

Challenges and Opportunities for Climate Action in Rural Maine

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ABSTRACT

This project sought to engage with rural Maine residents, particularly those experiencing poverty, aging in place, participating in municipal government, or operating small businesses to inform the Maine Climate Plan of 2025. We used a mixed-methods approach, with surveys and focus group interviews with consenting survey respondents. Most participants lived in Washington County, Maine. Results showed widespread interest in energy efficiency and electrification options, but participants faced multiple barriers to implementation due to cost and grid unreliability. Housing and heating insecurity were major problems with many participants living in inefficient or unsafe housing with minimal access to government assistance. Many were concerned that rural parts of Maine would experience undue burdens and insufficient benefits from the Maine Climate Plan, particularly with increased land conservation affecting local property taxes and energy-related programs that may be inaccessible or impractical for rural people.

According to the USDA, Aroostook, Franklin, Hancock, Knox, Lincoln, Oxford, Piscataquis, Somerset, Waldo, and Washington counties have rural-urban continuum ratings of six or higher.² Poverty rates in these areas were consistently higher than the state average, with individual poverty rates averaging over 15 percent in Maine's most remote counties.³ All of Maine's northern and eastern counties are classified as disadvantaged under the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, which was used until recently to identify qualified candidates for federal programs supporting disadvantaged communities.⁴ Maine's rural regions are largely economically dependent on re-

source-based industries such as fishing, farming and forestry, which are highly vulnerable to climate disruption. Underbuilt and poorly maintained rural transportation and working waterfront infrastructure are also particularly vulnerable to storm damage. These vulnerabilities were laid bare in December 2023 and January 2024 when a series of powerful storms swept across wide swaths of rural Maine, taking out roads and bridges and demolishing fishing piers (MIRRC 2025).

Additionally, rural Maine's power grid is extremely unreliable and vulnerable to disruption from increasingly frequent and powerful storms. For example, the utility serving southern Washington County, Versant Power, has some of the worst grid reliability rates, both nationally and in the Northeast. In 2024 Versant's service territories experienced an average of 1,206 minutes of power outages over an average of 4,379 service interruptions (EIA 2025).

According to our analysis of Maine land conservation data, 25 percent of the land area in Maine's rural counties is currently held in conservation compared with less than 10 percent in the state's more populous counties.⁵ A recent study sponsored by the Downeast Conservation Network found significant economic benefit

BACKGROUND

In 2024, the Maine Climate Council (MCC) developed updated recommendations for the Maine Climate Plan (MCC 2024). In response to advice from the MCC's Equity Subcommittee (MCC ESC 2023), the council sought input and expanded engagement with priority populations across the state to ensure the climate plan would have the broadest possible benefit while minimizing inequitable distribution of negative impacts. This project, focusing on rural populations and conducted by the Sunrise County Economic Council (SCEC), was part of a larger effort led by the Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions at the University of Maine (Brazier et al. 2025 in this issue).

The MCC's Equity Subcommittee identified rural communities as one priority population. In addition, most rural Maine communities meet the criteria for other priority populations in the subcommittee's report: low-income communities, disadvantaged communities, and frontline communities. According to the USDA, 2023 per capita incomes were 18 percent lower in rural Maine communities than in nonrural areas of the state.¹

accruing to Hancock County from tourism associated with conserved lands in Acadia National Park, but conserved lands in other areas of eastern Maine provided far less economic benefit (Lichko et al. 2018). A separate study on the impacts of tax-exempt conservation lands on property taxes found little effect on tax rates with increasing conservation; however, towns with higher levels of conservation—all of which are in rural areas—are more vulnerable to property tax increases as valuable land is removed from the tax rolls, stressing municipal budgets (Bennett 2023). The Maine Climate Plan sets a goal of achieving 30 percent land conservation statewide by 2030, raising concerns about equity and transparency (Hilton 2025) and prompting legislation proposed by rural representatives to limit the percentage of conserved lands to 50 percent or less of any Maine county (H.P. 116—An Act to Cap Publicly Owned Land Area).

Rural Maine’s electorate, residing largely within the state’s Second Congressional District, leans moderate to conservative and generally exhibits more skepticism about climate change than in other areas of the state or the nation. However, a majority of its residents acknowledge the reality of climate change.⁶ As of September 2025, 80 percent of incorporated communities in the less rural First Congressional District were enrolled or enrolling in the state’s Community Resilience Partnership, a program that provides funding and technical assistance for municipal climate action. Only 53 percent of incorporated communities in the more rural Second District had enrolled or were enrolling (authors’ calculations). Such lack of rural buy-in is often attributed to ideological opposition, but this has not yet been studied (Sharon 2022).

