



Robin's Hill Overlook, Skowhegan, by Peggy Yaeger

FALL/WINTER 2024

MAINE Environment

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**Tuesday, December 31
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More info on page 3**

Listening and Learning in Franklin County

BY COLIN DURRANT

Stretching from Jay and Farmington in the south to Eustis and Round Mountain in the north along the border with Canada, Franklin County is emblematic of the shifts happening across rural Maine. Former mill towns reinventing themselves; local organizations dedicated to serving their communities; towns emerging or sustaining themselves as outdoor recreation hubs not just for Mainers but for tourists who bring money to help bolster local economic stability, and of course stunning natural beauty!



Left, Marc Edwards; Right, Franklin County Listening Session

Two years ago, NRCM hired Marc Edwards as our first-ever Regional Outreach Coordinator in Franklin County with a focus on building enduring power that will protect and strengthen Maine's environment. Our goal was to strengthen NRCM's legacy of partnership with people who care about the nature of Maine by focusing on listening and learning from the residents and local businesses who live and work in this important region of the state.

Marc was a natural fit, with 25 years' experience in natural resources, including as a ranger with Baxter State Park and Acadia National Park, and a long-time resident of Strong. He has been deeply involved in the community, including serving as a local school committee member. For NRCM, outreach and organizing work has always been about building relationships over the long term. Our focus on Franklin County was a chance to continue that work with a dedicated team member who would be given the time and space to have the conversations and do the work necessary to build those relationships.

"In my early days in this position, I met with my good friend and neighbor Roger Lambert, who is well known and respected in the hunting and guiding community not only in Franklin County, but statewide," says Marc. "I wanted to get his opinion on our work and how we can be responsive to the needs of rural Franklin County. After giving me an earful, he finished by saying, 'That NRCM came to my house to hear what I have to say is groundbreaking!' This really sums up my work in Franklin County."

Story continued on page 2



JSHAPIRO/NRCM

First Floating Offshore Wind Lease Sale in Gulf of Maine

A new era for clean energy in New England kicked off in late October when the federal government announced the results of its first floating offshore wind lease sale in the Gulf of Maine. Developers purchased four of the eight available lease areas. These include one in the northern gulf, 53 miles off the coast of Maine. The four leases could support enough offshore wind capacity to supply 2.3 million homes with clean energy. The lease sale bolsters Maine's leadership on floating offshore wind, as the developers of these lease areas will serve as potential commercial partners for the state's proposed offshore wind port on Sears Island. The wind power generated from these projects will also deliver a reliable source of renewable energy to Maine homes and businesses, helping keep costs as low as possible for everyone, and reducing the state's reliance on expensive, polluting, and unreliable oil and gas.

In 2023, NRCM joined with environmental groups and organized labor partners to pass a landmark offshore wind law with strong labor standards, extensive wildlife protections, and incentives for investments in coastal communities. Based in part on provisions in Maine's offshore wind law, the areas being leased by the federal government are outside the fishing grounds used by nearly the entire Maine-based lobster fishery. Says NRCM's Climate & Clean Energy Director Jack Shapiro, "This successful lease sale is a momentous step forward for Maine's goals to tackle climate change and build a new clean energy industry centered on our proud maritime and shipbuilding heritage."

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Meet Todd Garth, NRCM's Interim Executive Director

NRCM's Board of Directors hired Pemaquid resident Todd Garth as Interim Executive Director with a focus on helping lead the organization into the future. A seasoned, mission-focused leader, Todd brings close to 30 years of national and international experience in nonprofit management, advocacy, and fundraising, with groups that include Habitat for Humanity International and World Vision US. He has deep connections to Maine. NRCM's Strategic Communications Director Colin Durrant sat down with Todd recently to learn more about why he's so excited about the opportunity to help build an NRCM for the future. You can read the entirety of the interview at nrcm.org/blog/qa-todd-garth.



LAURA ZYLSTRA

Todd, welcome to NRCM! What motivated your interest in working here?

My wife and I met in Maine 33 years ago [at the Carpenter's Boat Shop]. And it feels like our entire journey since that time has been around, "How do we get back to Maine?" We managed that for some long stretches, but we've been away recently. And so it's a great opportunity to be back in Maine. It's a great opportunity to be serving one of the aspects of Maine I truly love, which is the beautiful natural environment, and to be a part of an important nonprofit in the state of Maine. I've worked for some smaller nonprofits, and for some larger ones. Nonprofits that have a good, strong history like NRCM has can make a real difference at scale, something that works for an entire state. That's something I want to be a part of.

What are some of those unique things that you think NRCM really has to offer to Maine?

