Blue Hill Bay Watershed Needs Assessment

PROJECT COVER SHEET

Project Title: Blue Hill Bay Watershed Needs Assessment 2012-2013

Municipality or region covered: Eight communities comprising Blue Hill Bay Watershed in central Hancock County (Trenton, Ellsworth, Mount Desert, Bar Harbor, Tremont, Surry, Blue Hill, and Brooklin)

Grant category: Project will address elements from Categories 4 and 5 (Land use Activity Impacts on Water Quality and Restoring Coastal Habitats)

Grant request amount: $50,000 (18 months)

Project Manager: James Fisher, PhD, AICP Senior Planner, Hancock County Planning Commission (HCPC), 395 State Street, Ellsworth, ME 04605, 207-667-7131, jfisher@hcpcme.org

Project partners: HCPC, representatives from the eight communities (selectpersons, planning board or marine resources committee members, etc), Friends of Blue Hill Bay, and BSA Environmental Consulting. (May also include representatives from community-based organizations such as Healthy Peninsula, Healthy Acadia, Friends of Acadia, and Sustainable Ellsworth)
Blue Hill Bay Watershed Needs Assessment

Project Summary

Project Definition
The Blue Hill Bay Watershed Needs Assessment is a multi-town, multi-stakeholder initiative designed to engage communities, businesses, residents and local organizations in a program to assess Blue Hill Bay resources, identify existing and potential threats to bay ecology and make informed decisions about coastal activities that impact these resources.

The needs assessment will engage the eight communities adjacent to Blue Hill Bay in Hancock County: Trenton, Ellsworth, Mount Desert, Bar Harbor, Tremont, Surry, Blue Hill, and Brooklin. These eight communities enjoy the economic and aesthetic benefits of the bay's resources, such as fisheries, tourism, and recreation. They also contribute to the health of the bay through local programs and policies, such as ordinances affecting land use, waste management and water resources. The bay provides a common asset for towns that are otherwise geographically isolated from one another. This initiative will bring partners together to develop a shared vision, needs and potential solutions to long-range challenges confronting the region.

Background and Explanation of Problem
Blue Hill Bay watershed marine frontal drainage encompasses approximately 407 square-miles or 260,614 acres in central Hancock County, Maine. The bay is fed by the Union River which has an additional 550 square-miles in the upland portion. Open wetlands and water account for approximately 59 percent of the total acreage and forests make up 32 percent spread across the 85,482 acres.

The availability and quality of the bay's natural wildlife habitats is a measure of its overall health, but also represents the fragility of the ecosystem as it undergoes serious development pressure. According to the Maine Natural Areas Program (MIFW 2009), the watershed has among the highest acreage of diverse wildlife habitats ranging from inland freshwater habitats to intertidal habitats for shorebirds, shellfish, marine mammals, near-shore and diadromous fish stocks, crustaceans, and mollusks. The bay is also one of the primary seal pupping areas in New England. Along with Penobscot Bay, it attracts up to 50 percent of the breeding population during the pupping season from April to August.

Bar Harbor, Blue Hill and Ellsworth are all service centers with Blue Hill Bay shore land. The city of Ellsworth is the largest center with a 2010 population of 7,741 and has the distinction of being the fastest growing city in Maine in the past decade. Acadia National Park attracts approximately 3 million visits per year and has significant mainland and island frontage on Blue Hill Bay.
Rapid changes in the region's natural and built environments are having significant affects on watershed characteristics. Coastal land in particular has experienced ongoing development pressure. Upland forest tracts are being divided into smaller tracts, logged and further sub-divided. Loss of forest lands can result in lower water retention, faster runoff and soil erosion, a source of nonpoint pollution in the bay. Sprawling rural development also fragments land, resulting in loss of habitat for wildlife and traditional recreation.

