



**maine** DEPARTMENT OF  
**Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry**





Members of the Legislature: Welcome back! Department staff are looking forward to working with you this session, and truly appreciate your willingness to serve our state.

DACF is entrusted with stewarding many of Maine's most treasured resources and the vibrant natural resource economy they support. That includes things like stopping forest fires; mapping the ocean floor; keeping our parks and public lands pristine and accessible; planning wise land use; improving and supporting land-based industries; and ensuring the safety and abundance of the food we eat.

DACF touches the lives of many every day, and we are committed to being a Department that works for all Maine people. You will find that, at every level, our Bureau and program staff are dedicated, creative, and excited to serve Maine's people and some of our most iconic industries.

I'm proud that our Department has had a strong working partnership with the legislature, and specifically, the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. Working together, we can ensure that Maine has policies and programs in place that promote the best stewardship of our state's natural resources and the success of the industries they support.

I hope that this briefing, which outlines Commissioner's Office staff, Bureau Directors and key program areas, is a helpful resource as you seek to learn more about our Department and its areas of expertise. We encourage you to reach out during the session with any questions.

We look forward to our continued collaboration with you.

*Amanda E. Beal*

Commissioner





DACF is charged with promoting and advancing Maine's agricultural resources, protecting and enhancing nearly 18 million acres of forestland, managing more than 700,000 acres of state parks and public lands, and administering numerous science-based programs focused on food safety and quality, resource management, land use planning, and conservation.



# OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER



**Amanda E. Beal**  
Commissioner

Amanda has served as the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) since 2019. Before leading DACF, Amanda was the president and CEO of Maine Farmland Trust.

Amanda serves as a Maine Climate Council member and co-chairs the Council's Natural and Working Lands working group. She also currently serves as 2nd vice president on the board of directors of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, as board president of the Northeast Association of State Departments of Agriculture, and as board president of Food Export Northeast.

Amanda earned a B.A. from the University of Southern Maine and an M.S. from Tufts University, having completed the Agriculture, Food & Environment program with a specialization in the convergence of natural resource policy and food security. Amanda grew up on her family's commercial dairy farm in Litchfield, Maine, and now lives in Warren, Maine, where she and her husband own a 35-acre farm.



**Randy Charette**  
Deputy Commissioner

Randy joined DACF as Deputy Commissioner in 2016. He is the Department's primary contact on human resources-related matters, internal department policies, and facilities management. Randy aids the Commissioner in many areas of her responsibilities, including policy development, financial issues, and internal operations. He is currently a member of the Capitol Planning Commission and the AARP Age-Friendly State Steering Committee. Before joining DACF, Randy managed groundwood mill operations at Madison Paper Industries. He holds a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Maine and an M.B.A. from Thomas College.



**Nancy McBrady**  
Deputy Commissioner

Nancy joined DACF as Bureau of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources Director in 2019 and transitioned to Deputy Commissioner in January 2023. At the Bureau, she led the effort to create the PFAS Response Program and continues to engage in PFAS policy development on behalf of the department. Before joining DACF, she served as the Executive Director of the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine. Nancy also served as a Trustee of The Nature Conservancy of Maine and previously practiced environmental and land use law in Portland. She graduated from Williams College and the University of Maine School of Law.



# OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER



**Emily Horton** Director of Policy and Community Engagement

Emily joined the Commissioner's Office in 2019 and acts as the DACF legislative contact, including serving as policy liaison to the Governor's Office and the ACF Committee, the full legislature, and Maine's Congressional delegation. She is the tribal liaison for the department and oversees all rulemaking and FOIA requests for DACF. Emily has worked on natural resource policy at the federal level and has over ten years of experience with Maine's agricultural and environmental sectors. She holds a B.S. in Environmental Studies from Lesley University and a Master's in Public Health from the University of New England. She grew up in Waldo County.



