

# Maine Climate Council

## Coastal and Marine Working Group Meeting

### Co-Chairs:

Carl Wilson, Department of Marine Resources

Curt Brown, Ready Seafood Company



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF  
Policy Innovation  
and the Future



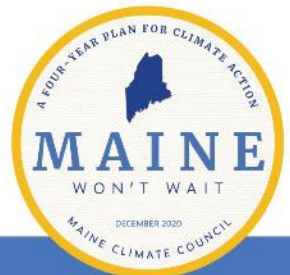
MAINE DEPARTMENT OF  
Environmental Protection



May 15, 2024

# Welcome

- If you are a working group member:
  - please rename yourselves and add \*asterisk in front of your name
- If you are a member of the public and / or interested state staff
  - please rename yourselves to include “public participant”
- Everyone’s voices are valuable
  - We will take working group member comments / questions first
  - Public participants, please add your comments and questions to the chat and we will make time to get to them



# Meeting Objectives

- Receive feedback from Mitchell Center's preliminary outreach, consider implications
- Review and agree on broad recommendations and actions
- Consider important context of our work for executive summary
- Share next steps in Maine Climate Council process
- Celebrate outcome of dedicated efforts of Working Group members



# Meeting Agenda

- 9:00** Welcome & Updates  
*Co-Chairs Carl Wilson (ME DMR) and Curt Brown (Ready Seafood), Laura Taylor Singer (Facilitator)*
- 9:15** Preliminary Findings for Mitchell Center Outreach  
*Dr. Caroline Noblet and Louise Chaplin, University of Maine*
- 10:15** Overview of Recommendations and Actions  
*Laura Singer and Jesica Waller (ME DMR)*
- 11:15** Public Input
- 11:25** Review of executive summary caveats  
*Carl Wilson and Jes Waller (ME DMR)*
- 11:45** Final thoughts and Next Steps
- 12:00** **THANK YOU**

**Option Tour of Ready Seafood!**



---

---

# Amplifying Voices: Representing Diverse Perspectives

— Coastal and Marine  
Working Group —

---

---

## May Progress Check-In

# Reminder of the Project Goal



March 2023

To ensure the populations in Maine most impacted by climate change are aware of and have the opportunity to influence State climate programs and policies by iteratively and intentionally engaging these “priority populations” in the Maine Climate Council process in ways that are meaningful for each population.



# The Mitchell Center Team's Role



- Develop engagement topics based on Equity Subcommittee Report (ESC) from March 2023 and Working Group (WG) feedback in January 2024
- Collaborate & contract with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)
- Engage with Priority Populations (PPs) & support CBO engagements
- Support engagement approaches that are appropriate and natural for CBOs and PPs & fit within the predetermined timeline
- Communicate feedback from PPs and CBOs to WGs to inform WG recommendations to the Maine Climate Council (today's presentation)
- The inclusion of equity consideration lies with WGs in their recommendations (and then the Council broadly)

# Original Priority Populations List from GOPIF

- Low income households, including renters, home owners, and mobile home residents
- Older adults and youth
- Black or POC communities
- Tribal communities
- Low income communities
- Disadvantaged communities
- People with limited English proficiency, including New Mainers
- Recipients of LIHEAP, LIAP, or other energy assistance benefits
- People with mobility challenges
- People without access to reliable transportation
- Migrant farm workers and other outdoor workers
- Businesses in the natural resource industries like agriculture, forestry, and fishing who are operating at the economic margin or suffer disproportionate climate risk
- Un/underemployed people who are also representatives of a priority population or are transitioning from prison or recovery
- Minority, women-owned or veteran owned business enterprises (MWBVEs)
- Rural communities and small towns with limited staff or fiscal capacity
- Climate-frontline communities



# Original Priority Populations List

- Low income households, including renters, home owners, and mobile home residents
- Older adults and youth
- Black or POC communities
- **Tribal communities**
- Low income communities
- Disadvantaged communities
- People with limited English proficiency, including New Mainers
- Recipients of LIHEAP, LIAP, or other energy assistance benefits
- People with mobility challenges
- People without access to reliable transportation
- Migrant farm workers and other outdoor workers
- Businesses in the natural resource industries like agriculture, forestry, and fishing who are operating at the economic margin or suffer disproportionate climate risk
- Un/underemployed people who are also representatives of a priority population or are transitioning from prison or recovery
- Minority, women-owned or veteran owned business enterprises (MWBVEs)
- Rural communities and small towns with limited staff or fiscal capacity
- Climate-frontline communities



# We are continuing conversations with Wabanaki partners, building on multi-year relationships

- 2018-2021 Klein, Ranco, Hart, Penobscot Nation, “Future of Dams” (*Penobscot citizens and DNR staff*)
- 2021-2023 Klein, Lamb, Penobscot Nation & Passamaquoddy Tribe, “Community Window Insert Builds & Energy Justice” (*Penobscot & Passamaquoddy citizens & Housing staff*)
- 2022-2023 Klein, Lamb, Penobscot Nation, Passamaquoddy Tribe, Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, “Community Resilience Partnership Enrollment” (*citizens & staff from 3 tribes*)
- 2023-2024 Klein, Lamb, ACTT, “Intertribal Solar Cooperative” (*citizens & staff from each Wabanaki nation*)
- 2023-2027+ Klein, Lamb, Wabanaki Sustainable Energy Team, “EPA Star Grant” (*citizens and/or tribal government staff from each Wabanaki nation*)