Although the overall health of Blue Hill Bay appears to be good, numerous threats to its health have been identified for the region. In 2010, Maine DEP identified Card Brook in downtown Ellsworth as impaired with stormwater runoff from impervious cover (IC) identified as largest significant source of pollution and stream channel alteration. The Blue Hill based Marine Environmental Research Institute (MERI) published its "State of Blue Hill Bay" report in November 2011. The report identifies development/land use, water quality, pathogen and chemical pollution, invasive species and coastal hazards as key challenges for the bay.

Communities on Blue Hill Bay have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to protecting the bay. Examples include programs to reduce point and non-point sources of pollution, active promotion of sustaining and rebuilding clam beds, creation of public access facilities. Communities surrounding the bay have engaged in careful consideration of aquaculture permit requests, reviewing potential impacts on water quality, wild species, traditional fishing practices and local quality of life. Local organizations have played an active role in review of state and local water quality permitting regulations in the bay. Several years of active debate clearly illustrate community commitment to the management and overall health of the bay. However, these efforts have often been disparate, disjointed and incremental. Inter-local collaboration for long range policy has been limited.

**Demonstration of Need**

This project builds on the work of several existing programs in the region including Blue Hill Peninsula Tomorrow Healthy Peninsula, Healthy Acadia, and Sustainable Ellsworth. Most importantly, the project also builds on a "Use Inventory of Blue Hill Bay" (www.fobhb.org) that worked with communities to compile and map data about the Bay and the many ways it is used for commercial, recreational, governmental, scientific, and other purposes. This project was conducted by the Friends of Blue Hill Bay in 2007-2008 and included the creation of numerous maps and numerous town meetings to gather feedback as to the uses and management of the bay and its surrounding watershed. Although the project was highly successful in terms of community engagement and support, there was not enough funding at the time to research and write a corresponding document addressing a needs assessment and/or planning. There have been numerous requests from the community to update the maps and develop a multi-town, multi-stakeholder report.

Similar initiatives have been developed in neighboring bay communities including Taunton Bay (www.friendsoftauntonbay.org), Frenchman Bay (www.frenchmanbaypartners.org), and Penobscot Bay (www.penobscoteast.org). Each of these efforts is led by area watershed or bay management organizations who work with municipalities and conservation organizations to develop strategies for better planning and resource management. The Blue Hill Bay Needs Assessment will work closely with the neighboring initiatives in order to network and learn from their models. There is added value in the timeliness of this project since it is occurring simultaneously with the Frenchman Bay Partners Conservation Planning Initiative. Although the Frenchman Bay group is a year or two ahead of this project, it will serve as a model and provide analogous energy for us in the neighboring bay. Several of the same communities and organizations will be involved. Likewise, efforts from Healthy Peninsula and Healthy Acadia which are addressing transportation, housing, and other social needs will feed into this assessment.
Efforts to understand the needs of Blue Hill Bay recently culminated in a November 2011 symposium hosted by Friends of Blue Hill Bay and titled "Behold the Bay: a symposium celebrating the marine resources of Blue Hill Bay." Over 60 people attended the day-long event including numerous private citizens and representatives from several state and federal agencies, area land trusts, municipal government, and charitable and conservation organizations. Speakers included Dr. Steven Katona (Conservation International), Phil Black (Blue Hill Marine Resources Committee), Dr. Susan Shaw (Marine Environmental Research Institute), Ted Ames (Penobscot East Resource Center), Kathleen Leyden (Maine State Planning Office), Kristin Hoffman (Forest Society of Maine), Sara Williams (US Fish and Wildlife Service), Angela Dubois (Maine DEP), and Dr. Curtis Bohlen (Casco Bay Estuary Partnership). Speakers emphasized the need to protect species diversity (e.g., diadromous and near-shore marine fisheries), human-oriented management, and relating communities to healthy ecosystems. Symposium participants identified the need for better planning and resource management building on regional collaboration.

