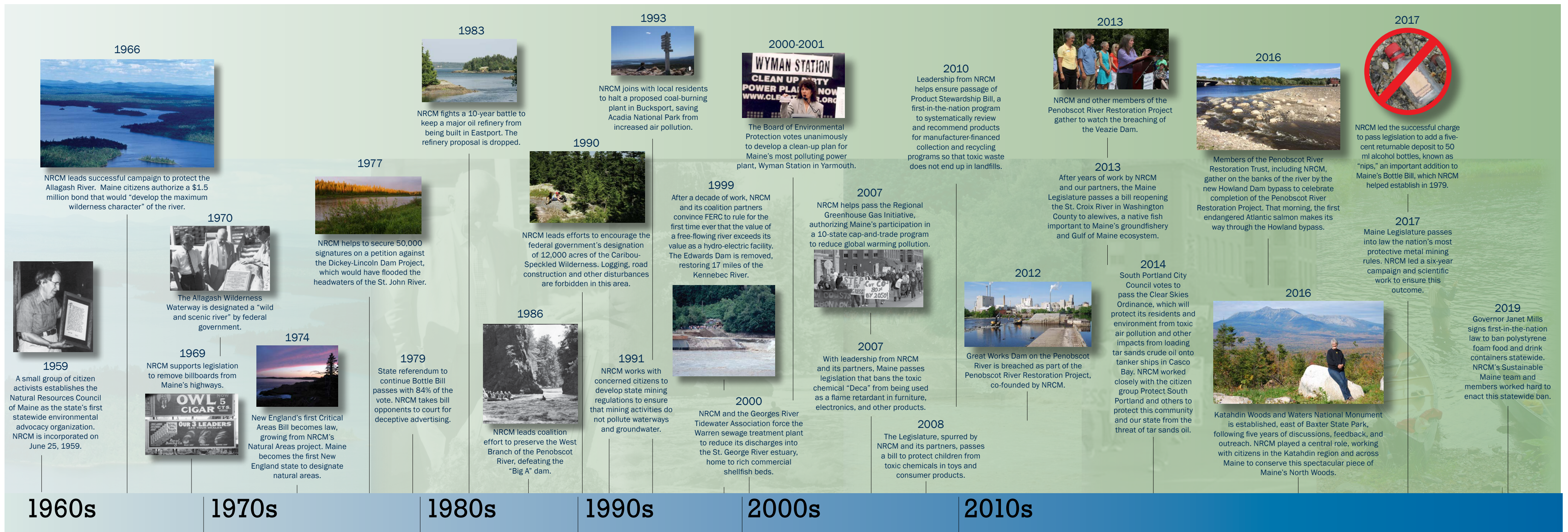
Gifts made through your estate enable the Natural Resources Council of Maine to help protect Maine's forests, air, waters, and wildlife for generations to come. It is easy to leave a legacy. You may use the same language, whether you are rewriting your will or setting up a trust. Here is sample language:

"I devise and bequeath to the Natural Resources Council of Maine, a nonprofit corporation whose tax identification number is 01-0270690 and is currently located at 3 Wade Street, Augusta, Maine, the sum of \$ _____ (or, _____ % of my estate) to be used to support the charitable activities of the Natural Resources Council of Maine for the protection of Maine's environment."

Do you have a deductible IRA or a retirement account funded with pre-tax income? You may designate NRCM to receive all or a portion of these assets simply by updating the beneficiary form provided by your plan administrator. You will need this information:

Natural Resources Council of Maine
3 Wade Street, Augusta, ME 04330
Federal Tax ID #01-0270690

Your legacy—large or small—helps NRCM do two things: act quickly and fight for as long as we are needed. For more information or to let us know that NRCM is already in your estate plan, please contact Gretta Wark, Senior Director of Philanthropy, at (207) 430-0108 or gwark@nrcm.org for a confidential conversation. Thank you!



