

Currents

• A Quarterly Newsletter of the Casco Bay Estuary Project •

Volume 1, No. 2

Summer 1992

CASCO BAY ESTUARY PROJECT ANNOUNCES MINIGRANT AWARDS

The Casco Bay Estuary Project has given preliminary approval to grant proposals from nine watershed towns for local government minigrants and to four applicants for public outreach minigrants conducting educational and public involvement activities in the Casco Bay watershed. Each grant will include a 25 percent non-federal match by the applicants.

Local Government minigrant projects range from providing technical assistance for watershed inventories to identifying the sources of pollution causing closure of shellfish areas. The amounts listed with each project are the requested amounts.

Brunswick: develop an educational manual explaining Brunswick's Coastal Protection Ordinance; \$4500.

Cape Elizabeth: provide educational signs for that part of the town's greenway system that is in the Casco Bay watershed. \$1500.

Cumberland: develop a volunteer water quality sampling program; \$1398.

Durham: inventory and engineering study of the Runaround Pond watershed to assist in future zoning decisions; \$3750.

Falmouth: provide technical assistance with the town's Watershed Management Plan to aid in the town's comprehensive planning; \$10,000.

Freeport: identify sources of pollution causing closure of shellfish beds; \$5550.

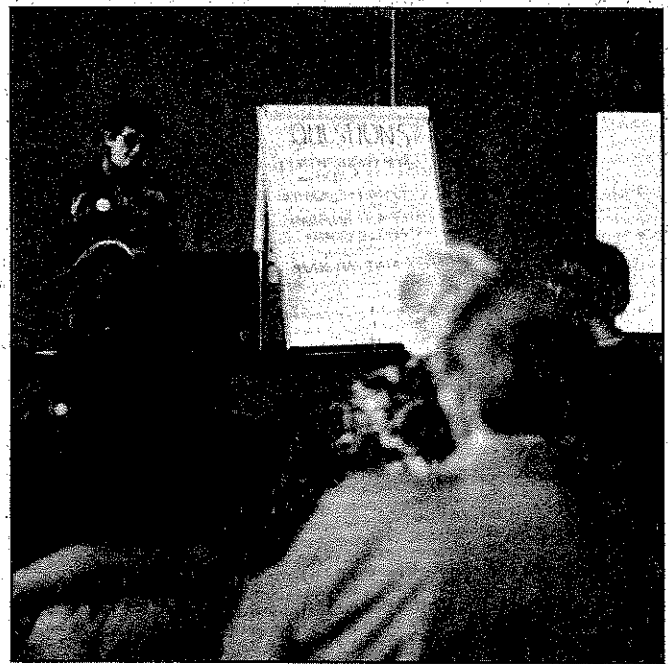
Harpswell: identify sources of pollution which have caused closure of two specific shellfish beds; \$4500.

Naples: Conduct a hydrogeological study of the Crooked River aquifer to help develop aquifer protection standards for the Naples Village area; \$10,000.

So. Portland: conduct sediment and water analysis and mapping to study the efficacy of Clark's Pond, Calvary Pond and Barberrry Pond in the treatment of stormwater; \$6166.

PRIORITY GOALS AIRED AT APRIL FORUM

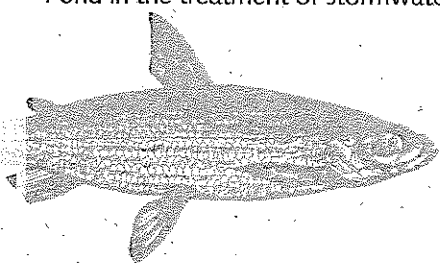
On Saturday, April 11, the Casco Bay Estuary Project held a public forum at Fort Andross in Brunswick to get input on the five priorities of the project. Many will remember April 1992 more as the beginning of winter than the end of it, and we are no exception: fifty stalwart citizens braved a snow storm and treacherous roads to come to the forum. They left with a new and better understanding of what Casco Bay and the Estuary Project are all about.



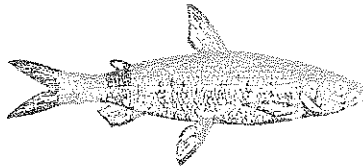
Management Committee member Clarice Yentsch addresses the crowd gathered at the Forum.