**Claire Hawkins** Director, Natural Resource Markets & Economic Development

Claire joined the Commissioner's Office in 2020. She works closely with all DACF bureaus, providing strategic advisory on public investment, trade and market development, program development, policy, fund administration, international affairs, research and data coordination, and collaboration with non-profits, financial institutions, and industry organizations. Claire has broad experience in private-sector market research, strategy consulting, and innovation. Most recently, she served as Director of Investment Operations at the Maine Technology Institute (MTI). She holds a B.A. from the University of Vermont and an M.S. from the University of New Hampshire and has additional training in development finance, circular economics, and sustainability.



**Beth Valentine** Director, Fund to Address PFAS Contamination

Beth joined DACF in September 2022 to oversee the administration and coordination of the PFAS Fund, work with the PFAS Fund Advisory Committee, lead planning to establish funding priorities and implement programs to allocate funds. Before joining DACF, Beth worked as an administrative and appellate attorney. She also worked as a coastal environmental planner with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. She holds degrees from Hamilton College (B.A.), the University of Rhode Island (M.A.), and the University of Maine School of Law (J.D.).



**Jo D. Saffair** Special Assistant to the Commissioner

Jo D. joined the Commissioner's Office in 2023, bringing extensive expertise in natural resources and conservation. She is a former consultant with DACF and state agencies, organizations, and academic institutions, and she also served as the Executive Director of the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund. She supports DACF initiatives, such as leading the facilitation of the Maine Climate Council's Natural and Working Lands Work Group to update recommendations for Maine Won't Wait, the state's climate action plan. Jo D. helped to facilitate the Agricultural Workers Minimum Wage Committee and is supporting the department's efforts to develop a solar project permitting system on high-value agricultural land. She holds a B.S. in Agriculture from the University of Connecticut and a Master's in Environmental Law and Policy from Vermont Law School.



# OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER



[Aimee Carlton](#) Business Operations Manager

Aimee started her role as the Business Operations Manager with DACF in 2013. She is the primary contact on budget and financial matters and manages the areas of technology, procurement, contract management, audit, and business controls. Before DACF, in her 26-year career, she has worked at the Departments of Marine Resources, Environmental Protection, Administration and Financial Services, and Health and Human Services.



[Jim Britt](#) Director of Communications

Jim joined the Commissioner's Office in 2019 and has fostered a communications culture that prioritizes inclusivity, ensuring that every voice is heard. His efforts extend to making department-wide expertise readily accessible to the press and the public. At DACF, our communications goal is to disseminate crucial information about resources impacting people's lives, facilitating access to essential data for informed decision-making. Before DACF, Jim was a business owner and communications consultant, collaborating with small and medium-sized businesses and non-profits in Maine and New England. His academic background includes a BSBA from Youngstown State University, complemented by executive education program work at Harvard Kennedy School. In 2023, Jim received national recognition as the recipient of the National State Departments of Agriculture Communications Award.



[Kathy Eastman](#) Assistant to the Commissioner and Constituent Liaison

Kathy joined DACF in 2014 after working for over fifteen years in the Office of the Attorney General in various divisions, including Consumer Protection, Child Support Enforcement, Child Protection, General Government, Litigation, Criminal, and the Food & Drug Administration - State Tobacco Program. Before that, she worked for the Workers' Compensation Advocate Office and the Workers' Compensation Board. Kathy works closely with the Commissioner and is DACF's constituent services liaison and serves as the liaison with the Governor's Office.



