Environmental Law and Ethics Web Sites.  
Updated: 8/13/17.

Timeline of Environmental Law in the United States:  
Current Environmental policy issues:  https://www.nytimes.com/section/climate

Recommended starting point to become familiar with environmental law issues:  

To understand why Environmental Law is important, it can help to watch the video or DVD of either “A Civil Action” (Toxic exposure that caused childhood leukemia cluster in Woburn, Mass.), based on Jonathan Harr’s excellent book; see:  
http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/756 or http://www.readinggroupguides.com/reviews/a-civil-action/guide or http://blogs.law.unc.edu/admitted/2013/07/31/a-civil-action--a-peek-at-the-rules-of-evidence/; or the film “Erin Brockovich” (lawsuit for contamination of drinking water with chromium VI, which led to $333 million settlement; see:  
http://www.brockovich.com/ or one of the many PBS Frontline documentaries on environmental issues, especially now as the EPA is run by opponents of environmental law:  http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/topic/environment/.

When you watch any of these films, think about (1.) the role of citizens in pursuing redress for their injuries, even in the face of scientific uncertainty; (2.) the role of tort plaintiffs' attorneys in providing representation (on a contingent fee) in some of these actions; and (3.) the actions of the corporations and their attorneys in terms of whether or not they provide complete and accurate discovery; how they participate in the legal process; and how they carried out their ethical obligations as responsible businesses (or, if not, why not). A 'tort suit' is a suit for a 'civil injury other than a breach of contract,' and can include accidents or injuries caused by an environmental harm.

(4.) Many environmental lawsuits are brought by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) representing environmental groups seeking to force the federal and state governments to actually comply with the law: citizens' suits encouraged by the original laws themselves. These actions are particularly important when the EPA is run by opponents of environmental law, as happened under Reagan, G.W. Bush and now under Trump. Of particular importance are the many lawsuits seeking to compel government to address the reality of climate change, particularly the Children's Trust Lawsuit:  

These stories and the films based on them raise questions such as: Does civil litigation, either under the common law, or to enforce environmental rules, provide an adequate solution to the needs of injured parties, and the protection of environmental
values? If not, do agencies like the Federal EPA, the Fish and Wildlife Services, the U.S. Department of the Interior, or other federal agencies and parallel state agencies adequately enforce the statutes, regulations and treaties that make up contemporary environmental law? Do regulatory agencies, in short, do a significantly better job than private lawsuits? Or.


With the *Citizens United* 5-4 Supreme Court decision gutting campaign finance laws by falsely claiming that corporations are real "people" under the Constitution, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizens_United_v._FEC](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizens_United_v._FEC) and [https://www.oyez.org/cases/2008/08-205](https://www.oyez.org/cases/2008/08-205), unlimited secret "dark money" contributions to "SuperPacs" are contributing to attacks on environmental law in general and the EPA's work in particular. The current Congress and President resist recognizing the scientific consensus that climate change or global warming is real, and is the result of human action requiring significant measures to avoid a serious climate catastrophe this century. The attempt to force through the Keystone XL pipeline reflects this misunderstanding. Efforts to weaken mining laws (finally defeated this year) and the continued rejection of reasonable support for solar energy in Maine, reflect the tension between environmental law and policy and the public interest, on the one hand, and the interests of specific business and political groups at the state level.

Take time to consider how state agencies and political actors in Maine are addressing environmental concerns, and whether they are relying on science, business and economic pressure, local support or opposition for particular issues, dark money groups supporting ALEC [see: [http://www.alecexposed.org/wiki/ALEC_Exposed](http://www.alecexposed.org/wiki/ALEC_Exposed)], or other factors in making their decisions. See also: [http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/American_Legislative_Exchange_Council](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/American_Legislative_Exchange_Council) and [https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2012/04/exposing-alec-how-conservative-backed-state-laws-are-all-connected/255869/](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2012/04/exposing-alec-how-conservative-backed-state-laws-are-all-connected/255869). ALEC’s web site is: [https://www.alec.org/](https://www.alec.org/)
Selected Web Sites on Environmental Law & Policy. See also: Lexis/Nexis Academic Universe and Westlaw databases, on-line at many university libraries. Check your local public library or university campus branch library for help.

U.S. Law Sources and Information
American Bar Association, Section of Environment, Energy & Resources: https://www.americanbar.org/groups/environment_energy_resources.html
They also have a "Transition of Administrations' Tracker" which tracks changes made after Trump took office:
https://www.americanbar.org/groups/environment_energy_resources/resources/transition.html
Findlaw: http://www.findlaw.com/
Jurist: http://www.jurist.org/
Legal Information Institute (LII), Cornell University Law School: http://www.law.cornell.edu/
Environmental Law Institute: http://www.eli.org/

International Law
American Society of International Law (ASIL) Guide to Electronic Resources for International Law - International Environmental Law Link:
http://www.asil.org/resource/env1.htm
Basel Convention Controlling Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal: http://www.basel.int/
Europa - European Commission - Sustainable Development Goals:
UN Environmental Program (UNEP): http://www.unep.org/
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): http://www.ipcc.ch/

Selected U.S. & State Government Agencies  [The EPA under Trump and Pruitt has removed references to climate change and has significantly altered or deleted much of the information traditionally available on their various sites. I cannot vouch for their reliability as to matters of fact, science, or of law, after Jan.20, 2017.]

