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Maine

Coastal Priorities Statement

Maine State Planning Office **March, 1994**

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STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333

JOHN R. McKERNAN, JR.
GOVERNOR

March, 1994

Dear Reader:

As a state, we are privileged to enjoy one of the nation's premier coastlines. Maine's 3,500 miles of coast have provided economic, environmental, and recreational resources throughout the state's history. The profit and pleasure we gain from the coast gives us a commensurate responsibility: to wisely manage our coastal resources in such a way that future Maine generations can freely enjoy the same uses.

Any management system must be periodically reassessed. The State Planning Office has canvassed state agencies and local communities for their opinions on priorities facing the state's coast, as well as reviewing findings from other coastal assessments. The resulting *Coastal Priorities Statement* concisely states the specific issues facing the coast that we must address in the near future. I offer it to you as a guideline for activities that state and local entities may pursue to protect and sustain our shared coastal resources.

Sincerely,

John R. McKernan, Jr.
Governor

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

We live in a remarkable geographic area. The state of Maine enjoys a diversity of landscapes unparalleled among the other 49 states—extensive rivers, productive forests, rich estuaries and offshore marine waters. To many the state's identity is associated with the latter environment, the diverse 3,500-mile coast of Maine.

Each summer thousands of individuals make their way to the state's coastal areas to enjoy extraordinary waters, wildlife, and landscape. Even among residents, the coast has a compelling allure. Forty-three percent of Maine's people live in the coastal region, which comprises only twelve percent of the state's total land area.

The state of Maine has a responsibility that accompanies enjoyment of this unique region. It must strive constantly to balance the uses which its people wish to make of the coast with a duty to protect and conserve the very elements that make the region so appealing.

Through its Coastal Zone Program, housed within the State Planning Office, and numerous laws and programs implemented by other state agencies and local communities, the state has attempted to strike this balance for the past 16 years. It is appropriate that, in the aftermath of explosive growth throughout the state during the 1980s, the state Coastal Management Program review priorities for the coastal zone and provide a road map for the next decade's activities.

Through pursuit of these priorities, we can better align our economic and environmental responsibilities in the coastal region.

The array of economic interests in the coast is staggering. Over the past ten years we have seen a dramatic increase in saltwater aquaculture licenses, varying from seaweed aquaculture in Lubec to European oyster cultivation in the Damariscotta River. The sea urchin harvest has reached record proportions, as has the annual lobster harvest. The growth of coastal tourism and second home construction continues despite the chilling effects of recession. A wealth of small businesses and large are located along the coast of Maine, producing approximately 58% of the state's income in 1991.

Just as noteworthy are the environmental elements of the Maine coast. From the sandy beaches of Wells to the fog-bound waters of Cutler, the ecological character of the Maine coast amazes in its variety. The collective natural resources of coastal lands and waters are the basis of the region's economic strength, as both a draw to tourists and new residents and as the foundation of many coastal residents' livelihood. The still-high quality of Maine's coastal water and its biologic abundance stands in marked contrast to the diminished and degraded character of coastal waters to our south.

Conclusion

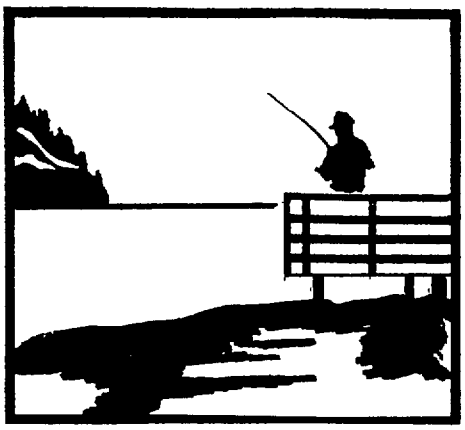
We all share responsibility for the coast of Maine, just as we share its economic and environmental benefits. At this time the state of Maine has the opportunity to reevaluate the strength of its coastal management laws, and the direction of the state Coastal Management Program. We must recommit to the struggle to achieve a balance between development and protection of our coastal areas in order to provide the next generation with the benefits we now so freely enjoy.

Maine's Coastal Priorities

The attached Coastal Priorities Statement summarizes the findings of previous public and private coastal management assessments. The conclusions drawn from those publications have been reviewed by state, regional, and local bodies, whose comments were incorporated in this final document. The highest priority management issues which should drive state actions in the next decade are:

- **Enhance protection and conservation of coastal resources**
    1. Improve the effectiveness of State land use and environmental laws
    2. Strengthen municipal abilities to manage development
    3. Encourage multi-town approaches to regional issues
- **Encourage investment in coastal communities**
    1. Promote Effective Harbor Management and Coastal Dredging
    2. Increase shoreline public access for commercial and recreational users
    3. Prepare a coastal sustainable development strategy
- **Increase awareness and expand support for coastal resource management**
    1. Enhance public awareness of priority coastal issues
    2. Increase Support for Coastal Resource Management
    3. Expand Citizen Stewardship Initiatives

The length of the coast of Maine, 3,500 miles, is equivalent to the distance between the east and west coasts of the United States.



