

## **Maine Climate Council Coastal and Marine Working Group (CMWG)**

**Tuesday, April 29, 2025**

**9:00 am-12:00 pm**

**Department of Marine Resources, Augusta, ME**

### **Meeting Summary**

The Coastal and Marine Working Group (CMWG) for the Maine Climate Council met at the Department of Marine Resources Offices in Augusta. The meeting of Working Group members was held in-person and over Teams. See the appendix for a list of meeting participants.

#### **9:00-9:30: Welcome and Introductions**

Co-Chair, Curt Brown welcomed working group members.

#### **9:30-10:15: Updates from the Infrastructure Resilience Commission with a focus on Working Waterfront**

Curt Brown introduced the Infrastructure Rebuilding and Resilience Commission (IRRC), of which he is a member, with a brief history. Governor Mills created the IRRC in May 2024 to review Maine's response to recent storms. Field trips were a highlight of the IRRC's work. At each location, community members shared impacts from the storms. There was a common theme of 'we've never seen anything like this'. A sentiment also heard at the CMWG meetings after January 2024.

Maggie Kelly-Boyd provided an overview of how the IRRC was formed and its connection to the CMWG. Ms. Kelly-Boyd summarized the IRRC's work focused on working waterfronts over the past five months. There are three federal funding sources to support working waterfronts: 17M to be administered by DOT, 7M to be administered by Maine Coastal Program/Sea Grant, and 10M to be administered by DMR. Key recommendations from the IRRC include: 1. Maine needs a regional approach to support working waterfronts and 2. Maine needs a systematic method to compile inventory data.

Jessica Gribbon Joyce asked which fund is covering direct infrastructure support and highlighted that the number one need from interviews with industry was access to capital. Ms. Kelly-Boyd stated that DOT funds must go to public working waterfronts and MCP/Sea Grant and DMR funds have some flexibility to go to private working waterfronts. GOPIF is also exploring philanthropy options to support private working waterfronts.

Gabe McPhail asked what public education will be offered to potential direct recipients of available funding. Ms. Kelly-Boyd said that DOT leads the communications for their funds and

relies on regional councils and similar for DMR. DOT has one staff. MCP will hire a new position for NOAA funds (7M).

Melissa asked what requirements would be in place to rebuild with an emphasis on resilience. Ms. Kelly-Boyd stated that DOT is putting together guidelines for their funds and other requirements will need to be explored.

Jes Waller asked what made it easy to pull information from the working waterfronts subcommittee plan to carry over to IRRC plan. Ms. Kelly-Boyd noted the actions and recommendations were very helpful. CMWG member attendance at meetings and carrying the ideas forward was also effective.

Curt Brown asked if there is a plan for roll out. Ms. Kelly-Boyd said yes, the plan will be released May 7, 2025 and roll out will happen next week.

10:30-11:30: **Voluntary updates** (5 mins or less) from the group on their implementation of MCC recommended work

CMWG members shared updates on work related to CMWG/MCC. Below are highlights from the updates shared:

Jeremy – Second Blue Carbon Symposium will be held Oct 21, 2025. Save the date coming soon.

Ivy (written remarks shared by Jes) – Maine Coastal & Marine Climate Fund (MCMCF); Coordinate Maine Climate Network; Sensor Squad coming out with a manual; Pilot project on seagrass restoration; and Blue Carbon Network.

Jill – Black sea bass citizen science monitoring project; temperature sensors on fishing trawls on nets, at depth, and DO (on 2 of 15 vessels). The Coastal Cohort Program launched in February 2025 with 8 towns to fill out working waterfront inventories.

Devin – Maine Seagrass Consortium: monitoring, outreach, restoration/protection focus. MNRCP funding restoration for wetlands, submitting eelgrass restoration proposals. Eelgrass listed as species of greatest conservation need.

Helena – Compiling Blue Carbon policy from other states and working to turn scientific understanding into policy change and action. Tidal Marsh Restoration Network held three meetings and has nine working groups. They made list of funding sources and developed inventory of Maine's marsh projects. Secured a grant from Peregrine Accelerator program to integrate Wabanaki knowledge into marsh restoration.

Jessica – Community Intertidal Data Portal has new GIS data product, Rising Tides and Resilience story map. Shellfish harvester trail easement in works in Freeport, first easement of this kind, once final will create template to serve as a model.

Susie – Aquaculture tours for shellfish and kelp for state decision makers and others (WG members contact Island Institute if interested). Aquaculture People and Planet video screenings this summer. Future of Fishing program tool kit available on Island Institute's website, includes financial resources. Island Institute Fellows program will now focus on climate resiliency and marine economy.