NRCM has a really long history of working across the entire state, across several different aspects of environmental concerns and opportunities, but also working with folks from both sides of the aisle and in the middle. It's about trying to do what's best for the state of Maine, listening to Mainers and trying to bring that vision for all of us forward in a way that supports a state that is keeping its uniqueness, like its clean waters. I'm a fly fisherman, and I was fishing in Michigan recently where people mentioned they'd love to go brook trout fishing in

Continued on page 4

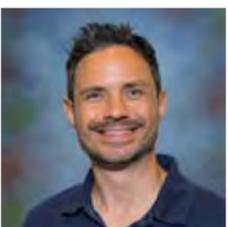
Welcome, New Board Members

At its August 2024 meeting, the NRCM Board of Directors elected two new members:



Nancy Hasenfus (Brunswick) Nancy grew up in rural Maine and has been concerned about environmental issues since a young age. She earned a Master's in Education and a PhD in psychology from the University of Maine, then went on to get an MD from Tufts. She practiced primary care Internal Medicine for 33 years. She served as governor of the Maine Chapter of the American College of Physicians from 2010

to 2014. Now in retirement, Nancy's main concerns have been expanding access to healthcare and promoting effective environmental legislation. She lives with her husband in Brunswick and is a member of the MaineHealth Board, the Maine Behavioral Healthcare Board, and ALIC (the Androscoggin Lake board). Most of her volunteer effort in recent years has been through the Citizens' Climate Lobby, a nonpartisan group advocating for a carbon fee and other environmental legislation.



Sam Lavalley (Brunswick) Sam has spent his career focused on clean energy. Since 2022, he has served as Chief Financial Officer of ReVision Energy, where, prior to that, he worked in Project Finance. In that role, he delivered Power Purchase Agreements to schools, governments, and nonprofits so they could decarbonize their electricity supply and save money on electricity costs without an upfront investment. During his 10

years in this position, Sam earned a post-graduate accounting degree (Southern New Hampshire University) and a Master's (Villanova) in Business Administration. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics & Political Science from the University of Vermont. In addition to his professional skills in financial planning and information technology, Sam's interests and experiences are in the fields of leadership, vision, and strategic planning. Sam sees serving on the NRCM Board as another opportunity to devote his energy, passion, and skills to protecting Maine's environment for future generations.

Listening - from Page 1

What we know from our more than 60 years working to protect the nature of Maine is that the best ideas often come from the everyday people who are so deeply connected to the woods, waters, or communities we all hold so dear. In

Bird walk at Perham Stream Birding Trail, Madrid, Franklin County



MEDWARDS/NRCM

a meeting NRCM hosted with local Franklin County residents in 2022, an outdoor recreation leader brought up the desperate need for investing in trails of all kinds. Out of that conversation came the idea for the Maine Trails Bond to repair damaged trails and build new, accessible trail networks.

Earlier this year, more than 520 businesses, recreation organizations, and towns statewide joined with a bipartisan group of lawmakers to pass the Trails Bond out of the Legislature. This unique coalition brought snowmobile and ATV riders together in the same room as outdoor brands, mountain bikers, and land trusts. As a result, Maine voters overwhelmingly approved the \$30 million investment in trails statewide on November's ballot.

NRCM's work in Franklin County has also focused on co-creating community events that bring new or existing supporters together to have shared experiences. Marc collaborated with a group of residents in Strong to revive the Sandy River Festival, a day-long celebration along the banks of the Sandy featuring inspiring talks, music, food, and fun activities. NRCM has participated in Earth Day clean-up events in Farmington. Bird walks and alpine plant hikes have brought NRCM supporters to Franklin County together with local residents to learn more about the woods and wildlife that make the region so special.

NRCM is partnering with the High Peaks Alliance, the University of Maine at Farmington (UMF), Life Enrichment Advancing People, and the Town of Farmington to plan for a Spring 2025 event that will include an all-abilities accessible walk on



Musicians perform at the Sandy River Festival

ETHEBERGE/NRCM

UMF's new universally accessible trail along the Sandy River, followed by lunch and socializing at the Town of Farmington's Walton's Mill Park along Temple Stream with new universally accessible features.

Being present in a community can't be just about asking someone to support

NRCM's work. Rather, it has to be about connecting with them with shared values. It's about opening up a dialogue to learn what matters to them and how that may or may not align with what NRCM is considering as priorities in the coming years. "Even with some of my dear friends in Strong where I live, we don't agree on everything, but we can still go down and have breakfast at the White Elephant and talk," says Marc.

After three years with NRCM, Marc is retiring at the end of 2024, but his energy, compassion, and thoughtfulness have provided an excellent foundation for our ongoing community-driven work to build long-lasting relationships with Mainers regardless of where they live. NRCM's commitment to Franklin County will continue with plans to hire a new regional outreach coordinator to continue building relationships across the region. We are doubling down on this successful model by hiring a new regional outreach coordinator on the Midcoast to deepen our connection to people in Penobscot Bay communities.