1. INTRODUCTION

As more people seek to enjoy the natural beauty of the Maine coast and live along its shores, we must reassess the state's efforts to manage its coastal resources wisely. Given increasing demands on the state's financial resources and the consistent stresses placed on Maine's coastal zone and the 145 communities located within it, the state needs to reevaluate its highest priority coastal management priorities.

This **Coastal Priorities Statement** is an assessment of the most significant resource management problems and opportunities in coastal Maine. It provides a framework to guide state management and development decisions in order to ensure that coastal Maine retains a high quality environment and a sound economy. This Priorities Statement provides a basis for focusing funding on specific management activities. In addition, it identifies coastal management and development issues which State and regional agencies, environmental organizations, and municipalities will need to work together.

To respond to Maine's highest priority coastal management issues we need to:

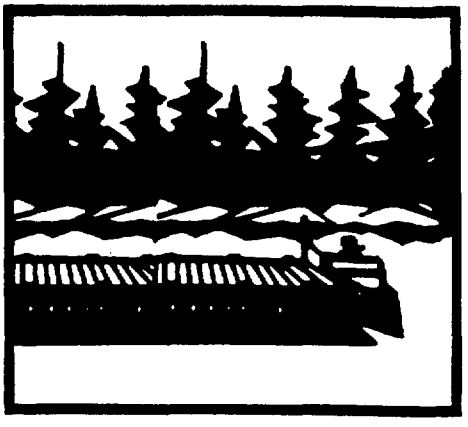
1. **Enhance the protection and conservation of coastal resources**
2. **Encourage investment in coastal communities**
3. **Increase awareness and expand support for coastal resource management**

2. THE MAINE COAST

Coastal Demography

The geographic distribution of Maine's population is similar to that of the nation. Fifty-three percent of the United States' population lives within 50 miles of the coast. In Maine, forty-three percent of the population lives in the coastal area, which comprises only 12 percent of the State's land area. Maine's coastal zone, as defined in the state's 1978 Coastal Zone Management Plan, includes all towns or unincorporated areas that border on tidal waters.

More than 533,000 people live and work year-round along the Maine coast. There are 14 vacation homes along the Maine coast for every 100 year-round homes. In the summer, the population of many small coastal towns doubles or triples as summer residents return to their vacation homes and tourists visit for shorter stays. The summer residents add another 100,000 people to Maine's coastal population in the summer.

