



## Protect Maine Lakes

Ensure that Maine's \$3.5 billion lake legacy - quality of life, drinking water sources and freshwater habitat - endures to benefit future generations

*"The people of the State of Maine always should keep in mind that they are the actual owners of the lakes of Maine and of the water contained in them. These lakes and this water are public property of inestimable value."* **Percival P. Baxter**

### The water quality of Maine lakes and ponds exhibits widespread, measurable declines

- The clarity of many Maine lakes and ponds declined as much as 20% in the fifteen years between 1995 and 2010, as documented by a University of Maine satellite survey<sup>1</sup>.
- The Maine Department of Environmental Protection has listed 10% of Maine's great ponds as "at risk," meaning these valuable resources will become impaired in as little as 20-40 years if land use in their watersheds doesn't improve<sup>2</sup>.
- Continued declines would jeopardize Maine's lake portfolio:
  - \$3.5 billion in annual economic activity
  - Drinking water supplies for 50% of Maine residents
  - 52,000 jobs
  - Outstanding recreational opportunities
  - Support for municipal services derived from lakefront property tax revenues
  - The health and wellbeing of people, businesses, and communities dependent upon Maine lakes<sup>3</sup>.



### Improving Maine's primary lake protection law and better understanding the causes of non-compliance will preserve the health and benefits of Maine's world class lakes and ponds



- Pass the Act to Protect Maine Lakes to ensure that the 100 foot development setback area is observed when permitted new construction requires foundations.
- Pass the Act to Protect Maine Lakes to ensure that permitted construction within the 100 foot setback area does not cause erosion and sedimentation that pollute lake water.
- Review noncompliance records to understand barriers to lawful land use and report back to the Legislature on findings by January, 2016.

## Pass the "Act to Protect Maine Lakes"

Sponsored by Representative Gary Hilliard

For more information, contact Maggie Shannon at [msshannon@mainelakessociety.org](mailto:msshannon@mainelakessociety.org) or 207- 495-2301

<sup>1</sup> McCullough, I; Lofting, C; and Sader, S; *Landsat imagery reveals declining clarity of Maine's lakes during 1995–2010*; Freshwater Science, 32(3):741-752.2013

<sup>2</sup> 2012 ME DEP 303b list: <http://www.maine.gov/dep/water/monitoring/305b/2012/report-final.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Boyle, K.J., J. Schuetz, and S. Kahl. 1997. Great Ponds Play an Integral Role in Maine's Economy. REP 473, Water Research Institute, University of Maine.



## **Maine's Environmental Priorities Coalition**

is a partnership of 31 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.

***We are counting on Maine policymakers to take the important steps needed to make wise use of Maine's extraordinary environment so Maine people and Maine's economy can thrive.***

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