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## CBEP Winter 2018 News

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Casco Bay Currents, an email newsletter of the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership

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Winter 2018



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Welcome,

to the Winter 2018 edition of *Casco Bay Currents*, the newsletter for the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership (CBEP).

You are receiving this quarterly email newsletter because you signed up for our newsletters in the past. If you wish to unsubscribe, please click the link at the bottom of the page.

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## CBEP Annual Report 2017



It was a busy year for CBEP and its partners.

Read more about the Partnership's accomplishments [here](#).

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## Partner Profile: New England Environmental Finance Center

Founded in 2001, the New England Environmental Finance Center (NEEFC), our partners at the Muskie School at USM, tackles creative approaches to stormwater management, climate change, drinking water protection, and other environmental challenges, especially the question of how to pay for needed environmental improvements.

The staff of the NEEFC have significant experience in working with communities to identify sustainable financing plans for environmental infrastructure and operations *and* developing the community support necessary to actually implement these strategies.

Ed Suslovic, a former Portland mayor, city councilor, and legislator is the Program Manager for Stormwater Management at the NEEFC. "CBEP and the NEEFC have a long history of collaboration when it comes to protecting Casco Bay, and it is exciting to share those lessons learned with other communities across New England and beyond" says Suslovic.

For more information about the EFC or to request assistance, check their [website](#).





## **\$10,000 "Prize" Awarded to Address Nutrients in Casco Bay**

CBEP and its partners will purchase nutrient sensing equipment with prize money awarded by a consortium of federal agencies, including the EPA.

The waters surrounding Portland Harbor have among the highest total nitrogen (TN) concentrations observed on the Maine coast. High nitrogen loads appear to be responsible for increasingly negative impacts on water quality. However, a limited understanding of nutrient processes in Bay waters makes it difficult for scientists and researchers to identify cost-effective solutions for reducing nutrient loading to the Bay.

With the prize money, CBEP will purchase equipment that partner organizations will deploy in the waters surrounding the City of Portland and the Portland Water District's East End Wastewater Treatment Plant. This will complement a local monitoring program to improve our understanding of how nutrients impact the Bay. The data will influence permitting decisions affecting the largest dischargers in the state, who collectively treat waste for a majority of the region's population.

Results will be shared with Casco Bay communities through two existing regional coalitions: the Casco Bay Nutrient Council and Casco Bay Monitoring Network.

If you would like to know more or contribute to this effort, call CBEP at [\(207\) 780-4820](tel:207-780-4820).

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## CBEP Habitat Protection Grants



CBEP is awarding \$39,000 to five organizations to support the permanent protection of targeted habitats in the Casco Bay watershed through its *CBEP Habitat Protection Fund*. The Fund provides cost-sharing grants to support transition and acquisition costs.

CBEP awarded funding for the following projects:

- **Rines Forest II, Cumberland**, Chebeague and Cumberland Land Trust. This 53-acre parcel is adjacent to the 216-acre Rines Forest in the Piscataqua River watershed, in the heart of a three-town green corridor for wildlife and conservation with high value wildlife habitat.
- **Riverfront Woods Preserve Project, Yarmouth**, Royal River Conservation Trust and the Town of Yarmouth. Funds are going towards the purchase of the 24-acre Dugas parcel on the Royal River, a stretch of river critically important because it connects Casco Bay's significant habitat to resilient riparian zones upriver.
- **Robinson Pond South**, Cape Elizabeth Land Trust. This roughly 52-acre parcel borders on a 7.5-acre pond, providing important habitat for inland and tidal waterfowl as well as a variety of native birds, plants and animals. It also protects low-lying coastal land predicted to be a future marsh migration corridor.
- **Scribner Lot, Otisfield**, Western Foothills Land Trust (WFLT). This 46-acre forested parcel is adjacent to 271 acres owned by WFLT and has frontage on the Crooked River. The project will protect 2,817 feet of shoreline and 19.3 acres of wetlands.
- **Woodward Point, Brunswick**, Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT). This property has more than 10,000 feet of coastal frontage and 38 acres of ecologically diverse and commercially important coastal wetlands. It includes shore frontage on the New Meadows River and includes "the Bullpens," high-productivity clam flats. MCHT is partnering with the Brunswick Topsham Land Trust to acquire this property.