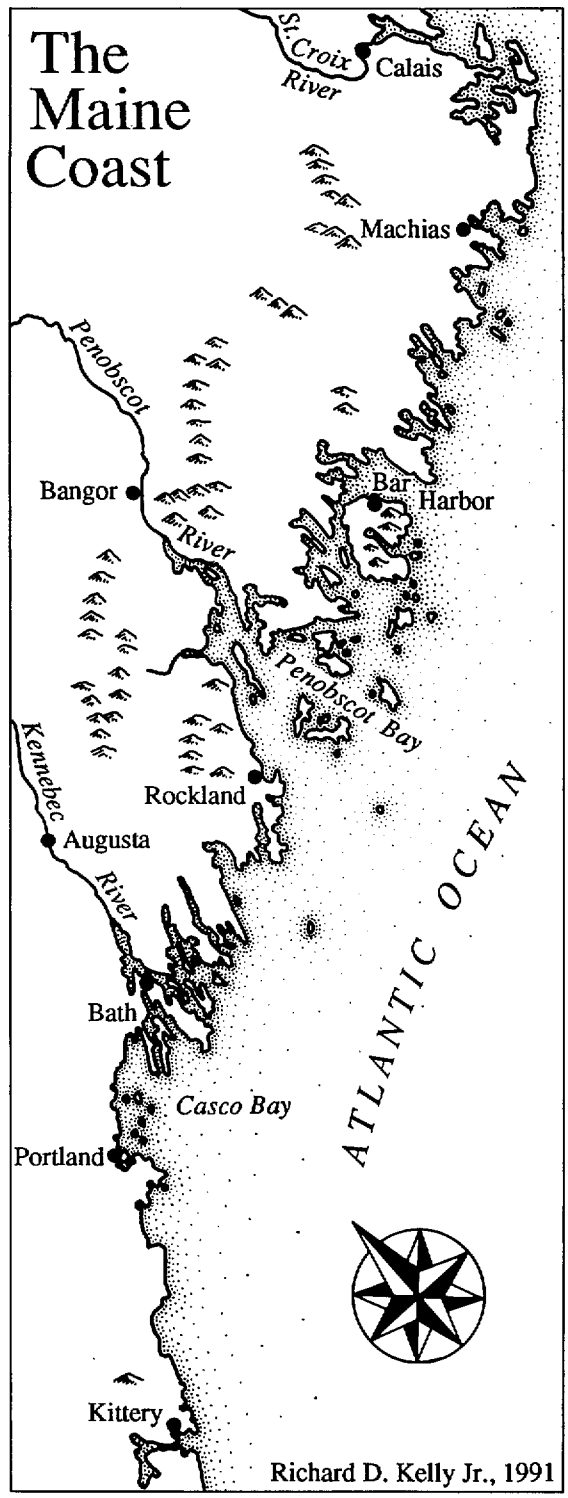


MAINE'S TOTAL POPULATION, 1991 1,234,597

INLAND COUNTIES	
ANDROSCOGGIN	104,534
AROOSTOOK	87,453
FRANKLIN	29,204
OXFORD	52,443
PISCATAQUIS	18,659
SOMERSET	50,413

COASTAL COUNTIES	
CUMBERLAND	244,386
HANCOCK	47,541
KENNEBEC	117,098
KNOX	36,728
LINCOLN	30,458
PENOBSCOT	147,171
SAGADAHOC	33,724
WALDO	33,712
WASHINGTON	35,686
YORK	165,405

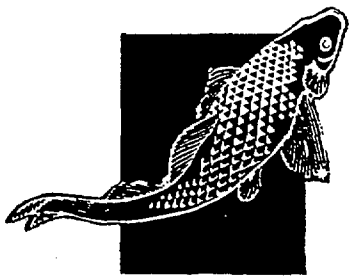
Coastal County Population as Percent of State Total = 72.2%



12,500 years ago, Maine waters extended as far inland as Bingham, Maine; Portland lay under 160 ft. of water.

During the 1980's, both Maine's total population and its coastal population grew by nine percent. The coastal area population will grow at an estimated rate of eight percent between 1990 and 2000, although Cumberland, Hancock and Penobscot counties may grow slightly faster. New residential construction will continue the population pattern typical of the 1980's, of dispersion outward from population centers to rural areas.

This existing population growth in the coastal region has placed greater demands upon natural resources, community infrastructure (e.g., roads, sewers, solid waste facilities) and altered the economy in many coastal communities. The projected rate of growth in the next decade will continue these stresses and some instance, amplify them.



Coastal Economy

The economy of many small towns and cities along Maine's coast depends on several forms of industry. Tourism forms a major part of the service sector economy of the coast. Small, resource-based businesses also predominate within the region. Many of these smaller businesses are dependent on such natural resources as clean water, shellfish, lobster, and groundfish for their livelihood. Larger businesses, in particularly ship building and repair, help boost the per capita earnings of coastal residents. This combined economy results in a higher than statewide average per capita income (6.5% greater than for the state as a whole) for many, though not all, coastal residents.

Coastal County	1991 Figures Per Capita Personal Income	Approximate County Population
Androscoggin	16,682	104,543
Cumberland	21,351	244,204
Hancock	18,796	47,563
Knox	17,398	36,728
Lincoln	19,330	30,470
Sagadahoc	18,416	33,720
Waldo	13,135	33,726
Washington	14,250	35,719
York	17,848	165,396
Coastal County Average	18,584	
Maine State Average	17,552	

Source: Survey of Current Business, May, 1993, Volume 73, no. 5, Table 2, "Total Personal Income and Per Capita Personal Income by County 1989-1991."

The Maine coastal program includes 149 townships.

Coastal Resources

Maine's 3,500 miles of shoreline provide the state with an extraordinary array of natural resources. As these resources vary by geographic region, so do human demands upon them.

Water

Maine's extensive coastal waters, both fresh and salt, constitute some of its most valuable economic, recreational, biological, and scenic resources. Lakes and wetland systems contribute directly to the primary productivity of estuaries and coastal marine systems. The systems of rivers, streams, and lakes provide spawning areas and seasonal habitat for Maine's commercially valuable anadromous fish species. Estuarine and marine waters support substantial sea urchin, lobster, and shellfish populations which have become central to the coastal economy. Offshore subtidal areas are thought to provide valuable spawning areas for a variety of fish species. Because of coastal communities' dependence on the viability of fish and shellfish stocks, the continued health of these linked fresh and saltwater systems remains critical.

Air

Since the passage of the Clean Air Act in 1972, aspects of Maine's air quality have significantly improved. Some air quality standards in Maine's laws are more stringent than the federal government's, reflecting the priority the state places on our air resources and the high existing quality of our air. However, poor air quality remains a serious problem in coastal Maine during the summer. Many of Maine's air problems, primarily high ozone levels, involve pollutants from out-of-State, upwind sources.

Land

The landscape of the coastal area is highly diversified. Particularly noteworthy are the state's 3,000 islands and the deeply indented contour of the coast. Coastal lands include smooth glacial outwash plains and coastal mountains, prime agricultural land, lands with soils unsuitable for development, hard and soft wood forests, and numerous rocky barrens. This diversity of coastal landscapes provides habitat to a wide variety of flora and fauna. The desire to live or vacation along the shore has brought about changes in land uses and subsequent alteration of land and water habitats.