The goal of this study was to engage with rural Maine residents, to involve them in the climate planning process and learn about their particular needs, interests, and concerns related to climate change and the Maine Climate Plan. We focused particularly on people who were experiencing poverty, aging in place, participating in municipal government, and operating small businesses.

METHODS

We used a mixed-methods approach with purposeful, criterion sampling to seek typical cases (Patton 2015) among priority populations in rural Maine. While rural residents 18 or older from anywhere in Maine were invited to participate in the study, most study participants lived and worked in Washington County. Focusing in this region allowed for

SCEC staff to leverage existing relationships with local people and partnerships with social service agencies to actively recruit participants at local venues and events frequented by members of target populations. Washington County was assumed to be largely representative of the general rural population in Maine with low median incomes, high poverty rates, significant dependence on natural-resource-based industries, and an aging population. Due to time and funding limitations, the study was not designed to be statistically representative of rural populations, but was instead meant to identify and explore important themes.

In consultation with local partners familiar with the target populations, we developed three surveys directed at municipal officials, business owners, and the general public. The survey for the general population asked about basic demographic characteristics, as well as challenges and needs related to social determinants of health where they intersect with climate change and resilience, including housing, heating, food, and transportation security. Municipal officials were asked about their experiences and challenges related to addressing climate adaptation and mitigation in their communities and how such efforts intersect or relate with other town priorities. Business owners were asked about climate related impacts on their business operations and emerging challenges and needs. All survey participants were asked about vulnerabilities and responses to storm events and whether they had observed the effects of climate change. A final question asked respondents to volunteer to participate in a focus group interview with an offer of a \$50 gift card incentive.

Participants were recruited to take the online surveys via social media posts, email lists, newsletters, and listservs that reached municipal contacts, business contacts, and general audiences. SCEC staff with paper surveys visited food pantries, substance use recovery service locations and events, business resource fairs and training sessions, and convenings of municipal officials, farmers, and fisheries harvesters. At each of these visits, staff offered small gifts such as lip balm and hand sanitizer as incentives for those completing the surveys. Survey analysis involved simple percentages and distributions for quantitative question responses and basic deductive coding of written comments.

We conducted five focus group interviews with consenting survey respondents, one with municipal officials, and four with low-income residents, older adults, and those in resource-dependent industries. Focus group

participants were selected using survey responses to ensure we sampled across prioritized groups, and invitees could choose to participate in person at an SCEC facility in Machias or join the conversation by videoconference. The interview guide was designed to probe deeply into topics related to equity considerations for the Maine Climate Plan and how they intersect with other factors such as social determinants of health and particular needs and challenges of rural people, municipalities, small businesses and resource-dependent businesses. Key themes included

- housing and infrastructure security, safety, and efficiency
- energy costs, grid reliability, responses to power outages, and alternative energy solutions such as solar or wind power
- heating security and interest in efficiency programs and alternatives such as heat pumps
- transportation security, costs and interest in alternatives such as electric vehicles
- food security, access, costs and interest in local foods
- climate-related health issues such as heat emergencies and vulnerability to cold during power outages
- involvement in climate-related issues such as storm preparedness and response, and emergency shelters
- sense of inclusion and involvement in local, state, or national decisions related to climate change

Focus group interviews were recorded and transcribed automatically via Zoom. Then a researcher edited the machine transcription for accuracy. Coding was guided by a deductive codebook based on the specific themes in the interview guide, but we employed some inductive coding to further elucidate cross-cutting issues such as the way social determinants and energy challenges intersect.

RESULTS

Four focus groups with low-income participants, elders, and small business owners involved a total of 12 participants, 7 of whom participated in person and 5 via Zoom. The municipal focus group involved four selectboard members from small Washington County communities.