60 Years of Protecting the Nature of Maine • 1959-2019

Visit our full timeline highlighting milestones of NRCM's six decades protecting Maine's land, air, waters, and wildlife!
www.nrcm.org/about-nrcm/history-of-nrcm/timeline-of-nrcms-history/



S. Haines/NRCM

◀ Celebrate with Us!

Please join us on **Saturday, June 29, 2019, 1:00-4:00 PM**, at the Langlais Sculpture Preserve in Cushing to celebrate our 60 years protecting the nature of Maine. Bring your children and grandchildren to this free, multi-generational event. View 12 larger-than-life sculptures and see artist Bernard Langlais' workshop and homestead. Enjoy refreshments, kids' activities, live music by Old Grey Goose, tours, and celebratory words by NRCM CEO Lisa Pohlmann. Located at 576 River Road, Cushing.

The host committee warmly invites you: Melanie and Richard Essex, Cushing; Alene and Bob Gelbard, Friendship and Washington, DC; Cynthia Hyde and Jim Kinnealey, South Hope; Cindy Lang, Thomaston; Didi Manns, Camden; Sarah Rheault, Camden; Judy and Alec Watson, Cushing and Washington, D.C.; Joan Welsh, Rockport; and Annie and Jock Winchester, New Harbor.

Save the Date

August 24, Saturday 11:00 AM Member flatwater paddle on the Penobscot River, partnering with Penobscot Paddle and Chowder Society. The trip starts in Brewer at the Penobscot Salmon Club and ends at the Hampden Marina (about 3.5 hours). Bring your own boat or hop aboard one of eight 24-foot long voyager canoes that fit 10 people each. Free & open to all members. FMI or RSVP to Stacie (207) 430-0127 or shaines@nrcm.org.

September 14, Saturday 2:00-4:00 PM Member hike, partnering with Midcoast Conservancy, along Hidden Knoll Trail, Montville. Free and open to all members. FMI or RSVP to Leslie (207) 430-0179 or lburhoe@nrcm.org.



NRCM's podcast, "Maine Environment: Frontline Voices,"

covers the most pressing issues facing our state's land, air, waters, and wildlife—and our Maine way of life. Hear from NRCM experts, state agency heads, elected officials, Mainers making a difference, and others on the frontlines of working to protect the nature of Maine. Available on iTunes, Google Play, and Spotify.

SEND US YOUR NOMINATIONS

NRCM People's Choice Award

We're accepting nominations for our People's Choice Award now through Friday, August 9. NRCM will compile the nominees and post finalists on our website, where, from Monday, August 12 through noon on Monday, September 9 you, your friends, and your family can vote for the volunteer you think most deserves this year's People's Choice Award. (Please note: We cannot consider someone who currently sits 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.) Please send us your nomination or use the form at our website (www.nrcm.org). The winner will be presented with the award at NRCM's Conservation Leadership Awards event this fall. Please contact Beth Comeau at beth@nrcm.org or (207) 430-0106 FMI.

CMP Transmission Corridor Update

The overwhelming opposition to Central Maine Power's highly controversial corridor project continues to grow, with 15 towns and the Franklin County Commissioners having voted to oppose or rescind support. More than 10,000 people signed NRCM's online petition against the power line, and a poll showed 65 percent of voters statewide are opposed and 72 percent think the project is a bad deal for the people of Maine. CMP's for-profit transmission line still faces several regulatory hurdles. The US Environmental Protection Agency recently wrote a letter to the Army Corps of Engineers highlighting major concerns about the project's negative impact on wetlands, streams, and vernal pools, and CMP's failure to adequately analyze alternatives and consider mitigation options. While we were deeply disappointed in the Public Utilities Commission's flawed decision to grant CMP a certificate for this project, that decision has been appealed for being contrary to the law and not supported by evidence. The permitting process by the Department of Environmental Protection and Land Use Planning Commission is ongoing, with a permit decision not expected until late October or early November. Legislators also have been considering a number of bills pertaining to the proposed CMP corridor and voted to support upholding local control through LD 1383, but unfortunately voted to oppose an independent analysis of the climate impacts of the project. —Colin Durrant, Media Relations and Advocacy Communications Director



Sally Mountain has a stunning view of the Upper Moose River basin, but this part of the North Woods would be bisected by CMP's proposed power line.



