

Saco Bay, Maine Forms Workgroup to Address Sea Level Rise

Project Summary/Overview

The SLAWG held twenty bi-monthly meetings during 2011 to create a sea level adaptation action plan for the Saco Bay communities of Biddeford, Saco, Old Orchard Beach, and Scarborough.

Project Background

In 2009, the Saco Bay Sea Level Adaptation Working Group (SLAWG) was created to develop and implement regional climate change adaptation strategies to respond to rising sea levels and become more resilient to coastal storms. The purpose of the SLAWG is to review information from the Coastal Hazard Resiliency Tools Project that has analyzed the problem of sea level rise, to create a Vulnerability Assessment for Saco Bay, and to develop, and implement an Action Plan of implementation strategies for regional solutions. Currently, the SLAWG has completed its initial versions of a Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan

Project Implementation

The Action Plan lists several implementation strategies and objectives including but not limited to:

1. Use regional approaches to plan for improvements
2. Create a ranking process and prioritize a list of potential sea level adaptation construction and conservation projects
3. Comment on dune restoration
4. Recommend the standardizing of floodplain management standards and building code interpretations
5. Recommend standardizing ordinance review standards

6. Complement the efforts of the Towns and Cities that participate in the FEMA Risk Map program but sharing relevant information already generated by SLAWG projects
7. Coordinate stormwater planning programs with EPA and DEP requirements
8. Monitor changes to statutes, regulations, and ordinances affecting permitting of improvements

Project Outcomes and Conclusions

In May of 2011, the initial version of the Action Plan was developed.

*Prepared By:
Sea Level Adaptation Working Group
Jonathan T. Lockman, Planning Director
jlockman@smrpc.org
(207) 234-2952 x15
Maine Department of Conservation
Maine Geological Survey
Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission*

Part of the Northeast Climate Change Adaptation Project

*In 2011, the [Northeast Regional Ocean Council \(NROC\)](#) and the [Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment \(GOMC\)](#) received funding from the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's \(NOAA's\) Climate and Societal Interactions Program \(CSI\)](#) to examine innovative municipal approaches to climate change adaptation in the coastal zone of the Northeast and Bay of Fundy. The two-year project, *Stimulate Innovation and Increase the Pace of Municipal Responses to a Changing Climate in the Coastal Zone of the Northeast and Bay of Fundy*, was completed in June, 2013. The research and outreach for the project was conducted by the following partners: the [Marine Affairs Institute](#), a partnership of [Roger Williams University School of Law](#), [Rhode Island Sea Grant Legal Program](#), and [University of Rhode Island](#); [Blue Urchin](#); [StormSmart Coasts Network](#); and [Clean Air-Cool Planet](#).*

*Read more about the Northeast Climate Change Adaptation Project on our website:
<http://necca.stormsmart.org/>*