



# Maine Sierran

Maine Chapter of the Sierra Club

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## Let's Protect This Special Place

*Sierra Club Maine joins the effort to make a Maine Woods National Monument a reality.*

"...A red headed woodpecker flew across the river, and the Indian remarked that it was good to eat. As we glided swiftly down the inclined plane of the river a great cat-owl launched itself away from a stump on the bank, and flew heavily across the stream...soon afterward a white headed eagle sailed down the stream before us."  
-Henry David Thoreau, Down the East Branch chapter of *The Maine Woods*

Thoreau knew a special place when he saw it. The Katahdin region where the East Branch of the Penobscot River flows is one of those places, and its wildness and pristine beauty are well documented in Thoreau's classic, *The Maine Woods*.

Now we have a very real opportunity to preserve and protect a significant parcel of the wilderness that Thoreau explored and wrote about over 150 years ago. But the window on that opportunity is closing fast.

For a number of years, the Quimby family's Elliotsville Plantation Inc. has offered to donate some 87,000 acres toward establishing a 150,000-acre national park and recreational area in the Katahdin Region of the Maine Woods. An additional \$40 million gift would go toward park maintenance.

Unfortunately, in spite of polls showing overwhelming support among Mainers for the park proposal (60 percent), Elliotsville Plantation Inc. has not been able to gain the needed support from Maine's congressional delegation (only Congresswoman Pingree has endorsed the park proposal).

In recent months, however, an alternative path toward preserving this special place in the Maine Woods has gained momentum—designation of the Elliotsville Plantation land as a national monument. While a national park requires congressional approval, a national monument can be established simply by an executive order of the President. It carries the same protections as a national park, and could be a first-step towards national park designation. A monument designation would involve only land owned by Elliotsville Plantation.

Sierra Club Maine fully supports the monument



Photograph by Ken Cline

option and is working with other state environmental groups to urge President Obama to make such a designation. The chapter is also working to gain the support of Senators King and Collins. While that support isn't needed to establish the national monument, it would significantly increase the probability of it happening. It would also provide some sense of unity moving forward—helping all interests to maximize the benefits a monument would bring the state.

"Yes, we're urging our senators to join the majority of their fellow Mainers in support of a national park/monument," said Jim Frick, who along with his other Maine Woods Team members, is working on behalf of the chapter on this issue. "This is a winning proposal for the Katahdin Region and

the state as a whole. It's full of potential benefits—economic, recreational, and environmental—with no real downside. I look at what a monument, or even better, a national park, could mean for Northern Maine and I can't help thinking that this should be a unifying issue, not a divisive one."

The political sensitivity to the park proposal is largely due to the vocal opposition that has come from the Katahdin region. Those voices are loud, but they may not accurately represent their communities. Much has been made of the votes against the park in Medway and Millinocket, but the reality is that those votes represented just 25 percent of eligible voters. In fact, polls show more than 50 percent of Northern Maine residents favoring a national park. In addition, the Houlton Chamber of Commerce, Katahdin Region Chamber of Commerce, Bangor City Council, Medway Board of Selectman, and the East Millinocket Board of Selectman, among others, have endorsed the park proposal.

While local concerns need to be respected and addressed, the stakes in a national park or monument extend far beyond the Katahdin region.

The *Bangor Daily News* expressed it well in a December editorial: "While there is vocal local opposition to a national park in the Katahdin region, these residents should not have veto power over a project with statewide significance."

Let's take a look at how a national park/monument would benefit the Maine Woods, the people of the Katahdin region and the entire state of Maine.



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*Continued on page 8*

## Legislative Update

# A Bill To Jump-Start Grid-Scale Solar Energy in Maine



Sierra Club Maine has been advocating diligently for the passage of a bill (LD 1649) that would remove many of the current constraints on community solar projects and jump-start grid-scale solar energy in Maine.

By late March, the fate of the bill was still uncertain. If passed in the

Legislature, it still faced a veto threat by Governor LePage.

The solar bill sets the ambitious goal of growing solar capacity from its current 20mw to 250mw in just five years. To achieve that goal, it would set up an innovative new solar auction system for various sectors of the market. The auctions would result in the ability for the utility to transmit a certain amount of solar for a set price for 20 years. The utility would not be able to generate this power under deregulation, so solar installers would contract with the utility to build new solar capacity. It's estimated that the bill could create 800 new jobs.

Public Advocate Tim Schneider estimates the benefits from the bill to customers could total more than \$122 million over the 20-year contract period.

New solar users would fall under the auction system and would be compensated with rates set in the 20-year contract.

But the bill has a grandfather clause that would give existing net metering customers the option to continue with that system for 12 years.

Net metering is the basic solar policy used currently in Maine and in 42 other states. Under net metering, when utility customers install solar panels, they use the power for consumption directly, but can also export the power they don't use back to the grid. The utility tracks this exported energy and credits the customer's account.

For years, the utility companies have been trying to get rid of net metering because they see it as an

eventual major threat to their profits—more solar means selling less of their own grid energy.

Net metering opponents contend that the system isn't fair to on-the-grid customers. The argument is that solar customers don't pay their fair share for using the grid as backup.

"There's a simple solution to this," notes Sierra Club Maine Executive Director Glen Brand. "Just levy a reasonable charge to those customers to cover these costs."

The final solar bill is a result of compromises made in talks among Central Maine Power, Emera, solar companies, Maine environmental groups (including the Sierra Club), energy office representatives, and Public Advocate Schneider. They were brought together by a 2015 legislative resolve to have the Public Utilities Commission bring together solar stakeholders to develop a new state policy that would be an alternative to net metering.

