Dear Maine Audubon members and supporters,

The second and final session of the 130th Maine Legislature wrapped up in May, and Maine Audubon was again hard at work advancing policy to conserve and protect wildlife and wildlife habitat. We secured successful outcomes for many of Maine Audubon’s priority bills this session, thanks in part to our advocacy and conservation staff’s efforts to submit testimony, work with lawmakers, and communicate with the press.

As always, our ultimate success is due to the work of Maine Audubon members and supporters. Our network sent at least 1660 individual messages to more than 100 Maine legislators representing every corner of the state. These messages were in addition to the phone calls you made, the in-person visits you attended, the letters and op-eds Maine Audubon members submitted to local papers, social media posts you shared and re-shared, and uncountable other ways you demonstrated your support for Maine’s environment. We thank you.

Yours in conservation,

ELIZA DONOGHUE, ESQ.
Director of Advocacy and Staff Attorney

Join our Action Network: maineaudubon.org/act

IN THE NEWS

Maine Voices: [Endangered] Piping plovers need federal backing to complete comeback

“Bat populations have dropped by more than 95% in Maine in just over a decade due to the insidious white-nose syndrome. Sea turtles, Atlantic Salmon, and marine mammals are at grave risk from a changing Gulf of Maine. We must ensure a strong Endangered Species Act to allow us to respond to new threats.”
Laura Williams, Maine Audubon Wildlife Biologist and Conservation Assistant, writing in the Portland Press Herald
JUNE 21, 2022

New law allows creation of more ecological reserves in Maine

“The best way to maintain biodiversity is to keep good examples of all the pieces of the puzzle.”
Maine Audubon Conservation Director Sally Stockwell, talking about networks created by Maine’s Ecological Reserve System in Spectrum News
MARCH 31, 2022

Lawmakers approve $2 million in funding to expand climate education in Maine schools

“It’s important that all students have access to climate education, but specifically for people in low income communities. We have to make sure it’s equitable for them and that they’re not left behind.”
Kosis Ifeji, Nature Based Education Consortium, quoted on Maine Public
APRIL 27, 2022
Promoting Climate Education

**LD 1902 | PASSED**

LD 1902 secured over $2 million for a pilot program to increase climate education in Maine public schools by providing grants for professional development and creating partnerships between schools and community organizations to develop engaging climate curriculum.

Improving Maine’s Ecological Reserve System

**LD 736 | PASSED**

LD 736 increased the size limit of the Ecological Reserve System, helping meet climate goals and protect biodiversity.

Improving the Water Quality of Maine Lakes

**LD 1826 | PASSED**

LD 1826 expands the membership and purpose of the Interagency Task Force on Invasive Aquatic Plants and Nuisance Species, including the identification of possible legislation to address threats to Maine lakes.

Reducing Conflict Between Boats and Wildlife

**LD 1663 | PASSED**

Maine will phase in a mandatory boating safety and education course for inland water users. The course will include education on how to minimize impacts on wildlife, including no-wake zones, and removing invasive species from boats.

Limiting Sprawl

**LD 2003 | PASSED**

LD 2003 encourages concentrated development in strategic locations across Maine, which will reduce transportation emissions, improve public health, and spare important wildlife habitat from loss or fragmentation.

Protecting Water Quality

**LD 1964 | PASSED**

LD 1964 reclassified more than 800 miles of rivers and streams across Maine—a tool to maintain water quality—including several waters with important trout and salmon habitat, such as the South Branch of the Sandy River, Orbeton Stream, the Little Narraguagus River, and the West Branch of the Penobscot River above Ambajejus Lake.
Work to Do

While this session was dominated by success stories, there is still work to be done. We are truly disappointed that LD 1626, the bill to recognize the sovereignty of Maine’s Wabanaki tribes, has not been successfully resolved. We will continue to support sovereignty for Maine’s tribes. Likewise, Maine lawmakers did not fund bills that would help guide responsible solar development or reclassify the Lower Presumpscot River, issues that we will continue to pursue.

As Maine Audubon’s advocacy work continues, we’ll keep you in the loop as vital partners in advancing strong environmental policy in Maine and beyond. Thank you for your support of Maine Audubon.

SPOTLIGHT

LD 1902 | Climate Education

Maine Audubon was proud to work with the Nature Based Education Consortium, a youth-centered network of leaders and advocates who care about building equity and access for all Maine youth outdoors, and other partners to craft and pass LD 1902. The Consortium’s Climate Education Advocacy Working Group, which also included representatives from the Maine Environmental Education Association, Maine Youth for Climate Justice, The Nature Conservancy in Maine, and other groups, led the campaign to pass the bill and secure funding.

Solar Array Native Planting Guide Now Available

Maine Audubon recently published “Habitat Restoration and Native Planting for Maine Solar Development,” which provides detailed information to help solar developers plant native plants under and around their projects. The guide is for solar developers, landscape architects, and other professionals and individuals who are interested in designing solar arrays that maximize co-benefits to wildlife and wildlife habitat through native plantings and site-specific design and management considerations.

More: maineaudubon.org/solar