Nick – Greenhouse gas emissions assessment in the aquaculture industry report will be coming soon (summer 2025). A Shoreside charging infrastructure report is also coming soon. Island Institute Webinar about NOAA funding with Ocean Conservancy on NGO community working to defend funding for Maine (invite only for NGOs, contact Nick for invite)

Jes – Biological Monitoring and Assessment Division at DMR: expanded lobster sea sampling program and new data entry using voice to text; ecosystem perspective in urchin dive survey is now a benthic ecology monitoring survey; evaluating climate data gaps developing review of monitoring program and surveys coming this fall. DMR has a new pathologist, Katie Stein.

Helena – TNC oyster purchase program for oyster restoration projects.

Jocelyn- Krill population study with UMaine; Climate and Ecosystem Steering Committee-mapping council process for where climate information can be used for fisheries management to think about climate ready fisheries management.

Ben W – Nearshore Marine Resources Program at DMR: long-term intertidal monitoring program (12 sites) to look for trends in abundance for shellfish and rockweed biomass; continuous temp loggers in sediment and at surface.

Gayle – MAIC continuing Sea Grant's Aquaculture in Shared Waters and Bootcamps. Alternate gear project new hire, Alicia Gaiero. New hire coordinating American Lobster Initiative work. Aquaculture BMPs will be coming out.

Rebecca – Ecology and Environment Division at DMR: inshore shark monitoring project expanding. Continuing Maine coast mapping initiative on areas of data gaps mapping between inshore and offshore areas in Casco Bay

Michelle – UMaine working with DMR to review monitoring programs at DMR; trawl survey, benthic ecology survey; lobster survey reviews; changes to seasonality and temperature for larval/post-larval lobster, piloting new tagging method.

Anne – MAIC/ARI Research/Development/Education (RDE) survey focused only on climate in 2024 and survey results report will be available soon; Farmer to Farmer exchanges to transfer technology from southern states to explore disease impacts; working on developing a sensor program to collect/compile data that is more inshore and granular and publicly available; RDE Summit had 200 participants focused on climate change

Bev – Bates monitoring GHG in tidally restricted area; new colleagues in Earth and Climate Sciences Department:

Dr. Shreya Arora ([sarora@bates.edu](mailto:sarora@bates.edu)) using LIDAR drone to map erosion susceptible areas

Dr. Nick Balascio ([nbalascio@bates.edu](mailto:nbalascio@bates.edu)) focused on coastal dynamics

Gabe – working with Island Institute on Maine Islands Project to bring capacity to identify infrastructure priorities and community/social resilience planning.

Equity subcommittee meeting recently – as planning next CMWG meeting how to center equity in discussion in meaningful way; Mitchell Center report has recommendations that could be brought forward in conversations.

11:30-11:47: **Discussion about how to move forward with this type of work in 2025**, working together to advance CMWG recommendations in a limited funding environment.

Jes Waller invited CMWG members to share any funding channels or opportunities on horizon.

Devin – MCP funded by NOAA, 5 year strategy for CZMA funds out for public comment now (closes May 23, 2025) and relied on CMWG, Mitchell Center report, and MWW plan

Jes – Maine Outdoor Heritage funds now aligned to MWW. Needs state partner.

Jessica - Maine Coastal and Marine Climate Fund RFP coming out soon.

Devin – NMRCF funding released in May for land acquisition and restoration. Eelgrass proposal will be submitted and looking for more partners.

Jessica – Federal contracts still available. Maine APEX through SBA to support contracts.

Jeremy – Federal funding (NOAA and USDA) for restoration use reimbursement model and can be challenge for project implementation and greater uncertainty now.

Nick – Island Institute broadband work example of bridge financing model.

Gayle – NOAA funds can set up drawdown 3 months in advance.

## Next Steps:

Track work related to MCC

June 10 and September 25 - MCC meetings

October 2025 - CMWG meeting

## Attendees:

- Carl Wilson, DMR
- Curt Brown
- Jesica Waller, DMR
- Ben Wahle, DMR
- Melissa Smith, DMR
- Maggie Kelly-Boyd, GOPIF
- Jill Harlow, MCFA
- Michelle Staudinger, UMaine
- Devin Domeyer, DMR
- Jeremy Gabrielson, Maine Coast Heritage Trust
- Melissa Britsch, DMR
- Bob Van Riper, DMR
- Susie Arnold, Island Institute
- Jessica Gribbon-Joyce
- Rebecca Peters, DMR
- Gayle Zydlewski, Sea Grant
- Helena Tatgenhorst, TNC
- Jocelyn Runnebaum, TNC
- Nick Batista, Island Institute

## Teams:

Robert Baines

Annie Langston Noll

Christine Beitzl

Gabe McPhail

Kyle Johnson

Kathy Mills

Hallowell, Dawn

Edgelynn Venuti

Peter McGuire

Ben Gutzler

Christine M Beitzl