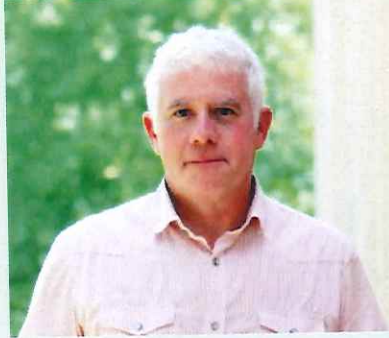
# BUREAU DIRECTORS



**Judy East**

Director, Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning

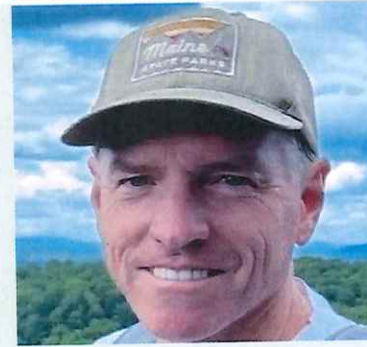
Judy has 35 years of experience in land use planning and became Bureau Director in late 2021. For two years prior, she was the Executive Director of the Land Use Planning Commission, one of six programs within the Bureau. Before that, she served for 17 years as the Executive Director of the Washington County Council of Governments. Judy brings expertise in numerous planning issues, including land use, housing, climate resilience, and community infrastructure needs. She holds a degree in Biology from the University of Toronto and an M.Sc. in Planning from the University of British Columbia.



**Craig Lapine**

Director, Bureau of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources

Craig is newly appointed to the Bureau Director position as of January 2023. Prior to that, he served as Special Assistant to Commissioner Beal starting in 2020, where he has worked to support DACF's policy and communications team and manage projects, including leading the Ending Hunger in Maine by 2030 initiative, standing up the State's Local Food Purchase Assistance program, and more. Before DACF, Craig founded and ran an agricultural education and food access organization for 18 years. Craig holds an AB from Princeton and an M.Ed. from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He and his family own and operate a farm in Pownal.



**Andy Cutko**

Director, Bureau of Parks and Lands

Andy has led the Bureau since 2019. His 35-year career in conservation includes positions with the US Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, NatureServe (an international conservation group), forestry and engineering consulting, and the Maine Natural Areas Program, a program within DACF's Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning. He holds a B.A. in Biology from Williams College and a Master of Forestry degree from Duke University.



**Patty Cormier**

Director and Maine State Forester, Bureau of Forestry

Patty was appointed to the Bureau Director and Maine State Forester role in 2019. Before this, she was a District Forester for the Maine Forest Service for 20 years. Prior to that, Patty was a Landowner Assistance Forester for Georgia Pacific Corporation. Patty serves on the National Fire Committee, is a State Forester Liaison for the Northeast-Midwest State Foresters Association Fire Committee and serves as Chair of the three-person Baxter State Park Authority. Patty holds a B.S. in Forest Management for the University of Maine at Orono.



## CONTACT US: LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY CONCERNS



Please contact Emily Horton,  
Director of Policy and Community  
Engagement with all DACF  
legislative or regulatory inquiries.

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(207) 592-6851 – cell

## OUR BUREAUS



DACF is comprised of four bureaus, which contain various types of programs that protect and support the natural resources that are integral to our quality of life in Maine and the people who work in these important sectors of our economy:

- **Bureau of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources**
- **Bureau of Parks and Lands**
- **Bureau of Forestry**
- **Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning**

In the following pages, you will learn more about each bureau; however, it is also important to note that, as a department, we have been actively working in cross-cutting ways to ensure excellent service to those who depend on us. A few examples include the following:

- Spearheading the work born out of the 129th Legislature, "Everyone at the Table: Maine's Roadmap to End Hunger by 2030" describes the steps we need to take to create a future where every Maine person has access to food and other resources they need to thrive. Implementation work for this roadmap is now underway in conjunction with the Governor's Office of Policy, Innovation, and the Future.
- Engaging in the work of the Maine Climate Council and its Working Groups, including staff serving on the Council and as Working Group co-chairs or members. Climate change impacts every one of our bureaus in numerous ways; therefore, this work remains important to DACF.
- Responding to PFAS contamination by providing response assistance, guidance, and funding to PFAS-impacted farms across the state. We work closely with the Department of Environmental Protection and the Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention to respond to producer needs and push for national and federal programmatic and financial support for states and impacted farmers.



## OUR BUREAUS



Bureau of Agriculture, Food  
and Rural Resources

Craig Lapine, Director



Overseen by Director Craig Lapine, the Bureau comprises three divisions, a division-level program, and three quasi-independent boards and commissions.