After a project update by state project coordinator Lee Doggett, management committee member Clarice Yentsch of the Bigelow Laboratory for the Ocean Sciences presented a brief synopsis of the following priority issues: to minimize adverse environmental impacts from stormwater runoff, combined sewer overflows, and individual wastewater treatment systems, to promote environmentally appropriate use and development of land and marine resources, to determine the effect of existing sediment contamination on the health of Casco Bay, and to promote responsible

see Forum, page 5



see Minigrants, page 4



GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS: THE 1992 WORKPLAN

As fiscal year 1992 enters its second fiscal year (FY92), we look forward to continuing progress made in the first year and forging ahead with new programs. Some highlights:

Municipal Outreach and Technical Assistance:

A crucial part of the work in year two will be to involve local government and elected officials in the project. To accomplish this objective a municipal outreach program will be developed including educational boat tours of Casco Bay and meeting with municipal officials to focus on the environmental and economic importance of Casco Bay to their town. Technical assistance and local government migrant programs provided to towns in year one will be continued in year two.

Scientific Characterization Continues:

The workplan also continues the work begun in year one to characterize the scientific and social trends occurring in and around Casco Bay. The project will follow up the study of surface sediments with a study of sediment cores to determine historical loadings and the impact these historical pollutants may have.

A second study will examine nutrient and pathogen loadings to a small embayment in Casco Bay will determine contributions

from various sources and develop a nutrient and pathogen "budget" based on the flushing of the embayment. The project will likely include a study of groundwater flow rates and the ability of soils to filter pathogens and nutrients, and a run-off study based on land uses and soil types.

Finally, a volunteer monitoring program will be undertaken to provide ongoing water quality and wildlife habitat information to the project and Casco Bay towns. Sampling parameters are likely to be temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, and fecal coliform bacteria. An advisory board of academic and state agency personnel will oversee the program with data being transferred to the Department of Environmental Protection.

Social Characterization Continues:

A study documenting long term land use changes will help to characterize social trends affecting Casco Bay. Using aerial photographs from two or more time periods to map development trends, this study will graphically illustrate the threat caused by development to Casco Bay. Data collected during this project will be stored on the Geographic Information System (GIS).

see Workplan, page 4

The Casco Bay Estuary Project is

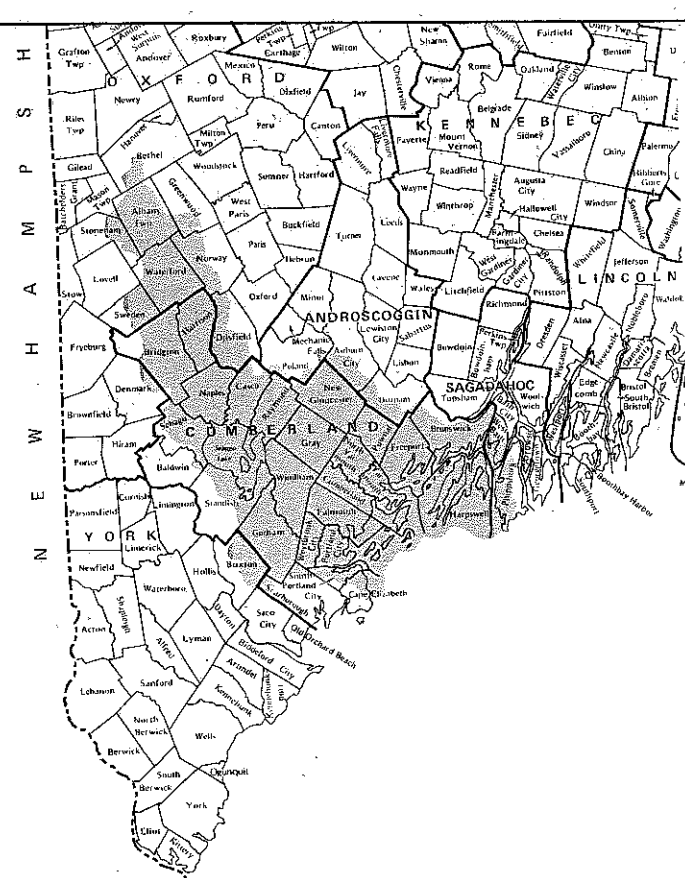
a partnership between the U.S. EPA and the State of Maine. The project is directed through an open, consensus building approach that brings together the public, business, academic institutions, and local, state and federal agencies to develop a comprehensive conservation and management plan. The process is designed to insure that local needs and values are the foundation for that plan.