# So far, iterative conversations have underscored the importance of

- Not including Wabanaki nations among a list of “priority populations”
- Recognizing Tribal Sovereignty
- Facilitating Government to Government interactions (e.g., Chiefs, Tribal Council)
- Incorporating tribal decision-making authority in the climate plan process
- Addressing historic injustices

***As we continue to learn more about how we can support Government-to-Government interactions:***

*We are especially grateful to Dr. Darren Ranco, Jasmine Lamb, Natalie Michelle, and Ambassador Bryant for their time and continued efforts in empowering the voices of Wabanaki Tribes.*

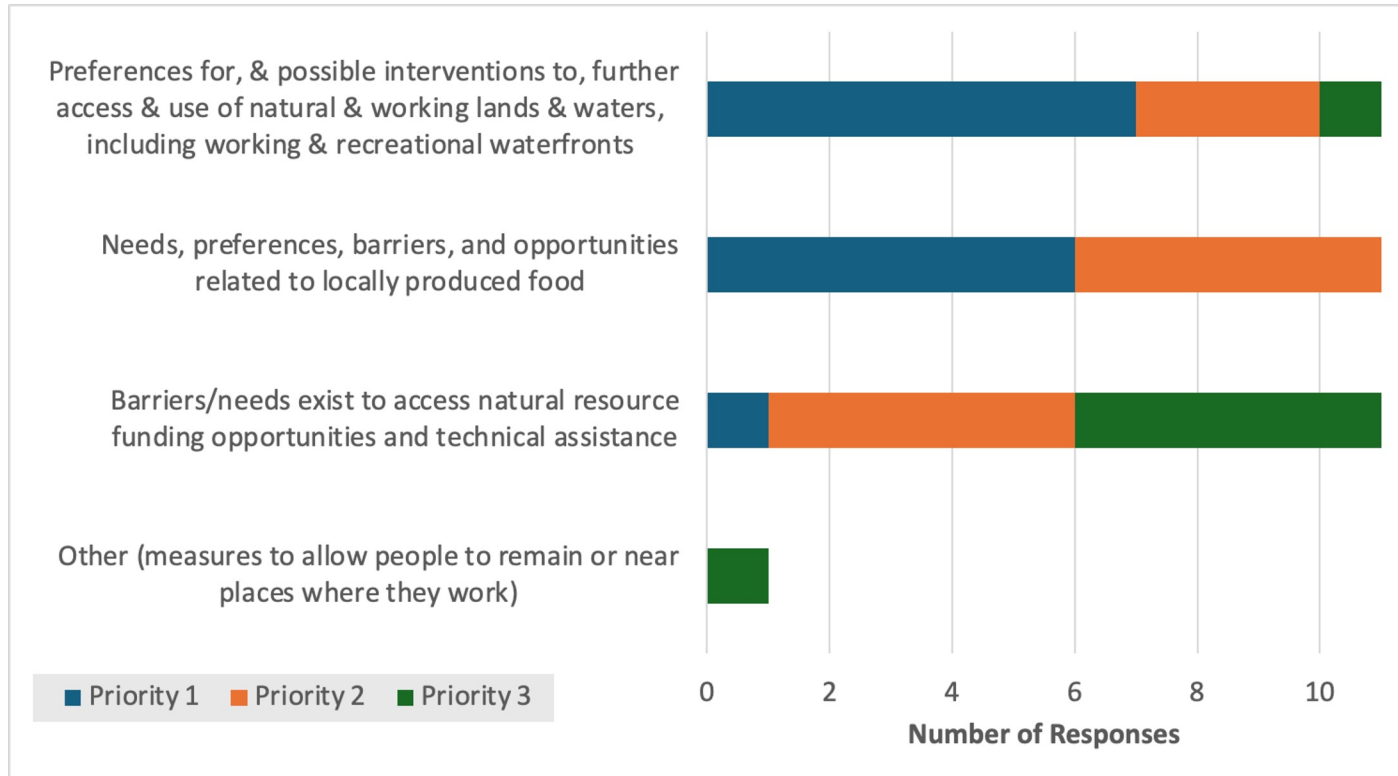
# Current Timeline

1. Report to WG about 1st round of engagements -- mid-May 2024
2. Second round of engagement activities -- Summer 2024
3. Report to MCC about 2nd round -- September 2024



Photo from Maine Sustainability and Water Conference session

# Thank you for earlier input on your priority questions!



Thank you to the **21** members of C&M WG who responded to our survey of Working Groups!

