



Summer Report

Senate could provide lifeline for Acadia

Mainers urge Sen. Snow to push for protections

In March, the U.S. Senate passed an amendment that provides a lifeline for Acadia National Park—but only for the next two years. Now, Environment Maine and citizens across the state are asking Sen. Olympia Snowe to find a permanent solution to protect all of the land at Acadia before she retires this winter.

The amendment would stop Congress from raiding the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a major federal conservation program that is the source of funding for land acquisition at Acadia and other treasured places across the country.

The fund is critical to Acadia, because about 1,000 acres within the park's boundaries are privately owned, and the park lacks the resources to purchase and permanently protect the land when it comes up for sale, leaving our park vulnerable to development.

Acadia needs a long-term solution

Unfortunately, the fix would be in place for just the next two years. And, as of this writing, the U.S. House had yet to pass the amendment. We need a long-term solution to protect Acadia. As a result, Environment Maine is mobilizing citizens across the state to ask Sen. Snowe to make protecting Acadia a top priority before she retires.

“Acadia is such a treasured and beloved place that we’re hopeful that Sen. Snowe will make protecting the park a central part of her legacy as she prepares to leave Washington,” said Environment Maine Preservation Associate Ally Fields.



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▲ Mount Desert Island, Acadia National Park.

1,000 acres in Acadia at risk

At Acadia, families and friends have a unique opportunity to experience Maine’s most striking natural beauty—from taking in the views of Frenchman’s Bay atop Cadillac Mountain to biking on the 45 miles of carriage roads.

Yet Acadia is scattered with more than 1,000 acres of “holes”—about 130 tracts of land within the park that are

privately owned and at risk of being developed. Iconic places like Burnt Porcupine Island and Rum Key are unprotected. These gorgeous undeveloped islands are covered with shingle beaches, steep cliffs and forests that support an array of species, including the bald eagle. Houses built on the islands would threaten these ecosystems and be highly visible from the park.



Staff

more online

◀ Director Emily Figdor working at the State House.

Find out more about how to protect Acadia at our website:
www.EnvironmentMaine.org.

To our members

My family has been looking forward to our trip to Baxter State Park for months, and it's finally around the corner! It will be my 1-year-old daughter Harper's first trip to Mount Katahdin, but I'm sure her older sister, Bella, will teach her how to follow trail markers, show her the beautiful loons and help her pick wild blueberries.

The summer in Maine is such a magical time, as so many of us get out with family and friends to hike, bike, bird watch, canoe, kayak, camp and so much more. And it's thanks to you, and thousands of other like-minded people who have joined together to protect Maine's environment, that we can continue to enjoy so many special places.

Thank you for being a part of the organizing and advocacy that sustains Maine's environment.

Emily Figdor
State Director



How do you want to be remembered?

You can be remembered as someone who cared enough to keep up the fight for a cleaner, greener, healthier future by making a bequest to Environment Maine or the Environment Maine Research & Policy Center.

For information, call: 1-800-841-7299, or email PlannedGiving@EnvironmentMaine.org.

Recent action

At 11th hour, Gov. LePage attacks clean energy

After the deadline for legislative committees to act this year, Gov. Paul LePage introduced two energy bills that would undermine Maine's progress on clean energy.

One bill would gut Maine's clean energy standard, which requires our state to gradually increase its reliance on renewable energy. The standard has played a major role in spurring the development of renewable energy in Maine, reducing pollution, making us more energy independent, and fueling economic development.

The second bill would make sweeping changes to Efficiency Maine Trust, which implements the state's energy efficiency programs. It would politicize the agency and shift its focus away from promoting the most efficient energy sources.

Environment Maine opposed both bills and worked to defeat them.

Coalition pushes for BPA ban in baby food containers

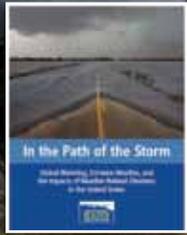
Earlier this year, Environment Maine joined a broad coalition of Maine health and environmental organizations to launch a campaign to ban toxic bisphenol A in lids of baby food jars and cans of toddler food—an important step to a broader ban on BPA in all canned foods.

BPA seeps into our food from the linings of metal cans and tops of jars, exposing us from the very first months of life to a chemical with very serious health effects. In fact, a recent study by Harvard University has found that eating canned soup can increase the amount of BPA in our bodies by 1,000 percent.

This same coalition last year won a ban on BPA in baby bottles, sippy cups and all reusable food and beverage containers sold in Maine. Now, we've petitioned the Board of Environmental Protection to extend the ban to canned foods marketed for infants and young children.



▲ Environment Maine joined a broad coalition to launch a campaign to ban toxic bisphenol A in the lids of baby food jars and cans of toddler food.



Report: Extreme weather has impacted all 16 Maine counties

Jay Parker, Flickr



legislature.maine.gov

Since 2006, federally declared weather-related disasters affected all 16 counties in Maine, according to a report from Environment Maine Research & Policy Center.

