

Summary Notes from Maine Climate Council

June 10, 2025

Overview

The Maine Climate Council (MCC) held its quarterly meeting from **9:00–11:00 AM on June 10, 2025**, via Zoom. The meeting focused on key updates from state agencies, as well as ongoing implementation of the *Maine Won't Wait* (MWW) climate action plan. Approximately 180 attendees joined virtually.

Agenda items included:

- Federal Policy Updates
- Resilience Programs and Funding Updates
- Overview of Efficiency Maine Triennial Plan VI
- Scientific and Technical Subcommittee Presentation
- Green Schools Initiative Presentation
- Building Codes Presentation

See full meeting video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pknAgc8xSwc&feature=youtu.be>

See slides here: [6.10.25 MCC meeting slides \(1\).pdf](#)

Below are the high-level summary notes from the meeting.

Welcome

Melanie Loyzim, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and MCC Co-Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed members. She introduced Sarah Curran, newly appointed Director of the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) and incoming MCC Co-Chair, replacing Hannah Pingree.

Sarah Curran emphasized the continued urgency of climate action in Maine and her commitment to collaborative implementation of *Maine Won't Wait*. Melanie recognized several new or returning legislative Council members and noted ongoing recruitment of youth representatives for MCC working groups.

Federal Policy Updates

Sarah Curran provided an overview of recent federal developments affecting climate funding:

- Programs funded by the **Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)** and **Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)** are experiencing disruptions.
- The U.S. House passed a **budget reconciliation package** with proposed rollbacks to IRA tax credits, including for clean energy and electric vehicles.
- These changes introduce uncertainty for climate investments in Maine.

Despite this, Maine remains committed to advancing its climate goals.

Resilience Program and Funding Updates

Brian Ambrette, Director of the State Resilience Office within the Maine Office of Community Affairs (MOCA), presented updates:

- The new **State Resilience Office, Flood Ready Maine** initiative and April 2025 passage of **LD1, An Act to Increase Storm Preparedness for Maine's Communities, Homes and Infrastructure**, are helping communities increase their resilience to climate change impacts.
- In May, the **Community Resilience Partnership (CRP)** awarded **\$8 million across 96 grants in 166 communities** to help them become resilient to the effects of climate change and to reduce fossil fuel use and carbon emissions.
- The **2025 Infrastructure Resilience Plan**, Maine's first long-term infrastructure strategy developed by the **Infrastructure Rebuilding and Resilience Commission**, outlines 50+ actions to build local and statewide climate resilience.
- Maine's \$69M **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Resilience Regional Challenge (CRRC) Resilient Maine** grant continues implementation on activities to protect Maine's communities, environment, and working waterfronts from extreme storms, flooding, and rising sea levels.

Efficiency Maine Triennial Plan VI

Michael Stoddard, Executive Director of **Efficiency Maine Trust**, provided an overview of the sixth **Triennial Plan**, approved by the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) in April 2025:

- The plan outlines many benefits for Mainers including **lower energy bills, suppression of electricity rates, and advancing carbon reduction targets**.
- Goals include **38,000 homes fully heated by heat pumps** and **9,900 homes weatherized** by 2030, and **138 megawatts of peak load reduction** by 2028.
- Demand management strategies will increase grid reliability and cost-effectiveness.
- Programs have a projected **cost-benefit ratio of 1:3.7**, with **\$492 million in projected electricity rate suppression**.
- Cumulatively the plan would result in **333,000 tons of CO₂ reduction** annually.

Scientific and Technical Committee Presentation

Dr. Ivan Fernandez, Distinguished Professor at the University of Maine's Climate Change Institute & School of Forest Resources and Dr. Susie Arnold, Marine Scientist and Director of the Center for Climate and Communities at the Island Institute, shared **Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (STS)** updates, including:

- Reminder that the role of the STS is to ground the work of the Climate Council and working groups in objective scientific information.

- The STS has begun to identify critical scientific research needs including federal funding reductions via the **Scientific Asset Questionnaire**
 - For example, loss of key scientific assets such as the NERACOOS buoys to collect data about our coast and oceans will undermine the success of MWW 2024 Update Strategy E, Action 6 to better monitor inland and coastal and marine ecosystems to increase resilience.
- STS actions might include documenting the loss of critical assets, to help inform state response.

Green Schools Initiative

Glenn Cummings, Director of Green Schools at the Maine Department of Education (DOE), Teddy Lyman, Climate Education Specialist at DOE, and Page Nichols, Chief Innovation Officer at DOE, shared progress on Maine's Green Schools Initiative:

- 39 school administrative units have adopted clean heating systems; the **Green Schools Network**, **Green Schools Symposium** (November 2025) and energy reduction guides will continue to support this transition.
- Project Green Schools awarded Maine the **National Green Schools Difference Maker Award**.
- Under the **DOE Climate Literacy Plan**, 30 climate education programs will launch under a professional development pilot grant.

Page Nichols also highlighted the **Maine Outdoor Learning Initiative**, which reached over 15,000 students between 2021-2024. Outdoor learning continues in partnership with community organizations while the Maine Outdoor Learning Initiative explores future funding.

Maine's New Building Codes

Molly Siegel, Buildings and Lead by Example Policy Advisor at GOPIF, presented on Maine's updated building and energy codes, effective April 7:

- The **Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code (MUBEC)** now incorporates stronger climate-aligned standards and is required to be enforced in municipalities with a population of 4,000 or greater.
- The code is slated to move from the State Fire Marshal's Office to MOCA to support streamlined community training and adoption.
- Benefits of the new energy codes (per household) include \$978 estimated in energy cost savings in the first year; lifecycle cost savings of \$23,000, and payback period of less than 5 years.

Next Steps and Adjourn

Melanie Loyzim closed the meeting by previewing upcoming Council activities:

- Working groups and subcommittees will meet throughout summer and fall to assess policy progress and prepare updates for a **December 1 progress report**.

- The Council will continue to monitor state and federal developments affecting climate work.
- Deliverables from the **EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant** will be submitted by **August 2, 2025**.

The meeting adjourned at 11am.