If the bill passes and the new system works, it's expected that net metering would eventually be phased out.

If the bill is not enacted, solar policy would fall into the hands of the Public Utilities Commission. All the PUC commissioners are LePage appointees.

Sierra Club Maine volunteers worked hard to improve the bill during the process, particularly concerning community solar. While we didn't get everything we wanted, we believe that the bill will move solar power forward. Please urge your legislators to support it!

### Other Key Bills

#### PASSENGER RAIL

The Legislature is considering a bipartisan \$25 million bond bill (LD 438) that will fund statewide passenger and freight rail infrastructure improvements, including new passenger train service connecting Lewiston to Portland and upgrading Downeaster Amtrak service to Brunswick.

Please contact the House and Senate leadership (Rep. Mark Eves, Sen. Garrett Mason, Sen. Justin Al-

fond, and Rep. Ken Fredette) today and urge them to support LD 438.

Tell them that you support giving Mainers an energy-efficient transportation choice to reduce global warming and air pollution and traffic congestion. Remind them that passenger trains are also a much-needed major catalyst for revitalizing town centers and boosting Maine's economy.

The bond, which will help leverage federal funds, is the first step in expanding passenger rail service across the state to western Maine and north to Bangor.

Maine is fortunate to have hundreds of miles of railways connecting small and large towns across the state. Expanding passenger rail service is a smart and necessary public investment to move Maine forward.

#### MARINE DEBRIS BILL

The marine debris bill is sponsored by Rep. Mick Devin, a member of our Chapter executive committee. LD 427 is a resolve that directs the Department of Marine Resources, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to consider the potential for the generation, management, mitigation, and effects of marine debris. Earlier in March, it was voted on in the House and passed by a 100-40 vote—with support from 24 Republicans.

The bill is expected to be vetoed by Governor LePage.

#### RGGI

An amendment to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) bill (LD 1398) received near unanimous approval in the House. It allows cash payments to large industrials in the amount they contributed to RGGI. They can take the cash but they will not qualify for energy efficiency grants and the energy efficiency allocation of RGGI stays at 85 percent. Sierra Club Maine opposed the amendment on the grounds that funds should be used directly for energy efficiency.

## Sierra Club Urges Senate to Fulfill Its Constitutional Responsibility

*Judge Merrick Garland would bring qualities of fairness and thoughtfulness to the Supreme Court.*

The Sierra Club is mobilizing its 2.4 million members and supporters to call on the US Senate to do its job and consider President Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Merrick Garland. The Club is sending more than 77,000 messages to Congress, organizing a letter from the environmental community to the Senate, and participating in actions across the country.

"President Obama has done his job; now it's time the US Senate does its job by holding a hearing and a timely vote for this well-qualified, impressive nominee as soon as possible," said Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune. "Merrick Garland is exactly the kind of fair, even-handed, and thoughtful jurist who deserves the immediate consideration of the Senate.... The Sierra Club's members and supporters across the country will continue to mobilize to ensure the Senate fulfills its constitutional duty, does its job, and gives Merrick Garland the fair and honorable consideration he deserves."

Garland is currently Chief Justice of the US Court of Appeals, District of Columbia. As noted by Brune, he has a reputation for thoughtfulness and fairness. Although his decisions on environmental issues are limited, on a number of occasions he sided with the EPA when challenged by big industry.

It is the President's constitutional duty to make a nomination for a vacancy Supreme Court, in this case, the vacancy created by the death of Justice



Antonin Scalia. It's the Senate's duty to advise and consent on all Presidential nominations.

However, Republican leaders in the Senate have given every indication that they have no intention of considering Obama's nominee.

Here in Maine, we can be proud that Republican Senator Susan Collins is not following the Republican leadership on this issue.

"I believe we should follow the regular order and give careful consideration to any nominee that the President may send to the Senate," Collins said prior to the Garland announcement.

Now that the President has made his selection, she looks forward to meeting with the nominee.

"Judge Garland is a capable and accomplished jurist. The White House has requested that I meet with him, and I look forward to doing so, as has been my practice with all Supreme Court nominees."

Maine's Independent Senator, Angus King, has also called for the Senate to hold hearings on Obama's Supreme Court nominee.

The President addressed the issue of the Senate's responsibility when introducing Garland on March 16 at the White House.

"It is tempting to make this confirmation process simply an extension of our divided politics, the squabbling that's going on in the news every day," Obama said. "But to go down that path would be wrong. It would be a betrayal of our best traditions and a betrayal of the vision of our founding documents."

The Sierra Club agrees wholeheartedly with the President. Ensuring that qualified nominees be judged on their merits and receive a full and fair hearing should not be a contentious or partisan issue. The President was elected in 2012 with a solid majority. Ignoring constitutional procedure for political objectives undermines the integrity of our democracy.

The judicial branch has never been more important to the future environmental health of our country and the planet. And an extended vacancy on the Supreme Court at this time could significantly affect progress on many important issues. That's why the Sierra Club will be doing everything possible to be sure that our democracy isn't compromised for political gain.

*Emily Cain supports clean energy, protecting our marine environment, and moving forward with a Maine Woods National Park.*

## The Clear Choice for Congress

If you're concerned about the environment, the choice in Maine's Second Congressional District race could not be more clear-cut. In her 10 years in the Maine House and Senate, Democratic candidate Emily Cain earned a 90 percent scorecard on the environment from the League of Conservation Voters. She's been a consistent advocate for clean energy, clean elections, and a long-time defender of strong conservation and health protections.