General Public

Of the 89 respondents to the survey for the general public, two-thirds said they live in a home that they own, while 19 percent were renters, and the remaining 15 percent were unhoused, lived in a shelter or recovery house, or had another ad hoc living arrangement. Of the 58 respondents who completed a disability status question, 21 (36 percent) reported that they had a chronic physical health issue or disability while 24 percent reported that they had mental health challenges. Thirty percent of the respondents were aged 55 or older, and 9 percent were aged 18 to 24 years old. Because recruitment methods were targeted to sample those in underserved groups and with challenges related to social determinants of health, such characteristics are heavily overrepresented in our sample relative to the broader population.

One-quarter of respondents reported annual household incomes below \$30,000, and two-thirds had incomes below \$75,000. For reference, the 2023 median household income in Washington County was \$52,237, \$71,773 in the state of Maine (US Census Bureau 2023a), and \$78,538 in the United States as a whole (US Census Bureau 2023b).

What are your biggest concerns or needs right now?

The cost of living, particularly high energy costs, were top concerns for most participants. Low-income survey participants told us about major challenges in meeting basic needs, including challenges that intersect with climate-related issues like energy and housing (Figure 1—additional figures are available in the [appendix](#)).⁷

Affordability and quality of housing was a critical factor for many participants. Many focus group participants said that they or their neighbors were living in makeshift housing and using unsafe methods to stay warm. Focus group and survey participants described neighbors living in trailers, tents, and barns and heating with propane or kerosene space heaters. One focus group participant displayed their living situation via videoconference.

Oh, my gosh! I could even show you, so our woodstove is right here, and you can see there's some plastic hanging. We just basically made a plastic tent. It's maybe eight by ten, and that's where we live in the winter, because to heat the whole space would be almost impossible.

Such housing arrangements make these low-income people especially vulnerable and render solutions like

service], but I come from a part of the world where you just walk to the corner, and there's a bus or subway. I don't know how elderly people can stay here if they don't have immediate family to get them around. Every day I go out and thank my [old] car for running.

Storms and power outages

Frequent storms and power outages were a major concern among both survey and focus group participants. Many low-income respondents said they endure long outages with no back-up power sources other than wood or kerosene heaters. Others rely on gas- or diesel-powered generators for backup.

Survey and focus group participants said they needed to be self-sufficient in dealing with storms, power outages, and other weather disruptions. “We need to take care of the problems ourselves and not wait around for someone else to come,” observed one focus group participant. “If a tree falls on the road, or if somebody’s basement is flooding, it’s like who’s got the extra pump to help fix the situation?” Communities come together to deal with emergencies, and most work is done by volunteers, according to focus group participants. Some vulnerable people fall through the cracks of the ad hoc systems. “I definitely know a lot of people whose roofs were damaged and may still be leaking,” one participant said, describing damage from recent major storms. “I don’t really see any assistance for that sort of thing, which kind of surprises me, but also, not really because it’s expensive to fix a roof.”

Rural Maine has few warming centers, and older participants worried about getting to them when the power goes out. One senior focus group participant said warming centers were inaccessible during weather emergencies. “My old landlord said [about power outages], ‘Go to a warming center,’ and I said, ‘It’s icy. How am I supposed to get there? And where would the warming center be?’”

Some study participants said that increased storm frequencies and intensities have been costing them and others in their community money due to lost wages, damage to homes and businesses, lost food in freezers in extended power outages. “We have had economic impacts,” noted one disabled survey respondent, “but our neighbors have had significant losses of food, including loss of all harvested game from their freezer, lost time from work, unaffordable housing damage.”

Realities of rural life

Several focus group participants mentioned that living in rural areas came with special challenges, particularly economic ones. “I feel like a lot of the challenges we’re facing are magnified because people are so low income and just struggling to meet what most people would consider basic necessities,” said one focus group participant. Also, participants said the challenges inherent in living in a rural, remote place can make adopting climate-friendly changes more difficult. A participant observed, “It does cost more to live here than, say, Bangor where they have transportation. You have to have a car here or you’re trapped.”

Many felt that rural places were an afterthought for decision-makers in Augusta and D.C. As one participant put it, “This is a different part of the state where there’s an invisible line, and we fall under that invisible line with Washington County and Hancock County and Aroostook.”

Land conservation goals

When asked about their opinions about the Maine Climate Plan’s recommendation to increase the percentage of conserved lands in the state to 30 percent by 2030, most focus group participants expressed ambivalence. They were supportive of land conservation, in principle, but felt that conservation often puts undue burden on rural regions.

I don't mind conserved land, I like it. We've got a lot here. But the problem that you hear all the time is taxes, that basically they don't have to pay taxes. Some of the organizations that buy land do pay the equivalent of taxes, but that is something that is a chronic complaint.

