



Salmon Falls River, South Berwick, by Betty Olivolo

FALL/WINTER 2023

MAINE Environment

**Be BOLD
In the COLD!**

Sign up for our **Polar Bear Dip & Dash** - in person or remote, you choose!

Sunday, December 31
See page 3 for lots more info!

Offshore Wind: a Sign of Climate Hope for Maine

BY JACK SHAPIRO AND COLIN DURRANT

The winds that whip across the ocean waters far off Maine's coastline are a sign of hope as we seek to rapidly reduce our reliance on dirty and expensive fossil fuels and avert the worst impacts of climate change.

Placing offshore wind turbines in the Gulf of Maine using floating technology developed by researchers and students at the University of Maine, and put together at a Maine-based port, would be an enormous win-win for our economy, environment, and coastal communities.

Building reliable clean energy we need to power heat pumps, electric cars, and emerging technologies like battery storage means we need to develop Maine's offshore wind potential. But we need to make sure we do it responsibly and in a way that benefits communities up and down the coast.

Responsibly developed offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine is moving full speed ahead, led by NRCM's Climate & Clean Energy team and a unique coalition we've built with organized labor, fishing groups, and our peer environmental organizations.

Setting the Stage for Maine's Clean Energy Future

"Maine has set the stage for a competitive new clean energy industry that will bring thousands of family-supporting jobs, protect the rich array of wildlife in the Gulf of Maine, ensure fishing communities have a voice in the process, and keep us on our trajectory to meet a goal of 100% renewable energy by 2040," says NRCM CEO Rebeccah Sanders.



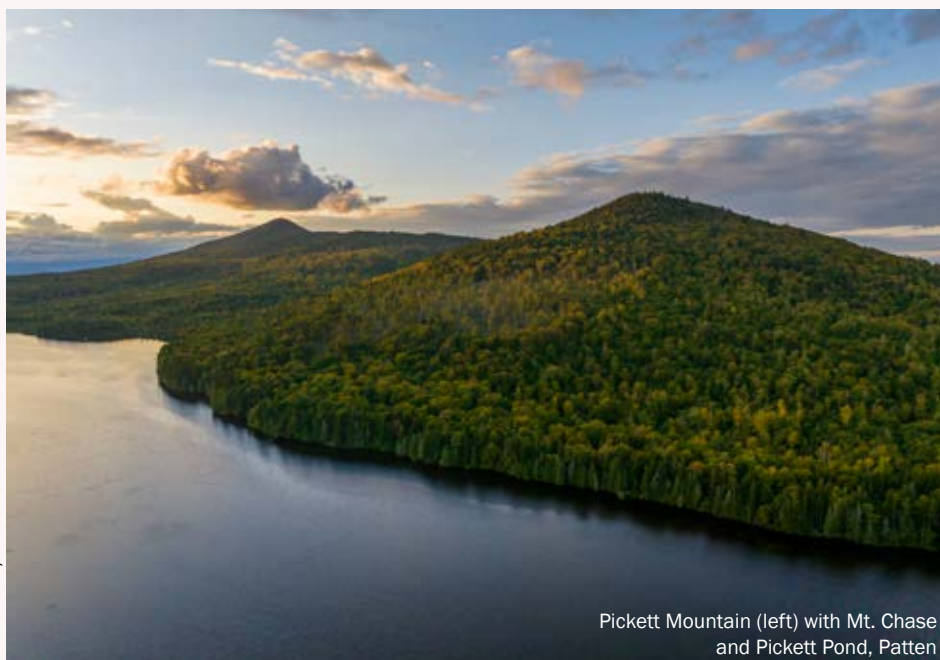
NRCM's Jack Shapiro during a visit to learn about Scotland's offshore wind turbines.

COURTESY PHOTO

Story continued on page 2

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Wrong Mine, Wrong Company, Wrong Place



J. MONKMAN/NRCM

Pickett Mountain (left) with Mt. Chase and Pickett Pond, Patten

An untested and underfunded company, Wolfden Resources, has submitted a second rezoning petition to the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC) to allow for the development of a zinc mine near Pickett Mountain in the Katahdin region. The Canada-based exploration and development company was forced to withdraw its first application in 2021 because it was riddled with errors.

The proposed mine has been identified by the LUPC as an "issue of statewide concern" and has attracted a lot of attention because of its location just miles from Baxter State Park and Katahdin Woods & Waters National Monument.

NRCM is mobilizing against the mine because it's too big of a risk for Maine.