The **Agricultural Resource Development Division (ARD)** is BAFRR's rural and economic development arm. ARD supports state fairs, the Maine Agricultural Trades Show, Real Maine, and other market development and expansion activities benefitting Maine foods and farms. Financial assistance programs like Specialty Crop Block Program (SCBGP) grants, Agriculture Development grants, Farms for the Future, the Dairy Improvement Fund, and others live within the Division. ARD is home to food security initiatives, including The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), Maine Senior Farm Share Program, Hunters for the Hungry, and Ending Hunger Corps. Content-area experts, including the State's Farm Viability and Farmland Protection Specialist, the Local Foods Institutional Market Development Coordinator, and the State Soil Scientist, work under the ARD umbrella.

The **Quality Assurance and Regulation Division (QAR)** ensures the safety of Maine's food supply and the fairness of consumer transactions. QAR staff safeguard the security and proper labeling of eggs, milk, red meat, poultry, and foods sold in retail. QAR ensures compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act and helps producers implement Good Agricultural Practices. Via the Weights and Measures program, QAR provides that Maine consumers are fairly charged for products requiring accurate measurement, from gas stations to firewood dealers to delis and—more recently—cannabis dispensaries. QAR also registers and collects fees on feeds, seeds, and fertilizers.

The **Division of Animal and Plant Health (APH)** is home to the State Veterinarian, who exercises broad oversight over the health of livestock, as well as the State Horticulturalist, who promotes practices in horticulture and entomology that uphold the health of our wild and cultivated plant materials. APH professionals provide a range of technical assistance to agricultural producers on broad topics, from feed to fencing to nutrient management. APH's Animal Welfare Program ensures the humane and proper treatment of dogs, cats, and other pets. APH also certifies the health of seed potatoes to protect the State's flagship potato industry.

BAFRR's **PFAS Response Program** supports farms by identifying PFAS contamination, pursuing strategies to reduce or eliminate PFAS, and providing technical and financial assistance to retain farm viability. These actions help keep PFAS-contaminated food out of the food supply. The program also works with Maine agricultural services providers to connect impacted producers with mental health resources to support the well-being of PFAS-impacted farm families. The Response Program works closely with the Fund to Address PFAS Contamination.



# BUREAU OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL RESOURCES

## BAFRR Continued

Harness racing has its roots in impromptu races among farmers and their wagons, and the [Maine Harness Racing Commission](#) provides oversight and support to the industry that descends from this storied pastime. The Commission promotes fairness and integrity in racing and works to protect the wellbeing of the sport's athletes: Maine's Standardbred racehorses. The Commission's five independent Commissioners establish rules for the sport that Commission staff enforce.

Maine is one of a handful of states that regulate milk prices. However, the [Maine Milk Commission](#) is unique in ensuring that consumers have access to Maine milk while accounting for the sustainability of our dairy industry. Maine has adopted tools such as the Maine Milk Pool Program, the Maine Dairy Stabilization Program (a.k.a. the Tier Program), and Maine Dairy Relief payments to protect dairy farms that play a vital role in Maine's agricultural economy. The Maine Milk Commission exercises independent policy-making authority, including the power to set minimum milk prices at the wholesale and retail levels.

The [Board of Pesticides Control](#) is Maine's lead agency for pesticide oversight. The BPC licenses pesticide dealers and applicators and provides education and technical assistance to professionals and the public regarding the safe and proper use of pesticides. The public board makes policy decisions, and experts in science, toxicology, and enforcement staff the BPC.

## Recent Initiatives Snapshot + Looking Ahead

- Thanks to DACF's Agriculture Infrastructure Investment Program, three new meat and poultry slaughter and processing facilities have recently come online, increasing Maine's meat processing capacity by approximately 20 percent. In addition, two more plants have joined the Cooperative Interstate Shipping (CIS) program. Acceptance into CIS allows state-inspected plants to sell their products anywhere within the United States.
- Maine's USDA-funded Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) program will begin making grants to middle-of-the-supply-chain farmers, food producers and processors in 2024.