By contrast Republican Representative Bruce Poliquin's environmental scorecard in Congress last year was a dismal nine percent. That's right, nine percent! Perhaps "dismal" is being too kind. He voted against virtually every significant piece of environmental legislation that has come before the House.

With so much at stake, and such a dramatic difference in the records of the two candidates, both the national Sierra Club and the Maine chapter have given full support to electing Emily Cain to Congress.

The Maine Sierran recently visited Cain at her Bangor headquarters to discuss her views on some of the Chapter's priority issues.

One of those issues is the establishment of a national monument/park in the Maine Woods. While Bruce Poliquin vehemently opposes both the Ellitsville Plantation, Inc. park proposal and the possible national monument designation by President Obama, Emily Cain has consistently supported finding a way forward. However, she says that the President designating the land as a monument is not her preferred way to a solution.

"An executive order to establish a monument is not my first choice for moving forward with this," she said. "A legislative solution is always better because it involves more people in the process and in the outcome. But if the monument is designated, and I'm elected, I want to work in Congress to make sure that we maximize the opportunities it will create"

Cain feels strongly about honoring the concerns of the people in the Katahdin region—making sure that issues such as traditional use (hunting, fishing, etc.) and helping the forest industries are addressed.

"Unfortunately this is sometimes framed as one against the other—either a strong forest products industry or a national park," Cain explains "That just isn't true. We need a vibrant forest products industry but we also don't want to miss all the opportunities that a national park or monument will create. I see this as helping move everything in the region forward. I really have no interest in continuing the divisiveness over this issue. We need to all move forward together."

On clean energy and efficiency, Cain compiled an outstanding record in the Maine legislature. She understands the serious threats posed by climate change, supports Obama's clean energy plan, and knows that the transition to clean energy provides real opportunities for the state of Maine. Poliquin, on the other hand, has joined fellow Republicans in working to block the President's clean energy plan.

"Clean energy is good for the environment and it's good for business," Cain said. "In Maine we've been a leader on this, but we need to keep looking forward and not miss opportunities, including research opportunities, to grow our clean energy industry."

Cain endorses the recent solar bill in the Maine Legislature and she's also been a strong advocate for offshore wind and tidal power.

"We have real opportunities in all those areas. Maine can be a model for what can be done in transitioning from fossil fuel to clean energy," she said.

Cain believes that both Maine and the nation need to do everything possible to slow climate change.

"That means being a leader in international efforts to reduce carbon emissions," she said. "But it also means working with our Maine fishermen, farmers, and foresters—giving them the support they need to adapt to the inevitable changes in climate."



On the Searsport dredging issue, Cain supports calls for a comprehensive environmental impact study. Last fall the Army Corps of engineers withdrew its permit application to dredge the harbor. But the withdrawal is expected to be temporary.

"I've talked with a lot of lobstermen about this," she notes. "It seems like the Corps is locked into one plan. They aren't listening to the people who are on the water everyday. If I'm in Congress, I'll make sure that when the Corps reapplies for its permit those voices are heard and are taken seriously. All alternatives need to be considered to find a solution that is viable but has a minimal impact on the marine environment."

The final issue we discussed was clean elections, an issue where Cain once again stands in stark contrast to her opponent.

Bruce Poliquin is a top recipient of Wall Street and big bank campaign money. His campaign funds come overwhelmingly from large donors and PACs.

Cain on the other hand prides herself in running a grassroots campaign, having received small indi-

vidual donations from more than 5,000 supporters—the vast majority of those being for \$100 or less. She strongly supports Maine's clean elections programs and ran in all her legislative races as a clean election candidate. Cain also believes that the country has to deal with Citizens United (the Supreme Court decision which removed virtually any restriction on corporate political donations) and the detrimental effect it's had on our democracy—including stifling progress on environmental issues.

"All voices need to be heard equally and the Citizens United decision has undermined that," she explains. "The financial stakes in elections have become astronomical. We have to hold politicians accountable for where they are getting support."

The 2016 second district election is vitally important: for protecting the Maine Woods and our marine life, for action on clean energy, and for taking steps toward regaining our democracy. Sierra Club Maine will be doing all it can to put Emily Cain in Congress. To find out how you can help, visit [info@emilycain.com](mailto:info@emilycain.com) or call 207-613-5297.

### Sierra Club Maine Political Team Gears Up for 2016

Electing eco-friendly candidates to the Maine Legislature is a high priority for Sierra Club Maine in 2016. It's especially important if we are to have any success in countering our contentious governor, who has blocked progress on virtually every environmental issue.

Toward that goal, the chapter's political team got an early start on its evaluation and endorsement process. According to chair Claudia King, this year's team, comprised of John Brautigam, Melissa Walsh Innes, Kris Clarke, Whitlock Jones, Mike Williams, Paul Machlin, and Ben Dawson, is a strong one.

"This team cares deeply about Maine's environment and the members bring a wealth of valuable experience in Maine politics," King said.

The team will focus on key state senate and house races. Of course, there are also two Maine congressional races going on in 2016. In those races the chapter has already endorsed Emily Cain for the Second Congressional District race and it will once again endorse environmental stalwart Chellie Pingree for the First Congressional District seat. In addition the team can consider making recommendations on any ballot initiatives that are related to Sierra Club Maine's mission and goals.