"I've seen my work in Franklin County as being mostly listening, being respectful, and being responsive to those who care about the natural resources in Franklin County. Finding common ground has been important. I have tried to make NRCM's work relevant to folks in my community whether they drive a Subaru or a beat-up old pickup truck, or whether they wear L.L. Bean or an old pair of Dickies work clothes," says Marc, reflecting on his experience.

Our work together has always been about building the Maine we all deserve—a Maine with clean water, healthy forests, abundant wildlife, livable communities, and accessible outdoors for all. That's why we're so committed to learning from and listening to you, whatever your connection is to Maine. We're at our best when we're working together to protect what we love. Thank you for being on this journey with us.

Colin Durrant is NRCM's Strategic Communications Director.

NRCM Honors Conservation Leaders



Front row, from left to right: Maxine Adelson (York High School Eco-club), MaryAlice Mowry, Enock Glidden
Back row, from left to right: Aiden Ring (York High School Eco-club), Chloe Whitbread (York High School Eco-club), Dan Kusnierz, Buck O'Herin

NRCM staff, members, board, and special friends honored our 2024 Conservation Leadership Award recipients on September 25, 2024. The occasion was part of Protecting What We Love: A Celebration of Action for Maine's Environment, our event at Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture & the Environment in Freeport. It included hay rides, a bird walk, advocacy room, and more. NRCM staff presented each of this year's recipients with their award and recipients shared stirring words about their work. You can read some of those remarks at nrcm.org/about-nrcm/conservation-leadership-awards.

Congratulations to this year's recipients:

- **Dan Kusnierz** (Penobscot Nation) and **MaryAlice Mowry** (Patten), for their unwavering leadership and advocacy in protecting the beauty and health of the Katahdin region from the dangers of the proposed Wolfden mine.
- **Enock Glidden** (Albany Township), for his tireless advocacy and inspiring leadership in support of the Maine Trails Bond, including ensuring trails are accessible to all.
- **Kate Pilotte** (Castine), for her successful advocacy for laws that allow local entrepreneurs to reduce plastic pollution through reusable containers.
- **York High School Eco-club**, for their successful efforts to ban disposable plastic utensils, making York the first Maine community to take this important step.
- **Buck O'Herin** (Montville) NRCM's People's Choice Award, for his lifetime of visionary conservation work in the Midcoast.

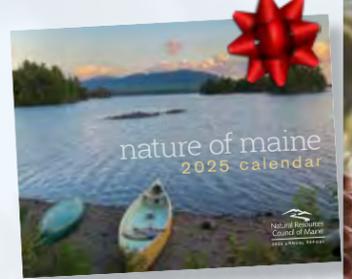
Give the Gift of a Clean, Beautiful Maine

The Perfect Gift for Family & Friends

The generosity of our members fuels our advocacy, allowing us to engage Mainers, collaborate with partners, provide expert guidance, and safeguard Maine's treasured places for generations to come. Skip the usual holiday "stuff" this year and make NRCM part of your holiday giving!

🎁 Give a Gift of an NRCM Membership

Delight your loved one with a gift membership to NRCM. They'll receive a stunning wall calendar and enjoy special updates and invitations to our events throughout the year. It's the perfect gift for anyone who cherishes Maine's natural beauty and wants to preserve it.



🎁 Renew Your Membership or Make an Extra Gift to NRCM

Renew your membership or contribute an additional gift to protect Maine's environment. **Bonus Tip:** Check to see if your employer offers gift-matching to double your impact!

🎁 Make a Gift of Stock or Other Securities

NRCM accepts gifts of stocks, bonds, and mutual funds as well as qualified charitable distributions from IRAs (from individuals aged 70½+).



🎁 Leave a Lasting Legacy

As the year comes to a close, now's a great time to think about estate planning and tax prep. By making a gift to NRCM through your estate, you can have a lasting impact on Maine's environment.

Donate online at nrcm.org/donate, or mail a check to NRCM, Attn: Ella D. Tabasky, 3 Wade Street, Augusta, ME 04330. Our tax ID number is #01-0270690.

Questions? Contact us at support@nrcm.org.

17TH ANNUAL POLAR BEAR DIP & DASH TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31st

Fundraise to
increase
your impact!



A benefit for NRCM's work to fight climate change

Southern Maine Community College
(South Portland Campus)

Run/Walk 9:00 a.m. • Polar Plunge 10:30 a.m.

To register, scan the QR Code or visit
givegab.com/campaigns/nrcm-dip-dash.

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Todd Garth - from Page 2

Maine sometime because of its clean waters and excellent brook trout fishing.

You've only been here a few weeks but what are some of the things that have excited you about this work?