## Recent Initiatives Snapshot and Looking Ahead Continued

- In 2024, the Farmer Drought Relief Program will begin offering grants for financial assistance for farmers to develop new water sources.
- The Maine Healthy Soils Program will begin offering financial and technical assistance to farmers implementing healthy soils practices in 2024.
- The Maine Senior Farm Share Program is testing partnerships with Maine farmers' markets to improve access for Maine's eligible older adults.
- Pursuant to LD 1881, BAFRR will develop rules regarding licensing of solar developments of five acres or more proposed for high-value agricultural land (HVAL) and mitigation fees associated with permitted developments.
- QAR is planning to overhaul and modernize the software used to track the feeds, seeds, and fertilizers it registers. It is also finalizing an RFP to replace its aging inspection information database.
- Maine's Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) program, funded by USDA, is entering its third and likely final year. Maine farmers will have earned nearly \$2 million for supplying Maine foods to the emergency and charitable food system.
- QAR is undertaking an update of its aging Cony Road facility, home to the Metrology Lab, PFAS Response, and the TEFAP team.
- The Animal Welfare Program will be issuing an RFP to engage a partner to manage Help Fix ME, Maine's low-income spay/neuter program.
- The PFAS Response team is transitioning oversight of the PFAS Income Replacement Program to the newly established Fund to Address PFAS Contamination housed in the DACF Commissioner's Office.
- The PFAS team is leading the creation of an interagency database that will be used by DACF, DEP, DHHS, and IFW in managing the State's PFAS response.
- The PFAS Response Program has worked closely with Maine CDC and DEP to further refine our understanding of how PFAS move in the environment, including plants and animals. This work will continue in the coming year, along with collaboration with academic research partners such as UMaine Cooperative Extension.
- APH continues its work tracking invasive species and developing Integrated Pest Management-based strategies to manage these organisms and protect Maine's native flora and the heritage industries that depend on them.



## OUR BUREAUS



Bureau of Parks and Lands

Andy Cutko, Director



The Bureau protects and manages some of Maine's most unique and precious natural and cultural resources and provides diverse recreational and educational opportunities that deliver environmental and economic benefits for current and future generations.

- The Bureau manages 48 [State Parks and Historic Sites](#), including 12 State Park Campgrounds, contributing more than an estimated \$250 million to Maine's economy in indirect benefits.
- In addition, the Bureau manages more than 6300,000 acres of [Public Lands](#) for recreation, cultural and historic preservation, wildlife and biodiversity, water quality, and timber production. Conservation easements, leases, and management agreements bring the total land area with BPL legal involvement to over 2 million acres.
- The [Boating Program](#) manages public boat launches and maintains navigational aids on Maine's most heavily used lakes.
- The [Off-Road Recreational Vehicle](#) Program provides grants to recreational clubs and municipalities to maintain ATV and snowmobile trails.
- The [Submerged Lands](#) Program administers submerged lands leases and provides grants for harbor management.
- The [Maine Conservation Corps](#) is a job-training program that works collaboratively with state agencies and conservation organizations.
- The [Community Grants and Recreation Program](#) administers the Land and Water Conservation Fund and Recreational Trails Program.



# BUREAU OF PARKS AND LANDS

## Recent Initiatives Snapshot

- In 2023, almost 3 million people enjoyed the day-use and campground areas of Maine State Parks. While this fell just short of the record-breaking years in 2022 and 2021, the slight decrease can be attributed mainly to poor weather conditions. Despite this, we anticipate a continued upward trend in visitation. Maine State Parks thrive through partnerships, exemplified by recent collaborations with organizations such as L.L. Bean (providing loaned equipment in “beach boxes”), Impact Melanoma (installing sunscreen dispensers), First Light Journey (connecting with Maine tribes), the Portland Museum of Art (displaying “art on the trail”), and various others.
- BPL is infusing \$50 million in Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan investments in State Parks across Maine. Completed projects include improved roads at Sebago Lake, Peaks-Kenney, Camden Hills, Rangeley Lake, and Lily Bay State Park, a renovated bridge at Reid State Park, and numerous equipment purchases. Ongoing architecture and design work includes park entrance stations, washrooms and plumbing improvements, campsite redesigns, and much more.
- As the full Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan allocation of \$50 million must be obligated to State Park projects by December 31, 2024, staff are working diligently to administer contracts, adhere to state procurement procedures, and minimize disruptions during busy State Park seasons.
- Timber markets started strong in FY23 but lagged later in the year, resulting in a harvest of 102,900 cords on Maine Public Lands (compared to 116,000 cords in FY 2022). The Public Lands Division is almost entirely funded through timber revenues.
- BPL continues working with the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife staff to model and manage deer wintering area (DWA) habitat on the Scraggly Lake Public Land Unit. This collaborative effort can serve as a model for other DWA management plans.
- After purchasing the Madison Branch rail trail, a 32-mile corridor from Madison to Embden, in November 2022, contractors have been working on converting the trail to recreational use. We anticipate the trail will be open to the public for the winter 2023/24 season.

