

Maine Climate Council – Community Resilience Working Group Meeting  
Friday, October 17, 2025, Virtual

### **Meeting Summary**

The purpose of this meeting was to bring together Community Resilience Working Group (CRWG) members to monitor *Maine Won't Wait* climate action plan progress and implementation and ensure collaboration and information sharing across working group members.

*Working Group Member Participants In Attendance, by Organization: Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, University of Maine, Sunrise County Economic Council, Bowdoin College, Town of Rumford, Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission, Tellus Civic Science/NOAA, Maine Geological Survey, Island Institute, New England Environmental Finance Center, the Nature Conservancy, Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission, Soltan Bass LLC, Northern Light Health, EcoPsychology Initiative, Maine State Resilience Office, Town of Van Buren, Maine Center for Disease Control, National Association of Wetland Managers, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future, Maine Emergency Management Agency, Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning, Maine Public Health Association*

### **Updates from Working Group Members**

Working group members were invited to each respond to the following prompts: *What are 1-3 recent updates from your work that have implemented and advanced the climate plan recommendations to build healthy and resilient communities? Do you have any upcoming events or resources that other working group members should be aware of? If any links to materials are available, please share in the chat.*

Below is a summarized list of updates and materials from the virtual meeting chat.

- **Maine Emergency Management Agency:** The Safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Fund application was submitted to FEMA. If awarded, this will help increase the fiscal portfolio for Maine.
- **Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning:** Robust models and tools are underway to improve understanding of inland flood risk. Two of the tools under development are an online Resilience Hub and Risk Data Hub. Community Wildfire Protection grants from the US Forest Service have one or two rounds of funding left.
  - For questions about wildfire grant funding, contact: [Kent.Nelson@maine.gov](mailto:Kent.Nelson@maine.gov)
  - Planners' Roles in Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation in Northern New England session at NNECAPA on **Tuesday, November 4 from 4:15pm to 5:15pm**. Conference info: <https://nne.planning.org/meetings/2025-northern-new-england-planning-conference/>
- **Maine Public Health Association:** New climate and health resources are available, translated into 8 different languages.
  - MPHA Annual Conference (**Monday, 10/27** in Augusta) - scholarships available, email Becca Boulos, [rebecca.boulos@mainepublichealth.org](mailto:rebecca.boulos@mainepublichealth.org);: [www.mainepublichealth.org/events/mpha-2025-annual-conference](http://www.mainepublichealth.org/events/mpha-2025-annual-conference)

- MPHA climate education materials - translated versions (Spanish, French, Portuguese, Swahili, Creole, Lingala, Vietnamese, and Somali) will be posted here as well: <https://www.mainepublichealth.org/news/climate-resilience-materials>
- **Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve:** The recent Save Our Shores Saco Bay event had one panel with a focus on getting out of harm's way. Attendees included academics, practitioners, and homeowners. WNERR is conducting a needs assessment about knowledge skills and capacity for coastal resilience. A risk workshop is being planned with collaborative partners at NOAA.
- **Sunrise County Economic Council:** The Upper Machias Bay Master Plan is about to begin the recommendation phase of the project. A Power to the People Campaign with the Mitchell Center is working on addressing the challenge of power outages with heat pump uptake and electrical solutions. Many requests for the Serving with Dignity workshop are heartening to see the focus on engagement practices.
  - Buzz the Beaver Magnet: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1s7C4M4bhcW4BFDUT93HAK4Wi1bf0R9A0/view?usp=sharing>
  - Power to the People Website: <https://sunrisecounty.org/power-to-the-people/>
- **Bowdoin College:** Following the July CRWG meeting, an idea arose to focus on working with students and practitioners. Efforts are now underway to plan a symposium on April 30th, focusing on collaborations between practitioners, students, and faculty. Working on securing funding so that it can be free to attend, more information to follow.
- **Soltan Bass LLC:** There are concerns over the ability to secure mortgages given the failure of Congress to reauthorize NFIP before the federal government shutdown. Currently there is limited appetite for private flood insurance to serve the market in Maine. Still waiting on the Bureau of Insurance Resiliency program roll-out, after which they can direct people to the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS) for home hardening, municipal buildings, and home building safety.
  - IBHS Our Story: <https://ibhs.org/our-story/>
  - IBHS Residential Wildfire Prevention: <https://ibhs.org/risk-research/wildfire/>
  - NPR article on flood insurance: <https://www.npr.org/2025/10/16/nx-s1-5574322/government-shutdown-helps-private-flood-insurance-companies>
- **Town of Rumford:** Rumford has recently joined the Community Resilience Partnership. There is significant flood recovery progress underway, including relocating playing fields out of floodplains and opening a new 450-acre community forest with accessible trails.
  - Land for Maine's Future was a contributing partner to the community forest effort. <https://www.mainepublic.org/environment-and-outdoors/2025-09-22/rumford-community-forest-officially-opens-to-the-public>
- **Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission:** Recently completed a needs assessment on the role of regional coordinators and are using the results to create a workplan for the second year of the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge grant. Towns want to talk about wildfire prevention, and SMPDC is thinking through regional products for regional wildfire prevention and resources. SMPDC is also working on grid resilience planning with CMP, consultants, and stakeholders
  - **Wednesday, Nov. 12,** Southern Maine Climate Action Workshop, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/southern-maine-climate-action-workshop-2025-tickets->