Although issues to be addressed in the assessment will be determined by community leaders during the project (meetings, phone interviews, etc), recent public meetings and press coverage suggest that these themes will include stormwater runoff, waterfront access, clam flat closures and ordinances, alewife restoration, shellfish aquaculture, recreation opportunities, and coastal storm preparation in anticipation of more severe storm events. A recent survey conducted by HCPC (October 2011) to rank Coastal Zone Management needs indicates that the top 5 coastal issues of concern as well as those issues needing the most training, ordinances, planning, and inter-municipal interaction were:

1. waterfront planning
2. water quality
3. public access
4. coastal hazards
5. impacts of development

In the same survey, participants stated that they supported "no discharge zones" and some "marine protected areas that are off-limits to dragging to protect benthic and sub-tidal eelgrass habitats." Other survey comments included a request for "best building practices brochure for coastal bank erosion" and "meaningful procedures to ensure species protection with the habitat." Additionally, when towns were asked if they will work regionally on addressing these issues, they responded overwhelmingly in support for collaborating on water quality, waterfront planning, and coastal hazards.

**Proposed Use of Grant**

FY12 Maine Coastal Program Competitive Coastal Grant will be used for three primary purposes:

1. to conduct a year-long regional public participatory program to engage community leaders to learn about bay natural, economic and social systems, and develop protocol for working together more effectively,
2. to gather existing and new geographic and scientific data to update existing maps and to create new resource maps of Blue Hill Bay and the surrounding watershed, and
3. to prepare a needs assessment document based on identified opportunities, needs, and threats as well as information and interpretation of the maps.

**Similar Work Undertaken by Applicant**

The project will be managed jointly by Hancock County Planning Commission and BSA Environmental Consulting. Both parties have extensive experience with coastal ecosystem science, GIS mapping, and multi-stakeholder planning.
HCPC: HCPC has been providing planning and related government-support assistance to Hancock County municipalities since 1970. Ongoing work includes land use, transportation, economic development, solid waste and recycling. Recent initiatives include comprehensive planning support in Brooklin, Blue Hill, Surry, Tremont, and Trenton as well as regional planning support to all of the towns on Blue Hill Bay. HCPC has been the leader in Scenic Byway planning in Hancock County and in 2010 completed a scenic assessment of high value scenic locations in coastal towns. HCPC has a track record of working with towns to sustain local agriculture and forestry, winning a national award from the American Planning Association for revitalizing local landscapes in 2000. HCPC provides support to towns in replacing failed septic systems, financing salt-sand storage facilities, the drafting of shore land zoning and harbor management ordinances, and other important initiatives that improve bay water quality.

BSA Environmental Consulting: Barbara S. Arter, Project Director and Conservation Planner of BSA Environmental Consulting. Ms. Arter has owned and operated BSA Environmental Consulting in Steuben Maine for over 12 years (see attached resume). She specializes in environmental and water-quality assessment, land-use planning, coastal and watershed science, and freshwater and nearshore-marine fisheries management. She has provided watershed management and sustainable resource planning services to private industry, nongovernmental organizations, municipalities, and state and federal government agencies for the past fifteen years. She excels at collaborating with state and federal agencies, university researchers, conservation organizations, land-trusts, natural-resource harvesters, industry, municipal governments, and private landowners in order to develop ecosystem-based management resources. She has been the project director and author of over fourteen conservation planning initiatives and the co-author or contributor of an additional eleven. Specifically, the projects involve managing development (zoning, shore stabilization, buffer assessment), contaminant pollution (pesticides, organochlorines, metals), pathogens (coliform, red tide), enrichment and eutrophication (NPS and point source), fisheries (commercially and recreationally harvested species), and aquatic habitats.

Project Description:

Project Tasks, how it will be done, and who will do it
The project is designed to work directly with town representatives and other local organizations to develop needs assessment status and strategies and will include both gathering input from community members as well as reporting out the results of findings back to the community. Tasks to achieve the Needs Assessment include:

1. Conduct literature review of existing area plans and related documents
2. Create a municipality-stakeholder workgroup and conduct kick off campaign
3. Update existing environmental and land use maps; create new assessment maps as needed
4. Conduct a series of regular input-gathering workgroup meetings throughout the region (8 towns)
5. Develop draft needs assessment and maps
6. Conduct a series of community-based reporting-out presentations to allow for feedback
7. Produce and publish a final report based on community input and including the developed maps