Chris Comeau

Beth Comeau and Bennett Christiansen at a gallery in Kittery, holding the NRCM magazine ad featuring Bennett's photo

Next Generation Photographer: An Interview with Bennett Christiansen

Our introduction to Bennett Christiansen of Kittery Point was through his beautiful photos of Maine's environment, which we used in a magazine ad and our calendar. His photography has also been displayed at businesses in Kittery. He was Artist of the Month at Just Us Chickens gallery, he's been featured in newspaper articles, and his photographs have hung on the walls of the Kittery Art Association. His image, "Nocturnal Hours," of Colorado's night sky, was awarded a spot among the top 100 nature photographs in Rocky Mountain School of Photography's "2019 High School Photo Contest." NRCM's Beth Comeau interviewed Bennett about his work.

How did you first learn about the Natural Resources Council of Maine?

From a neighbor who showed me a magazine ad for "My Maine This Week," and I decided to share a few images.

Where did your interest in photography come from, and when did it start?

My love for this art form grew out of my love for creativity and the outdoors. I began photographing still, plant life with my mobile phone around 2014, which progressed into landscape photography when I purchased my first camera not long afterwards.

What are some of your favorite Maine locations/subjects to photograph?

Maine is well known for its vast array of lighthouses. One of my favorites to photograph is Whaleback Lighthouse, standing tall above the waves in the mouth of the Piscataqua River. Not far offshore from there is the Isles of Shoals, yet another incredible location I enjoy capturing. Up until 2017, I had never visited Acadia National Park. The first time I did I was blown away by the jaw-dropping scenery and untouched wilderness. Some of the best experiences and images of my life were made while photographing in Acadia's boundaries.

What is it about Maine's environment that inspires you?

Maine and its shores are a more subtle beauty than the West, more quiet and elegant, which is why I love it so much. There are so many islands to explore off the coast, some having forests with unique ecosystems of their own or serving as essential stops for migrating birds. Inland, the ridges of Katahdin sit high above moose-filled woodlands. I've always enjoyed the enveloping fog that comes with summer and the vibrant colors of autumn, and the winter nor'easters and fresh spring greenery.

How do you use your photography to encourage others to protect Maine's environment?

Photography can play a huge role in environmental action. It's well known that photographs were a driving force in the designation of many national parks like Yellowstone and Yosemite, and they continue to have an impact on issues of the modern day. I try using many of my images to shed light on the things I care about, often in conjunction with writing. It can be quite powerful to provide the stories and emotions behind my photographs because they help connect my audiences in a deeper way, which I hope inspires new perspectives in the discussion about our footprint on Maine's nature.



Great Head Trail, Acadia National Park by Bennett Christiansen

What kind of camera/lens do you use most often?

I currently use a Pentax DSLR, coupled with a few different lenses of varying focal lengths. One of my favorites is a 150-450mm telephoto lens I recently purchased, which I use frequently for wildlife photography. Other than that I have three prime lenses (lenses that don't zoom)—a 50mm, 21mm, and 15mm—that give me wider perspectives. I like using prime lenses better than zoom lenses because they tend to produce sharper, higher-quality results. In the near future, I'll be investing in the mirrorless camera market specifically to try and save weight. As I begin going on backpacking trips more often, the weight advantage of mirrorless cameras will be extremely beneficial.

What are the particular challenges to photographing Maine's environment and wildlife?

My most recent challenge has been to capture the beauty of Maine's woodlands, particularly in southern Maine, for an upcoming book of Kittery and Kittery Point. The woods of New England have proven to be difficult to photograph because of how "cluttered" they can be. Branches don't always grow gracefully, yet I still love the senses that awake every time I venture into the trees. Getting an image of that feeling is a real struggle, but I've had some successful outings. It helps to really analyze a scene while location scouting and to take time composing with different lenses. Returning every now and then under different conditions increases the chances of capturing the best shot.