# Our engagement plan built on existing & planned activities

2023-2027 EPA Star grant *"The role of state networks in advancing community-initiated and -engaged sustainable energy action in underserved communities"*

- Community Sustainable Energy Team (Sep 2023-present)
  - *representatives from 6 communities with "high" social vulnerability*
- Maine Community Alternative Energy Survey (April-June 2024)
- Maine Community Alternative Energy Focus group (April 3, 2024)
- Maine Sustainability & Water Conference session 2 (March 28, 2024)
- MAINECAN: the Maine community-led Energy & Climate Action Network

**We incorporated MCC questions in these existing/planned engagements & existing classes/meetings we were involved in**

# From this foundation, we were able to “quickly” develop contracts with 9 community-based organizations

- A Climate To Thrive
- Center for an Ecology-Based Economy
- Coastal Enterprises Inc.
- Community Organizing Alliance
- Kennebec Valley Community Action Partnership
- Maine Council on Aging
- Maine Environmental Education Association
- PassivhausME
- Sunrise County Economic Council

*We are also in the process of exploring a contract with the Island Institute*



## In addition, we have multiple partners supporting this effort in other ways:

- Governor's Cabinet on Aging
- Maine Community Action Partnership
- MCAN!
- Resilient Communities L3C
- UMaine Center on Aging
- WindowDressers

# To-date, we have collaboratively completed 29 engagements for this 1st round

- Over **1,000** members of Priority Populations reached
  - Working Group-specific topics
  - Maine Climate Council general topics
- A **variety of engagement approaches**
  - Day-long conference sessions
  - Panels
  - Focus group discussions (ex: at low-income housing, older adult housing)
  - Participation at festivals/shows
  - Community discussions
  - Round Tables (ex: Pathways to Clean Energy Jobs, Climate Change & Food Justice)
  - Teach-ins
  - Webinars
  - Surveys

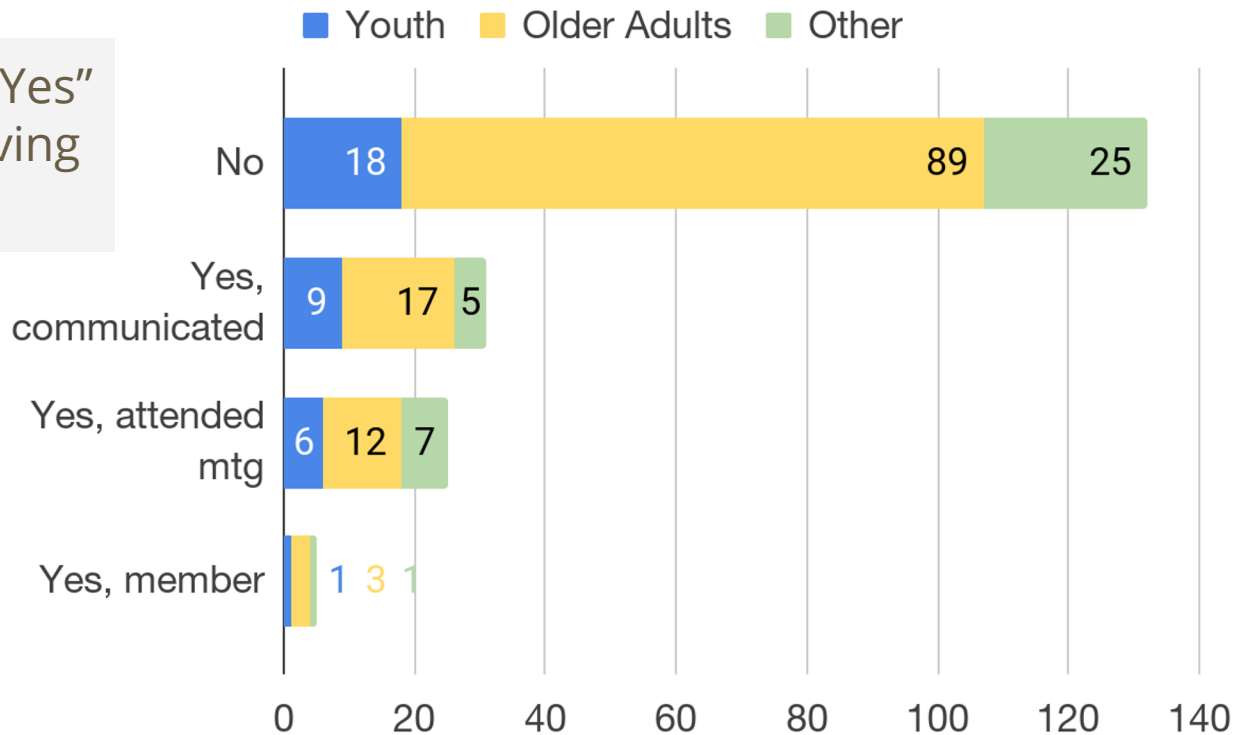
Photo courtesy of  
Community  
Organizing Alliance