3. THE CONTEXT FOR PRIORITY-SETTING

With limited financial resources at both the national and state levels of government, it is important that the state focus on its most vital coastal management issues. In the aftermath of an explosive period of growth during the 1980s, the state of Maine has the opportunity to reassess its current coastal management system before the next cycle of growth occurs. Without a periodic examination of our priorities in this special geographic area the state cannot be certain that its efforts reflect real and pressing problems on the coast.

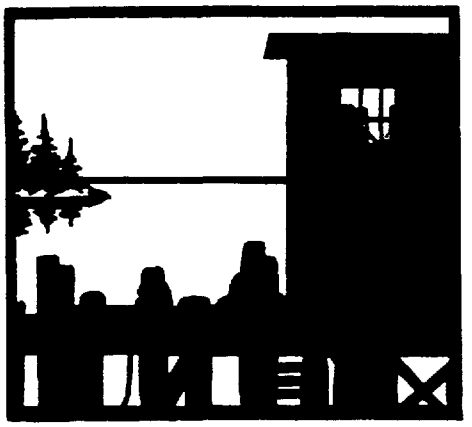
Coastal Maine is experiencing a variety of pressures as a result of more people living in coastal municipalities and more visitors traveling to its shoreline. While the current economic recession has slowed the tide of growth throughout the state, the coast remains a magnet to development. As a result of population growth, wildlife habitats have been compromised, water quality has declined, and the special quality of life in Maine's coastal communities has been altered. While the effects of growth and development are not unique to Maine, our response to them must be specially tailored to the conditions of the Maine coast and its people.

Over the years many public and private organizations have conducted their own assessment of the state's coastal issues. This Statement draws on that work. The issues past studies have identified include:

- Coastal Priorities Statement - In 1985 the Governor's Coastal Advisory Committee identified the following as priority coastal issues: controlling the impacts of growth and development, improving information management systems, integrating coastal development and environmental protection, expanding shoreline access opportunities, and working with our neighbors in the Gulf of Maine region on issues of regional concern.

- Assessment of Coastal Issues - In 1992 the State Planning Office conducted an assessment of eight national coastal management objectives as described in the federal Coastal Zone Management Act. More than 300 survey forms were distributed to local and state officials, private conservation organizations, and interest groups. The results concluded that two coastal issues were most important for the state to address —responding to the cumulative impacts

Population per mile of coast in the state of Maine has increased from 188 people per mile in 1960 to 250 people per mile in 1988, a 33 percent increase.



of incremental development and protecting coastal wetlands. Increasing shoreline access opportunities and strengthening Maine's response to coastal erosion and beach development were also identified as key issues needing attention.

• A Survey of Marine Related Organizations in the Gulf of Maine Region - In 1993 the Maine Community Foundation, at the request of the international Gulf of Maine Program, surveyed more than 300 non-governmental organizations in the Gulf of Maine region to identify the region's most pressing natural resource issues. Nearly 60 Maine organizations responded to the survey and indicated the highest priority environmental issues were protection of wildlife habitats and marine water quality.

• Water Quality Resource Questionnaire - In 1992 the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service surveyed municipal and community groups to collect information on the public's perception of water quality and land use issues, and to identify priority needs for public education.

The 158 respondents, including municipal planning boards, comprehensive planning committees, town councils, land trusts and environmental advocacy groups, identified industrial pollution, inappropriate development, failing septic systems, and urban and agricultural runoff as priority water quality issues.

Problems cited with current public outreach efforts included: individuals and groups do not know what information or programs are available to them, they do not understand the environmental regulatory process, and they do not have accurate, current information on water quality. Those surveyed suggested that in order to improve water quality management, state and federal governments need to educate the public, adequately enforce current regulations and improve funding for local efforts.

• Federal Evaluation of Coastal Management - In 1993 the federal government evaluated Maine's coastal management efforts and identified three issues that needed to be addressed. These included improved enforcement of state and local land use and environmental laws, increased public education and outreach efforts on priority issues, and better integration of local and state management of the marine environment.

• Land Use Regulatory Reform Study report - In 1994 a subcommittee appointed by the Maine Legislature completed an analysis of the way Maine manages its natural resources. The report identified ways to strengthen local land use man-

agement capabilities, to better integrate state and local planning and regulation, to increase accountability and coordination, and to improve the way Maine manages natural resource information. In regard to the coastal zone, the report highlighted a variety of actions to strengthen and evaluate the effectiveness of Maine's Growth Management Program. Among its recommendations, the report calls for the establishment of a state natural resources coordinating council, recognition of watershed management as a planning priority, and improvement of Maine's GIS mapping efforts focusing on wildlife issues.

In summary, these studies and assessments articulate a series of recurring themes (see attached chart) that provide the background for this Coastal Priorities Statement. The overriding issue for the state appears to be effective management of the impacts of growth and development in a way that balances both environmental protection and economic development.