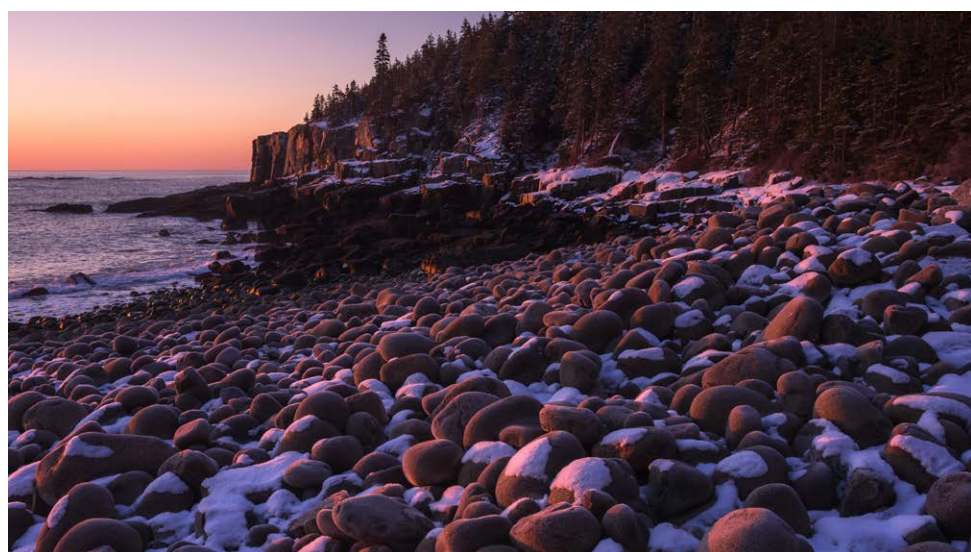
Chris Comeau

Christiansen family at Just Us Chickens

Is there somewhere in Maine that you dream of photographing that you haven't visited yet?

I've always wanted to visit the northernmost shores of Maine and photograph remote places like Cross Island National Wildlife Refuge or the puffins on Machias Seal Island. I want to get people driving past Acadia to see all the other amazing wonders the state has to offer.

Bennett's photography will be showcased at the Kittery Block Party, Portsmouth Music and Arts Center, and Ceres Bakery. Contact these establishments for more details.



Boulder Beach, Acadia National Park by Bennett Christiansen



CONNECT TO PROTECT Be a part of Maine's most effective and exciting "social scene" of people like you who care about our land, air, waters, and wildlife—like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter and Instagram to stay up to date on the latest news and events.



Sharing a Secret with Future Generations: Maine's Public Reserved Lands

BY STACIE HAINES, NRCM MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR



The peace and solitude found on the trails of Maine's Public Reserved Lands, even in the height of tourist season, is simply astonishing. I ask myself, why would I interfere with that by drawing attention to them by writing about them? There are several reasons, but number one among them: If we don't get out in nature—particularly with our youth—how can we care enough to protect it? As we celebrate NRCM's 60th anniversary this year, I think back on a multi-generational hiking trip that I hope will stay with my children and encourage them to be good stewards of the earth throughout their lifetimes.

My hiking buddies and I—we are a group of family and friends that stretch across three generations—backpacked the Debsconeag Backcountry Trail in the Nahmakanta Public Reserved Land. It's a super fun trail that loops around the Debsconeag and Nahmakanta Lakes. It offers remote lakeside campsites, blueberries on hillsides, and untouched wilderness for miles.

We wanted more of the same. We were not disappointed with a two-night stay on Tumbledown Dick Falls trail, also part of the Nahmakanta Public Reserved Land. This trail, unbeknownst to us, is even less visited. On our first evening, we hiked in three-quarters of a mile to Levitt Pond where we set up camp and went for a swim. Our tents were wedged in between trees with the soft floor of pine

needles beneath. The sweet smell of the forest emanated around us as loons called across the still water.