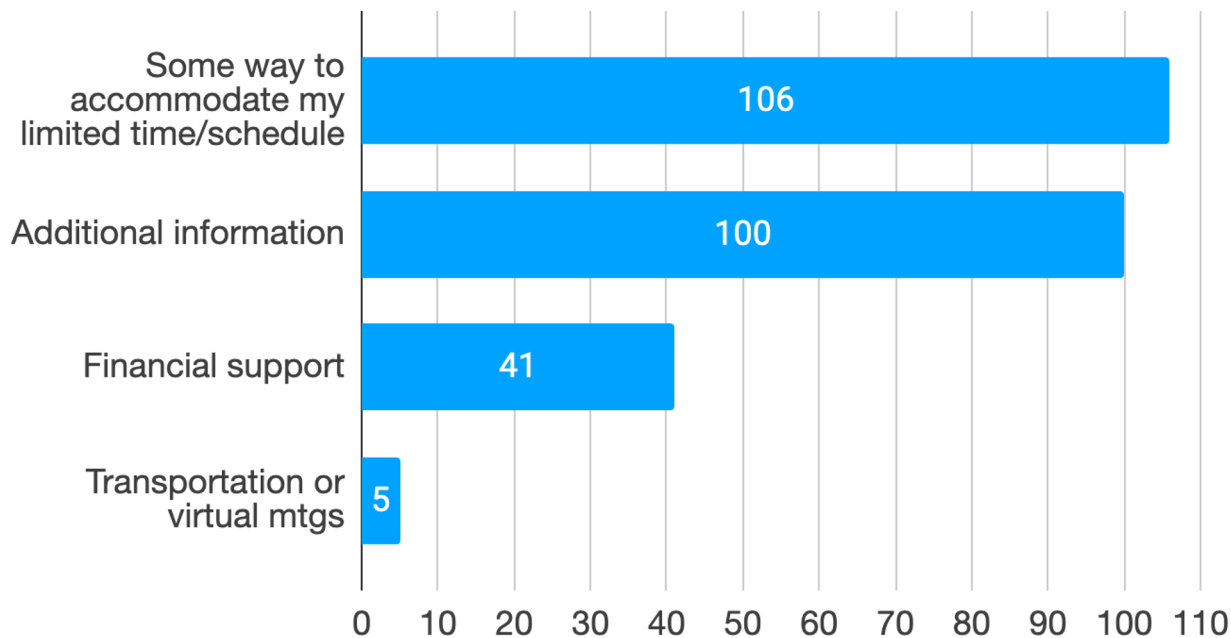
# Survey Results: Have you ever been involved in Maine Climate Council activities?

61% of 352 responded “Yes” or “Maybe a little” to having heard of the MCC

68% do/may want to be involved in this update



# What type of support would you need to be involved in the Maine Climate Council's update to the climate plan?



*"We need to put resources into public engagement on a totally different level, social media engagement, a marketing campaign to really highlight civic engagement as valuable and actually crucial to our lives."*

GOOD NEWS: 86% of 63 respondents trust climate change info from the State

# When asked ‘What are the biggest needs for you/ your community?’:

10% wrote in a *related issue* including:

- Healthy/Local Food
- Clean Water
- Preservation and/or conservation of natural spaces; Sustainability

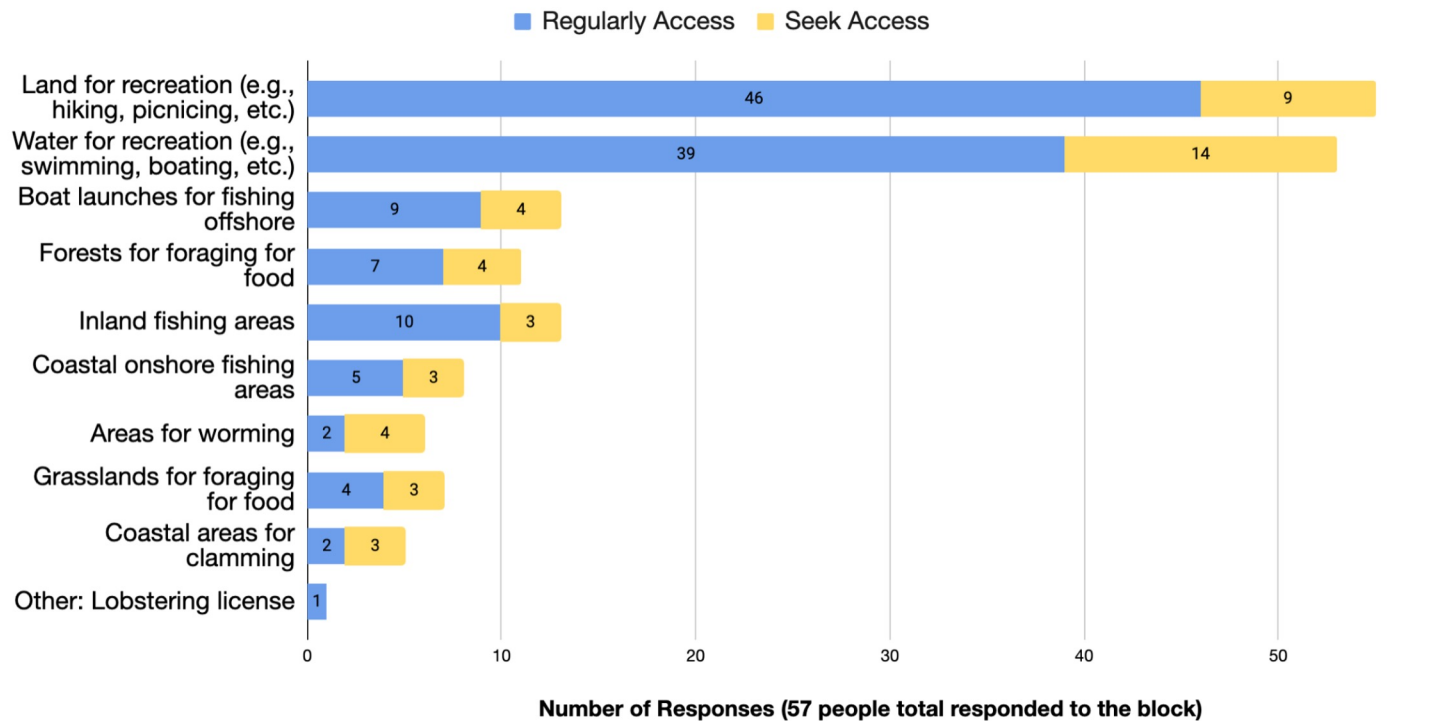
An additional 12% noted *Climate Change*

