



FALL & WINTER 2021

MAINE Environment

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DEC 26, 2021-JAN 2, 2022

Maine Should Not Be New England's Dumping Ground

BY SARAH NICHOLS, NRCM SUSTAINABLE MAINE DIRECTOR

This is an old familiar tale of wealthy corporations exploiting Maine's laws and natural resources in pursuit of profit, and the underrepresented people who are being affected banding together and fighting back. The setting for this story is Maine's State-owned Juniper Ridge Landfill (JRL) in Old Town/Alton; its protagonists are the working-class people living adjacent to the JRL, along with the Penobscot Nation and Maine's environmental community. The antagonists include the landfill operator, some waste haulers, and one solid waste processing facility in Lewiston.

Maine's lawmakers will ultimately decide how this story ends.

In 1989 the State of Maine passed landmark legislation prohibiting development of new commercial landfills because lawmakers were worried that Maine would become New England's dumping ground. The reason for this is because transfer of waste between states by commercial entities is protected by the federal interstate commerce clause. The simplest way to prevent waste from coming to Maine was to limit commercial landfills, or to have landfills instead be owned by a non-commercial entity, like the State of Maine.

That's why, in 2004, the State purchased JRL—to protect this landfill space for the needs of the people of the state of Maine. The State contracted with New England Waste Services of Maine, LLC, a subsidiary of Casella Waste Systems, to operate the landfill for 25 years. They paid the State millions to utilize the landfill, and they are responsible for all the financial obligations of landfill operations. They also profit from bringing waste to the landfill.

Out-of-state Waste, Outsized Influence

JRL is unique in that it is designed to only take "special waste," which primarily comes in the form of toxic construction and demolition debris and processing residue that contains lead, mercury, and arsenic. It also takes sludge that has been contaminated with cancer-causing forever chemicals known as PFAS. The landfill was not originally intended to take regular household trash, nor waste from out of state. However—because of the outsized influence that companies that profit from importation and disposal of waste have on our laws and regulations—that is exactly what is happening.

About 30% of the trash going to JRL each year is construction waste from out of state—the equivalent of sixteen forty-ton tractor trailers full of waste every single day of the year. Household waste makes up about 15% of what goes into the landfill. The fill rate at JRL is pacing more than 32% faster than anticipated when the State initially licensed the facility. As a result, the landfill

Story continued on page 2



Juniper Ridge Landfill/NRCM File

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Augusta, ME 04330
(800) 287-2345

Fighting for the Kennebec



Shawmut Dam, Fairfield, by J. Monkman/NRCM

NRCM and our partners have sued the owner of four dams on the Kennebec for repeatedly violating federal environmental law. For more than two years, Brookfield Renewable Partners has been violating the Endangered Species Act by killing endangered Atlantic salmon and has refused to engage in constructive dialogue about options for removing the dams to save Atlantic salmon and restore other sea-run fish. We've also asked a federal judge to issue a preliminary injunction to immediately stop or curtail operations at the dams to protect salmon during critical fall and spring migration periods. Visit our YouTube page at www.youtube.com/user/nrcmenvironment to view videos of Maine people who care about the future of our rivers speaking out in support of this vision for a free-flowing Kennebec.—Colin Durrant, Advocacy Communications Director



• THE BIG PICTURE •

A Clean Energy Future Maine Can Be Proud Of

Maine people delivered a stunning defeat to the CMP corridor at the ballot box on November 2nd. The overwhelming vote to reject the corridor sends a clear message that Mainers are not going to accept the damage done to Maine’s western mountains, especially for a project that offers no new climate benefit.

Clearly, the time has come for CMP to respect the will of Maine people and stop the project. NRCM will continue to urge the Department of Environmental Protection to suspend the permit and require CMP to restore the areas the company has already clearcut. We have also called on Massachusetts to move forward with an alternative option for meeting its climate goals.

