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More than 72% of Maine voters voted in 1993 to amend the Constitution in order to protect public lands via Article IX, Section 23: “State park land, public lots or other real estate held by the State for conservation or recreation purposes and designated by legislation implementing this section may not be reduced or its uses substantially altered except on the vote of 2/3 of all the members elected to each House. The proceeds from the sale of such land must be used to purchase additional real estate in the same county for the same purposes.”

But in 2014, behind closed doors and without public notice, the Bureau of Public Lands (BPL) issued a lease to Central Maine Power (CMP) for its corridor across two public lots: Johnson Mountain and West Forks Plantation. BPL has revised the lease twice, in 2015 and 2020, both times again without any public notice. Smells fishy to me.

In spite of the requirement to get a 2/3 vote of the Legislature before issuing a lease for an obviously destructive project across public lands, BPL has failed to do so three times. Why?

Maine people do not want the CMP corridor as they have made abundantly clear. Maine's Legislature needs to hold BPL accountable and require BPL to obtain the required 2/3 vote. This must be done to uphold democracy as it relates to not only the CMP corridor but other projects that would irreparably damage public lands.