The report, "In the Path of the Storm," examined county-level weather-related disaster declaration data from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for 2006 through 2011 to determine how many Mainers live in counties hit by recent weather disasters. The report also details the latest science on the projected influence of global warming on heavy rain and snow; heat, drought and wildfires; and hurricanes and coastal storms.

Recent weather-related disasters in Maine included blizzards in December 2010, torrential rains in February 2010 that created record tidal surges, knocked out power to 133,000 homes and caused \$5 million in damage, and Hurricane Irene, which damaged nearly 200 roads and a dozen bridges.

In 2011 alone, federally declared weather related disasters affected four Maine counties housing 320,000 people. Nationally, the number of disasters inflicting more than \$1 billion in damage (at least 14) set an all-time record last year, with total damages from those disasters costing at least \$55 billion.

Nationwide, federally declared weather-related disasters have affected counties that are home to 242 million people since 2006—nearly 4 out of 5 Americans.

Warmer world, worse weather

Weather disasters kill or injure hundreds of Americans each year and cause billions of dollars in damage. The risks posed by some types of weather-related disasters will likely increase in a warming world. Scientists have already detected increases in extreme precipitation events and heat waves in the United States, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recently concluded that global warming

will likely lead to further changes in weather extremes.

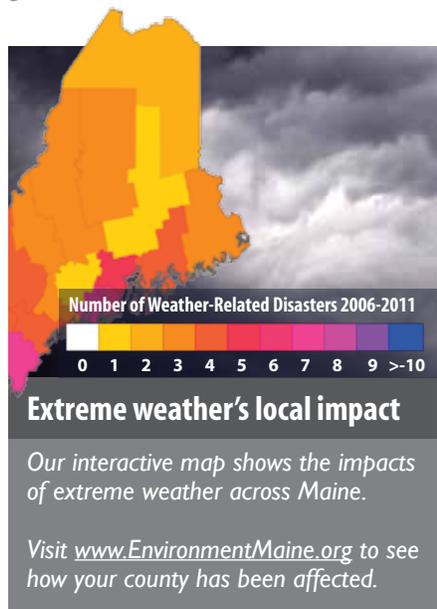
Taking action to reduce the risk

The breadth and severity of weather-related disasters in Maine and across the country—coupled with the latest science on the links between global warming and extreme weather—suggest that local, state and federal leaders should act to reduce global warming pollution and protect communities from extreme weather events.

Environment Maine released the report with Portland Mayor Michael Brennan, Portland City Councilor David Marshall, and Red Cross Emergency Services Director Michael Mason.

"Portland is working to reduce our carbon footprint and prepare for more weather disasters in the future, but there is still a lot of work to be done at the city, state and national level," said Mayor Brennan.

Environment Maine's Anika James also pointed to the importance of Maine's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative—a program that limits carbon pollution from power plants—and the need to improve the program to deliver greater environmental benefits.



Interview with Rep. Kim Olsen

Rep. Kim Olsen, a freshman Republican member from Phippsburg, played a critical role in stripping the rollbacks from Gov. LePage's bill to open the North Woods to reckless development. See our story on page four for more on our victory for the North Woods.

What were your concerns about the North Woods bill?

I had two main concerns with LD 1798 as originally presented. First, allowing commissioners to appoint themselves without Legislative oversight would present inevitable conflicts that could jeopardize Maine's North Woods. Second, I believed that the opt-out provision would have allowed for a systematic dismantlement of the Land Use Regulation Commission, stripping away 40 years of protections for the places where my constituents love to hike, fish and camp.

Why did you decide to testify and otherwise work to strip out the rollbacks?

Testifying before the committee was very important because I truly believe that these points were reasonable and accurately reflected the concerns of my constituents. I received countless calls and messages asking me to oppose these rollbacks, so it was important that I speak up. As a result, we were able to put our heads together and craft changes to a bill that could have divided but, instead, was voted out of committee with a unanimous report.

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Environment Maine

Our mission

We all want clean air, clean water and open spaces. But it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to win concrete results for our environment, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of environmental progress.

That's the idea behind Environment Maine. We focus exclusively on protecting Maine's air, water and open spaces. We speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.

Legislative attack on North Woods defeated

Our top priority this year in the Legislature was to protect Maine's North Woods from reckless development—and we won!

Last year, Gov. Paul LePage proposed eliminating the Land Use Regulation Commission, which manages development in the North Woods. When that failed, the governor and his allies tried to overhaul the commission in ways that threatened to corrupt the agency's decision-making and weaken protections for the North Woods. Environment Maine delivered more than 17,000 messages to lawmakers asking them to reject the rollbacks, and we worked in Augusta to give lawmakers the facts. Ultimately, we built enough support to stop the worst rollbacks.

"We want to thank the lawmakers on both sides of the aisle who fought hard to make this a better bill. The North Woods are where generations of Mainers have learned to love the outdoors—and we need to keep it that way," said Environment Maine Director Emily Figdor.



Staff

◀ *Environment Maine delivered more than 17,000 messages to lawmakers to protect the North Woods from reckless development.*

➡ *To learn more and get involved, go to www.EnvironmentMaine.org*