One thing is clear: the CMP corridor is in freefall, and whether the issue is the company’s obstruction of new solar projects, customer service problems, or the ridiculous scare tactics used in its advertising campaign, CMP has demonstrated that it can’t be trusted. Moving forward, NRCM will advocate for a clean energy future for Maine we can all be proud of. We can continue to develop local renewable sources including wind and solar energy. Combined with accelerated measures to construct more energy-efficient homes and businesses, and expansion of battery storage, we can build a more flexible, reliable electricity grid for the future that powers clean transportation and electrifies our homes.

Another priority in the coming year will be sovereignty for Maine’s four federally recognized Tribes: the Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Micmac, and Maliseet Tribes, collectively known as the Wabanaki. These Tribes are the original inhabitants of Maine, and it is long past time to fully recognize their right to self-governance, self-determination, and equitable treatment. Last year, I testified in support of a bill (LD 1626) that would formally recognize Tribal sovereignty but it was held over until 2022. NRCM will continue to stand with the Wabanaki. To learn more, visit the Wabanaki Alliance’s website at www.wabanakialliance.com and follow them on social media for updates.

Thanks to all of your for your ongoing support of NRCM’s work. I wish you the very best as we head into the holiday season and new year!

EPR Win Earns National Spotlight

Maine Women Magazine



NRCM Sustainable Maine Director Sarah Nichols has been busy speaking with national media about Maine’s first-in-the-nation passage of Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging. You can find stories featuring Sarah’s work here, to list just a few:

New York Times: www.nytimes.com/2021/07/21/climate/maine-recycling-law-EPR.html

Washington Post: www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/maine-becomes-first-state-to-shift-costs-of-recycling-from-taxpayers-to-companies/2021/07/13/aa6f8e44-e416-11eb-8aa5-5662858b696e_story.html

CNBC: www.cnb.com/2021/10/01/maines-new-recycling-law-makes-producers-of-garbage-pay.html

Grist: grist.org/accountability/maine-oregon-laws-shift-responsibility-for-recycling-plastic-waste-to-companies/

ABC News: abcnews.go.com/Politics/maine-recycling-law-targets-packaging-waste-bid-save/story?id=80714741

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Mandate

Against the backdrop of a highly productive legislative session for Maine’s environment earlier this year, one new law could prove to be extremely important for Maine’s efforts to address climate change. The bill, LD 1682, expands the responsibility of the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to include reducing greenhouse gas emissions. NRCM is working with partners in the environmental community and the clean energy sector to urge the PUC to embrace its new mandate and apply it to upcoming regulatory proceedings. Now that the PUC is empowered to act on climate change, we believe there’s no time to waste. The PUC has an opportunity and a mandate to help ensure that all Maine people benefit from the clean energy transition and that the billions of dollars currently flowing out of Maine for fossil fuels are instead put to work here at home to build healthier, more resilient communities for us and future generations.—CD

Dumping Ground - from Page 1

operator has consistently applied for and been granted changes to facility permits and landfill expansions. This has all happened despite legitimate concerns raised by the people most impacted by the existence of this landfill—the ones who live, work, and raise their children nearby.

The location of JRL threatens sites of cultural and spiritual significance to the Penobscot Nation, and the nearby residents are rightfully worried about the safety of the water they drink, the air they breathe, and the fish they catch in the Penobscot River. They also experience the regular occurrence of foul odors, a steady stream of large tractor trailer trucks filled with toxic waste entering their community, and are concerned about the greenhouse gases that escape the landfill’s surface each day. These people have been historically left out of decisions that impact the use of JRL, but now they are organized and fighting back.

Don’t Waste ME

They are known as the *Don’t Waste ME* group, and they are working alongside NRCM, Community Action Works, and others in Maine’s environmental community to right this massive environmental injustice and prevent Maine from being New England’s dumping ground into the future.

There are three key problems that need legislative solutions:

1. Out-of-state waste legally becomes disguised as in-state waste just by virtue of making a pit-stop at one of Maine’s solid waste processing facilities.
2. All but one of Maine’s solid waste processing facilities must meet a 50% recycling standard to maintain their permits, except for one facility in Lewiston that happens to receive 90% of its material from out of state and sends nearly all of it to JRL, which gets special treatment by only having to legally meet 20% recycling by 2022.
3. Consideration of environmental justice for people impacted by the State’s permitting decisions are not currently required by law.

