



Mission

Maine Audubon works to conserve Maine's wildlife and wildlife habitat by engaging people of all ages in education, conservation, and action.

Deployment Truisms

- Low-cost renewables? Need to cut down some trees.
- ↑ Transmission ↑
- Not all greenfields ≠ High value habitat
- ~~NIMBY~~

FEBRUARY 2020



BEST PRACTICES

for Low Impact Solar Siting, Design, and Maintenance *Avoiding and Minimizing Impacts to Natural and Agricultural Resources*

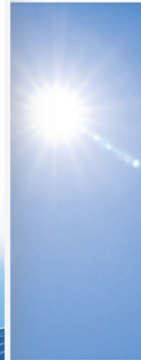
Increasing renewable energy production in Maine is critical to mitigating the impacts of climate change on Maine's natural resources and agricultural and natural resource based economies. Solar projects that follow these low-impact best practices will help Maine people, businesses, and communities realize solar's climate and economic benefits, while avoiding or significantly reducing undue impacts to wildlife, farming, and critical natural resources such as clean water.

The purpose of this document, authored by Maine-based environmental and agricultural nonprofit organizations, is to advise solar developers, municipalities, and the public about ways to avoid or minimize development conflicts. It is not meant to supersede required federal, state and municipal permitting; likewise, we recommend using these best practices regardless of permit requirements. It is also important to note that solar development is subject to other considerations, including interconnection, project economics, and other siting constraints.



Model Site Plan Regulations and Conditional Use Permits to Support Solar Energy Systems in Maine Municipalities

This document describes and models two land-use tools Maine municipalities may use to permit small-, medium-, and large-scale solar energy systems, including both ground-mounted and roof-mounted solar installations. The purpose of this document is to assist Maine municipalities in supporting development of solar energy systems in ways that address the needs of their community. Communities will need to carefully consider how model language may be modified to suit local conditions and where it should be inserted into an existing zoning ordinance, if applicable. Further, it is highly recommended that any language adapted from these models be reviewed by municipal counsel prior to adoption.



SOLAR IN MAINE

Frequently Asked Questions

*for Siting and Hosting Solar Projects
at the Municipal Level*

Today, Maine is on the cusp of a new era of solar power development. With the passage of a suite of new statewide laws in 2019, Mainers are beginning to experience what other states have been experiencing: a swelling opportunity for more solar installations, more solar jobs, and more solar customers including large customers like municipalities—that are using solar to lower energy costs. That opportunity brings questions about what solar means for Maine cities, towns and people.

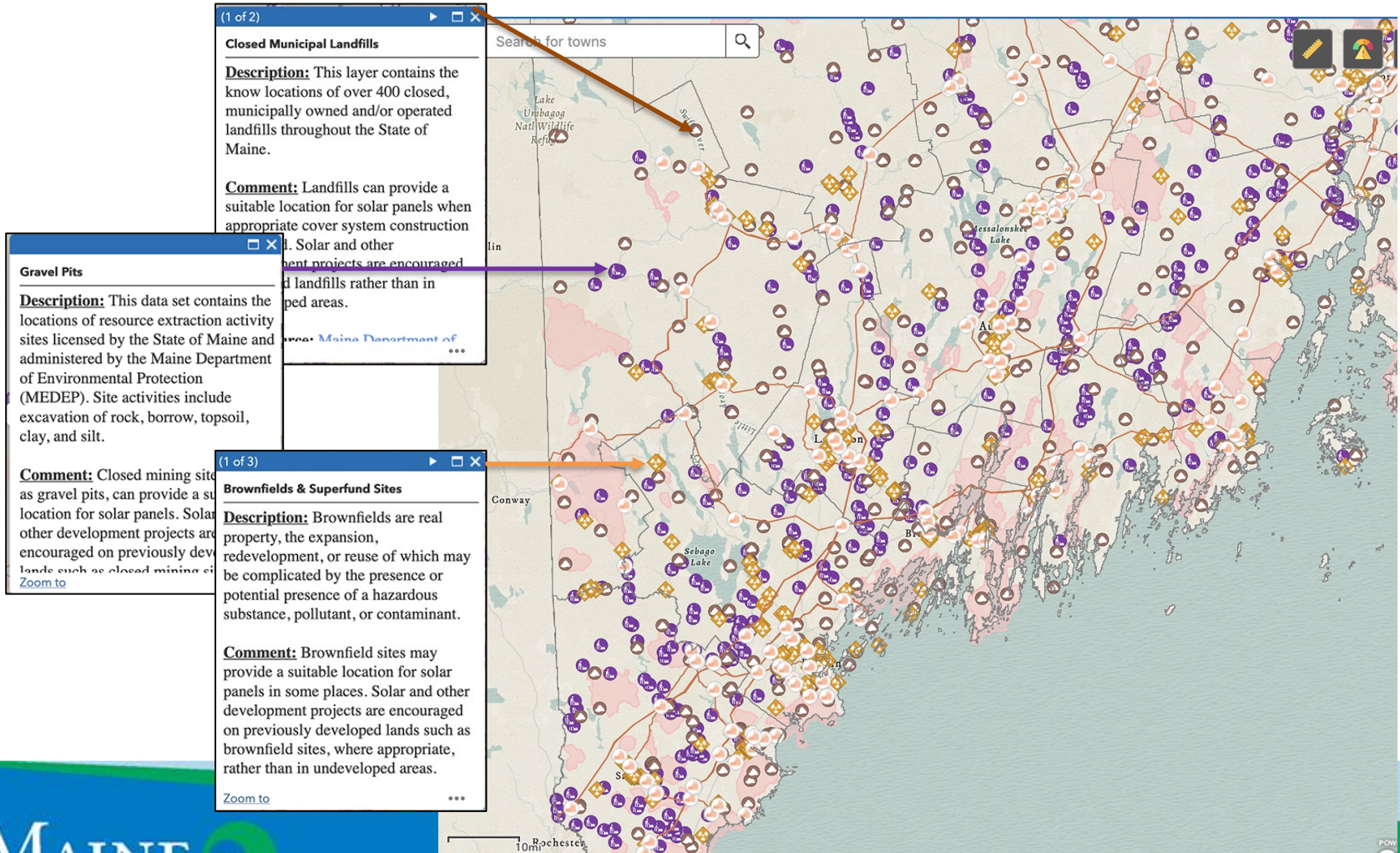
This document was created to provide answers to common questions about solar development that have been raised by municipal officials, landowners, and others considering larger solar projects for their own use or in their communities.

The questions and answers are organized under three general themes:

- General background on solar energy projects in Maine
- Physical features of solar development
- Considerations for municipalities, landowners, and neighbors

A companion document from Maine-based conservation organizations provides guidance to developers on how to responsibly site solar projects in Maine. If you have follow-up questions, there is contact information at the end of this document.

Renewable Energy Siting Tool



Recommendations

- Meet with stakeholders early.
- Be creative about mitigation.
- Avoid more than regulated resources.
- Work together to change the public narrative.

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