The next morning, we packed up camp and headed to Tumbledown Dick Falls Pond. This trail is relatively flat with countless colorful varieties of mushrooms along the way. We came across a great deal of blow-down but nothing impassable. The highlight along this section of the trail in August was blueberries, blueberries, and more blueberries. As if in a trance, we would pull ourselves away from one blueberry patch to get stuck in another one and time would lapse as we filled ourselves with the deliciously sweet fruit.

Somehow, we mustered up enough resistance to the elixir long enough to make it to next campsite at Tumbledown Dick Falls Pond. We unearthed a leaky boat to pole about in the calm waters before returning it to its resting grounds.

After lunch (as if the blueberries weren't enough) we left our tents and backpacks behind to hike to the highlight of the trail—Tumbledown Dick Falls. My son, his friend, and my father took the lead on this section of the trail and were rewarded with a close encounter with a bull moose. Our family has seen moose many times from car windows during our annual trips to Jackman. My son, however, reported that seeing a moose from ground level was a completely different experience altogether. He kept saying, "I just can't *believe* how large they are." I was disappointed that the moose had lumbered on by the time I reached them but more than that, I was so excited for them to have had this first-hand encounter.

My daughter and I were traveling at our own speed along this trail that is so undisturbed by humans, the crumbling stairs and the occasional blue trail marker are the only indications that other people had ever laid their feet here. The abundant cobwebs we walked through, the piles of moose droppings, and the deer carcass left behind by a coyote showed us that this place is teeming with life, just not of the *homo sapien* variety!



About four miles from the trailhead, we reached Tumbledown Dick Falls. A nine-mile or so day-hike will get you to the falls and back but rushing it won't leave time to get lost in a blueberry haze, sleep with the sounds of loons calling, encounter a bull moose, or spend a warm afternoon swimming in the cool falls.

Tumbledown Dick Falls is a 70-foot waterfall, one of the highest in New England. There is no photo that could do this justice. It is an experience. The falls rush at you, the fish rebound off your legs, and your concerns float away.

So, there it is—one of Maine's best kept secrets. Enjoy it. Immerse yourself in it. Share the experience with others. And, above all else, protect these hidden treasures in Maine for the next generation, for the moose, and for all the other wildlife that call this their home.

For more ways to enjoy Maine's great outdoors, see the enclosed Explore Maine!



Maine Schools Lead Food and Plastics Waste Reduction Initiatives

I was on my way home from a meeting with a school principal who wanted to communicate the urgency of taking action on waste with her school department and started thinking about some predictions: that by 2050 there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish by weight, that Maine's lobster population will drop in half as the species migrates north to cooler waters, and that global arable land will be a quarter of what it was in 1960—a problem for Maine because we import more food than any other state in the nation. My heart skipped a beat when I realized that in 2050 today's kindergarteners will be the age when many people start families and buy their first home.

This reality is not lost on Maine's educators. Schools across the state are diverting food waste from landfills, preventing potent methane emissions and recycling this valuable resource through composting. NRCM estimates that Maine schools produce more than seven million pounds of food waste annually. Students are engaging in this new way of managing waste and bringing techniques home. "This isn't a pet project, this is a moral imperative," says Christine Bertinet, Waterboro Elementary School Principal. Part and parcel to making good compost is forgoing single-use disposable plastics, which contaminate food waste bins, and switching to reusable trays and cutlery in the cafeteria. By switching to reusable trays and silverware, Gardiner Area High School is saving up to 2,480 pieces of plastic waste every day! I am impressed by the leadership Maine's public schools are showing when it comes to waste reduction. Schools are working their way up the food recovery and waste hierarchies so that we all have a brighter future. Your school can get involved, too! Please contact me to learn more about NRCM's School Food Recovery Program.—*Chrissy Adamowicz, NRCM Sustainable Maine Outreach Coordinator*