Data from Maine Citizen Survey,  
priority population respondents

Photo from Maine  
Sustainability and Water  
Conference session



# Q1: What are perceptions, barriers, preferences, and possible interventions related to access to and use of green space, natural and working lands and waters, including working and recreational waterfronts?



From SCEC survey: 100% of rural survey respondents report using natural and working lands and waters for food and recreation; nearly all use multiple resources, e.g. forest gathering AND hunting or fishing, etc.

# Q1: What are perceptions, barriers, preferences, and possible interventions related to access to and use of green space, natural and working lands and waters, including working and recreational waterfronts?

## Barriers to access

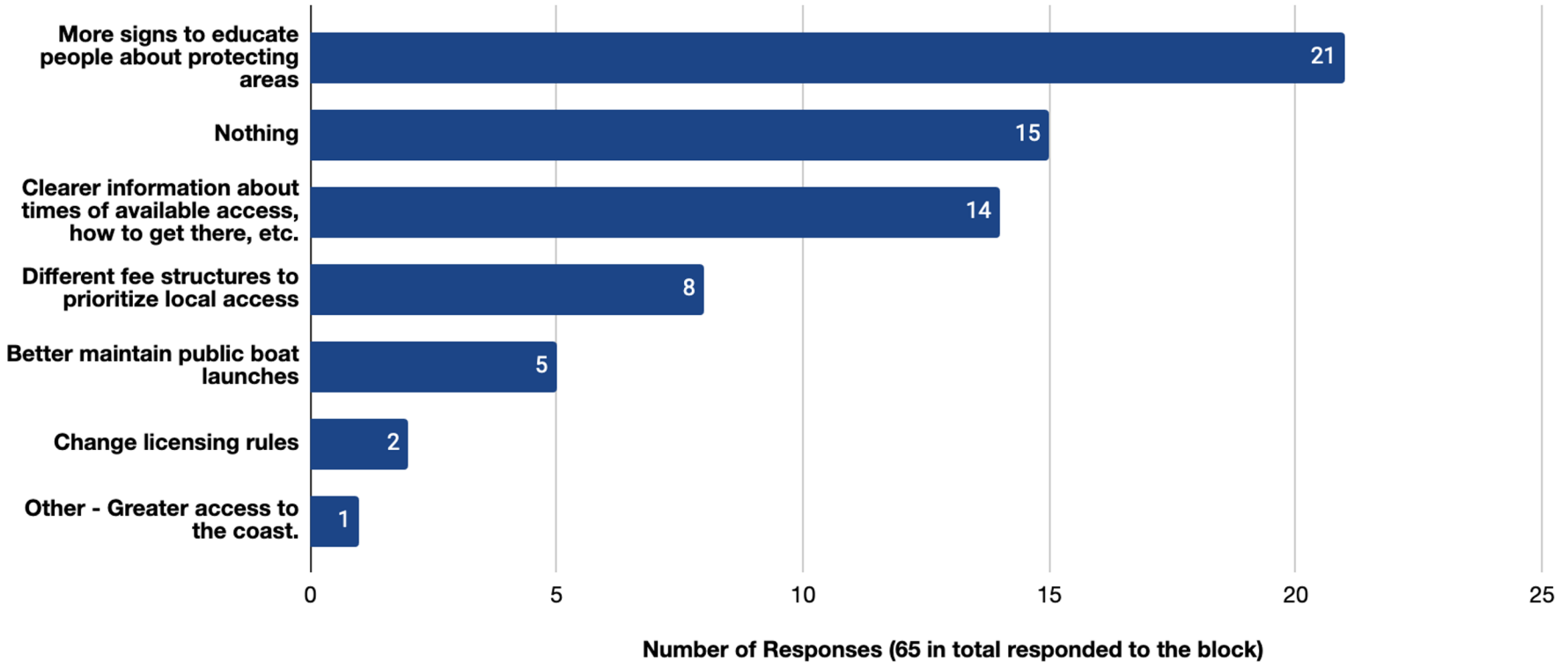
- Lack of information about what's available
- Language barriers
- Cost of access (parking, fees - often high due to tourism)
- Transportation to resources sites (recreational and working); associated costs
- Processes to gain access may prohibit use (forms, application fees, communicating with administrators, systemic inequalities)