"Right now, we're looking closely at key legislative races, particularly a few state senate races," King explained. "We are also developing our 2016 questionnaire which will go to candidates in every race we are considering."

Once the political team decides which races it will consider, the candidates in those races will be asked to fill out the questionnaire and schedule an interview. Based on the results, the team will send its recommended endorsements to the chapter executive committee for final approval.

King says there are four key questions raised in the endorsement process: What is the candidate's past record and current platform on key environmental issues? Does the candidate have a realistic chance of being elected? What is the candidate's work record? Does the candidate participate in the clean election program?

The political team's work doesn't end with endorsements. Once those decisions are made, it organizes the Sierra Club Maine support for the endorsed candidates. A big part of that involves energizing volunteers. If you would like to be part of that important effort contact Jeanine at [maine.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:maine.chapter@sierraclub.org) or call her at 761-5616.

*The nine original climate action teams are well into their projects with more teams being formed.*

## Moving Forward With Local Climate Action

It's been just a year and a half since the historic People's Climate March inspired Maine Sierrans to take action on carbon reduction in their own communities through the formation of Climate Action Teams (CATs). Over that time the momentum for forming CATs has built around the state. Nine CATs are now established, working on a range of community projects to combat climate change. And following the Chapter's well-attended Climate Action Workshop last December, more CAT teams are in the works. Here is a recap of CAT activities:

### Belfast

The goal in Belfast is to implement energy-efficient use of LED lighting in municipal buildings and lighting systems, increase energy efficiency in the local businesses, and provide energy efficiency initiatives for local homes. The Belfast CAT is also working on providing single stream recycling to all residents, improving the current percentage of recycling, estimated at only 30 percent participation. A future goal is installation of a solar array at the covered Belfast landfill to provide clean and sustainable energy to the city and its residents.

### Brunswick

The BYOB (Bring Your Own Bag) CAT is working to get two different ordinances passed that will both place a five-cent fee on single-use, disposable plastic and paper bags at the check-out counter and also ban the use of polystyrene in food packaging.

### Freeport

The Freeport CAT has been working on creating a community solar farm. It's held a series of meetings including one where representative Sara Gideon spoke about her plan to expand solar energy in Maine. They've made a big splash in their community – including participating in Freeport's Fourth of July parade in 2015. The community solar project is up and running—you can see it on the right side of 295 going north between Freeport and Brunswick on the Maine Idyll Motor Court property. The team is now working on a plastic bag reduction project.

### Kennebunk

The Kennebunk CAT took on a two-part campaign. First was the daunting task of restoring the Mousam River to a more pristine condition through the removal of three dams. Kennebunk Light and Power District (KLPD) produces hydroelectric power from these dams. As the second part of their campaign, the team proposed to replace the power lost with a solar installation. The dams are now antiquated and need expensive upgrades in order to be relicensed. Currently they only produce about two percent of KLPD's power—removing the dams and installing a major solar array is a “win-win” opportunity for Kennebunk residents and ratepayers.

### Phippsburg

The long-term goal is to identify and weatherize the low-income housing stock in Phippsburg. The team is working with Seven Rivers Habitat for Humanity to identify and weatherize low-income homes in their community and is developing a new model to deliver Habitat's experienced, effective weatherization program to income-eligible homes in Phippsburg. The CAT is recruiting local volunteers interested in participating in training and weatherization activities. It will also ask community members and



**The Portland Climate Action Team's first project, a 52kw community solar farm in Wayne. The land is owned by Portland CAT team member Rosanne Graef.**

organizations to assist with identification of homes that meet Habitat's income guidelines. The CAT will then match trained volunteers with homes and conduct the weatherization of the selected homes.

### Portland

The Portland CAT team is focusing on community solar farms. Their first 52kw project is up and running in Wayne, on land owned by CAT member Rosanne Graef. The team continues to support a proposed 650kw solar installation on the closed Ocean Avenue landfill, and they are working with the City of Portland on a possible solar community farm on the closed landfill on Peaks Island. Members of the CAT also participated in the Public Utility Commission's solar stakeholder group that has led to a new comprehensive solar policy for Maine. They worked hard to ensure that this policy makes it easier and more effective for Mainers to organize community solar farms around the state.



**Tony Giambro and Adam Baril from the solar industry were among the presenters at Sierra Club Maine's Climate Action Workshop in Augusta in December.**

### Sacopec Valley (Porter, Parsonsfield, Cornish, Hiram, Brownfield)

The Sacopec Energy Alliance (formerly known as the Saco/Ossipee Rivers Heating Alliance) took a renewed focus on energy efficiency. Working with Nate Howe of Horizon Residential Energy, members selected the home of a low-income resident of Kezar Falls and did a major energy upgrade to the house, including air-sealing, adding insulation, storm windows, and more. They then held a well-attended energy fair to spread the word about the benefits of energy efficiency. Since October 2014, they have

facilitated energy-efficiency work on several more homes in the area and held a second event where participants were treated to tours and information about two buildings that were models of energy efficiency—one old and one new. They continue to help residents find ways to make affordable energy upgrades.

### Wiscasset

The Wiscasset Sun Cats have a goal of placing solar panels on the Town of Wiscasset Municipal Buildings and creating a community solar farm. Both projects are underway. Placing solar panels on the town's municipal buildings will reduce electricity costs which could, in turn, help to lower taxes. Solar power provides green jobs, and it will help to lessen dependence on fossil fuels.

Several new CAT teams are in the works. In Bath, initial meetings have been held by a new CAT start-up. They are looking at a number of possible projects including a solar project.