One focus group participant worried conserving large swaths of land in their rural region would be economically risky by putting too much emphasis on tourism. “While I like the idea of conserving,” they said. “I don’t like putting all of our economic eggs in one basket [with tourism]. I don’t think that’s sustainable”

Climate conversations

Most survey participants (83 percent) indicated that they had felt or seen the effects of climate change in their communities. The most commonly observed effects of climate change were warmer winters, flooding and severe storms (Figure 2).

A significant minority (17 percent) said they had not seen climate change effects, with a few expressing doubts about the reality or severity of climate change. One

FIGURE 2: **Word Cloud Depicting the Kinds of Climate Change Effects Respondents Had Seen or Felt**



respondent said, “God has it all well in hand. Isaiah 46:9–10.”

Many focus group participants expressed frustration with the tenor of climate change-related decision-making. Several said they felt unsure or ill-equipped to have productive conversations in their communities in such polarized times, but were eager to learn and asked for help and support in doing so. “I think it’s difficult, like, where is the place for those conversations to be had?” asked one participant. “I think that it’s something that’s really lacking.”

They stressed the importance of focusing on what is relevant to people’s lives, especially related to the cost of things like housing and energy. Multiple participants emphasized the importance of engaging youth in conversations about climate change and the future. One survey respondent and several focus group participants noted that people in their communities tended to balk at the idea of making changes to adapt to climate change. “[They] are very resistant to change, even when the change is positive,” said one survey respondent. “That stubborn mentality results in our region being slow to plan, and we end up responding to changes that occur, but that is ultimately more expensive.”

Business Owners

Of the 47 respondents to the small business survey, 68 percent of the businesses were natural

resource-dependent, including fisheries, aquaculture, forestry, and nature-based tourism. More than a quarter of the businesses operated seasonally, and 89 percent employed fewer than six employees or were sole proprietors. Business owners described significant impacts on their operations of weather and high fuel prices. Forty-seven percent of survey respondents reported that their business had been affected by damage to property or infrastructure from severe storms in the winter of 2023/2024.

In follow-up focus groups, we learned that storms were especially concerning for people in resource-based industries such as fishing and forestry. For example, one member of a fishing family described impacts of recent storms:

Yeah, the clam diggers got shut down. They always do when there’s that much rain. My uncles had to pull their [lobster] boats, their big boats out so they wouldn’t be damaged, and that all costs money when you have to stop fishing, for three to five days, or even longer, because of the weather. You lose a lot of money.

Fifty-nine percent of respondents said that they had a generator to keep their businesses operating during power outages as a response to common power outages.

In focus group discussions, participants said they worried that traditional resource-based industries could be threatened by rising costs from climate damage and new regulations, as well as decreasing availability and rising costs of lands and waterfronts as they are converted to conservation. “Well, I guess, as land becomes more expensive, we have fewer farmers, and that’s a big threat,” said one participant. “And the young people aren’t coming here. We’re losing our old farmers, and we’re not getting enough young farmers.”

Overall, business owners in the focus groups and survey said their businesses were pressed by many overlapping and competing priorities. Climate change impacts were adding to their challenges, but regulations and other actions to adapt or mitigate climate change also added to costs and uncertainty.

Municipal Leaders

Twenty-one municipal officials and volunteers responded to the municipal survey; 24 percent were municipal employees, and 81 percent served in some volunteer capacity (the total exceeds 100 percent because some reported multiple roles, as is common in rural communities). In the survey, municipal officials and volunteers cited “climate resilience” as a primary concern for their communities (Figure 7). It is important to

note that this response may be influenced by the fact that the region had recently experienced a series of major storms and resulting federal disaster declarations. Many communities were still recovering.

Survey participants listed many economic issues that were either caused or exacerbated by climate change effects. Lack of economic diversity was a topic of extended discussion in the municipal focus group as they saw it as limiting municipal tax revenue and hindering resilience in the face of disruptions, climate-related or otherwise. “We should be booming. You know we’ve got a lot of stuff going on, but, in fact, we have very few restaurants, downtown is very quiet.” One focus group participant from a community that relies on the lobster fishery for nearly 90 percent of its economic activity said, “Obviously our extreme dependence on one fishery and the volatility of the industry, we’re grappling with that.”