We have an opportunity to fix each of these problems with LD 1639. If passed, the law would fix all three key problems and significantly reduce the volume of toxic waste that fills JRL each year. And the companies that rely on the status quo will be forced to do the right thing and innovate by finding more sources of in-state waste to support their businesses and find less wasteful ways of operating.

Please join us in urging Maine’s lawmakers to support LD 1639.

Welcome New Board Members



Lucy Abbott of Bethel is a long-time Katahdin Circle member, retired from the U.S. Foreign Service. She grew up in Africa and has since worked all over the world. Her decades of experience covering energy and environment issues around the globe have convinced her that petroleum products and production, despite their unprecedented contributions to economic development, are the root of many of our current challenges, from corruption to consumerism to pollution and climate change. Lucy has served on the boards of the Bethel Rotary and Bethel Library Association. On a lighter note: since moving to Bethel, she has been a pioneer in developing gardening and home maintenance techniques for the weak, thrifty, and slothful.



Aaron Anker is an owner of GrandyOats, maker of organic granolas, trail mixes, and roasted nuts. In 2015, GrandyOats installed 288 solar panels at their new facility, a disused schoolhouse in Hiram, Maine, turned into a granola bakery. GrandyOats earned an EPA merit award in 2017 for these efforts. While building out the facility NRCM asked if Aaron would testify at the Maine State House in favor of new solar legislation. Aaron is excited to build upon this experience and help us achieve our mission. Aaron has hiked all over the world and traveled cross-country multiple times, stopping in National Parks along the way. He now lives in Cape Elizabeth, where he often paddleboards, cycles, swims, nordic skis, and ice skates.



Sarah Cotton, of Hope, is passionate about keeping our water clean and clear and protecting natural spaces. After earning her B.A. in Environmental Studies at the College of St. Benedict (MN), Sarah volunteered with AmeriCorps in northern California working on water quality in coastal redwood forests. After enjoying California for a few years, she moved back to her home state of Minnesota and worked for the Soil and Water Conservation District where she coordinated its education and outreach efforts to help landowners take action to conserve natural resources. After visiting Maine several times to see family, she moved here with her husband in 2019. Sarah works in the Admissions Department at the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School where she is involved with their custom programs; she works with students and their parents to prepare them for their courses. She loves exploring the many places in Maine to hike, canoe, and sit by the ocean.

Ways to Give in This Season of Giving



Virtual Auction

Jump-start your planning for holiday gift-giving

by bidding on items in our Virtual Auction, November 15-30. With items at a range of price points, there's sure to be something for everyone on your list! Set up a bidding account at www.biddingowl.com/NRCM.

Gift Memberships

A Clean, Beautiful Maine Environment is the Perfect Gift

If you're looking for extra special gift ideas this year, consider giving a gift membership to NRCM! Your special someone will receive one of our beautiful Nature of Maine wall calendars showcasing the beauty of Maine's environment, plus important dates in environmental history, moon phases, and much more. The perfect gift for anyone who loves Maine! Purchase at nrcm.salsalabs.org/giftmembership or contact Codi Riley-Havu at (207) 430-0128 or criley@nrcm.org.



Tax-Aware Giving Options

Did you know NRCM can accept gifts of appreciated securities, bonds, and mutual fund shares? We are also eligible to receive qualified charitable distributions from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) held by individuals aged 70 ½ years or older. Consult with your tax advisor and contact Marlisa Simonson at (207) 430-0108 or msimonson@nrcm.org for the details needed to make non-cash gifts.

Bequests and Life-Income Gifts

We are grateful to members who include NRCM in their estate plans. If you haven't taken this step yet but you're thinking about it, you can learn more about the options at www.nrcm.org/donate/planned-giving/, then contact us to discuss how you can include NRCM in your will; designate NRCM as a beneficiary of an IRA or life insurance policy; or create a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust to provide income during your lifetime.

