



# NEW HAMPSHIRE COASTAL MANAGEMENT

The Coastal Program protects clean water, restores coastal habitats, and helps make communities more resilient to flooding and other natural hazards through staff assistance and funding to 42 coastal towns and cities as well as other local and regional groups.

## State Program in Action

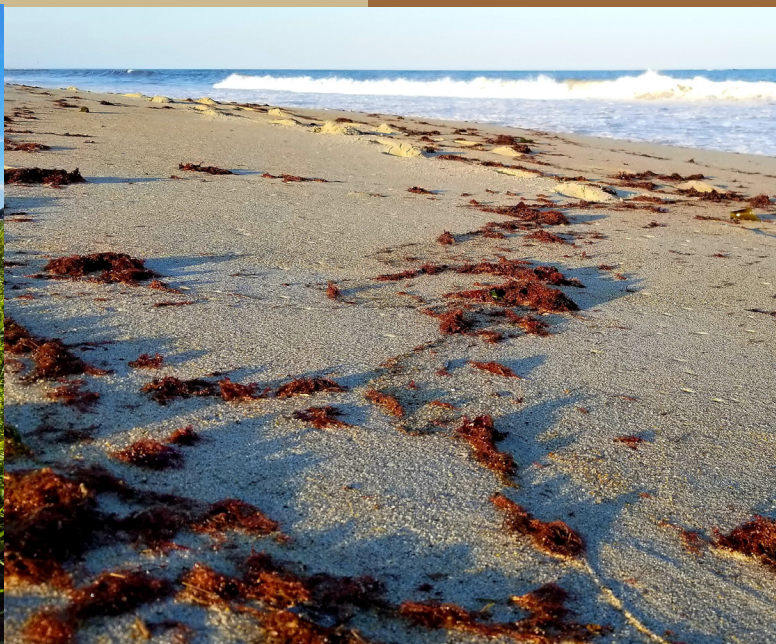
- After more than 20 years of New Hampshire Coastal Program (NHCP) leadership, the construction phase of the Gonic Dam(s) Removal Project finally began in fall of 2025. Despite the challenges of unresolved ownership, the need to protect municipal sewer structures and management of contaminated river sediments, the lower dam was initially breached in November 2025. This restoration work will continue through December 2026 with the removal of both upper and lower dams. NHCP staff, Kevin Lucey, played a significant role in project development through the due diligence, design, and permitting phases of the project. NHCP also worked with the dam owners and project partners to secure \$2,700,000 in grant funding to support the removal of the dams.
- The Oyster River exceeded the capacity of the 9-foot culvert supporting the only road providing access to this 100-plus home community, preventing residents and emergency response resources from leaving or entering the neighborhood during flood events. Through a partnership with The Nature Conservancy, with funding from New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services' Critical Flood Risk Infrastructure Grant, Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund, and Watershed Assistance Grant programs (among others), the undersized culvert was replaced with a 50-foot bridge. This replacement opened five miles of fish and turtle habitat, reduced water quality degradation and will significantly reduce flooding during large storm events.
- Funding from NHCP provided 12 coastal hazard and habitat training events with 483 attendees.
- NHCP provided funding to complete the removal of Sawyer Mill dam and restored 20 acres of Belamy River habitat.



## Science-based Solutions for the Future

Completed the 2025 update to the NH Coastal Flood Risk Summary: Part 1 Science report, which summarizes the latest trends and projections for sea level rise, coastal storms, groundwater rise, and precipitation. Development of the updated Part II: Guidance for Using Best Available Science is well underway and will support decision-makers in NH to consider flood risks and best available science in projects and planning efforts. The Guidance report is anticipated to be released in Fall 2026.

**FY25 Federal Funds: \$1,234,000**  
**FY25 State & Local Matching Funds:**  
**\$1,156,000**  
**FY25 Total: \$2,390,000**



# CARING FOR OUR MARSHES

In December 2025, the new, online guide *Caring for Our Marshes* was published on the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Coastal Program website. This guide offers practical, science-based information alongside illustrations that residents can use to improve the condition of nearby tidal wetlands and manage their property so that, as sea level rises, the landscape can adapt to changing conditions.

The guide has several components. The primary product is a website that has background information about the benefits, threats, wildlife and culture of New Hampshire tidal marshes, in addition to providing a series of best practices. The illustrations were developed by a local artist, Taylor Rose, to bring the salt marsh to life on the screen. Additional products include a 4-page summary and postcard. These resources are available anyone that lives, works, or plays near New Hampshire's salt marshes, including coastal residents, landscapers, community leaders and anyone that enjoys fishing, paddling or wildlife watching in coastal wetlands.



This guide was developed by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services' Coastal Program and the Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in 2025. The content was planned and reviewed with help from an Advisory Group of experts from municipal governments, nonprofits, universities, and the private sector with deep knowledge of New Hampshire salt marsh ecology, land use planning, permitting, landowner technical assistance, landscape architecture and science communication.

While this is still a new guide in the early stages of outreach, so far it has been well-received. At a recent event at the Gundalow Science Cafe, over 20 four-pagers were distributed. Check out our *About this Guide: Caring for Our Marshes* to learn more about our partners and the Advisory Group that shaped and developed this guide.

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