Penobscot Bay is the state's largest estuary, with a surface water area of 361 square miles and a total drainage area of 9,400 square miles.

4. PRIORITY COASTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Today, the overriding issue for coastal Maine is how to manage the effects of coastal development in a way that balances protection of valued resources with appropriate development. This issue is not unique to Maine, for as coastal population increases around the nation, the finite resources of the U.S. coastal zone will fall under even greater stress.

The Maine Coastal Program

The goal of the Maine Coastal Program is *to balance the conservation and development of coastal resources* at the State and local level. This goal is based on the federal Coastal Zone Management Act and was embraced by the Maine State Legislature and federal government in 1978 when the Maine Coastal Program was initiated; it is still relevant in 1994. The state strives to achieve this balance through a variety of state regulatory, planning and land acquisition programs.

Maine's Coastal Program is an interagency, collaborative effort. It operates as a "network" program, implementing Program goals through many state and local partners, in recognition that many of Maine's coastal management issues transcend the ability of one agency to resolve. It builds and maintains effective partnerships of public and private interests in order to develop, coordinate, and implement coastal policies. It also recognizes that many issues are regional in scope and require innovative management approaches to respond to them. The Coastal Program's diversity of activities reflect the complex and dynamic character of the state's 3500-mile coast.

Managing the Impacts of Development on Maine's Coastal Resources

In 1978 the Governor's Coastal Conservation and Development Committee, after two years of public consultation, determined that the single most important natural resource management issue for Maine was the cumulative effects of incremental development. In every coastal assessment conducted since then, managing the impacts of development has been a leading priority. In 1994, this issue remains Maine's highest priority task. Each of the issues described below are aspects of this broad theme.

The Legislature recognized the most effective way to manage the impacts of growth was advance planning at both the State and local levels. Thus it enacted the Growth Management Program in 1988. This program, one of eight in the country, has distinguished Maine as a national leader in the effort to balance economic development and environmental protection.

The coastal and ocean management issues identified in this Coastal Priorities Statement are organized into three broad categories. The first category, *Enhance the Protection and Conservation of Coastal Resources,* includes those issues Maine needs to pursue to better protect and conserve its coastal resources. The second, *Encourage Investment in Coastal Communities,* includes activities Maine needs to pursue to strengthen economic conditions in our coastal communities. The final category, *Increase Awareness and Expand Support for Coastal Resource Management,* focuses on those actions needed to make Maine citizens and visitors better stewards of the coastal environment.

A. Enhance the Protection and Conservation of Coastal Resources

Every recent assessment of coastal issues identified an urgent need to strengthen the protection and conservation of Maine's coastal resources. It is important to note that these efforts will be successful only if Maine effectively integrates coastal management at the local, state, and regional levels. Such improved management will build the foundation for a better balance between protection and development in this special geographic region. Maine's coastal priorities for the next years include:

1. Improve the effectiveness of State land use and environmental laws

Maine's land use and environmental statutes provide the framework for the State's coastal resource management program. Consequently, a priority is to continually evaluate and improve the effectiveness of these statutes. Necessary actions for the state to pursue include:

- *Improve the effectiveness of State enforcement of existing land use and environmental statutes in coordination with municipal regulatory activities.* Building on the early successes of the State's local code enforcement officer train-

ing and certification program will be an important part of this effort.

• *Improve scientific understanding of resources being managed.* Emphasize and support research and comprehensive coastal monitoring in order to provide a base of knowledge about the health, structure, and functioning of coastal ecosystems.

• *Strengthen the State's response to coastal hazards and sea level rise to protect public health, safety, and coastal infrastructure.* Efforts to develop policies encouraging "retreat" from the advance of the sea rather than armoring of the shoreline should continue. Past state activities in this area have made Maine a leader among coastal states. The natural sand dune systems of southern Maine present specific planning and management dilemmas that should receive state attention.

• *Improve State and local management of both terrestrial and marine habitats by expanding our knowledge of and strengthening protection for these vital areas.* Developing new approaches that improve protection of marine habitats is an urgent concern as these areas are directly affected by shoreline development. Adequate and consistent water quality monitoring must be assured in order to document the consequences of development on such coastal resources.

There are nearly 2 million lobster pots in Maine waters, a figure which has remained relatively constant over the past decade.

• *Develop new ocean management approaches that reduce conflicts between users of the marine environment, clarify the roles of the different levels of government, promote regional management, and strengthen interagency coordination.* The coastal waters of Maine are fixed in area. However, unlike the land, the state owns and manages tidal waters in common. This poses many singular management problems. The resources found in coastal lands and waters depend for their continued good health on multiple environmental factors, many of which are affected by human activities. Thus it is imperative that the state develop the means to resolve inevitable conflicts which arise in such a fragile geographic area. Developing appropriate tools, both planning and regulatory, requires involvement by all levels of government and by private interests. Through this process and through implementation of resulting ocean management policies, the state will be better able to make use of unfolding economic and environmental opportunities in the coastal region.