*Photo: Woodward Point, Brunswick*

## 2018 Community Grants - Coming Soon!

Look for the 2018 Community Grants RFP in your inbox or on our website in late January. This is the 3rd year for CBEP's Community Grants program, which encourages new partnerships and innovative projects to engage communities with Casco Bay and its watershed.



Successful projects incorporate at least one of the elements from the [Casco Bay Plan](#) and address identified Plan priorities. A total of \$10,000 will be available for educators, land trusts, civic groups, municipalities, churches, school groups, neighborhood associations and other non-profits.

For more information and to learn about past funded projects, visit the [Grant Opportunities page](#) of our website. For more information or to request a copy of the RFP, please contact Victoria at [victoria.boundy@maine.edu](mailto:victoria.boundy@maine.edu).

*Photo: Brunswick Jr. High School students at Thomas Point Marsh, 2017*

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## Reducing Flood Risk in New England with Nature-Based Infrastructure



CBEP, Maine Coastal Program, Maine Geological Survey, The Nature Conservancy, local municipalities and others will be piloting and evaluating nature-based approaches to coastal shoreline protection. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is funding this three-year project throughout New England.

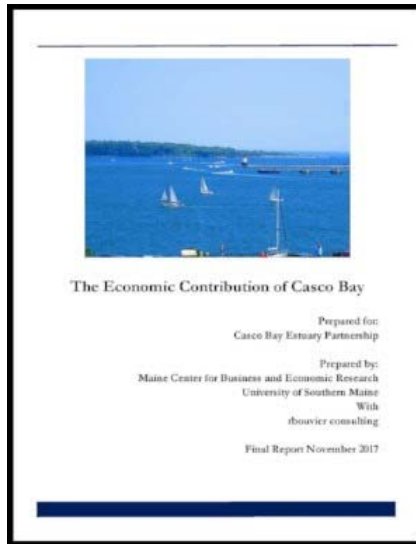
"Living shoreline" approaches use natural materials such as shell hash, root wads, and plants to enhance coastal resilience and provide better protection from storm events. This approach is largely untested in the Northeast, but is more common along the mid-Atlantic and southern coastlines. This pilot project will demonstrate whether living shorelines in New England can emerge as a viable alternative to traditional approaches to shoreline protection, maintaining critical coastal services such as flood protection, erosion control, and habitat enhancement.

Casco Bay, with its abundant coastal bluffs, eelgrass beds, mudflats and fringing marsh, is an ideal location to test living shorelines in a variety of conditions. Several demonstration sites will be set up on publicly accessible coastal properties, and local resident volunteers will be enlisted to assist with monitoring and stewardship. CBEP staff will work with partners to develop guidance materials, assessment and monitoring protocols, permitting and design guidelines, and evaluation of living shorelines approaches around the Bay.

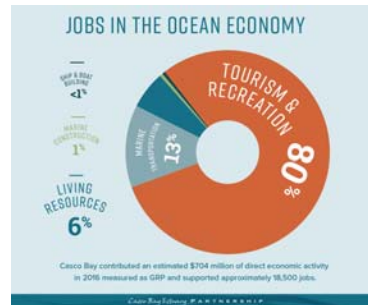
CBEP will post more information on its [website](#) as the project develops.

*Photo: A Living Shorelines project in Portsmouth, NH. Photo courtesy of NH Coastal Adaptation Workgroup.*

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**The Economic Contribution of Casco Bay**, a study prepared for CBEP by the Maine Center for Business and Economic Research, is available. Click on the image above to access the full report. Some of the study findings are highlighted in the infographics below. These shareable graphics, and more, can be found [here](#).



## Registration Begins January 22! *Adaptation Planning for Coastal Communities*

March 20-21, 2018  
Brunswick Hotel & Tavern

Coastal communities increasingly realize the need for climate adaptation strategies, but many are unsure where to begin. You are invited to participate in this course, facilitated by NOAA staff, to gain a thorough grounding and practical skills for incorporating adaptation strategies into planning processes. There will be lots of time in class to practice applying what you've learned, as well as opportunities for local collaboration through discussion, group activities, and local speakers and examples.

The course is designed for planners, public works staff, floodplain managers, hazard mitigation planners, sustainability managers, emergency managers, community groups, members of civic organizations, and coastal resource managers.

**If you are receiving this e-newsletter you are on our list, so look for the registration invitation in your inbox later this month, or send a message to [victoria.boundy@maine.edu](mailto:victoria.boundy@maine.edu).**

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