## Barriers to use

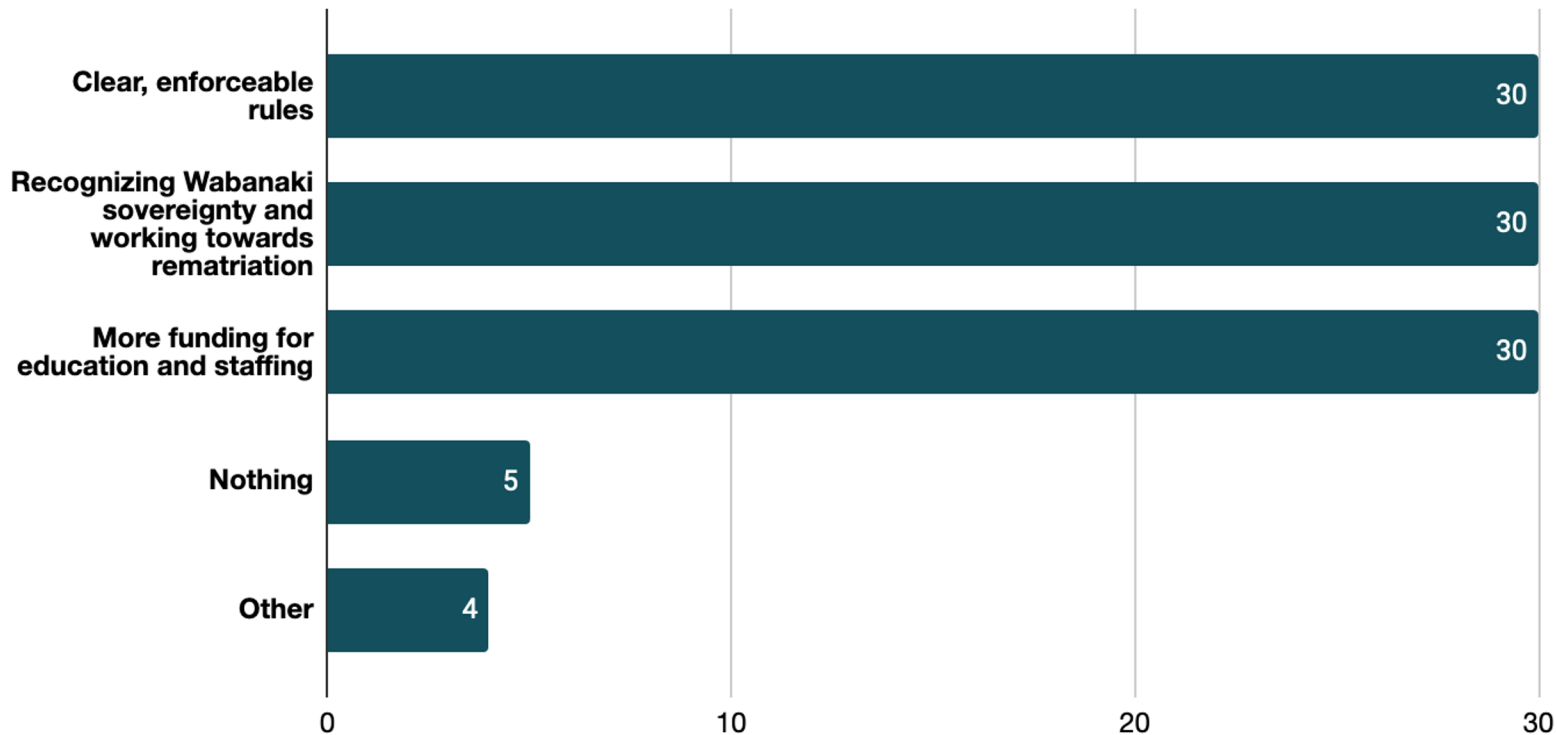
- Changes to ways of using resources: increased tick populations/browntail moth; lack of frozen ponds, etc.; lack of snow
- Safety of using some resources (ex: water pollution & swimming; foraging & hunting)



# What could be improved in terms of how you access these resources?



## What could be improved in terms of how these areas are protected?



Number of Responses (99 in total responded to the block)

# Q2: What could help you and your community to eat more locally produced food? What programs are successful at increasing access to Maine foods? Are there foods that are difficult to find in Maine?

## Accessing Local Foods

*Good news:* vast majority of folks think they can find local food through grocery stores, Farm Shares, CSAs, and farmers markets

On average, folks estimate they get about 35% of their food from local sources

Low income Mainers indicate that they make use of lots of different sources for local food, including local agricultural businesses/ farm markets and food pantries.

Photo courtesy of Center for Ecology Based Economy



## Q2: What could help you and your community to eat more locally produced food? What programs are successful at increasing access to Maine foods? Are there foods that are difficult to find in Maine?

### Opportunities for more local food

**Price of local food is a barrier** (especially meat and vegetables)

May be hard to find culturally preferred food - opportunity for farmers

Some areas are 'food deserts' (convenience stores only)

Information on products at grocery stores is strongly desired! Hard to tell sometimes what's local

Lack of awareness about local options (who grows/sells what; word of mouth)

Empower people to produce their own food (community gardens, etc.)