2. Strengthen municipal abilities to manage development

Maine's coastal communities continue to suffer the effects of a dramatic growth in population during the past decade, and the concomitant conversion of land to developed uses. These communities will continue to need varied forms of assistance from the state. Coastal municipalities are essential partners in Maine's coastal management efforts. Municipalities are most familiar with local natural resources, have broad regulatory authority, and are best positioned to make key decisions affecting the quality of life in their communities. To build on this partnership the following actions are needed.

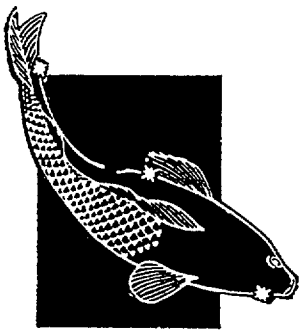
- *Effective participation in Maine's Growth Management Program.* Maine needs to ensure that all coastal municipalities have the opportunity to prepare comprehensive plans and implementing ordinances which address the Legislature's planning goals and coastal policies. Municipalities should also integrate the State's growth management, floodplain management and shoreland zoning programs at the local level. These actions will improve the quality of local development reviews and strengthen the protection of local coastal resources.

- *Increase the provision of technical assistance to local leaders.* Maine needs to maximize the effectiveness of its state-local coastal partnership by providing technical assistance to local officials and boards, including technical planning guides, model ordinances, hands-on assistance, and financial support for local planning and land use management.

3. Encourage multi-town approaches to regional issues

Many of the more complex and challenging coastal management issues involve coastal resources that transcend local and state boundaries such as groundwater, surface water, and wildlife. To adequately address these issues creative approaches must be used. Regional efforts, such as the Gulf of Maine Program, the Casco Bay Estuary project and the Damariscotta River Estuary project, have been initiated in the past few years. Each effort successfully demonstrates how countries, states, and municipalities can work together on issues of mutual concern. Expanding regional approaches such as these will be crucial for effective and responsive management in the diverse regions of Maine's extensive coast.

Portland, Maine, is the third largest oil port on the east coast. Other significant Maine oil ports include Sears Island and Eastport.



• *Support regional multi-town planning and management programs*. The state's regional planning commissions continued to provide much-needed technical expertise to the towns. However, the state needs to do more to encourage multi-town approaches to estuary management and to assist municipalities as they respond to the impacts of coastal development. Local comprehensive plans should serve as the basis for these efforts.

4. Improve the protection of coastal water quality

Over the past 20 years, the federal government and Maine have focused much attention on controlling conventional pollutants in discharges from large industrial sources and waste water treatment plants. The result of these efforts has been marked improvement of water quality, although the continued discharge of legally-permitted toxic contaminants remains problematic. As these point sources of pollutants are controlled, our attention has turned to the impact that non-point sources of pollutants have on coastal water quality. This non-point source pollution is, as its title implies, transported by rainwater from diverse sources, such as roads, parking lots, construction activities, septic systems, marinas, agricultural land, and forestry operations.

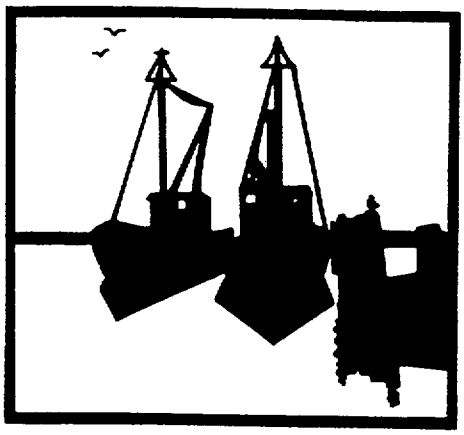
Maine's challenge is to identify non-point pollution sources and to implement appropriate management practices. Due to the omnipresent nature of this pollution, an extensive geographic area, and very limited dollars to perform the work, targeting the state's management efforts becomes crucial to garnering the greatest water quality improvements from our efforts.

To respond to this challenge Maine needs to pursue several initiatives including:

• *Develop a consistent water quality monitoring program to track the status and trends in near coastal marine water quality.* This program should include monitoring for toxics, nutrients, bacteria and general water chemistry (i.e. pH, DO, temp, turgidity, salinity) and target research to characterize identified coastal pollution problems. Data produced by citizen monitoring groups should be used as a complement to state monitoring programs.

• *Continue to pursue a varied strategy for addressing non-point source problems, including performing shoreline and*

watershed surveys. These surveys can be targeted to priority areas of concern or can be coastwide. GIS technology can then be used to catalog and geographically reference the information as it is gathered.



B. Encourage Investment in Coastal Communities

Maine's 145 coastal municipalities represent 12% of the state's land area, contain nearly half of the state's population and have more than 60% of the state's employment opportunities. Clearly, sustaining the health and vitality of the coastal region is a state priority. This section focuses on the investments needed to strengthen existing coastal infrastructure, the vital foundation of economic growth.