As part of the LUPC review, Wolfden must demonstrate that it has the technical expertise to build a mine and that its project is well planned. The company has repeatedly failed to meet both of those criteria.

Wolfden has never built or operated a mine. Its proposal is poorly planned and thought out. For example, Wolfden has not even stated where it would build its ore processing facility, a major component of a mining operation. Wolfden's proposal for wastewater treatment also doesn't hold up to scrutiny.

The location of the proposed mine is directly adjacent to some of the state's best habitat for brook trout and Atlantic

Story continued on page 4

Natural Resources
Council of Maine
3 Wade Street
Augusta, ME 04330
(800) 287-2345



• CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY •

Reflections on Our Year Together

As 2023 comes to a close, we are entering the traditional season for reflection. This is the time that we look back over the past year, give thanks, and begin to envision what future the new year holds. For me, this has been a momentous year, and I am especially grateful for your warm welcome as I took the helm at the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) earlier in the year.

Throughout the year my great love of Maine has only grown. The sea-sprayed coast, crystal clear lakes, and mountains that kiss the sky provide endless places to seek restoration and adventure.

But the heart of what makes Maine so special is its people. Innovative. Pragmatic. Community-centered. These qualities have shaped our state's environmental ethos, where Mainers from all walks of life work together to protect our natural resources today and for future generations.

I've experienced this first-hand as I visited with communities around the state, from Bethel's mountains to Stonington's rocky shores and from bustling Portland to villages peppered throughout Aroostook County. Evidence of Maine's resourcefulness and practical environmental values is everywhere. We see it in our farms and small businesses handed down through the generations and in our investments in developing entirely new industries, such as floating wind turbine technology created at the University of Maine.

While each community is distinct, we all share our hope and desire for a resilient future in the face of a rapidly changing climate and political landscape—and a need to act now. Over its more than sixty-year history, the NRCM community has always risen to the challenges facing our environment. I am confident that by working together we can meet the challenges facing our environment and our communities today.

Our work cannot happen without you. The issues we lift up, we lift up together. Climate policy, sustainability practices, and protections for waters and wildlife impact our daily lives. Your voices, opinions, and experiences as Mainers and members of your community shape our work to create a flourishing present and future for Maine's environment.

Thank you for your support of NRCM's work, for your generous welcoming of me as NRCM's CEO, and for the actions you continue to take for Maine's natural resources.

Be well, and happy holidays. —Rebecca Sanders, CEO

Welcome New NRCM Board Members

At its August 2023 meeting, NRCM's Board of Directors elected the following new members:



Kevin Kobel (Cape Elizabeth) Kevin recently retired from Accenture after a 30-year career, having served as a Senior Executive in its Growth & Strategy group and collaborator with senior Accenture leaders on growth strategy, market/competitive assessment, financial planning, and operational improvement. A graduate of Babson College with a B.S. in Business Administration, Kevin also earned his MBA at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He enjoys hiking, camping, biking, skiing, and boating. He is passionate about conserving and protecting the natural world in Maine.



Al Manville (Brunswick) Al spent 23 years as a federal employee (National Park Service Ranger Naturalist, USDA Botanical Resource Assistant, and Branch Chief/Senior Wildlife Biologist for USFWS) and 19 working for conservation organizations such as Defenders of Wildlife (Vice President) and the Adirondack Mountain Club (Executive Director). Al continues to teach part-time at Johns Hopkins University,

including in Acadia National Park. He holds a B.S. in Zoology from Allegheny College, an M.S. in Natural Resources and Wildlife Management from the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, and a Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology and Management from Michigan State University. A Certified Wildlife Biologist, Al is also a private pilot, wildlife photographer, kayaker, and dog owner.

Board members elected to serve their third term:

Francesca Galluccio-Steele

Amy Scott

Sadie Lloyd Mudge

Ben Whelan

Annie Winchester was elected to serve one additional year past her third term. We extend our gratitude to Bonnie Wood, whose Board term recently expired, for her dedication and expertise. To learn more about our board members visit

nrcm.org/about-nrcm/board-of-directors.

Offshore Wind - from Page 1



The Gulf of Maine has some of the strongest and most consistent winds in the world. Those winds peak in the winter months when our energy use is the highest. On a daily basis, offshore wind will generate the most power at night, complementing solar energy, which peaks during the day, making the two natural partners as we transition toward a clean energy economy.

NRCM's Plan for Offshore Wind

The powerful winds that blow far off our coastline have the potential to produce enough clean, reliable energy to meet the needs of New England states for almost 40% of the year. If combined with large-capacity battery storage, this figure could jump to 70%, according to a recent report by New Hampshire's Department of Energy.