Helping with Access: Maine Harvest Bucks connected to SNAP benefits; special programs for seniors to access local foods



## Q3: What barriers/needs exist to access natural resource funding opportunities and technical assistance?

### Barriers

- Harder to get funding for projects like planting trees along a river (smaller, less infrastructure-based projects) or maintenance projects, than it is to get funded for big engineering projects
- Application process/rules are complicated
- Towns have limited capacity to make sure all voices are represented when doing things like vulnerability assessments
- Data issues - lack GIS data/ capacity for vulnerability assessments; Lack digitized data, or data is stored or collected in very different ways - this presents a big challenge to getting assessments or plans in place when towns already have minimal capacity

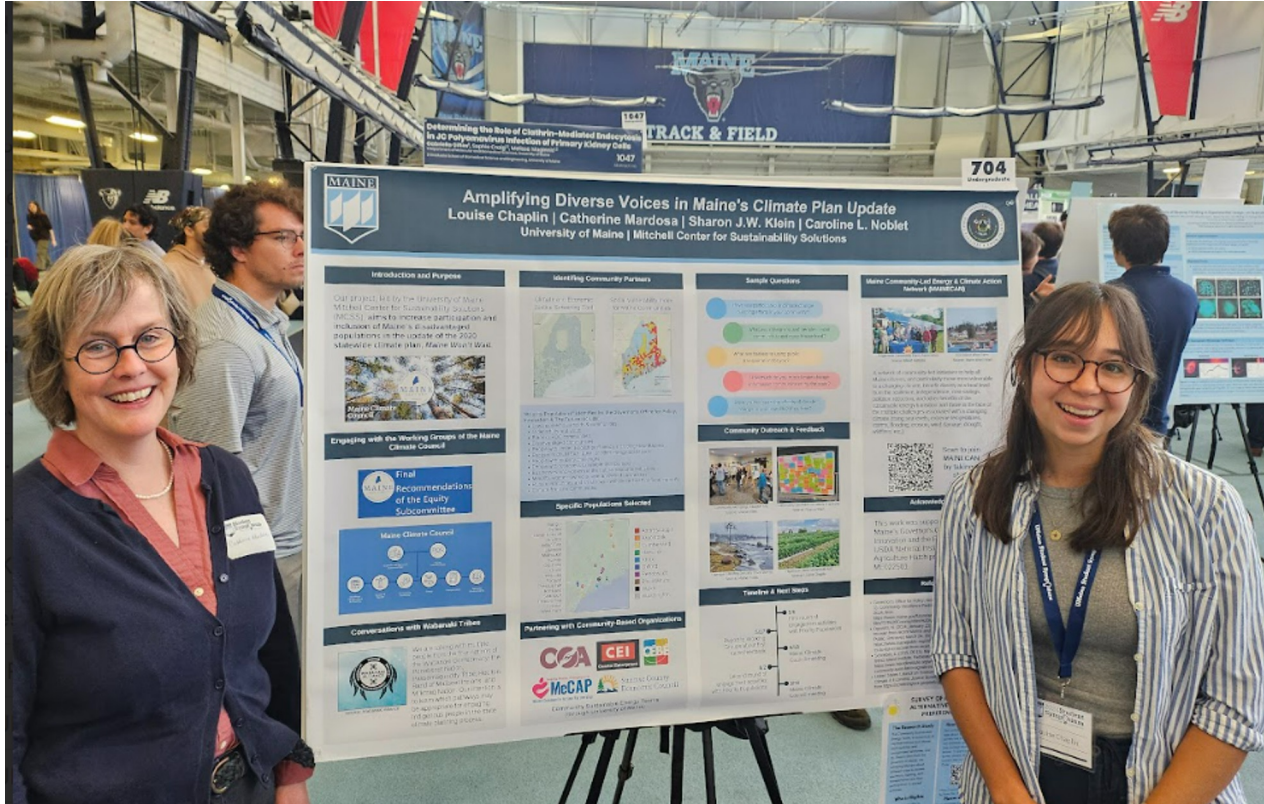
### Needs

More government staff/ support for municipal staff

# What's next....As you work on your recommendations

1. Cross-WG Learning: as we do presentations to the next 4 Working Groups next week, GOPIF will share presentations with WG co-chairs
  - a. Natural & Working Lands WG had similar topics to Coastal & Marine WG
  - b. Community Resilience WG had topics related to some Coastal & Marine themes
2. How can we be helpful to you? (anything you saw here today that you'd like follow up on?)
3. Second round of engagement activities -- Summer 2024
  - a. Are there groups you really need to hear from, or hear more from?

