



2019 Environmental Priorities Overview

Maine's Climate and Clean Energy Future



Advance New Renewable Energy Sources by Increasing Maine's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) to 80% by 2030

We all benefit from made-in-Maine renewables that reduce carbon pollution, increase energy independence, and grow our economy. Maine's vast clean energy resources offer cost-effective local energy at grid, community, and individual scales. Maine currently generates 40% of its energy from renewable sources. This RPS is outdated and can be expanded to 80% by prioritizing new in-state renewables, including solar, wind, and biomass heating.



Move Forward on Solar Energy That Benefits All Mainers

Help businesses, towns, and people in every corner of the state lower energy costs by increasing access to solar power and creating good-quality new jobs. Investments in solar power and new solar jobs are growing quickly in the Northeast and nationwide as the costs of solar have plummeted. However, Maine lags far behind the region because we lack a clear, effective, and fair solar policy. Unpredictability and arbitrary barriers have held back investment in solar in Maine. New solar policy will dramatically expand solar power investment. It will also expand access to solar power for low and moderate income families.



Reduce Carbon Pollution and Strengthen Maine's Economy by Enacting a Comprehensive Strategy to Tackle Climate Change

Mainers want a clear road map for curbing harmful greenhouse gas emissions that will create jobs and protect the health of Maine's people and environment for future generations. A strong climate plan will decrease our reliance on fossil fuel imports to generate electricity; it will create new jobs in Maine in energy efficiency, battery storage, and renewable energy. A plan will spur innovation in electric transportation. It will benefit Maine's forestry industries by implementing strategies such as increased reliance on wood as a building material. And an updated plan will benefit our farmers and landowners by encouraging them to manage their lands to maximize carbon sequestration.



Assess Climate Change Impacts on Maine's Marine Species by Creating a Science and Policy Advisory Council

The Gulf of Maine is changing faster than almost all other oceans; we need to better understand the impacts of climate change on Maine's marine environment and economy. Marine species already face sharp population declines and poor health due to climate change and Mainers who depend on these species already feel economic harm. A science based policy advisory council will recommend actions and adaptation strategies to protect our marine resources.



Spark Clean Energy Solutions for Maine Cities and Towns

A \$10 million bond would provide Maine towns and cities with matching grants to invest in clean energy and energy efficiency projects; from solar on landfills to modern wood heating for schools and public buildings. The bond will go to the voters.



2019 Environmental Priorities Overview

Conservation Priorities



Protect Maine’s Natural Resources by Investing in Land, Water and Maine State Parks
The Land for Maine's Future program (LMF) partners with landowners, municipalities, and state agencies to support local economies through conservation projects. A significant new bond will provide funding to protect access to mountains, rivers, lakes and forests. It will support working farms, and waterfronts and provide essential infrastructure to Maine parks to help maintain Maine's unique character.



Protect Clean Water by Upgrading Water Quality in Maine Rivers and Streams
The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)’s water reclassification proposal to the Legislature will increase protections for more than 400 miles of rivers and streams, including a significant section of the Penobscot River. Clean water benefits all Mainers. It increases property values, supports the fishing and guiding industries, and helps our fish and wildlife thrive.



Protect Maine’s Environment from Plastic Pollution by Encouraging the Use of Reusable Bags
Single use plastic shopping bags litter our lands and pollute our waters, clog storm drains and recycling equipment, and are unnecessary. Scientists say that by 2050, there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish, ton for ton. Globally, about one million plastic shopping bags are distributed per minute and only 1% are recycled. Today there are readily available, reusable alternatives that cause far less damage to our environment. An incentive helps remind people to use reusable bags.



Reduce Toxic Chemicals in Food Packaging
Maine families deserve food that is not wrapped in harmful chemicals. So-called “brain drain” chemicals, PFAS and phthalates, are entering our food supply through processing and packaging. They pose significant health risks, particularly for pregnant women and children. Alternative packaging is available, and the market is already changing. Passing legislation will ensure food on our shelves is in safer packaging and better protect our health and environment.

For more information, please contact Beth Ahearn, 207-671-5071 or beth@protectmaine.org