The project mission is

to preserve the ecological integrity of Casco Bay and ensure the compatible human uses of the bay's resources through public stewardship and effective management. To accomplish this the

Casco Bay Estuary Project will:

- take steps to prevent, mitigate, and remediate impacts from existing and potential pollution sources and habitat loss;
- support efforts to understand the bay ecosystem, including natural processes and the impact of human activities;
- support public education efforts to instill a responsible sense of public ownership of the bay, especially among coastal and watershed communities;
- develop the management framework to sustain the bay's resources and benefits.



The Friends of Casco Bay
BAYKEEPER

Casco Bay Estuary Project

"Are You the BAYKEEPER?" ...

...It's a question we're often asked as we tour the communities around Casco Bay by those who haven't seen the burly, bearded Joe Payne in person or in photographs. No, we're not the BayKeeper, although the confusion is excusable. We thought it best to set the record straight about the similar, but distinctly separate roles the Casco Bay Estuary Project and the Casco BayKeeper play.

The BayKeeper serves as a catalyst to inspire volunteer water quality monitors, to inform citizens and businesses about the bay and their impacts on it. Because of his high profile position as BayKeeper, Joe Payne is also a lightning rod for citizens who can't find their way through the state bureaucracy to get questions answered.

The Casco Bay Estuary Project was founded in April 1990, when Casco Bay was accepted into the National Estuary Program, launching a five-year effort to establish working partnerships among local, state, and federal governments, the public, and private and non-profit organizations to promote basin-wide the health of Casco Bay's water quality and living resources. The project will fund major scientific studies, demonstration projects, minigrants, volunteer water quality monitoring programs, and public outreach throughout the 40 town watershed.

In August 1991, the non-profit group Friends of Casco Bay hired Joe Payne to be the Casco BayKeeper, transforming what had been an all-volunteer organization into a full-time professional steward of the bay.

The goals of the Casco Bay Estuary Project and the Casco BayKeeper are similar, although their means of reaching them differ greatly. While the Casco Bay Estuary Project works on a larger scale, much of Joe's work is at the individual, grass roots level.

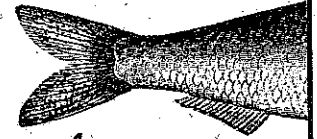
For three seasons (until he gets a winter boat), Joe Payne will be spending much of his time on the bay as possible in his 18 foot outboard the "BayKeeper", meeting the people who live, work and play on the bay and promoting good citizen stewardship of its resources. By poking into every nook and cranny of the bay, and talking to interested citizens he will also be identifying sources of pollution and working with the parties responsible to eliminate them.

When not on the water the BayKeeper can be found at meetings and elsewhere around the bay, either to learn or participate. As broad and expansive as Casco Bay is, with as diverse a community as lives around the bay, us bumping into each other has become a common occurrence.

Joe will be coordinating a volunteer water quality sampling program in Casco Bay, a project for which Casco Bay Estuary Project will provide \$75,000.

Where the BayKeeper and the Casco Bay Estuary Project join forces is in fostering better communication and cooperation among the people who live and work on Casco Bay. To some it is perplexing to have two groups with the goal to protect Casco Bay. To all of us it is an advantage to have Joe Payne working out on the water or on the streets on behalf of Casco Bay.

Did You Know?



1. How many islands and ledges (above high tide) are there in Casco Bay?

2. How many seal haulouts are there?

3. How many square miles of water in Casco Bay? (Leave out islands and peninsulas).

4. How many combined sewer overflows are there?

5. How many overboard discharge sewer systems are there?

6. What is the distance across the "mouth" of Casco Bay (between Cape Elizabeth and Cape Small)?

Answers:

- 1. 758 islands and ledges above high tide.
- 2. 45 seal haulouts.
- 3. 229 square miles.
- 4. 68 combine sewer overflows: 43 in Portland, 17 in S. Portland and 8 in Westbrook.
- 5. 355 overboard discharge systems.
- 6. 20.43 miles.

MINIGRANTS, continued from page 1

The Public Outreach Committee received fifteen proposals to fund projects ranging from an education counsellor at a day camp to an educational program aimed at recreational boaters on Casco Bay islands. More proposals were received than could be funded, however, the Public Outreach Committee plans to offer another round of public outreach minigrants in the fall to allow school groups time to prepare proposals.