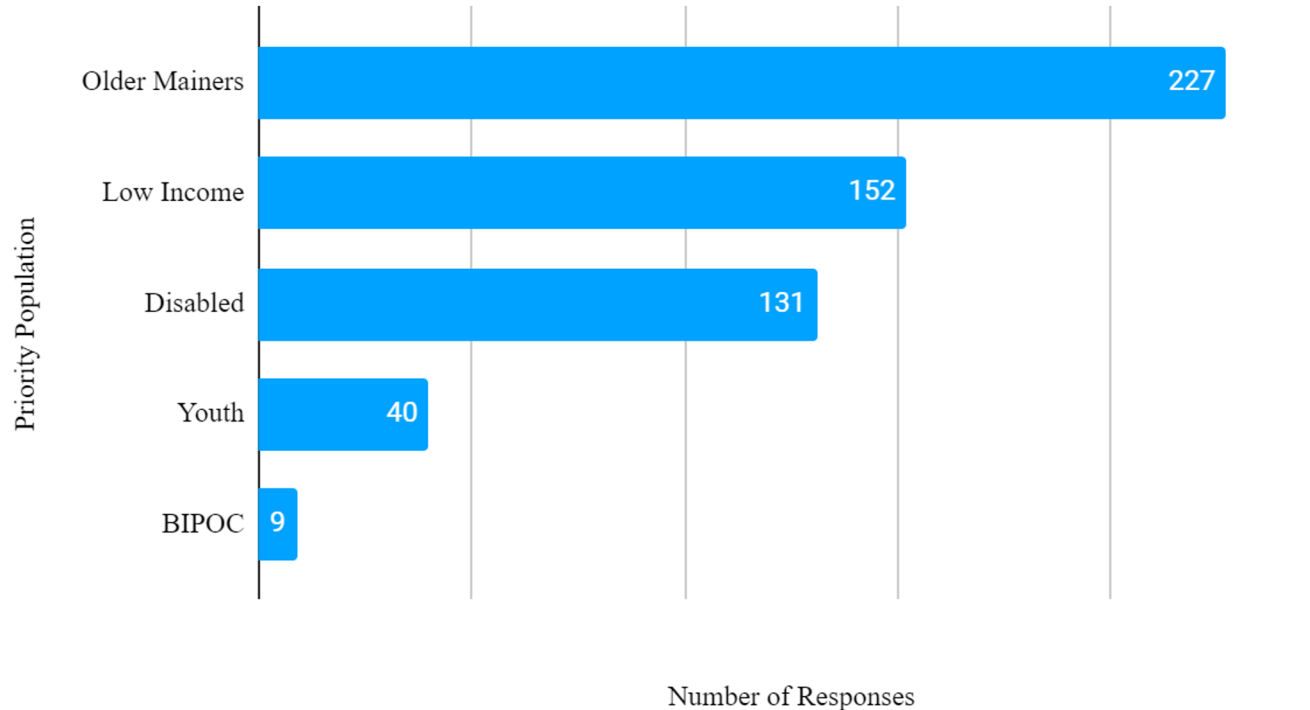
# Thank you!





# Appendix 1: Who responded to our survey?

Priority Population Survey Responses



# 2024 CMWG Subcommittees

- Fisheries/Aquaculture  
*Ben Martens, Jes Waller*
- Working Waterfronts/Infrastructure  
*Nick Batista, Bill Needleman*
- Monitoring and Coastal & Marine Habitats  
*Becca Peters, Ivy Frignoca,  
Curtis Bohlen and Jeremy Gabrielson*



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF  
Policy Innovation  
and the Future



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF  
Environmental Protection



May 15, 2024

# 3 Broad Themes

1. Support pathways to adaption of Maine's fisheries, aquaculture and seafood industries.
2. Invest in building healthy and resilient coastal communities and critical place-based infrastructure.
3. Seek opportunities to monitor, conserve and increase resilience of coastal and marine ecosystems.



# Recommendations

- Promote stewardship of resilient ecosystems to take advantage of diverse markets and grow existing opportunities
- Provide assistance and financing to maintain and expand equitable access to cultural, traditional, emerging and heritage industry and infrastructure
- Protect natural and working lands and waters and seek opportunities to restore and increase resilience of coastal, marine, and inland habitats
- Expand outreach and offer technical assistance
- Enhance ongoing monitoring and data collection that provide baseline data to guide informed decision making, and create new monitoring programs to fill data gaps
- Empower local and regional community resilience efforts
- Rapidly increase resilience of public and private working waterfront infrastructure to climate change
- Preserve and expand waterfront access, including intertidal access



# Recommendations and Actions Table

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NAM\\_UUjZT6rQlr942gwxGSNimRoAib-Q/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NAM_UUjZT6rQlr942gwxGSNimRoAib-Q/edit)



# Key Questions

- *Are there any concerns with how these were combined?*
- *Is there room for additional consolidation?*
- *Do these represent our collective work and discussions?*





# Executive Summary and Caveats

- Working Group met 8 times (mostly in-person) from October to May with dozens of subgroup meetings in four areas.
- Reviewed *Maine Won't Wait* language to include reference to coastal and marine, not just inland resources, where appropriate.
- Winter storms provided a clear focus on resilient coastal communities and marine infrastructure in the face of a changing climate.
- Limited in ability to consider all perspectives by lack of Tribal representative and timing of Mitchell Center's engagement efforts.
- Worked deliberately to integrate equity into recommendations and actions. Equity remains a broad concern within the WG with specific examples brought forward.
- Efforts were made to address potential overlap with Community Resilience, Natural and Working Lands, and Transportation working groups though additional integration over the coming months by GOPIF will be necessary.
- This report is broad and comprehensive, laying out specific actions and implementation steps that should be considered not only by the Maine Climate Council but others who have an interest in sustaining Maine's coastal and marine ecosystem and assisting Maine's communities as they adapt to a changing climate.



# Next Steps

- **Co-chairs and staff work with subcommittee leads to finalize and add any feedback from today's meeting.**
- ***Additional review via email of draft final report (TBD)***
- **June 5 - Final working group report due to GOPIF**
- **June 18 - Maine Climate Council meets**



**Tour of the facility!**

