

WHAT CAN I DO FOR THE GULF OF MAINE?

To accomplish the Action Plan 2001-2006 goals, objectives, and actions, the Council is reaching out to individuals and organizations that care about the Gulf. You or your organization can make a difference by identifying specific actions that are important to you and partnering with the Council and others to successfully execute those actions. Contact the Council at info@gulfofmaine.org or 603-225-5544, or view more specific contact information on the Council's Web site.

The Council applauds the substantial efforts of volunteers; local, state, provincial, and federal agencies; First Nations and tribal authorities; nongovernmental and community-based organizations; businesses and industries; schools and educational organizations; and research organizations to improve the health of the Gulf of Maine.

RESOURCES PROVIDED BY THE GULF OF MAINE COUNCIL

To support Action Plan goals and advance the work of its regional partners, the Council funds a number of activities. For additional information about these resources, visit the Council's Web site at www.gulfofmaine.org.

- *Gulf of Maine Times* is a free quarterly newspaper with a circulation of 10,000 government officials, nonprofit staff, educators, business people, press and other interested readers.
- *The Gulfwatch Monitoring Program* assesses the impacts of toxic contaminants in the Gulf of Maine. By measuring contaminant concentrations in blue mussels, researchers are gaining insights into the distribution and concentration of heavy metals, pesticides and organic contaminants.
- *Gulf of Maine Council Action Plan Grants* fund local and regional stewardship projects that implement the Council's priority goals.
- *The Regional Habitat Restoration Partnership* prioritizes and funds restoration activities in the Gulf through a grant program funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service.
- *The Council's Web site* (<http://www.gulfofmaine.org>) offers a broad range of Gulf-related information and tools for interested citizens. Resources include "People Finder" (database of contacts for regional organizations and individuals); "NGO Directory" (database of nongovernmental organizations supporting the Council's goals in the Gulf); calendar; library; *Gulf of Maine Times*; and application information for Council grants and annual awards.



GULF OF MAINE COUNCIL

Maine

Department of Marine Resources
State Planning Office

Massachusetts

Office of Coastal Zone Management
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

New Brunswick

Department of Environment and Local Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture

New Hampshire

Department of Environmental Services
Office of State Planning

Nova Scotia

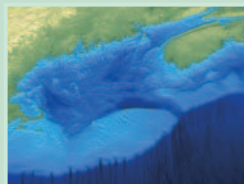
Department of Environment and Labour
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

Federal Partners

Environment Canada
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (US)
US Environmental Protection Agency
US Fish and Wildlife Service

Nongovernmental Representatives

Each governor and premier appoints one representative from his or her jurisdiction. Organizations serving in this capacity include the Chewonki Foundation, Conservation Law Foundation, Fleet Bank, Inshore Fisheries Limited, and the St. Croix International Waterway Commission.



To maintain and enhance environmental quality in the Gulf of Maine and to allow for sustainable resource use by existing and future generations...

—Gulf of Maine Council Mission



Gulf of Maine
Council on the
Marine Environment

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ACTION PLAN 2001-2006
at a glance



Gulf of Maine
Council on the
Marine Environment

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ABOUT THE GULF OF MAINE COUNCIL

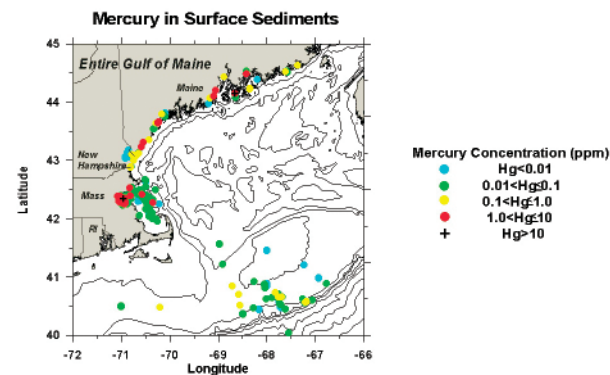
One of the most biologically productive environments on earth, the Gulf of Maine supports a vital maritime heritage and economy shared by the three American states and two Canadian provinces that border its shores. The governors and premiers of these states and provinces created the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment in 1989 to protect the ecological integrity of this invaluable resource and the many uses that depend on its continued health.

Since that time, the Council has coordinated activities across the region's national and jurisdictional borders to manage the Gulf as a single ecosystem. Fostering consensual decision-making and collaboration among a wide range of parties, the Council's meetings and activities are open to public participation. The meetings offer a regional forum for the exchange of information, and an opportunity to strategize about the Gulf's future. In drafting its five-year action plans, the Council receives broad input from individuals and organizations throughout the region.

PROTECTING AN ECOSYSTEM AT RISK

While agencies and organizations are managing the Gulf of Maine more carefully, increasing development along the coastal zone and in the Gulf's watershed presents serious problems. Pollution from urban and agricultural runoff, sewage, and industrial discharge threatens vulnerable habitats. New signs of ecological stress—the appearance of invasive species, threatened extinction of wild Atlantic salmon, and the presence of high levels of contaminants such as mercury in marine organisms—are appearing in many communities along the Gulf's shores.

Fortunately, evidence of ecological decline is balanced with stories of positive environmental change. On Gulf of Maine islands, for example, populations of nesting coastal seabirds are rebounding. Analysis of blue mussel tissue, through the Council's Gulfwatch program, indicates a decline in some toxic contaminants. These encouraging trends underscore the importance of the Council's efforts to bring people together to develop and implement constructive solutions that will enhance the environmental quality of the Gulf of Maine.



ACTION PLAN AT A GLANCE: A SUMMARY OF THE 2001-2006 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1: PROTECT AND RESTORE COASTAL AND MARINE HABITATS

Coastal and marine habitats throughout the Gulf of Maine are healthy and support the Gulf's diversity of plant and animal species.

Objectives

- Increase awareness and improve management of regionally significant habitats
- Increase habitat protection
- Increase habitat restoration
- Increase awareness and improve management of aquatic nuisance species
- Enhance citizen stewardship

GOAL 2: PROTECT HUMAN HEALTH AND ECOSYSTEM INTEGRITY

Contaminants in the Gulf of Maine are at sufficiently low levels to ensure human health and ecosystem integrity.

Objectives

- Increase awareness and improve management of priority contaminants (sewage, nitrogen, and mercury)
- Identify reduction strategies for priority contaminants
- Enhance citizen stewardship

GOAL 3: ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE MARITIME ACTIVITIES

The Council's vision for 2025 is that marine research and nature-based tourism provide unique and significant economic opportunities for the region.

Objectives

- Create and implement a marine research and monitoring strategy that responds to pressing management issues and supports regional economic development
- Develop and implement a nature-based tourism strategy that sustains the environment and the well-being of local people

More than fifty specific actions being taken by the Council and its partners to meet these goals and objectives can be viewed online at www.gufofmaine.org. They include:

- publicizing habitat and priority contaminant issues in the *Gulf of Maine Times*
- translating research findings for resource managers
- developing and implementing a strategy for mapping bathymetry, sediment and habitats
- creating a regional habitat restoration plan and funding restoration activities
- convening a conference to raise awareness of aquatic nuisance species
- creating an expanded environmental quality monitoring strategy
- enhancing links among nongovernmental organizations
- developing a long-term plan for education and outreach