A compounding issue raised by the group was the influx of new residents—both seasonal and year-round—who affect communities in both positive and negative ways. They reduce housing stock, conflict with locals, and disrupt shore access, according to participants. They also bring new resources and ideas. Their service as volunteers is needed and appreciated. “We love [people from away] who come in and stay and say, ‘How can I help?’” said one focus group participant. “And they’re very active.”

Municipal officials reported dealing with a vast and increasingly complex array of challenges with exceedingly limited resources. Finding volunteers for boards and other functions and hiring people to work for municipalities were particularly challenging. They all indicated that they are overwhelmed. “What are we worried about? Everything,” said one selectboard member. “Oh, my God. I come home, and I’m dizzy, I just can’t.” Another selectboard member said:

I’m just realizing how low our capacity is. You know, everyone has day jobs, families, and it’s all volunteer, and it feels like it’s the same people showing up every time. Capacity isn’t great, and I know we’re not alone in that.

Among the four participants in the municipal focus group, two represented communities that had enrolled in Maine’s Community Resilience Partnership and taken advantage of funding available to support climate-related actions in their communities. The other two communities were not enrolled, and their representatives said they were unlikely to do so due to lack of trust or buy-in among their constituents. However, all participants

described significant climate-related challenges that were taxing their town’s capacity to respond.

Participants discussed a variety of ways in which they were trying—and struggling—to help their communities embrace and control change. They are often met with resistance and must manage difficult conversations. “This community has historically been anti-ordinance, you know, don’t tread on me and all that nonsense,” one long-time selectboard member said. “In fact, and we’ve said over and over and over again, this is a double-edged sword. Be careful.” Another observed, “The biggest challenge that spreads across every other challenge is owning our change, realizing it’s inevitable. Ignoring it is going to make it worse for us. We will lose our identity if we do.”

Focus group participants were all concerned that expanding conservation lands in the region would put additional, undue and inequitable strain on municipal finances and resources.

So taxes have been something we’ve talked a lot about [in my community]. We do have some conserved land, and I know that a lot of places do donate to the town the amount that they would have been taxed if it wasn’t conserved. But when that taxable amount is not considered into the tax formula, it still raises taxes in that area.

Municipal leaders said in the survey and focus group that they need help in understanding the issues, the tools they have to work with, and pros, cons, costs, and benefits of Maine’s climate policies for rural people. These, they say, are necessary to help them and their constituents make informed choices about their own futures. One focus group participant said:

Our statewide and national efforts to move away from fossil fuels have implications that not everybody has put a lot of thought into in terms of cost and reliability. What does it mean for energy costs?

Also, all participants said they wished to see climate policy that is poverty-informed and addresses the many issues facing their communities that arise from poverty and its attendant consequences.

At our last annual meeting, we increased our general assistance budget [for residents in need] from \$1,000 to 10,000, realizing this not enough to be the solution. Just realize and get with the times and understand: people need assistance.

“For too long, we’re up here like the redheaded stepchild most of the time,” said one participant. “It feels that way. And we keep plugging away.”

CONCLUSION

It is crucial to recognize that climate change policies and programs often intersect and interact with other issues such as housing, heating, food, and transportation security. Many people in rural Maine must prioritize meeting basic needs before they can consider taking on added cost and effort to reduce their carbon footprint. Poverty-informed practices that integrate climate-related measures with widely used public benefit programs are likely to have the most impact. Programs that lower the cost and effort required to save money and increase energy security will bolster resilience. For example, pairing housing or heating assistance with programs that implement free weatherization services would make beneficiaries safer and more comfortable and save money over the long term.

Rural businesses, especially in natural resource-dependent industries, face many challenges that intersect with climate issues. As inflation narrows profit margins and regulatory constraints increase, climate-related changes become less feasible. Cost is crucial, but it is not the only barrier to adaptation. People who run rural businesses with only one or a few employees may have less time, energy, and risk tolerance to make changes to their business model or infrastructure. Programs aimed at supporting adaptation among businesses should be structured to provide technical and cost supports to businesses with fewer than 10 employees.