[1781645322119#:~:text=This%20event%20is%20designed%20to,action%2C%20from%20planning%20to%20implementation](#)

- **Tellus Civic Science (Contractor with NOAA):** Currently rolling out small grants projects and supporting multiple trainings. NOAA released high-resolution land cover data for Maine, now available for resilience planning. A peer convening between Rhode Island and Southern Maine practitioners will focus on resilience planning in action from a regional perspective. If you have ideas about how NOAA and federal partners can support technical assistance with projects, reach out to Abbie Sherwin, [abbie.sherwin@noaa.gov](mailto:abbie.sherwin@noaa.gov)
  - NOAA OCM webinar: Funding and Financing Coastal Resilience: Spotlight on Innovative Taxes and Fees – **November 13, 2 – 4:30 pm**  
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdl-pePwxc7hS3nSeGh2Ip5vxnleXuwwDbcYqYHzYRn2VJ5cw/viewform>
  - NOAA Atlas 15 webinar – **October 30th 2:00 pm**  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScSvX2FWSIN9wPMhxdZAo\\_Px5SDYoKzk4OZotC7kQ3D-guQFw/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScSvX2FWSIN9wPMhxdZAo_Px5SDYoKzk4OZotC7kQ3D-guQFw/viewform)
- **University of Maine:** Noted an upcoming Coastal Carbon Ecosystem symposium and grant activities for community-based plant nurseries for green infrastructure projects.
  - **Tuesday, Oct 21.** Coastal Carbon Ecosystem Symposium [https://umainesystem-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/parker\\_gassett\\_maine\\_edu/EQjBg\\_V446JFttrbEzOXA\\_PQBgrRtVIZPsUJVSrsLtHxbew](https://umainesystem-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/parker_gassett_maine_edu/EQjBg_V446JFttrbEzOXA_PQBgrRtVIZPsUJVSrsLtHxbew)
  - Coastal Erosion Outreach and Training (dates Oct-Nov.)
- **Island Institute:** Co-leading the Maine Island Project to gather information, identify gaps, and share profiles/storymaps with communities. Volunteer fatigue has been identified as a challenge, hoping that these success stories will provide capacity to communities in their projects. Also working on education and nature-based strategies in Casco Bay.
- **Maine Geological Survey:** Shared updates on beach mapping, coastal bluff stability mapping, and resilience workshop series. Beach mapping shows partial dune recovery (11 feet gained back of 25 feet lost in 2024 storms). Coastal bluff stability mapping: 90% complete for Casco Bay, with 5-year mapping schedule for entire coast. Paying attention to a project in between Scarborough and Cape Elizabeth that has been considering relocation of Sawyer Road, which cuts through marsh and was identified as vulnerable infrastructure.
  - Resilient Workshop Machias, **Oct. 27:** <https://sunrisecounty.org/2025/09/bluff-erosion-challenges-downeast-maine/>
  - Resilient Workshop Bath, **Nov. 6:** <https://www.midcoastcog.com/events-1/shoreline-solutions-workshop>
  - Resilient Workshop Blue Hill, **Nov. 13**
  - Maine DEP OURSHORE Workshop at UMaine on **Nov. 20**  
<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MEDEP/bulletins/3eded1c>
  - Maine Beach Mapping Program data (new 2025 data being published probably next week) [https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mgs/hazards/beach\\_mapping/index.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mgs/hazards/beach_mapping/index.shtml)
  - Coastal Structure and Dune Crest Overtopping Potential Tool (updated by end of 2025)  
<https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mgs/hazards/csdcioop/index.shtml>
- **New England Environmental Finance Center:** Coalition building with the Environmental Protection Network and non-profit community organizations that support environmental justice communities and underserved communities that lost funding. Developing targeted support for

funding and financing such as hosting climate funding office hours with GMRI and other colleagues.

