

Remarks by Liz Caruso, 2019 NRCM Conservation Leadership Award Recipient
October 16, 2019

Thank you so much for your gracious words and recognition. So this is funny—because here I am again, nervously speaking in front of a room full of people because someone from NRCM asked me to speak. This past year, you have graciously and encouragingly given me plenty of opportunities to practice courage and fight fear.

As mentally and emotionally challenging as it was to write and to speak to agencies, to legislators, to terrifying TV cameras, or to cross-examine CMP, I am so grateful that I had a voice and that I could be a voice for the Maine people...especially rural Maine residents who weren't being heard, but who would be greatly impacted by this corporate takeover. Of course, I was one of many, even here in this room, who sacrificed much time, effort and money to contribute to this united fight for what's right.

However, if it weren't for NRCM, for Sue and Carly, coming to the West Forks two summers ago, to provide information to a small group of local businesses and residents, I would have never known the truth of this corridor. As Sue later told me, I was initially skeptical that day of her message. But Sue- as she always does so well- clearly and effectively explained the far-reaching effects of this invasive and damaging project and dispelled the lies of CMP's propaganda. She helped us to understand that we could intervene and have a voice. Over the course of time, through the agency and legislative events, Pete, Dylan, Cathy, Nick, Carly, Sophie, Colin and others kindly, patiently, clearly and effectively explained the current situation before us.

We are here to celebrate hard-working, conscientious citizens, but I celebrate all those who comprise the Natural Resource Council of Maine. Without your efforts to educate us and thousands of citizens and organizations and without your efforts to educate legislators, I would not be here today. NRCM has been indispensable, even critical in the successful battle against this foreign corporate takeover of our state's energy industry and natural resources. You have been steadfast. Even amidst various setbacks or stages of disappointments, NRCM's commitment and boldness has been unwavering.

Though I am excited to see the final defeat of this dangerous corridor, I will miss working alongside talented, sincere, and hardworking individuals of the Natural Resource Council of Maine. Thank you for who you are and for this award.