A possible new CAT in Cumberland would collaborate on a project with SAD #51.

And in Rockland a new CAT is looking into revitalizing Sierra Club's Green Sneakers program to help families weatherize their homes.

Other towns that are considering a possible project are Dover/Foxcroft and Lewiston/Auburn.

We hope to eventually have CATs in every county in Maine.

In addition, CAT leaders are talking with Seven Rivers Habitat (centered in Lincoln, Sagadahoc and part of Cumberland counties) about their model for weatherizing low-income family homes. They have already collaborated with our Phippsburg CAT and there may be ways to expand the program to other communities. Finally, Sierra Club Maine is communicating with members of the Passamaquoddy Tribe about a possible energy efficiency/clean energy project for their community.

## Take Action in Your Community

If you would like to join or form a Climate Action Team, please contact [maine.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:maine.chapter@sierraclub.org) or call 207-761-5616.

# Taking Part in Climate History

*Chapter leaders Joan Saxe and Claudia King were on the scene at the historic Paris climate talks, connecting Sierra Club Maine's community-based projects to carbon reduction efforts around the world.*

**L**ocal to Global: that's a theme that Sierra Club Maine leaders Joan Saxe and Claudia King take to heart when it comes to work on climate change. Both women have been an important part of the chapter's long-time commitment to reducing carbon emissions in Maine communities. Connecting that work to the global scene, they journeyed together to France in December to be part of the Sierra Club presence at the historic 2015 climate talks in Paris.

At the summit, 195 countries adopted a binding climate agreement—the first of its kind. The success of the talks was due in large part to a change in approach. In previous climate summits, nations were asked to meet mandatory standards. This time, each nation brought its own emission reduction goals to the conference table. Together, the nations' emission targets aim at limiting any increase in the earth's temperature to 1.5 degrees centigrade.

Saxe and King were among some 70 Sierrans who attended the summit. Executive Director Michael Brune and several Sierra Club board members attended the official climate talks among the representatives of the world's governments. Saxe and King spent much of their time at the "Civil Society" pavilion, attending panel discussions, meeting other interested parties, and helping to host the Sierra Club booth (where by all accounts they were a popular team). They also received daily overviews of what was taking place in the negotiations.

Both women were extremely impressed with the respect the Sierra Club commanded at the event.

"Yes, the Club has a special place in this," King says. "We were one of the nongovernment organizations (NGOs) to get negotiating status. We saw Sierra Club leaders talking with Todd Stern, the lead US negotiator. It was impressive to see that the Club operating at that level."

While hosting the Sierra Club booth, Saxe and King donned their Sierra Club Maine aprons and enthusiastically engaged summit attendees from around the world.

"We talked to people from all over," Saxe explains. "They really were interested in our local-to-global theme. It struck a chord with folks."

"There was something special in this gathering that was genuinely grassroots," King adds. "It made us feel very connected with other local efforts all over the globe."

Both women agree that representatives from various indigenous groups made the biggest impression on them—including a woman from South America who had been sent to jail for her activism on climate change.



**Joan Saxe and Claudia King after returning home to Maine following the Paris climate talks.**

"Her commitment was amazing," recalls Saxe. "She said she'd go back to jail ten times before she would stop her activism on climate issues. It was inspiring."

They also met Italian schoolteacher, Rossano Ercolini, who almost single-handedly spearheaded the zero-waste movement in the Tuscany community of Capanorri—now Europe's first zero-waste town. His work, for which he won the Goldman Prize for the Environment, started a movement that spread through Italy and now much of Europe.

"We heard about this kind of thing often," King says. "Listening to activists at the Paris gathering, you realize that, around the world, so much change is spurred by grassroots efforts—by people who feel passionately about their communities and the earth."

There were also panels on the exciting national and local clean energy efforts in both developed and developing countries.

"There are groundswells everywhere," King says. "So many countries are ahead of the US in understanding the importance of clean energy and what it means for the environment as well as for communities."

While in Paris, Saxe and King had a special opportunity to communicate their excitement and inspiring stories back to fellow Mainers. As it

turned out, their time at the climate gathering coincided with a workshop for Sierra Club Maine's Climate Action Teams (CATs). During a live feed from the streets of Paris to Augusta (via a laptop placed on a recycling bin), Saxe and King, sporting French berets, reported to the workshop attendees on the progress of the talks. They also made the connection between those talks and local efforts, emphasizing the importance of the CATs' work to reduce carbon emissions and pave the way for a carbon-free economy. (See page 5.)

Paris was the third climate summit Joan Saxe has attended. It was the first for Claudia King. And while many people might have had second thoughts about attending such a prominent public gathering just weeks after the shocking November 13 terrorist attacks

on Paris, neither women entertained thoughts of not going.

"My husband didn't want me to go," Saxe says. "I just told him, 'I'm going.' It was never an issue with me. We can't let that kind of thing stop us from moving ahead with something this important."

King notes that the French clampdown on security actually made things seem relatively safe.

"My only apprehension was about was getting in the underground tunnel to use the Paris Metro," she says. "Before I arrived I thought I'd just pay for taxis. But once we got there and gained a sense of things, using the Metro wasn't an issue."

The Paris climate talks were a clear success. But both Saxe and King realize that much more needs to be done to bring the agreement to fruition. Many technical details need to be worked out among the world's nations in the coming years before official carbon reduction actions have a major impact.

Saxe emphasizes that we can't wait until all the details are sorted out and nations get going on their pledges.