1. Promote Effective Harbor Management and Coastal Dredging

Harbor management and coastal dredging are essential components of the state's coastal development strategy. Maine's harbors are "doorways" to the world, allowing Maine industries to export natural resources and manufactured products. Critical issues regarding the construction of public marine infrastructure (e.g., piers, wharves, rail connections, boat ramps, etc.) greatly influence the competitiveness of many of Maine's businesses. However, conflicts may arise between state priorities and local concerns. For example, decisions affecting the location of mooring fields can affect Maine's aquaculture industry. Finally, dredging of new and existing channels and anchorages are vital to the success of local ports and the productivity of the state's marine trade, yet may conflict with specific concerns of the local town.

- *Encourage local harbor management.* State agencies and coastal municipalities need to work collaboratively to ensure our key ports and harbors remain viable and active. Alternative conflict resolution techniques should be devised to provide a mutually agreed-to avenue for state and local dispute resolution.

- *Implement State dredge management strategies.* Review statuory and environnmental impediments to land disposal options for disposal of dredge materials, and work withe the Legislature's Dredging Subcommittee and the Army Corps of Engineers to identify information needed to make decisions concerning offshore disposal sites.

• *Prioritize state projects related to maintenance of federal navigation projects.* The Governor will issue an executive order to create a standing state commission that will prioritize projects annually in order to effectively allocate the limited resources of the Army Corps of Engineers.

2. Increase shoreline public access for commercial and recreational users

Ensuring adequate public access to the shoreline is a priority pursued at the state and local level. Citizens, land trusts, and local governments are expanding access opportunities locally. State programs, while currently greatly reduced in their capacity, are also acquiring and improving access sites. Yet there remains a deficit of coastal access sites for the existing population. This need for more access sites increases as the state promotes its tourism opportunities and the coastal population grows. The demand is exacerbated by the loss of traditional, informal access ways as shoreline property is developed.

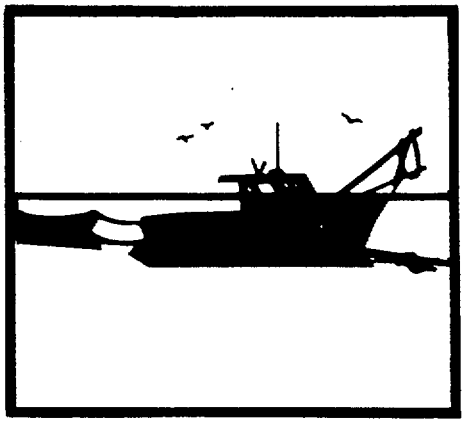
• *Pursue right-of-way discovery and clarify public title.* Publicly held rights-of-way to the shoreline exist all along the coast, but 200 years of development have clouded some titles. Coastal municipalities need to conduct historical research to document public ownership and record this information in their County Registry of Deeds. Given the very low cost of this work in comparison to acquiring shorefront property, research should be conducted in each of Maine's coastal municipalities.

• *Expand land acquisition programs.* In the past few years Maine has made important progress in acquiring shorefront property for commercial and recreational purposes. This work needs to be expanded so that public land, of varying types, is available for current and future generations to use.

Maine has the greatest number of islands of any coastal state in the continental United States—3,000 islands, of which 14 have year-round communities.

3. Prepare a coastal sustainable development strategy

Historically, the economy of coastal Maine is tied to its relationship with its natural resources. As use of these resources intensifies, the state must ensure that this use occurs in a sustainable fashion, that is, in a manner which meets our current needs, ensures the ecological integrity of the coast and does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.



- *Provide appropriate assistance to local communities.* One of the more significant issues facing many coastal communities is the decline of groundfish stocks and the related economic impacts. Shoreside facilities, vessel services, and supporting industries are a few examples of businesses that will be affected as management regimes change and stocks shrink. A consortium of state agencies needs to document these impacts, assist communities to plan for economic change, and explore appropriate assistance measures.

- *Prepare a coastal sustainable development strategy.* The transformations created by changing demographics on the coast, the decline of traditional forms of livelihood and growth of new sectors of the economy indicate an immediate need to plan for the cultural and economic well-being of the state's many coastal communities. The state must identify high value coastal resources and their status, determine threats to their sustainable use, and engage interested parties in a strategy development process. Such a process will require equal participation by state and local government agencies and by private interests.

C. Increase Awareness and Expand Support for Coastal Resource Management

Over the years Maine agencies have developed an array of educational materials for the general public and educators. The State Planning Office has organized the annual Coastweek/ Coastal Cleanup and made it Maine's largest volunteer initiative. Coastal watershed management projects with strong public outreach components are underway in the Damariscotta River, the St. Croix River and Casco Bay. The Shore Stewards Partnership, with support from state agencies, local groups, towns and high schools, has developed local coastal water quality monitoring and education programs. In short, Maine is pursuing a variety of innovative public awareness programs.