NRCM's plan to capture the potential for offshore wind is focused on several pillars:

- Passage of the law in 2023 that directs the Maine Public Utilities Commission to procure 3 GW of offshore wind by 2040 through a competitive process, including strong standards for good-paying jobs, wildlife protection, and environmental justice.
- Listening and learning from the communities that rely on the shared resources of the Gulf of Maine, especially fishing and lobstering families. Thanks to our partnership with the Maine Lobstering Union, the federal government has announced it will exclude a key fishing ground called Lobster Management Area 1 from development almost in its entirety, protecting this vital fishing resource.
- Collaborating with biologists at Maine Audubon and elsewhere to ensure turbine operations minimize impacts to birds, fish, and wildlife. The law passed in 2023 will support new research to better understand how we can protect wildlife while advancing offshore wind.
- Developing a Maine-based port to bring hundreds of millions of dollars in economic development from the private sector to our state, supporting the creation of thousands of good-paying jobs.

The Gulf of Maine includes about 36,000 square miles, most in federal waters. Federal and state governments will work together to identify optimal locations for commercial wind development, using the best available science and extensive input from a wide range of ocean users and stakeholders.

Maine's offshore wind projects will likely be located 40-50 miles from the coast. Because Maine ocean waters become deep very quickly, it is not possible to build projects anchored to the sea floor, so wind turbines will be placed on anchored floating platforms far offshore.

Building a port to support constructing floating offshore wind turbines and platforms can only be done in a few places in Maine, where there's deep water, enough space to lay down construction materials, and easy access to the Gulf of Maine, among other requirements. An Offshore Wind Ports Advisory Group and the Maine Department of Transportation Ports Authority have been evaluating the pros and cons of all possible options, weighing economic, environmental, and technical considerations.

The greatest threat to the wildlife, outdoor spaces, and coastlines we all cherish as Mainers is climate change. We have the technologies and solutions to avoid the worst impacts, but only if we act now to move rapidly away from expensive and unreliable oil and gas.

With the price of energy skyrocketing due to the volatility of the fossil fuel market, it is more important than ever that Maine develops local, reliable, and affordable clean energy sources here at home.

Jack Shapiro is NRCM's Climate & Clean Energy Director. Colin Durrant is NRCM's Advocacy Communications Director.

BE BOLD IN THE COLD
for the Natural Resources Council of Maine

16TH ANNUAL POLAR BEAR
Dip & Dash

A benefit for NRCM's work to fight climate change

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

Southern Maine Community College (South Portland Campus)
Run/Walk 9:00 a.m. • Polar Plunge 10:30 a.m. (NEW TIME!)



Join us in person for a 5k run/walk followed by a polar plunge at Willard Beach! Or show your support by joining virtually.

Visit nrcm.salsalabs.org/dipdash to register.

Fundraise to increase your impact!

Thank you to our generous 2023 business sponsors:



- Renys
- Northeast Delta Dental
- Maine Solar Solutions
- LL Bean
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- Coffee by Design

Fall 2023 Tribute Gifts

Among gifts received from May 1, 2023-October 31, 2023

IN HONOR OF:

Willow E. Adler from Christine Adler
Her Aunt from Jill Wilson
Ian Ryan from Jason and Carrie Cianchette
Winston and Thelma White from Gary White

IN MEMORY OF:

Dennis E. Kordish, Esq. from Victor A. Kordish
Adam McAllister from Matt and Laura Kelley
Buck Sawyer from Richard and Sandra Lawrence

Would you like to honor or memorialize someone with your next gift? Include "In honor of" or "In memory of" alongside their name in the check memo line or online gift notes.

**A Clean, Beautiful
Maine Environment
is the Perfect Gift**



**Gifts for
Family &
Friends**

Looking to cut down on giving "stuff" this year? How about giving an NRCM gift membership? Your special someone will receive our beautiful Nature of Maine

wall calendar in addition to timely communications and event invitations throughout the year. 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.

Gifts to NRCM

Is NRCM on your holiday gift-giving list? Renew your membership or make an additional gift at nrcm.salsalabs.org/2023 or by mailing a check to 3 Wade Street, Augusta, ME 04330. Don't forget to ask your employer whether your gift is eligible to be matched!



NRCM can also accept non-cash gifts of appreciated securities, bonds, and mutual fund shares as well as qualified charitable distributions from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) held by individuals age 70 ½ years or older.

