

Friends of Acadia Advocacy Alert

No. 29, January 28, 2011

YOU HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY to attend a hearing of the Joint Select Committee on Regulatory Fairness and Reform to share your concerns regarding Governor LePage's proposals to scale back Maine's environmental laws.

In a nutshell...

Governor LePage has developed a list of regulatory reform proposals that pose significant changes to Maine's environmental laws and regulations. To access the list of proposals, please visit <http://www.maine.gov/legis/opla/phase1gov.pdf>. Friends is concerned about several of these "reform proposals" because they could roll back years of bi-partisan work to establish thoughtful, science-based protections of Maine's outstanding natural resources and environment. The Maine Legislature's Joint Select Committee on Regulatory Fairness and Reform is holding hearings throughout the state on these proposals in order to help shape the text of L.D. 1 - a bill that will be targeted toward regulatory reform.

Schedule of Upcoming Hearings:

- **Monday, January 31, 2011** - University of Maine at Machias, Performing Arts Center, 116 O'Brien Ave, Machias, ME, 1-4 p.m.
- **Thursday, February 3, 2011** - Central Maine Community College, Jalbert Hall, Room 115, 1250 Turner St., Auburn, ME, 3-6 p.m.
- **Monday, February 7, 2011** - Sanford Town Hall, 919 Main Street, Sanford, ME, 3-6 p.m.
- **Wednesday, February 9, 2011** - Southern Maine Community College, Howe Hall, Room 306, 2 Fort Road, South Portland, ME 3-6 p.m.
- **Thursday, February 10, 2011** - Eastern Maine Community College, Rangeley Hall, Room 501, Sylvan Road, Bangor, ME, 3-6 p.m.

Friends of Acadia's Concerns:

1) The Governor's commitment to environmental support of Acadia National Park. At a January 20th roundtable of Maine citizens concerned for the environment, Governor LePage indicated that he recognized the value of Maine's environment and would be strong in protecting Maine's forests, agricultural lands, and waters. Yet, the proposed regulatory reforms demonstrate a roll back of protections contrary to this expressed commitment.

2) The proposed elimination of the Board of Environmental Protection could reduce the opportunities for Maine citizens to testify or bring objective expertise testimony regarding the effects of large developments and rulemaking procedures on Maine's environment.

- 3) Governor LePage's stated intent to conform Maine's statutory and regulatory standards to federally required standards would reduce Maine's environmental protection to the lowest standard. Maine's environment and quality of life are the strong brand that attracts residents and businesses. In many cases, Maine's standards are stricter than federal requirements.
- 4) The amendments proposed in 2010 to document current interpretation of the Site Location of Development law would help ensure that large scale development is considered carefully before implemented – Maine, and Acadia's, distinctive scenic vistas, and community character should be protected before allowing development to occur. The Governor's proposed reforms would reject these amendments.
- 5) The proposed regulation reforms roll back decades of carefully considered protections supported by bi-partisan legislators and Maine's residents. Maine will not earn greater respect or economic benefit from a roll back of sound environmental protection.

For More Information: Contact Friends of Acadia Conservation Director Stephanie Clement at 207-288-3340 or stephanie@friendsofacadia.org.

This Advocacy Alert was sent to citizens who have expressed interest in joining the Acadia Advocacy Network. If you would like to be removed from the Network, email stephanie@friendsofacadia.org with the word, "unsubscribe" in the subject line. Thank you very much for your support of Friends of Acadia and for weighing in on issues of importance to Acadia National Park.