We need to do more to inform the public about coastal resources. Virtually every assessment cited in this Statement noted that Maine citizens and coastal visitors need to be aware of the effect they have on coastal resources. To increase this awareness, the state should follow three routes. First, we must increase general public awareness of coastal issues. Second, we need to build on this increased understanding to generate increased support for Maine's land use and environmental management programs. Finally, the state must foster citizen stewardship initiatives and offer opportunities for citizen involvement in coastal management decisions, including provision of necessary training and technical assistance.

1. Enhance public awareness of priority coastal issues

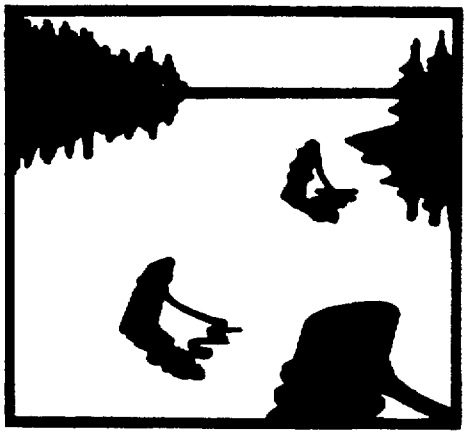
If we are to achieve long-term sustainability of coastal resources and retain a high quality of life, Maine citizens and visitors need to be well informed about the fragility of Maine's coastal resources. This requires thoughtful, ongoing efforts to present information in a way that the public can use, either to make more informed decisions in their own lives, or to encourage participation in broader local and regional stewardship efforts.

- *Increase Networking Between Programs.* Maine needs to promote new efforts to build coalitions among nonprofits, municipal governments, trade groups and state agencies. Through such coalitions, a consensus on how best to raise public awareness of priority issues can be achieved. These actions might include new educational approaches and expanded collaboration with the media pursued.

It takes a particle of water about three months to completely circle the Gulf of Maine, moving counter-clockwise with the prevailing current.

2. Increase Support for Coastal Resource Management

Maine citizens and visitors need to be well informed about the value of coastal resources and the rationale behind the current state and local management framework. To accomplish this objective, accurate, up-to-date information on these programs needs to be presented clearly and consistent.



- *Increase public understanding of state and local management programs.* For the public to be supportive of local and state management programs they need to understand the basis for them and the consequences of noncompliance with the standards. A coordinated, multi-media approach involving private and public organizations is needed to accomplish this objective.

- *Improve public information on the regulatory process.* Local and state agencies need to develop and disseminate better information on how to obtain the necessary local and state regulatory approvals. Efforts also should be pursued to simplify the permitting process without compromising resource protection objectives.

3. Expand Citizen Stewardship Initiatives

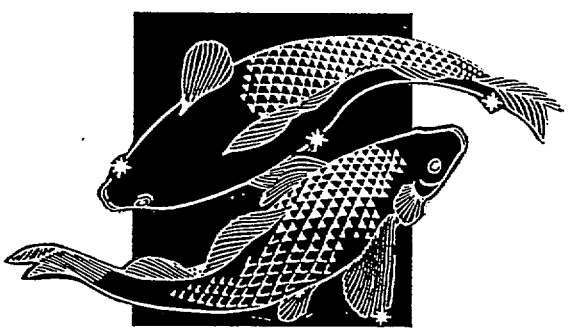
Maine is a national leader in environmental protection initiatives. However, reduction of government size at both the state and local levels required Maine to make difficult choices concerning environmental management resulting in the elimination of certain programs. In response to this trend, local and regional groups, (e.g. land trusts, lake associations, watershed groups, volunteer water quality monitoring groups, etc.) began assuming certain natural resource protection activities. Examples include open space protection and acquisition, shellfish management, water quality sampling, and surveys of shoreline permit compliance.

These initiatives indicate that people are vitally concerned about the area they live in and are prepared to take ongoing action to protect the environment. For example, a network of more than 600 citizen volunteers are evaluating the quality of marine and estuarine waters and working to solve water quality problems where they originate — at the local level. The Maine Coastal Program provides technical, organizational and financial support to this effort through the Shore Stewards Partnership.

In order to assist citizen involvement in hands-on stewardship of coastal resources, it is important to:

- *Provide and encourage opportunities for citizen stewardship, particularly for young people.* Training and equipping groups to conduct scientifically credible environmental monitoring projects in coastal environments (e.g. shoreline surveys, NPS surveys, water quality studies, marine debris collections) needs to be expanded. It is important to provide opportunities for local groups to network and share information via conferences, newsletters, and uniform computer databases. State government also needs to make a commitment to collect and analyze volunteer-generated information and to incorporate it into state level policy decisions.

- *Create an ongoing local and state leaders network.* Maine needs to establish an ongoing leaders network that disseminates accurate coastal resource information on priority coastal issues throughout their communities. This network could be patterned after successful "docent" programs that other coastal states have initiated.



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