Year-end philanthropic giving, tax prep, and estate planning go hand-in-hand. It's easy to make a lasting impact for NRCM by designating us as a beneficiary in your will or financial accounts. Consult with your advisor and contact Marlisha Simonson at (207) 430-0108 or msimonson@nrcm.org for more information. The tax ID of the Natural Resources Council of Maine is 01-0270690.

JIMONKMAN/NRCM



HOLD PLASTIC POLLUTERS ACCOUNTABLE

It's time to put an end to the misleading claims and false promises of the plastic industry, and promote genuine solutions for recycling, waste reduction, and reuse. Sign the petition at

**[nrcm.salsalabs.org/
plasticpollutionpetition!](http://nrcm.salsalabs.org/plasticpollutionpetition!)**

Join NRCM as we work to create transparency and accountability within the waste and recycling system to hold big corporations accountable for fueling the plastic pollution crisis. In Maine, we all need to work together to fight for systemic changes that empower local businesses, residents, and towns to implement healthier solutions for reducing plastic waste and supporting our communities. **Sign the petition today!**



NRCM Green Tip

KEEP OUT THE COLD Did you know that drawing the drapes on cold days can reduce a room's heat loss by up to 10%? As days get shorter and the temps get colder, be sure to close the drapes on those cold days to save on energy costs. For more money-saving tips to reduce your energy use, download or request a copy of our brochure, *Bright Ideas: Tips for Home Energy Savings* www.nrcm.org/our-maine/publications.

STAY INFORMED BE "SOCIAL" WITH US



DAN TANNER

MY MAINE THIS WEEK

Photographer and NRCM supporter Dan Tanner of Oakfield, Maine, shares his stunning fall foliage photo taken last September in Island Falls, from the Bog Brook Road overlooking the Mattawamkeag River. Wow!

Do you have a photograph of Maine you'd like to share? Send your submissions to beth@nrcm.org. Visit "My Maine This Week" online at nrcm.org for guidelines and more photos.

Wrong Mine - from Page 1



salmon. It is next to three State Heritage Fish Waters and contains the headwaters of the West Branch of the Mattawamkeag River—federally designated critical habitat for endangered Atlantic salmon. The mine would destroy critical habitat for threatened Canada lynx and habitat for other iconic Maine species, such as moose and pine martens.

The Katahdin region and Penobscot River watershed are sacred to Wabanaki tribes. The tribes have an intimate cultural and physical relationship with the land and water, which continues today through traditional practices such as sustenance fishing and hunting. The location of Wolfden's proposed mine is near several important tribal trust lands.

The tribes also have a close connection to Atlantic salmon and have long worked to recover habitat for the species. The proposed mine would endanger that progress.

The LUPC plays an important role in protecting the character of the North Woods, and their review is an integral first step in determining if and where industrial development is appropriate in the Unorganized Territories. If Wolfden can't meet LUPC standards, then its proposal should be rejected so that we don't waste any more taxpayer money.

The Penobscot Nation, Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, and NRCM intervened in the case and are all represented by Earthjustice. We helped mobilize more than 1,000 comments in opposition to the mine, and at three public hearings held in Millinocket and Bangor, opponents far outnumbered supporters. Prior to the Bangor hearing, nearly 200 Mainers joined NRCM CEO Rebeccah Sanders and Penobscot Nation Tribal Ambassador Maulian Bryant at a rally that concluded with loud chants of "Stop the Mine" ringing out as darkness fell.

The LUPC is expected to make a final decision in the first few months of 2024. —Colin Durrant with NRCM Staff Scientist Nick Bennett

 **Natural Resources Council of Maine**
3 Wade Street • Augusta, Maine • 04330
(207) 622-3101 • (800) 287-2345 • www.nrcm.org

- EDITOR** / Allison Childs Wells, Senior Director, Communications
- DESIGN** / brightredbicycle design
- CONTRIBUTORS** / Nick Bennett, Beth Comeau, Colin Durrant, Jack Shapiro, Rebeccah Sanders, Marlisa Simonson, Allison Childs Wells
- EDITORIAL BOARD** / Beth Comeau, Colin Durrant, Marlisa Simonson, Allison Childs Wells
- BANNER IMAGE** / Salmon River Falls, South Berwick, by NRCM member Betty Olivolo
- CEO** / Rebeccah Sanders
- SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM/**
Pete Didisheim, Senior Director, Advocacy
Marlisa Simonson, Senior Director, Philanthropy
Allison Wells, Senior Director, Communications
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