## Looking Ahead

- With more than \$22 million in approved funding from federal, state, and private sources, BPL is working on conserving more than 35,000 acres of Maine land through fee purchases and conservation easements.
- Maine's Public Land trails, campsites, and boat launches continue to experience heavy use. Sites like Tumbledown Mountain and the Cutler Coast are seeing some degradation from overuse. Public lands need trail maintenance and construction, educational information kiosks, parking, and access improvements. The Bureau is leveraging funds from the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) to invest in long-term trail improvements.
- Municipal Recreation Sites: Through the federal Great American Outdoors Act, Maine has received increased federal Land and Water Conservation Fund funding. These federal funds, directed to states and municipalities, require a 50% match, and the state and local municipalities are currently challenged to meet this match requirement. In conjunction with the Commissioner's Office and other national partners, the Bureau is advocating to improve the efficiency of the LWCF, including changing the match requirement and adding administrative funding.
- Off-road vehicle use has increased dramatically in recent years. The opening of the 32-mile Madison Branch in the winter of 2023/2024 should provide an excellent resource for rail-trail users. On other trails, the Bureau is working to address challenges imposed by ownership, multi-use compatibility, and liability concerns.
- The BPL is critical in helping the state reach its 30% conservation goal pursuant to the *Maine Won't Wait* climate action plan. Collaboration with conservation groups, funding sources, other state agencies, and landowners will be critical to reaching this goal.
- The Bureau is investigating the importance of its 630,000 acres of Public Reserve Lands for carbon storage and sequestration.



## OUR BUREAUS



Bureau of Forestry  
*Maine Forest Service*

Patty Cormier, Director



The [Bureau of Forestry](#) - Maine Forest Service (MFS) - was established in 1891 and works to ensure that the state's trees and forest lands will continue to benefit present and future generations of Mainers. The Bureau includes three divisions.

- [Forest Protection](#) is committed to the prevention and suppression of forest fires. Some still remember the widespread devastation resulting from the 1947 fires, which brought about significant and positive changes to the MFS that have continued over the decades. While the number of wildfires has been trending upward over the last few years, and we face increasingly unpredictable climate conditions, MFS is prepared to knock down fires quickly because of its upgraded training, improved field communications, and recently updated air fleet.
- [Forest Policy and Management](#) is dedicated to assisting the public and landowners with forest-related issues and education. Ten [District Foresters](#) across the state are available to help woodland owners make good choices about their land. [Project Canopy](#), Maine's urban and community forestry program, provides grants to municipalities to develop management plans for their community woodlands. Our [Direct Link Loan](#) program provides reduced-interest loans to help loggers purchase equipment and protect water quality. MFS completes forest inventory annually, and this information is vital for public policy decisions and strategic decisions by members of the forest industry. MFS Foresters also review timber harvest activities to assess the implementation and effectiveness of efforts to protect water quality and other resources.
- [Forest Health and Monitoring](#) is engaged in the battle between Maine's forest and insects and diseases. Occasionally, insects or disease gets the upper hand, and woodlands or people are affected to the point where action must occur. MFS works to reduce invasive threats using many strategies. For those not having reached Maine, efforts continue to slow its spread by restricting the flow of contaminated wood. For others, the damage is mitigated by releasing biological agents.