U.S. Links
EPA  http://www.epa.gov/
EPA Guidance “Waters of the United States” (WOUS) [Currently Pruitt is attempting to remove or revise this Guidance]: http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/guidance/wetlands/CWAwaters.cfm
EPA Notice of Extended comment period on oil and natural gas drilling rule: http://www.epa.gov/airquality/oilandgas/actions.html
Americas Great Outdoors: http://americasgreatoutdoors.gov/
Klamath Restoration Project: http://klamathrestoration.gov/
DataRefuge.org is a database set up to save data sets from the Trump/Pruitt science purge: https://www.datarefuge.org/ The University of Pennsylvania is involved in this project: http://www.ppehlab.org/ as further described here: http://www.ppehlab.org/storytelling

On Twitter or Facebook there are some "alternative EPA" accounts formed by current or former EPA staff aimed at preserving accurate information about environmental laws and regulations that may be censored or deleted altogether by Pruitt

See for example:
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/environmental-protection-network_us_593edf75e4b0c5a35ca2191f

Maine Links
Maine Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP): http://www.maine.gov/dep/

Other State Level Links
Association of State Wetlands Managers: https://www.aswm.org/
In particular: https://www.aswm.org/wetlands-law/rapanos-carabell/44-maps-and-pictures-of-carabell-and-rapanos-sites
Gateway to State Resource Locators: http://www.envcap.org/statetools/index.cfm
Groundwater Protection Council:[National Association of State Groundwater Agencies]  
http://www gwpc.org/home/GWPC_Home.dwt

Maine Environmental Organizations

Environment Maine  http://www.environmentmaine.org/home 
Maine Audubon:  https://maineaudubon.org/ 
Maine Conservation Voters:  http://www.mlcv.org/ 
Midcoast Green Collaborative  http://www.midcoastgreencollaborative.org/ 
Natural Resources Council of Maine  https://www.arcm.org/ 
Sierra Club Maine  http://www.sierraclub.org/maine

National & International Environmental Organizations and Resources (Too Numerous to list them all so these are the main ones you should know about)

Alliance for Climate Education:  https://acespace.org/ 
American Rivers:  https://www.americanrivers.org/ 
Bill McKibben Official Site (EAARTH):  http://www.billmckibben.com/ 
Carbon Mitigation Initiative (C.M.I.), Princeton University:  
http://www.princeton.edu/~cmi/ 
Carbon Tax Center:  http://www.carbontax.org/ 
Center for Biological Diversity:  http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/ 
CERES https://www.ceres.org/ 
Climate Central:  http://www.climatecentral.org/ 
DeSmogBlog (Canadian site related to Hoggan “Climate Cover-Up”):  
http://www.desmogblog.com/ 
Earth Island Institute:  http://www.earthisland.org/ 
Environmental Defense Fund:  https://www.edf.org/ 
Food and Water Watch:  https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/ 
Friends of the Earth (FOE):  http://www.foe.org/ 
Glen Canyon Institute:  http://www.glencanyon.org/about/david-brower 
Greenpeace:  http://www.greenpeace.org/usa/ 
League of Conservation Voters:  http://www.lcv.org/ 
Living on Earth:  http://www.loe.org/ 
The Nature Conservancy has some Maine related news:  
https://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/maine/newsroom/index.htm 
Merchants of Doubt site:  http://www.merchantsofdoubt.org/ 
National Audubon Society:  http://www.audubon.org/ 
National Parks & Conservation Association:  http://www.npca.org/ 
National Public Radio (NPR) Climate Connections:  
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC):  http://www.nrdc.org/
Peaceful Uprising: http://www.peacefuluprising.org/
Rainforest Action Network: https://www.ran.org/
Real Climate: http://www.realclimate.org/
Restore HetchHetchy: http://www.hetchhetchy.org/
Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) (Amory Lovins): http://www.rmi.org/
Sierra Club: http://www.sierraclub.org/
Sierra Club-David Brower Timeline: http://content.sierraclub.org/brower/timeline
The Climate Reality Project: https://www.climaterealityproject.org/
Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS): http://www.ucsusa.org/
WattTime: http://watttime.org/
We Can Solve the Climate Crisis: http://www.wecansolveit.org/
Worldwatch Institute: Vision for a Sustainable World: http://www.worldwatch.org/
Yale Climate Connections: http://www.yaleclimateconnections.org/

Some Video and Film Links.
An Inconvenient Sequel: https://inconvenientsequel.tumblr.com/
Bidder70: http://www.bidder70.org/
Blue Gold: http://www.bluegold-worldwaterwars.com/
Chasing Ice: http://www.chasingice.com/
Extreme Ice Survey: http://extremeicesurvey.org/
Gasland: The Movie: http://www.gaslandthemovie.com/
Gasland II: http://www.gaslandthemovie.com/
Monumental: David Brower's Fight For Wild America: http://firstrunfeatures.com/monumentalvd.html
Mountaintop Removal in West Virginia: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDAFQjLoxCM
Petropolis: http://www.petropolis-film.com/
This Changes Everything (the film): https://thefilm.thischangeseverything.org/

Recommended Books  (The first two are textbooks I used in college classes)


Elizabeth Kolbert, Fields Notes from a Catastrophe (Bloomsbury, U.S.A.: 2006; revised and updated, 2015).


Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway, Merchants of Doubt (Bloomsbury Press: 2011); now in paperback and a film been based on it; http://www.merchantsofdoubt.org/

Fred Pearce, With Speed and Violence (Beacon Press: 2008).