

## **Maine Environmental Issues – 2015. Resources and Links.**

1. U.S. EPA: <http://www2.epa.gov/aboutepa/epa-maine>

**EPA in Maine** [Stay Prepared in Winter Weather](#)

### ***Geographic Issues***

- [3 ME Orgs & Residents Receive EPA Environmental Award](#)
- [Camden Hills HS Wins 2 Environmental Ed. Awards](#)
- [The Mercury and Air Toxics Standards in Your State](#)
- [The Clean Air Act in Your State](#)
- [Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment](#) [Exit](#)
- [Casco Bay Estuary Partnership](#) [Exit](#)

### ***Air***

- [Air Quality State Implementation Plan](#)
- [Air Permits in Maine \(Title V\)](#)
- [Woodsmoke Issues](#)

### ***Water***

- [Approved TMDLs in Maine](#)
- [NPDES Water Permits in Maine](#)
- [Beach Monitoring and Notifications](#)

### ***Cleanups***

- [Brownfield Sites in Maine](#)
- [Superfund Sites in Maine](#)
- [All Cleanup Sites in Maine](#)

### ***Other***

- [Acadia National Park](#)
- [Roosevelt Campobello International Park](#)
- [Saint Croix Island International Historic Site](#)
- [Maine Acadian Culture National Park](#)
- [Appalachian National Scenic Trail](#)

**News** [All news releases for Maine](#)

## **Mapping**

- [Search Your Environment by ZIP Code](#)

## **2. Maine Government & Agencies:**

**DEP:** <http://www.maine.gov/dep/> Detailed web site.

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/projects.html> on current projects.

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/sustainability/index.html> on sustainability. Includes:

## **Online Services**

- [Help ME Recycle - Electronics, Fluorescent Bulbs and Mercury Thermostats](#)
- [Safer Chemicals in Children's Products - Rules and Reporting](#)
- [Toxics Use Reduction \(TUR\) - Rules and Reporting](#)

## **Topics of Interest**

- [Climate Change](#)
- [Fluorescent Light Bulb Information](#)
- [Product Stewardship](#)
- [Recycling](#)
- [Organics Management](#)

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/water/index.html> on water quality issues. The U.S. EPA has disapproved Maine's water quality standards, in a dispute with also relates to sustainable fishing rights of the *Passamaquoddy* Tribe:

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/water/wqs/index.html#wqs>

<http://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/passamaquoddy-and-penobscot-withdrawal-maine-legislature>

<http://www.pressherald.com/2015/03/02/maine-governor-on-epas-tribal-waters-ruling-its-an-outrage/>

<http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2014/07/17/maine-commission-report-racism-central-tribal-state-conflict-155893>

<http://www.epa.gov/region1/govt/tribes/passamaquoddyindiantownship.html>

[http://www.wabanaki.com/wabanaki\\_new/index.html](http://www.wabanaki.com/wabanaki_new/index.html)

**Maine Endangered Species List:**

[http://www.maine.gov/ifw/wildlife/endangered/listed\\_species\\_me.htm](http://www.maine.gov/ifw/wildlife/endangered/listed_species_me.htm)

**Maine Department of Agriculture – Land for Maine's Future:**

<http://www.maine.gov/dacf/lmf/> The Governor's refusal to issue bonds to fund further acquisitions for this program and demands that timber harvesting be increased beyond sustainable levels and used for unrelated programs is a major issue. See also: Land for Maine's Future Coalition at: <http://www.landformainesfuture.org/> and the NRCM map of these lands at: <http://www.nrcm.org/our-maine/land-for-maines-future-map/> and this article in the Bangor Daily News:

<http://georgesoutdoornews.bangordailynews.com/2015/07/16/environmental-issues/52-house-republicans-kill-the-land-for-maines-future-program/>

**Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC):** <http://www.maine.gov/mpuc/>

**3. Maine Environmental News and Organization Resources/Links.**

Maine Environmental News: <http://www.maineenvironews.com/>

*Comprehensive and current updates.* For example, I just saw this item about the Governor's threat to return state controls to the federal EPA, which is inconsistent with the idea of "cooperative federalism" which underpins U.S. environmental law.:

<http://www.pressherald.com/2015/09/11/fed-up-with-epa-lepage-retaliates-with-threat/>

Maine Environmental Policy Institute: <http://www.meepi.org/>

The Nature Conservancy – Maine:

<http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/maine/>

Environment Maine – All Issues: <http://www.environmentmaine.org/issues>

The Natural Resources Council of Maine: <http://www.nrcm.org/> Its projects are at:

<http://www.nrcm.org/projects-hot-issues/>

Maine Audubon Society: <http://maineaudubon.org/>

Sierra Club Maine: <http://www.sierraclub.org/maine>

The Island Institute: <http://www.islandinstitute.org/>

Midcoast Green Collaborative: <http://www.midcoastgreencollaborative.org/>

**4. Environmental Education Programs in Maine:**

Maine Environmental Education Association: <http://www.meeassociation.org/>

University of Maine Ecology and Environmental Sciences Program:  
<http://umaine.edu/ecologyandenvironmentalsciences/>

Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences: <https://www.bigelow.org/>

Darling Marine Center: <http://dmc.umaine.edu/>

Maine Energy Education Program (MEEP): <http://www.meepnews.org/>

Chewonki: Environmental Education in Maine: <http://www.chewonki.org/toc/>

The ELLMS Project: <http://ellms.org/>

## **5. Land Trusts.**

Directory of Land Trusts in Maine: [http://www.mltn.org/trust\\_guide/](http://www.mltn.org/trust_guide/)

Maine Coast Heritage Trust: <http://www.mcht.org/index.php>

Boothbay Region Land Trust: <http://www.bbtrl.org/>

Damariscotta Lake Watershed Association: <http://www.dlwa.org/>

Damariscotta River Association: <http://www.damariscottariver.org/>

Hidden Valley Nature Center: <http://hvnc.org/>

Medomak Valley Land Trust: <http://www.medomakvalley.org/whatwedo.html>

Pemaquid Watershed Association: <http://www.pemaquidwatershed.org/>

Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association: <http://www.sheepscot.org/>

Sheepscot Wellspring Land Alliance: <http://swlamaine.org/>

The Land Trust Alliance: <http://www.landtrustalliance.org/>

## **6. Environmental Issues and Choices in Maine Today can include:**

Implementation of bonds for Land for Maine's Future.

Ocean acidification and its impact on marine life and industry associated with it.

Sea level rise, coastal erosion, potential flooding, and how to respond in land use planning. Impact on coastal property values. Insurance costs.

Trade-offs between preservation of land and ecosystems for its own sake, for habitat preservation, beauty, sustainability and the value added to employment and tourism by tax-exempt land trusts and easements, against development requests and impact on the property tax base.

Local control versus efficiencies through regional organization mergers: impact of the recent local merger votes and decisions on success of land trusts.

Separating science from politics at the state and local levels; how do we conduct discussions?

Tribal sovereignty, the legal and moral rights of native peoples, and sustainable fishing and health impacts of water quality on fish caught and consumed by native people in Maine: why do the Governor and the Attorney General dispute the EPA's position in support of tougher water quality standards?

Mining rules and their impact on water quality. For example, from the NRCM web site: "Mining sulfide deposits can create huge pollution problems. The waste rock (rock that contains no valuable ore), and the tailings (which are the leftover materials after ore has been removed from rock) react with air and water to form sulfuric acid. This acid leaches into ground and surface waters, dissolving toxic heavy metals from the surrounding rock. This destroys water quality and aquatic life and is called Acid Mine Drainage (AMD). It is a serious problem, often affecting large areas around sulfide mining operations."  
<http://www.nrcm.org/projects-hot-issues/healthy-waters/open-pit-metal-mining-in-maine/>

Energy efficiency, solar and wind energy, and reducing our carbon footprint: why do the Governor, the PUC, and CMP resist steps to increase reliance on reliable alternative energy in Maine? Compare how these issues are playing out in Maine to efforts in other states to impose burdens on homeowners who install solar power. What are the subsidies given to fossil fuels and how are they justified?

Invasive species and how to respond. Impact of climate change on introduction of new species. How to respond?

Vernal pool and wetland preservation – setbacks, land use regulations, impact on uses of property owners. Relevance of whether you 'come to the known limitation' in buying land? See for example: <http://maineaudubon.org/wildlife-habitat/vernal-pools/>

Federal, state, and regional or local regulation: which makes the most sense?

Valuing the present versus acting to preserve the future.

Impact of partisan 'think tanks' on public opinion, politicians, and regulators. Financial disclosure of links to enhance transparency and integrity of choices?

Mercury and other water pollution and its impact on Maine. From the NRCM web site: "Despite our successes, pollution continues to threaten people and wildlife in Maine. Since 1995, the Maine Bureau of Health warns people to limit eating fish from all of Maine's inland waters due to mercury contamination. It also tells people to further limit eating fish from many of Maine's rivers, eat no lobster tomalley, and severely limit consumption of bluefish and striped bass, two of Maine's most popular saltwater sport fish. This is due to a combination of mercury, PCB, and dioxin contamination."  
<http://www.nrcm.org/projects-hot-issues/healthy-waters/clean-free-flowing-waters/>

Dam removal and fisheries restoration. Impact on hydro power?