# BUREAU OF FORESTRY

## Recent Initiatives Snapshot

- The Project Canopy [program](#) was awarded a 1.5 million dollar grant for increased outreach and education to focus on supporting urban and community forestry work through sub-grants to communities designated as disadvantaged.
- A new statewide education program, the [Adaptive BMP Collaborative \(ABC\)](#), is now live. This program is designed for all those involved in Maine's forest products industry. ABC will make it easier for forestry and logging professionals to find recognized, quality training programs and identify professionals who have participated in those training programs. ABC endorses forestry training programs that integrate specific adult education principles and practices and meet strict training quality criteria. The program is guided by an [advisory panel](#) that includes logging contractors, professional foresters, forest products companies, non-profit organizations, and state agencies.
- Andy Whitman was hired as the Bureau's first [Carbon Specialist](#). This position was a recommendation of the Forest Carbon Task Force. Andy will be focused on advising on all things carbon statewide.
- Implemented Maine's [new open burn law](#) and activated a wildfire defense [grant](#) to work with vulnerable communities for wildfire readiness and response planning.
- Launched a new [webinar series](#) on various forestry subjects, offered monthly, with all available for viewing on our MFS website afterward.
- A new program was launched to provide cost-share assistance to loggers to purchase skidder bridges. This program is statewide and will cover 80% of the cost of bridges for qualifying loggers. Assisting loggers with acquiring bridges works towards promoting climate-friendly practices when working around water.

## Looking Ahead

- MFS will continue to adapt its support of management and maintenance of ash in response to the growing emerald ash borer threat. This support will include a department collaboration led by MFS to provide regular updates to cities and town leaders whose infrastructure will be impacted by dying ash trees; continued collaboration with Wabanaki natural resource managers in strategies to protect cultural ash resources; increased efforts to preserve the genetic diversity of ash; and increased efforts to support informed management of ash in the forest. Efforts also continue to monitor the extent of quarantines for multiple other invasive insect invasions.
- Implementation of funding for municipalities for Browntail Moth mitigation will continue.
- Forest Rangers will continue to grow their efforts to improve fire resilience by reducing wildfire risk across Maine's landscape. Measures will include working with stakeholders representing landowners, fire departments, counties, and communities and action plans to encourage wildfire preparedness. Community-wide protection plans, prescribed burning, mechanical chipping, external training, and other actions can reduce fuel loading in high-risk areas. Through comprehensive outreach, successful fire planning can help prepare for wildfire response and contain damaging spread and impact. MFS staff will continue to assist the forestry community in responding to climate change by promoting good stewardship, adaptive best practices, and strong markets for forest products.
- With the increase in federal funding to support the Maine Forest Action Plan, various programs within MFS will be able to expand programs designed to help Maine people, including the Project Canopy Program for municipalities, fire training, and programs for stakeholders along with a partnership with the Maine Tree program.
- Outreach will continue to fill open positions -- workforce capacity remains a challenge, especially with forester positions.



## OUR BUREAUS



### Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning

Judith East, Director



The [Bureau](#) provides science for resource management, conservation, and land use planning, and consists of six programs.

- [Maine Geological Survey](#) (MGS) is the primary source of information on the geologic framework of the state, its groundwater resources, rising sea level, critical minerals, and geologic hazards. Information is presented in free web pages and thousands of maps and publications, available in digital downloads and paper formats.
- [Maine Natural Areas Program](#) (MNAP) facilitates the conservation of Maine's biodiversity by providing comprehensive information and scientific expertise on at-risk species, natural ecosystems, wildlife habitats, ecological reserves, and invasive plants to landowners, developers, resource managers, land trusts, towns, and other conservation partners.
- [Land for Maine's Future Program](#) (LMF) is the State of Maine's primary funding vehicle for conserving land for its natural and recreational value. It provides funding to protect farmland and working waterfronts. The Program was established in 1987 and has completed projects in all 16 counties covering mountain summits, shorelines of rivers, lakes, ponds, coastal islands, beaches, forests, grasslands, wildlife habitat, farmland, and wetlands.
- [Municipal Planning Assistance Program](#) (MPAP) provides land use planning expertise for Maine citizens, municipalities, regional planning organizations, state agencies, and the Legislature. The Program provides grants to towns for projects that improve water quality, increase resiliency, restore habitat, promote sustainable development, and enhance the economy while preserving natural resources.
- [Floodplain Management Program](#) (FMP) helps communities participating in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) with technical information, floodplain maps, and model ordinances.
- [Land Use Planning Commission](#) (LUPC) serves as the planning and zoning authority for the unorganized and deorganized areas of the State, an area greater than 10 million acres. The Unorganized Territories often referred to as the UT, include towns, townships, and plantations that either have no local government or have chosen not to administer land use controls at the local level.