Employer Matching Gifts

Many companies offer matching gift programs for employees who donate to nonprofits like NRCM—does yours? Your impact could be doubled, tripled, or even quadrupled! Need help getting started? Contact Codi Riley-Havu at (207) 430-0128 or criley@nrcm.org.

DIP & DASH OR DONATE!



SAME GREAT CAUSE!

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SAME BRAGGING RIGHTS!



NOW WITH MORE OPTIONS TO

DIP, DASH, OR BOTH!



YOU DECIDE

- ✦ where and when between December 26 and January 2 to dip, dash, or both. ✦
- ✦ Choose your own site or choose from our scenic options. ✦
- ✦ \$50 until December 25, \$60 after that, with all proceeds benefiting NRCM's work to address climate change in Maine. ✦

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

- ✦ Live leaderboards ✦ Cheering sections (safely distanced) ✦ Prizes! ✦

The funds you raise support NRCM's work fighting climate change in Maine!

Get all of the latest info at

nrcm.salsalabs.org/dipdash

NRCM is grateful to the many Dip & Dash sponsors who have extended their support in this unusual year.

SPECIAL SHOUT OUT TO OUR CHAMPION SPONSORS:



Congratulations to This Year's Conservation Leadership Award Recipients

On Tuesday, October 26, 2021, NRCM staff, members, and special friends "Zoomed" in to help us honor our 2021 Conservation Leadership Award recipients. The festivities kicked off with NRCM member Justin Walton's rendition of the song, "What a Wonderful World," accompanied by beautiful photos of Maine's natural areas. Our virtual guests and honorees also met, via video, 2020 Brookie Award recipient Riley Stevenson, and watched a short video highlighting our effort to remove four dams from the Kennebec River. "It is such an honor to be able to acknowledge the contributions our award recipients are making to keep Maine a special place," says NRCM CEO Lisa Pohlmann. "Hearing their speeches is always the highlight of the event." Congratulations to this year's recipients:



Ivan Fernandez



John Banks with Lisa Pohlmann, CEO

Sam Saltonstall, People's Choice Award for almost two decades of tireless advocacy for energy efficiency, renewable energy, and climate change mitigation.

Laura Marston, Conservation Leadership Award, for advocating for and pioneering new ways to reduce waste and encourage reuse through her business, throughout her community, and across Maine.

Ivan Fernandez, Conservation Leadership Award, for his leadership as one of Maine's top climate scientists, providing policy-makers and the public with leading-edge information about our changing climate, including as a member of the Maine Climate Council.

John Banks, Lifetime Achievement Award, for his countless contributions to the protection of natural resources on behalf of the Penobscot Nation, with a special focus on restoring water quality, fisheries, and connections among people and nature.

You can watch the video of the event, and hear the inspiring words of our recipients, at www.nrcm.org/events/conservation-leadership-awards.



Laura Marston with Maria Gallace, Board Chair



Sam Saltonstall

New at the NRCM Blogosphere

Stay informed and entertained with our picks for this month's must-reads:

- **Birding with Jeff and Allison: Congratulations, You're a Birder!** by NRCM's birding experts
- **Passamaquoddy Tribe at Sipayik Opposes Mining Activities in Cobscook Bay Area**, guest blog by Chief Maggie Dana
- **Brookie Award Winners in Their Own Words**, by NRCM Rising Director Todd Martin
- **Critter Chatter: Three Little Kittens, Part II**, by NRCM member Jayne Winters
- **Wolfden Withdraws Mining Application after Strong Rebuke from LUPC**, by NRCM Grassroots Outreach Coordinator Todd Martin
- **A Conversation with 2021 Allagash Visiting Artist Martha Kotter**, by NRCM Forests & Wildlife Director Melanie Sturm
- **A Fall Escape to Nahmakanta**, by NRCM Rising Leadership Team member Sarah Sindo