Our study suggested that there is widespread interest in the potential cost savings and convenience of upgrades such as heat pumps or electric vehicles. However, frequent power outages, especially in the most remote areas, are an important barrier to acceptance of beneficial electrification, regardless of ideological views of climate change. When power outages commonly last days or weeks in the wintertime, it makes no sense to install heat pumps or buy electric vehicles. An outage can mean days in the cold without transportation, destruction of stored food or medicines, and disruption of business. Even if a rural resident can afford the initial outlay of funds and the wait for government rebates, heat pumps and electric vehicles are not practical as long as the electrical grid is so unreliable. Therefore, we recommend that state programs prioritize working with electricity providers to improve grid resilience and reliability in rural areas before investing heavily in encouraging solutions such as heat pumps and electric vehicles.

Drawing upon the insights from this study, a partnership between SCEC, the Island Institute, and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory is focused on increasing grid resilience. A new campaign in Washington County entitled “Power to the People” is leveraging partnerships with power companies to raise awareness among residents and municipal leaders about what they can do to improve the reliability of the electrical grid in their communities and increase proactive management of the grid to promote resilience.

The Maine Climate Plan’s goal of achieving 30 percent conserved lands by 2030 is of concern to many rural residents and municipal officials. It is assumed the new conservation lands will be disproportionately in rural areas and that increasing conservation will result in inequitable impacts on already-strapped municipal budgets. While land conservation has less of an impact on municipal budgets than is widely believed, there is still a small additional burden on taxpayers with each acre of land conserved (Bennett 2023). And with the exception of national parks, conserved lands provide minimal economic benefits to their host communities in rural areas (Lichko et al. 2018). Future land conservation initiatives should emphasize equitable distribution of conservation activities. Also, such programs should be paired with support for economic development initiatives designed to leverage conservation lands for economic benefit via tourism, forestry, agriculture, etc.

Rural municipal leaders told us they felt overwhelmed by the need to address increasing climate challenges in the context of other stressors with limited resources. Grappling with issues related to aging infrastructure, tight school budgets, and low-income residents in crisis were just a few of many competing challenges. Participants said state climate resilience programs were often insufficient to meet their needs or were structured in ways that didn’t fit their complex realities. While some cited the state’s Community Resilience Partnership as a valuable resource, others did not enroll because they or their constituents were mistrustful of outside involvement in their affairs, were averse to change, denied the existence of climate change, or simply didn’t have time among competing priorities. This suggests that predicated assistance on enrolling in the Community Resilience Partnership may limit the reach and impact of the program in rural communities until trust and buy-in can be developed. Providing alternative means to receiving assistance and restructuring programs to address intersecting challenges like poverty and aging rural

infrastructure may help build buy-in and ensure benefits are more equitably distributed across the state.

Many participants in all elements of the study said they were struggling to communicate within their communities about climate change and its impacts. In addition to lacking basic facts and options for addressing climate issues, ideological differences among residents and fear of change were commonly mentioned as barriers to effective communication and collective action. Small communities with limited capacity rely heavily on volunteerism, collaboration, and neighborly communication. These elements are central to their resilience and adaptability, but these elements are under stress in today's highly polarized political climate. Rural communities need help in supporting civil communication, building trust, and fostering collective, locally driven action on their climate challenges. Overall, our rural study participants made it clear that practical and structural considerations, more than ideological opposition, are the primary reason for low levels of engagement with climate-related programs such as the Community Resilience Partnership and the heat pump rebate program. Such programs should be restructured to build on community strengths while addressing the particular and intersecting challenges of rural life to ensure the costs and benefits of Maine's Climate Plan are equitably distributed.

NOTES

- 1 "State Fact Sheets—State Data: Maine," USDA, Economic Research Service, <https://data.ers.usda.gov/reports.aspx?ID=4035&StateFIPS=23&StateName=Maine>
- 2 "Rural-Urban Continuum Codes," USDA, Economic Research Service, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-continuum-codes>
- 3 "HDPulse—Health Disparities and Minority Health Resources (NIMHD)," <https://hdpulse.nimhd.nih.gov/>.
- 4 "Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool," <https://public-environmental-data-partners.github.io/j40-cejst-2/en/>
- 5 "Maine Conserved Lands," https://maine.hub.arcgis.com/datasets/ad59f27a21f24f9bb005868a04b65a3_0/about
- 6 "Estimated % of Adults Who Think That Global Warming Is Happening (nat'l avg. 72%), 2024," Yale Climate Opinion Maps 2024, <https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/visualizations-data/ycom-us/>.
- 7 The appendix is available online: <https://doi.org/10.53558/ojgb6357>

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