# BUREAU OF RESOURCE INFORMATION AND LAND USE PLANNING

## Recent Initiatives Snapshot

- The Bureau established a dozen new groundwater monitoring sites to track how aquifers respond to droughts, rainy periods, and saltwater intrusion in coastal areas.
- Activated a [sea-level rise ticker](#), updated monthly, to provide the latest information and projections for changes in local sea level.
- Awarded [Coastal Community Grants](#) to seven towns and two Regional Planning Councils to assist with climate change adaptation activities; coordinated timing with Community Resilience Partnership to allow applicants to maximize project scope and matching fund efficiencies.
- Updated methodology and finalized 2023 list of Maine Service Centers and submitted [Growth Management Program](#) evaluation to three legislative committees.
- Initiated a New-to-ME [webinar series](#) to support young and new-to-Maine planning professionals with a mentoring network and training on Maine land use law and regulation.
- Renewed or adopted replacement zoning for three expiring custom zoning plans: the White Mountain National Forest Resource Plan, the Attean Twp. and Denniston Plt. Concept Plan, and the Brassua Lake Concept Plan.
- Created an online instructional video with tips on filling out a permit application and an example of a completed building permit application.
- Issued three Requests for Proposals and selected [18 new projects](#) totaling \$8.23 million in new investments, which will be leveraged with \$13.9 million in public and private funding and will protect 22,135 acres. Of the 37 projects chosen in 2022, 14 have closed, adding 15,766 acres to Maine's conserved lands portfolio. Another 23 projects are in process to protect an additional 27,000 acres, including over 1,250 acres of working lands.

## Looking Ahead

- Examine what may be the largest concentration of iron- and manganese-bearing rocks in the US in collaboration with the USGS and the University of Maine in Aroostook County; these rare earth elements are used in electronics, defense industries, and electric vehicles.
- Coordinate across BRILUP programs, DACF Bureaus, and sister agencies to implement the recommendations of *Maine Won't Wait*.
- Develop plans for a rock-core storage facility to preserve, archive, and make accessible a geological repository of Maine geology.
- Support completion of the second Scientific Assessment of Climate Change and its Effects in Maine for use by the Maine Climate Council and its multiple workgroups in early 2024.
- Facilitate the strategic planning, coordination, and implementation of the state's long-term monitoring of saltmarshes to track saltmarsh response to sea level rise.
- Complete development and gather feedback to refine a Town Resources Map viewer to assist with Comprehensive Plan preparation; refine Growth Management Law and associated Rules to streamline plan preparation and support implementation.
- Initiate LUPC rulemaking to address accessory dwelling units, short-term rental units based on the policy review and public outreach completed in 2023. Complete background research and a policy review for updating LUPC's standards for exterior lighting.
- Finalize and implement the enforcement work plan to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the compliance program in LUPC's service area.
- Complete rulemaking and issue new Program Statement for land conservation proposals; this RFP likely exhaust available LMF funding.
- Launch the Land for Maine's Future Program online application process.





DACF works as an agency, and with our partners throughout the state, to help businesses and communities steward and celebrate our most cherished spaces and places: the crop and farmland that beautify our state and feed us, the woodlots and forests iconic to the Pinetree State where maple syrup also flows from sugarbushes, the thousands of acres we enjoy in our parks and public lands, and by providing important data and resources to enable landowners across the state to manage Maine's natural resources sustainably.

Thank You.





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