Maine Island Trail Association: establish an educational/informational program aimed at recreational boaters on Casco Bay islands; \$2000.

Michael Deschaine, student at Bonny Eagle H.S.: develop slide show and brochures about pollution in the Sebago Lake watershed, and distribute to students and citizens; \$325, with his 25% match provided by the Portland Water District.

Portland Trails: to support public education and outreach efforts on the importance of buffers along shoreline corridors and shoreline resources; \$3000.

Presumpscot River Watch: expand existing water quality monitoring program to include four high schools in the Casco Bay watershed and the University of Southern Maine; \$3000.

WORKPLAN, continued from page 2

A second social characterization study will document the economic value of Casco Bay to municipalities. The study will enable towns to demonstrate the bay's value to the local community by quantifying the value of local commercial (particularly shellfishing) and recreational activities.

A five year strategy will guide the data gathering process for the Casco Bay Geographic Information System (GIS). Information for the computerized database and mapping system will allow municipalities access to state and local data.

Public Participation:

The public outreach program will continue emphasis on public participation and education with core activities to keep people informed about Casco Bay and the Estuary Project's activities, including *CURRENTS*, biannual forums, a slide show, fact sheets and posters. Special projects will include boat tours, involving schools in municipal activities, non-point source pollution education, and public outreach minigrants.

Volunteer Coordinators Needed

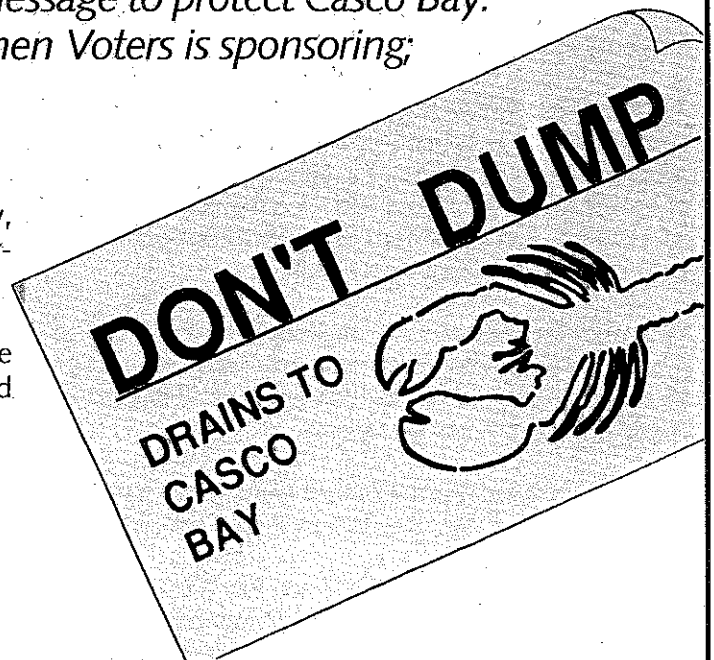
*Here's a sure fire way to send a message to protect Casco Bay:
The Portland League of Women Voters is sponsoring;*

The Storm Drain Stencil Project

If you're looking for a concrete way to help protect the bay, here's a great opportunity. Volunteers are needed to coordinate storm drain stenciling in towns around Casco Bay.

You round up the volunteer man-power and schedule the days you'll be going out to paint the town. The Portland League of Women Voters will provide the stencils.

Contact: Judy Kimball at 761•9512.



FORUM, continued from page 1

stewardship of Casco Bay and its watershed through increased public awareness and involvement (fact sheets summarizing each of these are available from the project).

Forum participants had the opportunity to sit in on two consecutive sessions at discussion tables focussing on each priority. Input was rich and varied, reflecting the diversity of background and experience among forum participants. Table discussions were led by management committee members George Flaherty (Portland Public Works), Don Perkins, Jr. (Friends of Casco Bay), Clarice Yentsch, and Jackie Cohen (Freeport town planner). Rosemary Monahan from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region I in Boston lent her expertise to discussion of the problem of overboard discharges/individual septic systems. Thanks to all who volunteered and contributed to discussions!

Notes from the discussion tables have been consolidated and sent to forum participants. Some highlights:

Forum Highlights:

At the public awareness tables, people spoke of the need to make citizens aware that they have an impact on water quality and wildlife habitat, both individually and collectively. The costs of pollution both economically and socially need to be broadcast to the general public to make it understood that in our everyday lives we have an impact on the environment. This would also increase the effectiveness of any management efforts. It was agreed that kids are an excellent way to achieve results, either directly through programs that involve children or indirectly as a link to their parents.