Composting at Hall-Dale Middle School in Hallowell

B. Comeau/NRCM

Washington Watch

In April, the Trump Administration announced a temporary postponement of the irresponsible plan to vastly expand oil and gas drilling off the nation’s coasts. This followed a recent setback in court and months of pushback from states with coastal communities, including Maine, and could be a key turning point in the effort to stop this dangerous plan and protect our coasts. The hesitation from the Trump Administration is a good sign, but to ensure this plan doesn’t move forward, lawmakers and communities are still pursuing efforts to block expanded oil and gas drilling in the Atlantic Ocean. Maine’s Senators Susan Collins and Angus King, along with the rest of the coastal New England Senators, have re-introduced legislation that would block offshore drilling off the region’s shoreline, and the Maine Legislature passed a bill that would block oil and gas drilling in Maine’s waters, following the lead of other coastal states like New York. Governor Janet Mills has withdrawn Maine’s membership in the “Outer Continental Shelf Governors Coalition” that former Governor Paul LePage joined in 2015, and she has vowed to fight federal proposals to open the waters off the Maine coast to drilling. We know that Mainers and elected leaders on both side of the aisle oppose this plan, and we’ll be ready to respond if the Administration does put forward a proposed leasing program. —Kristin Jackson, Federal Outreach Coordinator



During March Recess, NRCM Federal Director Emmie Theberge met with Congressman Jared Golden and small business leaders to discuss ways to advance renewable energy.



NRCM Federal Director Emmie Theberge joined Congresswoman Chellie Pingree and Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry Commissioner Amanda Beal in March at Bumbleroot Farm to unveil a five-point plan that supports farmers as a solution to climate change.

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MY MAINE THIS WEEK

To welcome spring this year, we shared this beautiful photo of Bar Harbor, Maine, taken by NRCM member Larry Mingledorff of Palm Coast, Florida, on one of his annual trips to Maine.

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 for guidelines and more photos.

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David and Colleen A. Foster in honor of Chuck Acker’s 90th birthday

Rae Ann and Fernand French in honor of Chuck Acker’s 90th birthday

Sam Horine in honor of his father, Sam Horine

Jessica Howard in memory of Gloria Berenson

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Peter and Harriette Merrill in memory of Susan Chafee Welch

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Mary Ellen and Neill Miner in honor of Chuck Acker’s 90th birthday

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Joan Ray in honor of Judy Berk

Howard T. Reben and Susan E. Hirsch in honor of Chuck Acker’s 90th birthday

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Green Tip: Protecting Native Maine Habitat

By Deb Perkins, NRCM Member

Plants are the basis for habitat because they support insect populations, which in turn support all other higher forms of life in our yards and beyond. Most insects can only use plants that they co-evolved with (i.e., *native* plants). To conserve wildlife, we must first conserve native plants. Non-native plants do not serve a functional ecological role in our landscapes and have minimal wildlife value. In fact, invasive non-native plants negatively impact wildlife habitat in a variety of ways, some of which we are just now beginning to understand. To conserve biodiversity and wildlife habitat, we must take swift action to protect and release native plants from the aggressive competition and bullying behavior of non-native invasives—and every landowner can make a difference!



Deb’s daughter pulling Japanese barberry in her neighborhood using the Uprooter weed wrench (a heavy-duty professional tool designed to pull woody plants). A weed wrench provides great leverage for large stems and stubborn roots, and is a chemical-free technique that can involve the whole family!

- 1. Learn to identify invasive plants**—the most important step! If you don’t know what they look like, you won’t notice them creeping in and taking over.
- 2. Remove invasive plants** using mechanical and hand-pulling methods wherever possible. Prevent further spread and infestations with regular monitoring and rapid response.
- 3. Plant native plants** throughout your yards and managed landscapes, especially at sites where invasives have been removed. This will prevent regrowth and give our native plant communities a much-needed boost! Fast-growing native shrubs are a particularly good choice for restoring sites after removal!

NRCM member Deborah Perkins is a wildlife ecologist. As proprietor of First Light Wildlife Habitats, she partners with landowners as “The Personal Ecologist” to create thriving wildlife habitats in their own backyards, farms, and forestlands. She lives with her husband and daughter in Poland Spring.

Thank you, Aveda salons!

Throughout April, these Aveda salons helped raise funds in support of our work protecting Maine’s clean, beautiful waters.

