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**MAINE PURSUES CLEAN ENERGY INDEPENDENCE;
Governor Baldacci announces State's commitment to
renewable energy.**

Augusta, Maine – Mainers are making the connection between energy independence and “green” electricity in increasing numbers. Green electricity – based on technologies that harness cleaner and renewable resources – offers sustainable energy without the environmental side effects of traditional electricity sources. The Maine Green Power Connection, launched today by Governor John Baldacci, has been founded by 25 organizations committed to educating Maine about the benefits of cleaner electricity. The Connection will help Maine electricity customers to see the connections between their electricity use, their state and their planet, and to understand the benefits of cleaner, secure, homegrown energy that does not incur drilling and other environmental damage.

“Green electricity, generated in Maine by small Maine hydro and biomass generators, represents a win-win for Maine”, said Governor Baldacci as he welcomed the founders of the Connection. “Cleaner, renewable electricity helps to clear Maine’s air while it keeps in Maine the dollars we pay for our electricity”.

Edward Miller, Executive Director, American Lung Association of Maine, agreed.

“The Lung Association of Maine looks forward to the day when Maine’s entire

airshed – the air we share with the states to the west of us and the provinces to the east – is free of the lung-damaging pollutants that result from the combustion of traditional carbon-based fuels. Renewable electricity, purchased by citizens across Maine, is a way to make that happen”.

Five leading Maine organizations have stepped forward to bring the Maine Green Power Connection (“the Connection”) to reality. In addition to the American Lung Association, the Chewonki Foundation of Wiscasset, the National Environmental Trust, Maine Interfaith Power and Light and Interface Fabrics Group have all contributed funding and in-kind resources to form the Connection.

Each of these organizations is also contributing something else – its purchasing power. Said Chewonki President **Don Hudson**: “In addition to buying green electricity for our own use, we will also urge our staff and students, funders and supporters to do likewise. As environmental educators, it’s only natural for us to spread the word about this simple planet-saving step.”

The National Environmental Trust is another charter member of the Connection, contributing public outreach, policy and funding support. “We know that burning coal and other fossil fuels to generate electricity releases pollution that causes acid rain, smog, global warming and health problems,” said **Susan Sargent**, Maine Representative for the National Environmental Trust, “Maine Green Power Connection focuses our attention on clean energy technologies available to us today, and demonstrates that when we choose renewable energy we make a choice of an energy future that is good for our health and the environment.”

Headlining launch of the Maine Green Power Connection in the State House Cabinet Room were several announcements about significant green power purchases:

- **Governor Baldacci** signed a Letter of Intent with Maine Renewable Energy LLC to purchase green electricity for over 700 small state electricity accounts. When fully implemented, changing these accounts to Maine-generated renewable electricity will reduce air pollutants in Maine by 4.6 million pounds of CO₂, 5,500 pounds of nitrogen oxide and 18,000 pounds of sulfur dioxide.
- **Peter Felsenthal**, President, Maine Interfaith Power and Light, reported that the first 7 weeks of MeIPL's green electricity sales have significantly exceeded expectations. "486 electricity accounts have been switched to Maine Renewable Energy's renewable electricity product," he said, "a tremendous response so early in the offering. Under the assumption that these were underutilized facilities, these 486 accounts will be responsible for roughly 2.0 million fewer pounds of CO₂ than would have been emitted under the current Standard Offer. An additional 317 green tags have also been sold, saving 443,000 pounds of CO₂. Altogether, these steps by individual Mainers represent roughly 2.4 million pounds of emissions that will not be released into the atmosphere."
- **Paul Paydos**, Vice President, Technical Services for Interface Fabrics Group in Guilford, announced his company's purchase of 2.5 million kilowatt hours worth of green electricity through green tags, representing 10% of the company's annual electricity usage. Said Paydos, "This purchase, along with the fact that our Maine facilities derive almost 90% of their thermal energy needs from biomass.....waste wood chips.....means that Interface Fabrics Group is making significant progress towards a goal set 7 years ago - to continually reduce our dependence on non-renewable energy sources by conservation and to begin to fuel our factories with renewable energy."

Erika Morgan, program manager for the Maine Green Power Connection, introduced representatives of the other 19 founding organizations (list attached). "Through these organizations, the Connection will put information about environmentally benign, secure, home-grown electricity into the hands of over 50,000 Mainers each year. Together, through the media, events like this and in many other ways, we will reach Maine's entire population many times over."

Pointing to the wide array of organizations founding this effort, Morgan said, "It goes without saying that there are few things on which we independent-minded Mainers would all agree. At the same time, given a choice between non-polluting, secure, homegrown electricity and energy sources that bring pollution, health effects and political risk, which would you choose?"

For more information about the Maine Green Power Connection, visit

www.MaineGreenPower.org

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Charter organizations

American Lung Association of Maine
Chewonki Foundation
Interface Fabrics Group
Maine Interfaith Power and Light, Inc.
National Environmental Trust

Supporting organizations

Colby College
College of the Atlantic
Endless Energy Corporation
Maine Energy Investment Corporation
Maine Renewable Energy LLC
Unity College
Urquhart & Spritz

Advisory organizations

Ed Holt & Associates, Inc.
Energetic Management Associates
Environment Northeast
Independent Energy Producers of Maine

Participating organizations

Coastal Enterprises, Inc.
Damariscotta River Association
Habitat for Humanity/Bath-Brunswick Area
Maine Audubon
Maine Council of Churches
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
Peace Action Maine
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Maine Chapter
Sierra Club, Maine Chapter