"In the interim, we need to keep pushing and continue to make a difference at the grassroots level," she says. "Our CAT program is a great example of that—it's gaining momentum and making a difference here in Maine."

## Thank You, Senator

*The biomass issue aside, we applaud Susan Collins support for clean energy and efficiency.*



At Efficiency Maine's recent Annual Meeting, Senator Collins, referring to the Paris UN Climate Conference, noted that climate change requires everyone to act. She understands that climate disruption has no respect for borders, having personally seen its impacts on glaciers, sea level rise, permafrost melt, and fish migration patterns in Antarctica.

We also applaud Senator Collins' vote on the Clean Power Plan. She was one of only two Republicans to break with the party block, risking their ire, to do the right thing. A strong supporter of clean power and energy efficiency, she believes savings from current low oil prices should be put to good use by investing in efficiency now.

Collins has successfully advocated for an additional \$22 million for Maine residential efficiency efforts and renewable/efficiency incentives in the federal budget. She believes that the public sector should lead the way on efficiency and renewable energy in municipalities and schools.

During the meeting Collins congratulated Efficiency Maine and top performing businesses and individuals providing energy efficiency and innovative methods, recognizing the hundreds of new jobs created, while combating Maine's dependency on fossil fuels.

Efficiency Maine has provided significant benefits to Maine residents and businesses by leveraging over \$58 million of RGGI (Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative) money to fund its programs.

Through the work of Efficiency Maine and the leadership of Senator Collins, we can make real progress to reduce Maine's heavy reliance on carbon-emitting fossil fuels.

Sierra Club Maine doesn't agree with Senator Collins on all energy-related issues. In fact, we disagree with the recent biomass amendment she introduced to the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015, instructing federal agency to consider biomass (forest bioenergy) to be carbon neutral. This goes against prevailing scientific opinion. It takes minutes for the wood from a tree to burn; it takes decades for a replacement tree to grow back to maturity. We should not be providing incentives to degrade our forests, which are one of our major defenses against climate change.



**F**ifth graders from the Kennebunk/Kennebunkport Consolidated School met with Congresswoman Chellie Pingree at the Sierra Club and Maine Farmland Trust film and discussion night at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Kennebunk on February 26. The students, who are studying food in America, came to see the film "Dive" and hear Pingree discuss her attempts to reduce food waste. Left to right are, Lily Bickford, Aedan Marley, Ethan Prichard, Congresswoman Pingree, and teacher Jennifer Humphrey.

## Let's Stand Up For Democracy!

Join fellow Sierrans and concerned citizens from around the country in Washington DC on April 16-18 to demand an equal voice for all Americans.



Thousands of people from over 170 organizations (including the Sierra Club) will gather in Washington, DC on April 16-18 to demand a democracy where every vote is heard and counted, where all Americans have an equal voice, and where money doesn't buy access and power. Concerned citizens will mobilize for an array of actions and events, including demonstrations, teach-ins, music, and the main event of the weekend, the Rally for Democracy.

We see threats to our democracy every day—most notably with the blatant obstructionism in the Senate, including refusing to hold a hearing on a Supreme Court nominee, failing to hold a hearing on voting rights, and failing to move forward on reforms to big money in politics.

Americans are coming to Washington to demand a democracy with an equal voice for everyone and to demonstrate the depth and breadth of voices calling for change.

Why is the Sierra Club involved? Because congressional obstructionism and big corporate money in politics stifles progress on environmental issues.

Sierra Club's focus will be the Rally for Democracy on Sunday, April 17th. To RSVP for the Rally for Democracy, please RSVP at [sc.org/DemocracyAwakening](http://sc.org/DemocracyAwakening). For more information about the weekend events go to [democracyawakening.org](http://democracyawakening.org).

*Support Sierra Club Maine through payroll deduction*

# MaineShare

MaineShare gives you an easy way to support more than 40 organizations working to make Maine a better place to live.

Enroll your workplace for the current campaign online at [www.mainshare.org](http://www.mainshare.org) or contact us directly.

P.O. Box 2095, Augusta, ME 04338  
Telephone: 207-622-1050  
Email: [giving@maineshare.org](mailto:giving@maineshare.org)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Book Clubs

Maine Chapter Book Club (Windham area)  
**March/April**

*Dead in Good Company*

**May/June**

*Silence of the Songbirds*

**July/August**

*Unsettled Past Unsettled Future*

**September/October**

*The Raven's Gift*

For exact dates and other information contact:

Martha Briggs, [marthabriggs@gmail.com](mailto:marthabriggs@gmail.com)

DownEast Book Club

**April 17**

*The Social Conquest of Earth*

**May 15**

*The Great Transition*

Organizer Deborah Loftus at

[loftusdw@roadrunner.com](mailto:loftusdw@roadrunner.com)

### Movies

*Portland Film Series*

Maine College of Art, Portland

April 20

Film to be announced

*Kennebunk Film Series*

First Parish UU Church, Kennebunk

April 22—Coffee reception 6:30 pm, film 7 pm

Film and speaker to be announced

*We also have a summer film series in Bar Harbor. Check the Sierra Club Maine website, [sierraclub.org/maine](http://sierraclub.org/maine), for schedules of upcoming films in all locations.*

### Outings

**Birdwatching and Hiking**

April 30

Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, MA

Group will take the train from Portland

Contact [joan.saxe@gmail.com](mailto:joan.saxe@gmail.com)

### Other Events

**Penobscot Watershed Conference 2016**

April 9

Point Lookout Conference Center, Northport

For more information and to register go to:

[seagrant.umaine.edu/penobscot-watershed-conference](http://seagrant.umaine.edu/penobscot-watershed-conference)

or call 207-734-6907

**Sierra Club Maine Fundraiser**

April 12—4pm to 8pm

Panera Bread

343 Gorham Road, South Portland

(a portion of bread sales during these times support the chapter. You need to bring a flyer which you can print from the events page of the chapter website.)

