



Maine Environmental Priorities Coalition 2013 End of Session Summary



Further Protect Pregnant Women and Children from Toxic Chemicals *Sponsored by Senator Seth Goodall*



In its final version, the Healthy Kids bill would have protected families from the dangerous chemical bisphenol-A (BPA) in food packaging by requiring food manufacturers with more than a billion dollars in annual sales to label the chemical in their products. The bill passed soundly in the House and unanimously in the Senate, but was vetoed by Governor LePage. The Senate failed to override the veto and, disappointingly, refused even to debate the bill.



Open the St. Croix River to River Herring *Sponsored by Representative Madonna Soctomah*



Passage of LD 72 represented a big victory for healthy rivers this session by allowing alewives (also known as river herring) to run unimpeded up the St. Croix River to their historic spawning grounds. The river once supported more than 2.5 million alewives but the population crashed to less than a thousand when the fishways at two dams were closed by legislative decree in 1995. Alewives are a critical food source for many birds, fish, and mammals, and are the preferred spring bait for Maine lobster. The Marine Resources Committee voted unanimously in favor of the bill, setting the stage for easy passage in both the House and Senate. Governor LePage let the bill become law without his signature.



Protect Water Quality and Avoid Taxpayer Clean-up Costs from Metallic Mineral Mines

Sponsored by Representative Jeff McCabe



The Senate failed to pass LD 1302, a bill to improve water quality safeguards and taxpayer protections in Maine's mining law, despite a sizable, bipartisan victory in the House. Moving forward, the LePage Administration's Department of Environmental Protection will be drafting rules this summer that will govern future mining operations. The legislature will have final say over whether these proposed rules are adopted in January of 2014. After the bill failed, several of the sponsors of LD 1302 wrote a letter to the DEP requesting stronger water quality protections.



Oppose Roll Back of Rules Protecting Wild Brook Trout

Maine has been identified as "the last true stronghold for native brook trout," but a bill this session would have put lakes that are home to wild brook trout populations at risk. LD 170 did not survive the session, but substantial pieces have been carried over in a fishing omnibus bill to be addressed next year.



Increased Investment in Energy Efficiency

LD 1426 contributed much-needed resources for Maine's energy efficiency programs. The bill was added to a larger omnibus energy package, LD 1559, which passed and successfully overcame Governor LePage's veto. The omnibus bill, unfortunately, also contains provisions that could increase Maine's dependence on natural gas from hydraulic fracturing.



About the EPC: Maine's Environmental Priorities Coalition is a partnership of 28 environmental, conservation, and public health organizations representing over 100,000 members who want to protect the good health, good jobs and quality of life that our environment provides for all of us.



350 Maine
Appalachian Mountain Club
Atlantic Salmon Federation
Bicycle Coalition of Maine
Conservation Law Foundation
Environmental Health Strategy Center
Environment Maine
ENE
Friends of Casco Bay
Maine Audubon
Maine Center for Economic Policy
Maine Congress of Lake Associations
Maine Council of Churches
Maine Council of Trout Unlimited
Maine Interfaith Power & Light
Maine Conservation Alliance
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
Maine People's Alliance
Maine Rivers
Maine Wilderness Guides Organization
Natural Resources Council of Maine
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Maine Chapter
Product Policy Institute of Maine
RESTORE: The North Woods
Sierra Club, Maine Chapter
The Ocean Conservancy
The Wilderness Society
Toxics Action Center

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