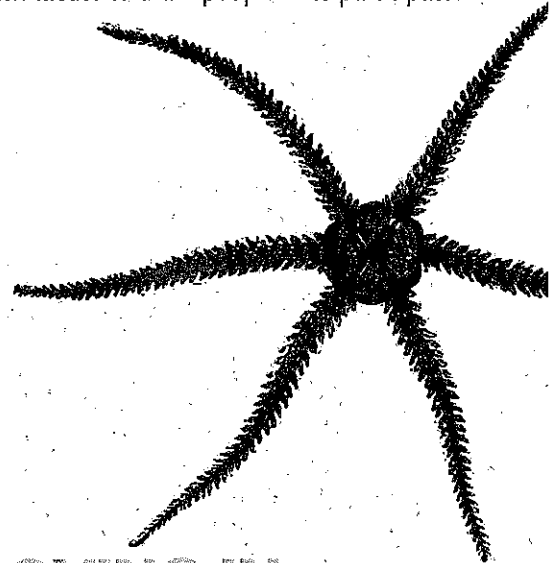
At the overboard discharge/septic system discussions it was agreed that nutrient and pathogen loading from these systems pose myriad problems, and it seems as many solutions: from denitrifying systems which remove nitrogen from sewer effluent to depuration plants which use clean water to "flush" shellfish harvested in contaminated areas.

The stormwater and combined sewer overflow discussions emphasized the need to educate people living in urban areas about ways they can reduce loads on municipal treatment facilities. Water conservation, for example, would reduce treatment plant loads. The value of natural wetlands to absorb stormwater runoff should be made more widely accepted to stop their destruction for development.

Discussion about pre-existing long term contaminants focused on the need to first define the scope of the problem (this is a priority for the project), and then determine ways to prevent contaminated sediments from re-entering the water column after they have settled. For example, dredging was pointed out a concern,

since sediments become disturbed at the dredge site and are re-suspended in the water column when dumped at sea.

Discussions on development focused on the recognition that development can be compatible with natural processes, if done properly. Planning at the local level is an effective mechanism to guide such development, except that not enough town citizens get involved in their local planning process. Discussions then centered on outreach tactics to draw people in to participate.



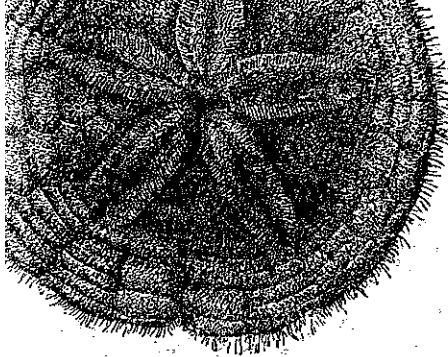
MOVING IN...

The Casco Bay Estuary Project is moving into new office space at 312 Canco Road.

Our address will remain the same. Meanwhile,

"THE NUMBER YOU HAVE BEEN DIALING, 879-6300, HAS BEEN CHANGED.

THE NEW NUMBER IS 828-1043 PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF IT!"



04103

Portland, ME

312 Canco Road

Casco Bay Estuary Project

Mailing Lists Update

In our last issue of *Currents* we asked recipients to respond if they wished to remain on our mailing list. We got a lot of responses. To keep our mailing label as up to date as possible and to keep mailing costs down, we now ask those who do not wish to remain on the mailing list to please fill out and send in the form below. We promise to stop sending you mail that you do not read!

Please stop sending me further issues of *Currents*

Name

Address

City & Zip

If you or anyone you know would like to learn more about the Project and receive this newsletter, please call 207-828-1043, or send their name and address to:

Bob Moore
Casco Bay Estuary Project
312 Canco Rd.
Portland, ME 04103

Stay Involved!

Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings are open to the public. To stay in touch with the latest developments with the Casco Bay Estuary Project, plan on attending these meetings:

August 4

October 6

December 1

All three meetings will be held evenings, 7:00 at the Yarmouth Community House, 57 East Main St., Yarmouth. If you're interested in attending or want to know more about what's happening, call Bob Moore at the Casco Bay Estuary Project. 828-1043