Protecting the White Mountains

Land around our hiking trails under threat

The Appalachian Trail is one of the most popular hiking destinations in New Hampshire. Yet land around the Trail and throughout the White Mountains is at risk of destructive development.

A few years ago, a logging company clear-cut land around the Appalachian Trail in the White Mountains, leaving only a thin line of trees along the trail. Thankfully, funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), an essential program to fund the conservation of treasured lands across the country, made it possible to buy the land back and restore it.

But despite its critical role in protecting and restoring sensitive lands, the Land and Water Conservation Fund is at risk.

Sen. Jeanne Shaheen takes the lead

Despite the desperate need for effective conservation programs like the LWCF, the Fund is often raided by Congress for other purposes. Last year was the worst raid yet, with House leaders slashing the LWCF by 93 percent.

In response to attacks on this critical program, Environment New Hampshire and our allies launched a massive conservation outreach effort, resulting in more than 500 local elected officials, sportsmen’s groups, outdoors business leaders, and local conservation organizations jumping on board to help protect our natural legacy. We sent a national letter including these groups to President Obama on March 5th.

Also, a group of senators, including New Hampshire’s own Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, cosponsored legislation that would fully fund the LWCF this year and beyond. At the end of April we hit a major milestone when 30 senators cosponsored Sen. Shaheen’s bill.

But, more work remains to be done to protect the White Mountains and other sensitive lands here in New Hampshire and around the country. We need more support in the Senate and we will need to pass the legislation through the House of Representatives. This summer, Environment New Hampshire is continuing our work to harness the overwhelming public support for protecting the White Mountains and to demonstrate that support to our leaders.

Learn more about our work to protect the White Mountains and take action: www.EnvironmentNewHampshire.org
To our members

This spring I learned that the latest victims of global warming in New Hampshire are our iconic moose. Warmer winters mean more ticks. According to a NH Fish and Game Department report, as many moose are dying from tick bites as die from hunting season and car accidents combined.

Global warming is happening in New Hampshire now, and with your support we are working to thwart its worst effects. This spring, your support gave us the momentum to help strengthen New Hampshire’s most effective program to reduce global warming pollution.

And this summer, we are going to work to make more progress for our environment—from preserving the White Mountains to promoting clean energy in New Hampshire. The only way to stand up to powerful polluters and developers is by bringing committed people together. Your support helps us do just that!

Sincerely,

Johanna Neumann
Regional Director

Recent action

Extreme weather on the rise

It’s been eight months since Hurricane Sandy, the wakeup call that shook the Northeast. Environment New Hampshire has called for bold action from our lawmakers in Concord and in D.C.

To raise awareness of the damaging impacts of climate change and draw the connection to extreme weather, we released our brand new report, “In The Path of the Storm.” The report documented county by county where disasters hit and when. The findings of the report show that every county was hit by an extreme weather event since 2007.

The report comes as the EPA is considering rules to clean up power plant emissions, the number one source of global warming pollution. We are urging President Obama and the EPA to bring the standards over the finish line and help protect our communities.

Global Warming Solutions

In February, roughly 40,000 Americans joined us in D.C. for the “Forward on Climate” rally. Tens of thousands of others across the country gathered at dozens of simultaneous rallies to reject the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline; put a cap on carbon pollution from new and existing power plants; and expand renewable energy programs.

Earlier this year, President Obama renewed his promise to tackle global warming saying, “the failure to do so would betray our children and future generations.” And in his State of the Union address, he added, “If Congress won’t act soon to protect future generations, I will.”

Environment New Hampshire is working to garner the public support he needs to tackle global warming and cut carbon pollution from the source.

Toward a greener future

Environment New Hampshire and Environment New Hampshire Research & Policy Center gratefully accept bequests, beneficiary designations of IRAs and life insurance, and gifts of securities to support our work to build a cleaner, greener, healthier future.

For more information, call 1-800-841-7299 or send an email to: PlannedGiving@EnvironmentNewHampshire.org.

