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Casco Bay under the Microscope at “State of the Bay” Conference

(PORTLAND – October 28) – The Casco Bay Estuary Partnership (CBEP) hosts the next “State of the Bay” conference on Thursday, November 3rd, 2005, at The Marriott at Sable Oaks in South Portland (agenda attached). This year’s conference includes the release of the *State of the Bay 2005* report and the announcement of this year’s recipient of the Casco Bay Award for significant contributions to the protection of Casco Bay and its watershed.

“We host this conference every few years to highlight the latest science, new management techniques, and successful projects in and around Casco Bay” notes CBEP Executive Director, Karen Young. “It’s an all-day event to gather environmental organizations, governmental agencies, citizens, scientists, municipalities and funders – to look closely at the environmental health of the Casco Bay ecosystem. Our afternoon sessions cover many of the successful projects we’ve been involved in over the last few years including everything from significantly reducing stormwater pollution to volunteer monitoring for horseshoe crabs to educational program for the area’s youth. If it has something to do with the health of Casco Bay, you’ll find it at the conference.”

Concurrently, CBEP is issuing the *State of the Bay 2005* report, a comprehensive look at fourteen issues associated with Casco Bay’s environmental health. Young remarked that “This is the first time we’ve revisited this report since 2000. In that time, we’ve gotten some much more

sophisticated data about the environmental conditions in the region, and the factors that provide stress on the system. We anticipate that this report will be the cause for much discussion at the Conference and in the months ahead.”

The “State of the Bay” conference is open to the public. For registration information, call the USM Department of Conferences at 207-780-5951, or email conferences@usm.maine.edu.

Now celebrating its tenth year, CBEP grew out of the *Casco Bay Plan* in the early 1990’s, a comprehensive look at the issues affecting the environment and sustainability of Casco Bay. CBEP, part of the USM Muskie School, promotes public stewardship and effective management of the Casco Bay ecosystem as well as awarding grants to local environmental organizations.

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