- New England Environmental Justice Hub <https://www.hub.grassrootsfund.org/>
- Beta version of NEEFC Funding and Financing Navigator - database of funding opportunities (federal, state, philanthropic) in New England, will be continuously added to/updated
- **The Nature Conservancy:** Provided updates on their strategic planning and Kennebec River Restoration project. In the draft planning process for TNC strategies, strong focus on flood risk reduction using nature-based solutions. The Kennebec River Restoration project was recently in the news for the success around fish passage and benefits, but important to note there is also an emphasis on community economic well-being such as a commitment to strengthening the economy around dams and supporting the Sappi Mill transition.
- **Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission:** Lincoln County submitted a comprehensive, multijurisdictional 2026 Hazard Mitigation Plan integrating multiple state initiatives such as Maine Won't Wait, the Plan for Infrastructure Resilience, and social resilience components. This will ideally be a model for others to develop their comprehensive plans. EMA is hosting workshops open to anyone in the state.
  - **November 18** - AWR213: Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience Awareness, <https://www.maine.gov/mema/about/calendar/awr213-critical-infrastructure-security-and-resilience-awareness-tue-11182025-1200>
  - **January 6-7** - MGT315: Conducting Risk Assessments for Critical Community Assets
  - **January 8** - MGT414: Critical Infrastructure Resilience and Community Lifelines
  - **January 20** - MGT452: Physical and Cybersecurity for Critical Infrastructure
  - Draft HMP for public comment, <https://www.lcrpc.org/stories/lincoln-county-2026-hazard-mitigation-plan-update>, the submitted draft will be uploaded to our website shortly.
- **Northern Light Health:** Since July, additional progress has been made on implementing the resiliency plan, such as purchasing temporary flood control mitigation devices, holding a training for maintenance staff to practice deploying devices, rooftop equipment evaluation and securement, expansion of generators and emergency power coverage. Upcoming is a sustainable healthcare podcast series.
  - Northern Light Health Sustainable Healthcare podcast episodes live: <https://northernlighthealth.org/MISC/Podcast/Sustainable-Healthcare>
- **EcoPsychology Initiative:** There is a growing need for psychological resilience support, especially in schools across all age ranges. Reminder that the Community Resilience Partnership now includes addressing mental health resilience as one of the actions.
- **Maine State Resilience Office:** The Maine Office of Community Affairs (MOCA) has successfully consolidated 8 programs under one roof (35-40 staff). MOCA is planning a **November 12** opening with new services including funding finder tool. The Community Resilience Partnership completed contracts with 10 regional coordinators for year 2, and reported 100+ applications for Community Action Grants, with awards expected in December. The State Resilience Office has identified 5 priorities for LD1 funding that is intended to help with flood risk communication. Examples include: updating flood maps in areas without digital coverage, developing inland flood risk model for future precipitation scenarios, and creating an Online Risk Data Hub that integrates resources with the Community Resilience Workbook.

- **Town of Van Buren:** Focused on human-centered design projects including the redevelopment of property lost in a flood to become a successful community garden, expanding the garden space from 10 to 20, growing canopy for the downtown village, and providing excess food through a farm stand. There is also space for free education for community members such as art classes. Across the region town managers are meeting to work together on resilience and identify gaps. There is a 10-community cohort applying to a Community Action Grant together.
- **Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention**
  - Received next year of Climate/Health funding from US CDC. Currently completing/delivering County EMA Extreme Temperature Response Plans this week for Oxford, Androscoggin, and Franklin Counties - next week will be reaching out to County EMA Directors they haven't yet worked with on these plans to solicit 6 new counties who would like to work with us on plans/annexes in the coming year.
  - Ran an education campaign this summer focused on preventing heat illness in the workplace - check out some components at [www.maine.gov/cooldown](http://www.maine.gov/cooldown). The campaign will also run next summer. Finalizing the Extreme Temperature Resilience Community Guidebook - expecting it to be published and ready to share by the end of next month.
- **Maine Department of Environmental Protection**
  - Interagency Regulatory Forum – looking at storm response regulatory guidance currently, shifting to forward looking land use regulatory questions likely next year. Grounded in CRWG recommendations going back to 2020, updating in 2024, and tying in infrastructure rebuilding and resilience commission recommendations.
  - Developing guidance for shoreline stabilization and supporting property owner outreach events and advanced training for practitioners > OUR SHORE (many collaborators over last few years to make possible) – builds also on new DEP regulations adopted spring 2025 that encourage nature-based design use, reduce permitting thresholds for projects designed with biodegradable materials. This work informed recent updating to US Army Corps permits for Maine.
  - Inspiring video from Little Diamond Island community dune builders, <https://youtu.be/Nsx9YVKXXj8>
  - Shore Corps host site application will be coming out soon.
  - Shout out about Drought Task Force, MEMA convening, incredible model of using science to inform decision making, interdisciplinary, and involves a lot of partners, including federal partners.

### Next Steps

- Next Climate Council Meeting is December 1st, 1-4pm, hybrid with an option to join in person in Augusta or virtually through Zoom. During the meeting the *MWW* annual progress report will be presented.
- We will be in touch to identify 2-3 times in 2026 for the CRWG to meet.