Photo: John A. Anderson, Shutterstock.com

Federal staff at the Forward on Climate rally in Washington, D.C.
The sun is a free and non-polluting energy source that never runs out. With other states going big on solar, it’s time for New Hampshire to follow suit.

Solar power is taking off on rooftops and in communities throughout New England. Massachusetts has seen a 70-fold increase in the amount of solar power installed in the past five years alone, thanks in part to bold leadership and good policies. In fact, Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick recently announced a massive increase in the solar goal for the state, with a goal of getting as much power from the sun in 2020 as is produced by New England’s largest coal fired power plant.

The markets are responding. Over the last twenty years, the cost of solar panels has decreased seven-fold. It’s making more and more sense for businesses, municipalities and homeowners to take advantage of the financial advantage of investing in solar.

And, there is enough sun to power our needs in New Hampshire. We have a similar latitude and climate with Germany, the country with the most solar installed in the world.

New Hampshire can be at the forefront of clean energy innovation, but we have to hustle.

**Getting in the race**

When it comes to solar, New Hampshire is falling behind its neighbors. Data from the Interstate Renewable Energy Council show that New Hampshire is slowing to the middle of the pack when it comes to the rate of solar installation. At the same time, more and more homeowners, businesses and local governments want to go solar because they recognize the benefits of solar energy as a way to help reduce pollution and lower energy costs over time.

Now is the time for Gov. Maggie Hassan to put into place ambitious goals and sound policies that will enable more homeowners, businesses and municipalities to tap the power of the sun.

Gov. Hassan has made clean energy and innovation a cornerstone of her administration’s platform. We are 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.

**Support for bold leadership**

Gov. Hassan will go big on solar if she is convinced that solar power enjoys overwhelming public support. By reaching out to the public, as well as businesses and municipalities, and asking them to raise their voices in support of setting ambitious solar goals and putting in place the policies that will enable those goals to be met, we can help give the governor the backing she needs to lead.

Unfortunately, powerful utilities and other anti-clean energy interests, intent on holding onto the polluting energy sources of the past are trying to block efforts to expand solar.

But a strong network in favor of solar power can help make sure we don’t get left behind by our neighbors in other states on the path towards a bright clean energy future.

**Get involved**

To learn about future events and opportunities to help New Hampshire shift to clean energy, sign up for email alerts at www.Environmentnewhampshire.org

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**Offshore wind victory**

Thanks to our work and that of our allies along the Atlantic Coast, we are likely to see construction begin on our country’s first-ever offshore wind turbines before the end of the year.

Coal- and natural gas-fired power plants pollute our air, are major contributors to global warming, and consume vast amounts of water—harming our rivers and lakes and leaving less water for other uses. Wind energy has none of these problems. It produces no air pollution, makes no contribution to global warming, and uses no water.

Wind energy avoids 137,000 tons of nitrogen oxide emissions and 91,000 tons of sulfur dioxide emissions, important contributors to ozone smog and soot pollution.

As 2012 came to a close, critical wind energy incentives were at risk of being cut, threatening the future expansion of wind energy. Environment New Hampshire stepped in, helping to maintain them in 2013. And we went on to work with our allies, mobilizing public support for regulators to approve offshore wind farms in places where there would be minimal environmental impacts.

Areas off of six states (Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Virginia) were approved in the last several months. We also expect two more areas off of New York and North Carolina to be approved later this year.
Early this year, the Northeast’s most significant program to reduce global warming pollution, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), came up for review. At the moment when we clearly need to step up our response to the threat of global warming, too many updated versions of RGGI that were put forth severely weakened the program.

So we rallied the support of our members and activists, and we worked to demonstrate to the RGGI commission that program must be strengthened. A significantly strengthened RGGI was the result, putting the Northeast on track to reduce our global warming emissions by 20 percent in the next ten years.

Merrimack Station Power Plant

Power plants in the northeastern states emit over 120 million tons of carbon dioxide, the leading global warming pollutant. The regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative will help us reduce our emissions.