Cuts put White Mountains at risk

Crucial protections on the chopping block

The White Mountains represent the best of New Hampshire’s stunning natural beauty. This fall, as we look forward to seeing the White Mountains transform with vivid fall foliage, it’s disheartening to know that impending cuts will put the mountains at risk.

Congress is threatening to decimate the most important program for protecting White Mountain National Forest from encroaching development. So this summer, Environment New Hampshire staff pounded the pavement, visiting communities and talking to thousands of Granite Staters about risks to the White Mountains. Our staff built support for a bill that will permanently restore protections to the White Mountains, preserving the best of New Hampshire forever.

The best of New Hampshire at risk

New Hampshire’s White Mountain National Forest is where some of our families’ most unforgettable memories are formed—our first childhood hikes, our first time sleeping under the stars, our first glimpse of incredible wildlife. From hiking the Appalachian Trail to viewing the gorgeous fall foliage from the Cannon Mountain Tramway, the White Mountains represent the best of New Hampshire’s natural landscape.

Yet patches of privately owned land break up the White Mountains. If these private lands are sold to the wrong hands, the beauty of the White Mountains will be threatened by development and pollution.

Unfortunately, it’s too easy to picture treasured places in the White Mountains sold off, developed, and lost forever.

Fifty years ago, the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund was set up to conserve special places like the White Mountains—all without costing taxpayers a dime. The fund has helped protect trails in the White Mountains, but Congress has consistently raided the program and used the funds for purposes that are completely unrelated to conservation—and now some members of Congress are ready to take a hatchet to the fund, with cuts that virtually eliminate the program.

This year, we have a real chance to fully preserve places like the White Mountains forever.

To learn more about our work to protect the White Mountains and take action, visit: www.EnvironmentNewHampshire.org

The White Mountains provide critical habitat for some of our state’s most beautiful wildlife.
My favorite time of year is when the leaves of the sugar maples turn red, orange and yellow in my neighborhood. And every year, I try to do a couple of fall hikes before the first snow, because there’s really nothing more peaceful to me than hiking in White Mountain National Forest, with stunning views, brisk air and glorious foliage.

But the White Mountains are facing cuts that put our pristine trails at risk. We have a chance to protect the White Mountains, but we need to build plenty of support to win.

Protecting places like the White Mountains is something we owe future generations, and I know the only way we’ll be able to do it is if we join together and call on our elected officials to act. Thank you for being with us. Go to our website to take action and help protect the beautiful places we love.

Sincerely,

Johanna Neumann
Regional Director

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Recent action

**New Hampshire groups hold news conference in support of global warming plan**

In July, Environment New Hampshire joined a coalition of New Hampshire organizations, businesses and elected officials supporting federal clean air and global warming safeguards to highlight the support of Granite Staters for the historic Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) carbon pollution standard for power plants announced by President Obama.

Jonathan Gregory, a business owner of SunRay Solar in Concord said, “The president’s plan to reduce carbon emissions and increase renewable energy demonstrates the leadership we need to compete in the new global economy. This is a win-win situation for all—investing in the clean energy economy while protecting the health and environment of New Hampshire for generations to come.”

**New Hampshire commits to cutting carbon pollution**

This summer, the New Hampshire Senate passed a bill to authorize New Hampshire’s continued involvement in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a regional compact of Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states that limits carbon pollution from power plants.

In February, New Hampshire and eight other states announced a new agreement to make deeper cuts in power plant carbon emissions that would lead to a 20 percent reduction in those emissions over the next decade.

“Strengthening programs such as RGGI is a great win for New Hampshire,” said Environment New Hampshire Regional Director Johanna Neumann. “Our research shows that pursuing strong reductions in emissions can help grow our clean energy economy. New Hampshire is ready to commit to improving our climate and energy programs.”
New plan to address increase in extreme weather

After another year of storms and another summer of record heat in New Hampshire, the president’s plan to address global warming was loudly applauded by Environment New Hampshire and others across the country.

President Obama announced a climate plan that will set limits on carbon pollution from power plants, advance energy efficiency, and increase the nation’s commitment to renewable energy. By 2030, this plan is expected to have cut carbon pollution by more than 1,000 tons each year.

“President Obama has responded to the millions that have spoken out on behalf of their communities and their families, urging him to lead on climate,” said Johanna Neumann, regional director with Environment New Hampshire. “All of us who have felt the effects of global warming, or are simply worried about what’s in store for our kids, can take comfort in knowing that President Obama has put the nation on a path toward a cleaner, healthier and safer future.”

Left unchecked, global warming is projected to bring more intense storms and flooding. Scientists have warned that the window is rapidly closing for making the necessary cuts in carbon pollution to protect future generations from the worst consequences of global warming.

To respond to this threat, the president’s plan contains several key components, including:

• A plan to build more renewable energy: The plan focuses on expanding production of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar, especially on public lands.

• More support for affected communities: The president’s plan will help ensure that communities are better equipped to prepare for and recover from the impacts of global warming.

• An effort to rebuild U.S. leadership internationally: The president’s plan calls for the U.S. to actively engage in international efforts to address global warming.

Focus on carbon pollution

Environment New Hampshire offered special praise for the president’s pledge to cut carbon pollution from existing power plants, given that they are the single largest source of carbon pollution in the country.

More than 3.2 million Americans submitted public comments last year in support of the president setting limits on carbon pollution from power plants. Hundreds of organizations and local leaders from across the country have also spoken out in support of limiting global warming pollution from power plants.

To learn more about our work to curb global warming and read the full report, “In the Path of the Storm,” visit: www.EnvironmentNewHampshire.org

Too much of the energy we use in New Hampshire comes from polluting sources like coal and oil that dirty our air and contribute to global warming.

To tackle these issues, Environment New Hampshire is working on the grassroots level, advocating for strong solar policies in the state.

Strong solar policies in other states have lead to our country having more than 10 times as much solar capacity as it did in 2007.

This summer, our national coalition released “Lighting the Way,” a report that outlined the top 12 states for solar per capita: Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii, New Jersey, New Mexico, California, Delaware, Colorado, Vermont, Massachusetts, North Carolina and Maryland.

The report emphasizes that it is not the availability of sunlight that makes states solar leaders, but the degree to which state and local governments have created effective public policy for the development of the solar industry.

New Hampshire can lead on solar as well, but now we are falling behind our neighbors. Now is the time for Gov. Maggie Hassan to put into place ambitious goals and sound policies that will enable more homeowners, businesses and municipalites to tap the power of the sun.

Environment New Hampshire is working to convince her to commit to our bold vision of 10,000 roofs as a part of her plan to encourage the renaissance of technology and clean energy in the Granite State.
Welcoming Gina McCarthy as EPA administrator

In July, Granite Staters joined Environment New Hampshire outside the local office of Sen. Kelly Ayotte, thanking her for voting to confirm Gina McCarthy as the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

“Gina McCarthy’s confirmation is long-awaited good news for the planet and should not surprise anyone remotely familiar with her record,” said Steve Dzubak, field organizer with Environment New Hampshire. “McCarthy’s stellar work under both Republican and Democratic governors, coupled with her track record at the EPA, proves that when it comes to protecting our families’ health and environment, it isn’t about which party or who you work for. It’s about whether you can get the job done. Gina McCarthy can get the job done.”

In the next three years, the EPA must finalize carbon limits for new and existing power plants—the largest sources of global warming pollution—as outlined in President Obama’s recently announced Climate Action Plan. The EPA must also take action to protect our lakes from pollution, and move ahead with other much-needed environmental initiatives.

more inside

White Mountains facing drastic budget cuts; New plan to address increase in extreme weather; and more.

EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy