



Conservation Law Foundation

www.clf.org



"SAVE GREAT BAY"

A Broadbased Partnership to
Protect the Great Bay Estuary

Tom Irwin
Senior Attorney
(603) 225-3060
tirwin@clf.org

SAVE GREAT BAY

A Quick Overview

Broad-based group of stakeholders with common goal of protecting Great Bay estuary:

- State legislators
- NGOs
- Researchers
- Agencies

SAVE GREAT BAY

How it came to be

June 2008 Letter to Portsmouth Herald from
Drs. Fred Short, David Burdick, Arthur
Mathieson, Gregg Moore

- “The Great Bay Estuary is in trouble.”
- “As scientists and as citizens of the Seacoast, we raise the alert: nutrient levels in our estuarine waters threaten the health of the Great Bay Estuary now.”

SAVE GREAT BAY

How it came to be

July/August 2008 -- Alarmed legislators and interested citizens take action

- Two “roundtable” meetings of stakeholders
- What are the threats?
- Who is doing what?
- How can we coordinate?



Facilitation & Focus

Fall 2008 – Facilitated meetings with brainstorming sessions asking the questions:

- What are the key issues?
- On what issues can a better coordinated group make a difference?
- How can we be organized to make a difference?

A Call to Action: The Key Issues

- Increasing nutrient levels/impairments
- Eelgrass declines
- Increasing sediment loads
- Plummeting shellfish populations
- Disruption of anadromous fish passage
- Surface & groundwater availability concerns



Structural Organization

Education Working Group

- Expand citizens' awareness of Great Bay and its watershed, and of their relationship to the resource

Policy Working Group

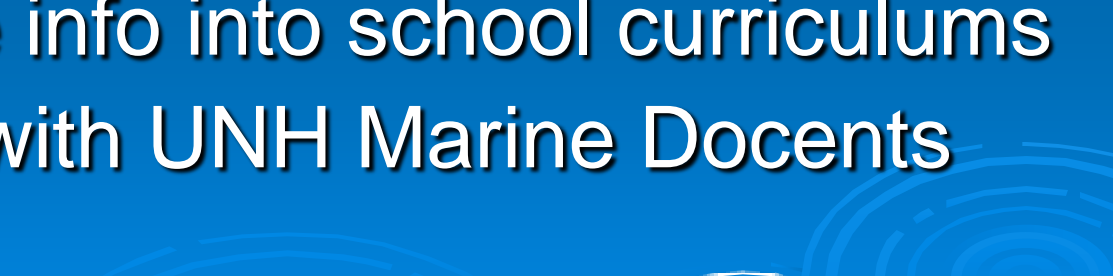
- Identify policy actions that can help the estuary in the short-term

Communications Working Group

- Develop an overarching message to expand awareness and spark behavioral and policy change
- 

SGB Priorities:

Education Working Group

- Citizen surveys to assess knowledge of the estuary, its condition, and how their behaviors affect it
 - Compilation of critical scientific facts
 - Identification of target audiences and educational needs
 - Assimilate info into school curriculums
 - Integrate with UNH Marine Docents Program
- 

SGB Priorities: Policy Working Group

- Develop legislation to promote better intermunicipal planning to address wastewater, stormwater and sprawl
- Advocate the need for high-priority TMDLs to address impairments
- Identify and communicate issues to the federal Congressional delegation

SGB Priorities: Communications

Wk Group

- Develop vision and message for overall communications strategy
- Develop web communications portal – SaveGreatBay.org
- “You are here” signage campaign
 - To educate regarding the watershed
 - To direct people to SaveGreatBay.org

Accomplishments to date

- Improved communication and networking among stakeholders
- Incubator for SB 168 – a bill to establish a Coastal Watershed Alliance
- Letter to EPA urging high priority TMDLs
- The beginnings of a compelling education and communications strategy – SAVE GREAT BAY “branding” campaign

Challenges Facing SGB

- Busy people with time constraints
- Multiple issues
- Logistics of organizing a large group
- NO STAFF



Where will SGB go from here?

- Coalition that speaks with one voice on key issues?
- A collaboration that helps “brand” the Great Bay estuary?
- Venue for identifying key issues, information-sharing, strategizing?





Questions & Input

For more information....

Tom Irwin

CLF – New Hampshire

Phone: (603) 225-3060

E-mail: tirwin@clf.org



www.clf.org