Implementation of Maine's *Kids Safe Product Law*, enacted in 2008. See the discussion in the NRCM web site, <http://www.nrcm.org/projects-hot-issues/toxics-and-sustainability/safer-products-and-chemicals/maines-kid-safe-products-law/> including: "In first three years of the Kid-safe Products Law, only two priority chemicals have been named and only one product category has been targeted for phase out, namely the use of the hormone disrupting chemical BPA in baby bottles, sippy cups and reusable food and beverage containers. The law provides total discretion to the governor, the Director of the Center for Disease Control and the DEP Commissioner to decide if and when any additional priority chemicals or product restrictions will be adopted."

GMO food labeling in Maine, and efforts to restrict it at the national level. Does the science warrant labeling? Risks and benefits? Impact on organic food production? The application of the 'precautionary principle' to this discussion. These issues will probably be discussed at some point at this fall's Common Ground Fair in Unity, Maine. See for example: <http://www.mofga.org/Resources/FindLocalFoods/tabid/221/Default.aspx>

Natural gas permits and the debate over fracking. See the films *Gasland* and *Gasland II*, <http://www.gaslandthemovie.com/> and the local discussion in Rockland recently. This is a good example of how national discussions of an issue (in this case, fracking to get natural gas and its impact on water quality), and changes in the energy market (note the drop in oil prices currently leading to a decline in domestic production for the time being) can translate into public hearings here in Maine on local permit requests.

**See: Rockland residents raise environmental concerns at natural gas forum** By Stephen Betts, Bangor Daily NewsStaff .Posted May 26, 2015, at 9:07 p.m. Last modified May 27, 2015, at 10:17 a.m.

ROCKLAND, Maine — An application for a natural-gas fired power plant will not be filed until late fall or early summer but not until a series of public informational meetings are held, according to City Councilor Larry Pritchett. Pritchett moderated a meeting Tuesday night at City Hall during which Energy Management Inc. spokesman Evan Coleman sat in front of the gathering to answer questions for more than two hours. The plant, which is to produce electricity and steam, will need site plan, air emission and stormwater permits from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, as well as a site plan permit from the Rockland Planning Board, Pritchett said. He said the company

has not even completed a design for the plant. “Unless it is going to benefit the community, it probably won’t happen,” he said. About 75 people turned out for the first informational meeting Tuesday night. The questions centered on environmental concerns. The controversial fracking technique of obtaining natural gas dominated the initial part of the meeting. Fracking is a drilling method that uses hydraulic pressure to fracture rock, creating fissures and cracks deep underground to extract natural gas or oil, according to [www.livescience.com](http://www.livescience.com). Advocates say the technique is a safe, economical way to obtain clean energy. Critics say fracking can contaminate groundwater and release greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming. Some residents Tuesday expressed their concerns about the plant being powered by gas that would come from fracking. Coleman said, however, that anyone who drives a car that uses gasoline is a consumer of fuel originating from fracking. He said if fracking is done correctly, there is a very slim chance of polluting groundwater. Mayor Frank Isganitis reminded the gathering that there would not be fracking in the community. He said if people use energy, they are getting some of it from fracking. Coleman said the natural gas that would be in the pipeline would come from Pennsylvania and would be shipped to Canada and then back to Maine. Residents also criticized the location of the proposed plant. The City Council has granted Rockland Energy Center LLC, a subsidiary of Energy Management Inc., an option to buy about 18 acres of city-owned land where City Hall and the public services garage are located. The option is conditioned on a referendum in which voters would decide whether the land sale will occur. Dean Felton of Rockland said he was concerned about noise, pollution and aesthetics. “Basically, I’m a NIMBY guy,” Felton said, referring to the acronym for “not in my back yard.” Coleman said the City Hall location was determined to be the best in terms of accessing natural gas and linking to the electrical grid. He said, however, the company is open to an alternative site in Rockland but questioned whether moving it a short distance would allay the concerns of some people. He said the natural gas line could be built either in the summer of 2016 or summer of 2017. The nearest natural gas line to Rockland is in Windsor. Coleman said land would not be taken by eminent domain for the gas line but instead would follow existing utility rights-of-way.

The plant’s engines may be cooled by water that could be either fresh water from Maine Water Company or gray water, which is water that has gone through the sewage treatment plant. He estimated the plant would use 300,000 to 400,000 gallons of water per day. He said the project would use much less lighting than what is present at the nearby Walmart Supercenter in neighboring Thomaston, which is within view of City Hall. Coleman said the company would seek a tax increment financing agreement with the city that would allow it to have a fixed property tax bill for 25 years. Any tax agreement would have to be voted on by the City Council and the public would have an opportunity to comment on it.

<http://bangordailynews.com/2015/05/26/news/midcoast/rockland-residents-raise-environmental-concerns-at-natural-gas-forum/>

7. Which issues concern you most? Which would you like to spend most time on? Let me know and we will talk about them at our first meeting after my overview. Thanks.

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9/14/15