

Talking Points

New Hampshire's participation in the Gulf of Maine Council

1. Why do we participate?

- Between 2007 and 2011 New Hampshire received approximately \$250,000 through the Council's habitat restoration program that generated nearly \$600,000 in match for five projects. Project highlights include the Merrimack Village Dam Removal, [Maxwell Pond Dam Removal](#) and the Exeter River Great Dam Removal Impact Analysis and Feasibility Study.
- We can access a regional network (e.g., Maine, Massachusetts, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia) of professionals that are working on watershed and coastal issues that are important to New Hampshire. As a result we can perform our work in New Hampshire more quickly and efficiently.
- By working through the Council we can address issues that require an inter-state response. Examples of these issues include the restoration of migratory fish stocks that are affected by river barriers; collection and assessment of data on the effects of contaminants on people, marine water quality and shellfish resources; and the impact of human activities on the seafloor.
- State agencies, the University of New Hampshire and non-profit organizations participate in its committees. Most of their work is performed electronically (e.g., email, conference calls and webinars). Their ongoing, voluntary participation allows them to share their expertise and learn creative approaches from their colleagues that can be applied in New Hampshire.
- Council products and services that New Hampshire places a priority on include: distribution of the *Gulf of Maine Times* to New Hampshire residents involved in industry, education, conservation, science, recreation, and health; habitat restoration grants; environmental monitoring data in the Great Bay estuary; publications on salt marshes and American eels; and stream barrier removal guidelines.

2. What is our "return on our investment"?

- New Hampshire's annual dues are \$18,000. Over a five year period NH municipalities and non-profit organizations received \$250,000 in five years to restore habitats and are currently applying for Council funding to increase community resiliency to a changing climate.
- It has three gubernatorial appointments on the Council (e.g., Department of Environmental Services, Fish and Game, and a non-profit representative) that represent New Hampshire's positions in two meetings a year. Participation in the Council's activities allows it to access human and financial resources throughout the region. Thus New Hampshire can save time and money.

3. How does the Council's 2012-2017 Action Plan support state agency priorities?

- The three goals in the Action Plan align directly with the legislative mandates of the Departments of Environmental Services and Safety, Fish and Game Department, and the Office of Energy and Planning
- Action Plan activities of particular interest include improve and protect water quality (DES), habitat restoration (DES/F&G), seafloor mapping and spatial planning (DES/F&G), marine and aquatic monitoring (DES/F&G), ecosystem health indicators and environmental reporting (DES/F&G), adapting to a changing climate and coastal storms (DES/DoS/OEP), and working landscapes/sustainable communities (DES/OEP).

- New Hampshire's marine environmental monitoring efforts along the seacoast are augmented through the Council's regional data and information management efforts.