**HOPE Festival**

April 23—11 am to 3 pm

University of Maine Student Fitness Center

Orono

(Be sure to look for our Sierra Club Maine table.)

**National Park 100th Anniversary Celebration**

September 10

Acadia National Park

Mount Desert Island

This is a volunteer work day for the national park. Join fellow park supporters and park personnel to celebrate our national parks by working on hiking trails in Acadia. More details will be available later this spring at [sierraclub.org/maine](http://sierraclub.org/maine).



## If everyone receiving this newsletter gave just \$20...

We agree, that is quite a big "if." But just think, if everyone receiving this newsletter did donate \$20, Sierra Club Maine could cover its total operating expenses and fundraising goals for 2016.

Our Chapter is endowed with a large number of volunteers and activists—close to 14,000 in all. Some of those activists are among our 3500 current members, but the majority are not.

We depend on our members financial support to accomplish our work. With only one full-time and one part-time employee, our operating expenses are bare bones. Much of our work is accomplished by our many committed volunteers—the foundation of this chapter and the Sierra Club in general. A membership extends to both the national Club and Sierra Club Maine—so part of your membership dues help support our Maine chapter.

While we keep our expenses as low as possible, the chapter's operating costs still amounts to just under \$200K. That expense could be covered if all our supporters gave \$20. That would mean our fundraising team could move on to other important work such as building Climate Action Teams, protecting the Maine Woods and the Gulf of Maine, and lobbying for strong environmental laws and protections in the Maine Legislature.

If you are not a Sierra Club member, please consider joining. If you are already a member, thank you. And whether you are a member or not, please consider donating whatever you can to support the Maine chapter's work. Just \$20 each would make a huge impact on our efforts! (To manage your membership please contact [membership@sierraclub.org](mailto:membership@sierraclub.org).)

## Our Newest Chapter Leaders

Sierra Club Maine is pleased to welcome the following three new members to its executive committee. The three were elected by online ballot last fall.

### Michael "Mick" Devin, Newcastle

Mick is a US Naval Academy graduate who manages the experimental shellfish hatchery at the University of Maine's Darling Center. He is also completing his second term in the Maine House of Representatives representing the towns that make up the Pemaquid Peninsula, along with Monhegan and Louds Islands.

### Ken Cline, Bar Harbor

Ken is a long-time Sierra Club volunteer and activist who has been a leader in the chapter's efforts to protect the Maine Woods. An environmental law professor at College of the Atlantic, Ken is the inaugural holder of the COA's David Rockefeller Family Chair in Ecosystem Management and Protection.

### Keith Rollins, Westbrook

Keith is a media consultant, currently working with Townsquare Media in Portland. He has extensive experience in strategic planning and business management, including serving as an executive with the Portland Department of Economic Development.

In addition to the new committee members, Claudia King was also reelected to her third term on the executive committee. Claudia is a retired physical therapist who currently serves on the Falmouth Town Council.

# Maine Chapter of the Sierra Club

Telephone: 207-761-5616

web: [sierraclub.org/maine](http://sierraclub.org/maine)

email: [maine.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:maine.chapter@sierraclub.org)

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Becky Bartovics (Chair)	North Haven
Michael (Mick) Devin	Newcastle
Tony Donovan	Portland
Tara Hollander	Stockton Springs
Claudia King	Falmouth
Ken Cline	Bar Harbor
David Mokler	Biddeford
Keith Rollins	Westbrook

## CHAPTER DIRECTOR

Glen Brand [glen.brand@sierraclub.org](mailto:glen.brand@sierraclub.org)

## CHAPTER TREASURER

Ruth Bettinger [bettinger.ruth@gmail.com](mailto:bettinger.ruth@gmail.com)

## CLIMATE ACTION TEAMS

Miriam Rubin [miriamrubin@me.com](mailto:miriamrubin@me.com)

Lyn Sudlow

## MAINE WOODS TEAM

Ken Cline [kcline@coa.edu](mailto:kcline@coa.edu)  
Jim Frick [jim.frick@umit.maine.edu](mailto:jim.frick@umit.maine.edu)

## GULF OF MAINE TEAM

Mick Devin [mick@mickdevin.org](mailto:mick@mickdevin.org)

## LEGISLATIVE TEAM

Becky Bartovics [bartovics@earthlink.net](mailto:bartovics@earthlink.net)

## TRANSPORTATION TEAM

Tony Donovan [melikesrail@gmail.com](mailto:melikesrail@gmail.com)

## POLITICAL TEAM

Claudia King [seekingcking@gmail.com](mailto:seekingcking@gmail.com)

## NEWSLETTER

Jim Frick [jim.frick@umit.maine.edu](mailto:jim.frick@umit.maine.edu)

*MAINE SIERRAN* is published twice per year (March and September) by the Maine Chapter of the Sierra Club. Articles may be reprinted with credit to *MAINE SIERRAN*. We welcome your input. Please email Jim Frick at [jim.frick@umit.maine.edu](mailto:jim.frick@umit.maine.edu) if you have suggestions or comments or if you are interested in contributing articles or photographs.

## Statement of Purpose of the Sierra Club

"To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the Earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the Earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives."

**Being a Sierra Club volunteer is fun and rewarding! Just contact Jeanine at [maine.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:maine.chapter@sierraclub.org)**

## Visit us on Facebook



A great way to keep up with Maine environmental issues and Sierra Club activities.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/sierra-club-maine-chapter/181279771922933>

# A National Monument for the Maine Woods

*Continued from page 1*

## ECONOMIC BENEFITS:

The economy of the Katahdin region has suffered greatly with the decline of the paper and forest products industry. While a national monument or park would not magically transform the region, it could as the *Bangor Daily News* pointed out, “be a focal point of its remaking.”

Independent studies indicate that a national park would create between 450 and 1,000 jobs. National monuments and parks attract visitors, businesses, and new residents—all desperately needed in Northern Maine. That’s why over 200 businesses have endorsed the park proposal. In addition, statistics show that there is an increasing demand for more outdoor recreational opportunity (particularly camping).

Opponents have argued that the Elliotsville Plantation proposal would have a detrimental effect on the timber/wood products industry. But that argument is countered by independent studies predicting a national park would have no economic downside to the timber industry. The fact is that any sustainable harvesting on the proposed 150,000-acre national park and recreation area would represent less than one percent of Maine’s yearly wood use. Further, the 87,000 acres of potential monument land is owned by Elliotsville Plantation and will be off-limits to harvesting whether or not it is transferred to the federal government.

## LAND VALUE:

Opponents to the park proposal have dismissed the Elliotsville Plantation parcel as not being worthy of national monument or park status. While it’s true that lower parts of the parcel have been harvested, the majority of the land remains pristine—not that different from what Thoreau observed in 1857. There are rare plant species, seven pristine ponds, silver maple floodplains, stunning views of Mt. Katahdin, seven mountains with hiking trails to several summits, existing camping areas, and boat launches providing access to the East Branch of the Penobscot River and its free-flowing tributaries. All together there are more than 30 miles of rivers and streams. The variety of wildlife in the area includes moose, eagles, snowshoe hares, black bears, fisher cats, Canadian lynx, and pine martens.

Long time Maine Woods activist and current Sierra Club Maine executive committee member, Ken Cline, has explored the proposed monument site many times. It’s become one of his favorite places.

“This is a very special place,” Cline said. “The East Branch area abounds in wildlife and plant species that are representative of the uniqueness and richness of the Maine Woods. And the abundance of rapids provides thrilling recreational opportunities for paddlers. This is a place where people can really experience the restorative power of wilderness. It’s become my favorite river trip in the Eastern US. It



Lucas St. Clair, president of the board of Elliotsville Plantation, looks over the land he hopes will be designated as a national monument and one day become a national park

*“Through a strong partnership with the Sierra Club we can make sure the story of this amazing place is told and available for generations to come.”*



needs to be preserved.”

Quimby family member, Lucas St. Clair, who has done an outstanding job heading the park/monument efforts, noted the value in protecting this land as an important ecosystem and watershed. But he also emphasized that the proposed monument would be much more than that.

“The National Park Service can tell the story of this place and its role in history,” he explained. “The area has inspired the first Americans, conservationists, a Supreme Court justice, a US president and countless others. Through a strong partnership with the Sierra Club we can make sure the story of this amazing place is told and available for generations to come.”

Again, the window of opportunity to take advantage of this generous donation and protect a special area in the Maine Woods is closing quickly. You can help by urging Senators Collins and King (see contact information below) to support the monument concept. Additionally, please visit [sierraclub.org/maine](http://sierraclub.org/maine) and sign our petition asking President Obama to create a Maine Woods National Monument.

## Governor LePage Attempts to Legislate Against Monument

In late February, Governor Paul LePage made what can only be described as a desperate attempt to stifle the momentum for a national monument in the Maine Woods. LePage introduced a bill that would require landowners transferring property to the federal government to insert a reverter clause that would return the property to the original owner if that property was designated as a national monument.

In a public hearing on the bill, Jerry Reid, chief of the Natural Resources Division of the Maine Attorney General’s Office, strongly recommended against passage of the governor’s bill.

“The important takeaway message is that the state cannot prevent the takeover of the land and cannot do anything to frustrate what the federal government is going to do there,” he said.

Very significantly, there was also written testimony against passage of the bill from Roger Milliken, a past director of the Maine Forest Products Council and past president of Baskahegan Company, which owns 120,000 acres, some of which border the proposed monument site. Milliken went beyond just opposing LePage’s bill, he strongly endorsed a national monument designation.

“I understand and share the despair we in the forest products industry feel at the decline of Maine’s paper economy, he stated. “But we should not waste your time fighting the tide of history. If we truly care about the future of our industry, we need to focus on what is in the best interest of the people who seek to earn their livelihood in the forested parts of Maine.”

The bill failed in committee by a vote of 7-6 and moved on to the full House of Representatives.

*Please write or call your Maine senators and urge them to support a national monument for the Maine Woods.*

Senator Angus King  
359 Senate Office Building  
Washington D.C. 20510  
202-224-5344

Email legislative assistant Morgan Cashwell at  
[Morgan\\_Cashwell@king.senate.gov](mailto:Morgan_Cashwell@king.senate.gov)

Senator Susan Collins  
213 Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
202-224-2523

Email Carol Woodcock at  
[Carol\\_Woodcock@collins.senate.gov](mailto:Carol_Woodcock@collins.senate.gov)