Protecting the Natural Character of the Moosehead Region

The Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC) is collecting public comment on four discussion maps that provide different suggestions for how they might plan for new development in the Moosehead region. As we have done for years, NRCM is working with friends in the region to protect the natural character of this special place. Habitat for species of special concern like Canada lynx, Rusty Blackbird, and native brook trout could be compromised if development is misplaced. The wrong decision could also jeopardize treasured places to go fishing, hiking, paddling, or simply watching the sunset. Moosehead is facing threats from overdevelopment, climate change, and biodiversity loss, so NRCM will be making it a top priority to watchdog how LUPC's planning process develops in the coming year.—CD



Green Tip of the Month

CLEAN YOUR HOUSE WITH PLANTS House plants remove toxins from the air. English ivy absorbs formaldehyde, a common pollutant in synthetic carpet dyes and wood floor resins. The fan-like plumes of the lady palm absorb ammonia, which can irritate the respiratory system and is found in cleaners and dyes. Set a fast-growing golden pothos plant near the entryway to reduce chemicals found in car exhaust that can sneak inside your house. For more toxic-free living tips, download or request a copy of our Clean and Healthy Housekeeping brochure at www.nrcm.org/our-maine/publications.



Michelle Moody

MY MAINE THIS WEEK

This stunning fall foliage photograph is the view from the Barren Mountain Ledges in Ellitsville Township, and that's Lake Owana to the right in this pic. Thank you to longtime NRCM member **Michelle Moody of Topsham** for sharing her gorgeous photo with us!

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.

Fall 2021 Tribute Gifts

IN HONOR OF:

Jane Andrews from Helen Seitz
 Jim A. Andrews from Mary Stuart and Cindy Robertson
 Attean Lake Lodge from Mary Stuart and Cindy Robertson
 Ian Ryan from Jason and Carrie Cianchette
 Wayne Sturtivant from Mary Stuart and Cindy Robertson

IN MEMORY OF:

Ezra J. Briggs III from: Kathryn J. Olmstead
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Richard Christensen from: Anonymous
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Richard Warren Delucchi from: Rebekah Martin
Nancy Forgette from: Sarah Sindo
Eric Thomas Greig from: Laura K. Patterson
Deborah G. Lord from: Kathleen Middleton
Michael S. Porder from:
 Rita Auerbach • Kathryn Greenwald • Robert Penzer
 Mary Jane Perna • Pauline Porder
Ozzie Dog Rankin from: Anne M. Rankin
A. Holmes Stockly from: Gloria A. Tolenti
Peter Taber from: Linda Stearns

Don't Miss Out!

If you're not tuning in to our biweekly podcast, you're missing out on our expert insider takes on the latest news and issues relating to Maine's environment. Tune in to Frontline Voices at www.nrcm.org/our-maine/maine-environment-frontline-voices-podcast/.



Fall In To Winter Photo Contest!

Ah, New England in the fall. It marks the time when we know that another Maine winter is on its way. We want to see, and possibly use, your fall and winter photos of our beautiful state to help us protect the nature of Maine! Maybe you've got leaf-peeping photos from a hike in the western Maine mountains. Or, perhaps you've got images of The County buried in snow. Entering our contest is easy. Just visit www.nrcm.org/news/fall-winter-photo-contest for all the details and submit your Maine fall and winter pictures to nrcm@nrcm.org. We'll post them on Facebook for voting! The winners will receive some pretty awesome Maine swag from NRCM and the following local Maine businesses who kindly donated prizes.

—Levi Hahn, NRCM Social Media & Creative Services Manager



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CONTRIBUTORS / Colin Durrant, Levi Hahn, Sarah Nichols, Lisa Pohlmann, Marlisa Simonson, Allison Childs Wells

EDITORIAL BOARD / Beth Comeau, Colin Durrant, Levi Hahn, Marlisa Simonson, Allison Childs Wells

BANNER IMAGE / Penobscot River looking at Old Town from Bradley, a My Maine This Week photo by NRCM member David Small

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Natural Resources Council of Maine

3 Wade Street,

Augusta, ME 04330

(207) 622-3101

(800) 287-2345

nrcm.org