It is exciting to see an organization that has such incredibly talented staff and dedicated board members. Everywhere I go in the state to meet up with old friends, when I tell them I'm at NRCM the response is universally "that's a really good organization, they make a difference." And you know, I'm excited by that. I'm also excited by this ability to create a big tent for the environment. We all enjoy Maine. We might do it in different ways, but how do we all get together behind the important issues that need to be taken care of in the state? Not do it in some precious way that protects the interest of one particular niche, but for everybody.

Could you share another moment or story about Maine that holds a particularly powerful memory for you?

A few years ago I had cancer, and when I was done with the treatment, I wanted to do something that I had always wanted to do but had never done, which was to climb Katahdin. I was really



COURTESY PHOTO

excited, and I put in a lot of work training, just personally trying to prepare so that it would be an enjoyable experience. I had two buddies join me on the climb. For me, it was a moment when I'd gotten past cancer, and I wanted to go and do this big hike and get on with my life by doing something important to me. I was ready for Katahdin, and it absolutely is a memory for the three of us.

Your story is one so many of us can relate to! Given the impact climate change is posing to our communities, what gives you hope for the future?

So many times, it's people that are the problem, but it's also people that are the solution. People can be nasty and short-sighted, but the other side of it is everywhere you go there are always some people willing to step up, make personal sacrifice, and bring their skills to bear. You know, we probably all have some dear friends who maybe are on the other side of some issue in our lives. And we probably also know times when those friends or family members lifted us up or gave a helping hand or word of encouragement.

Thank you, Todd!

Fall 2024 Tribute Gifts

Among gifts received from May 1, 2024-September 30, 2024

IN HONOR OF:

Jessica and Anna Bowen from Mr. and Mrs. Roger Bowen
William Newkirk from Brooks Newkirk
Marriage of Audrey Puleio and William Cleaves from Donna Yellen

IN MEMORY OF:

A loved one from Beth Phelan
Duke (Otis) Magoun from Caleb Estabrooks
Barbara Mason from Mark Mason
Gus Sargent from Juliana McClellan

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.



NRCM Green Tip

DON'T TRASH TREE LIMBS. Don't get rid of all of your downed tree limbs. Instead, put them in a pile in a corner of the yard to provide shelter for backyard birds.

SUMMER JUMBLE CONTEST WINNER



Many thanks to all of you who sent in your Summer Jumble puzzles from our 2024 Explore Maine publication. Congratulations to our lucky winner, **Brett L of Pittsfield!** Brett has some awesome NRCM gear coming his way.

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Frontline Voices podcast



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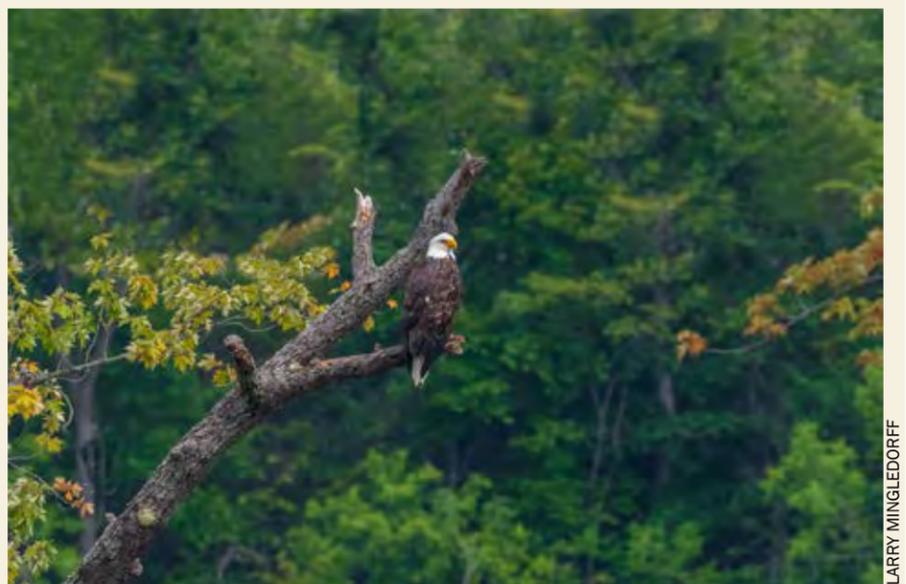
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New NRCM Fall Apparel

Visit NRCM's online shop (shop.nrcm.org) now to see the new fall apparel designed by local artist Mel Andrel and printed locally at Creation Lab. We have new orange bandanas (great for people and pets!). We also have hooded sweatshirts, adult long-sleeved tees, and adorable toddler tees to match! Limited quantities of each available for purchase. Get yours today before they're gone!



LARRY MINGLEDORFF

MY MAINE THIS WEEK

Bald Eagle, Baxter State Park: NRCM member **Larry Mingledorff of Palm Coast, Florida**, came to Maine this summer for his annual visit and captured this incredible image on a trip to Baxter State Park.

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.