1. Project planning, start-up communications, and conduct literature review of existing area plans and related documents. The project team will meet to develop a work plan and strategies for getting community involvement. The team will also make a catalogue of existing regional documents and review those documents as background preparation. It will also review documents from other coastal regions facing similar challenges. The literature review will also serve as the introduction in the final report.
web page: www.hcpcme.org/bluehillbay will be used to promote regional meetings, publish draft maps and
document sand provide a one stop shop for links to internet resources. Social media tools including Twitter
and Facebook will also be used to promote local participation in assessment meetings.

2. **Create a municipality-stakeholder workgroup and conduct kick off campaign.** The success of this
project will depend on effective communications on the front end in order to get effective stakeholder buy-
in for the project. This part of the process will include numerous phone interviews, meetings with town
government and organization representatives, and press releases explaining the project and the process.

The project will use a multi-stakeholder approach designed to solicit and incorporate effective input into
assessment, planning, and decision making. Stakeholders include residents, businesses, nongovernmental
organizations and associations such as conservation, wellness, and other community-based organizations,
and municipal officials such as selectpersons, town managers, code enforcement officers, planning board
members, and marine resource committee members. In addition to representatives from the eight
watershed towns, we anticipate reaching out to and receiving participation from the following groups:

- Acadia National Park
- College of the Atlantic
- Downeast Audubon
- Blue Hill Heritage Trust
- Maine Coast Heritage Trust
- Frenchman Bay Partners
- Friends of Goose Cove
- Friends of Acadia
- Healthy Peninsula
- Healthy Acadia
- Blue Hill Friends and Neighbors
- Marine Environmental Research Institute
- Union River Watershed Coalition

We also anticipate inviting state and federal agency specialists to participate and provide guidance and
input. These would include:

- Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife (fisheries and habitat protection, Beginning with Habitat,)
- Department of Marine Resources (commercially harvested marine species management)
- Department of Environmental Protection (water quality)
- State Planning Office (Land Use &Coastal Program Team)
- US Fish and Wildlife Service (fisheries and habitat protection)
- NOAA (diadromous species habitat restoration and threatened and endangered marine species)
- Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation District (soil stabilization, erosion control)

3. **Update existing landuse maps; create new assessment maps as needed.** Using maps and data
contributed by Friends of Blue Hill Bay, the team will review the data/maps and update them as needed.
This will require a data search and GIS technical expertise. Based on input from the stakeholders, the team
will also develop new maps as needed. The team will develop interpretive text for each map. The text will
be included in the final Needs Assessment report.

4. **Conduct a series of regular input-gathering workgroup meetings throughout the region (8 towns).** The
team will hold a series of meetings with town/regional representatives to gather input on the maps and on
regional bay issues. Since not all of the eight towns will travel the long distance to one location, the team
may decide to hold two or three sub-regional meetings with two-three towns per meeting. We anticipate
that these meetings will require much leg work, preparation, and follow up and therefore represent much
of the grant funding. The team may have guest speakers specializing on landuse, water quality, and
coastal hazards attend the sessions in order to provide guidance.
5. **Develop draft needs assessment and maps.** Based on the input from the meetings, the team will research and develop draft maps and needs assessment report.

6. **Conduct a series of community-based reporting-out presentations to allow for feedback.** The team will hold a series of meetings with community stakeholders asking for input on the maps and draft report. They will also distribute the draft electronically and ask for input via email or website.

7. **Develop final report based on community input and including the developed maps.** The team will make changes to the draft report and maps and will produce a final document. The final report will be distributed to the towns and stakeholders. There will also be considerable press letting the public know where they can get a copy. We anticipate printing paper copies of the report/maps so that towns can use them for further planning. In that way, the products will become a resource for the towns.

**Expected Project Outcomes and Products**

Deliverables for this project are updated maps and a needs assessment report. These documents will enable towns to do further planning, identifying opportunities to build consistency between local land use and environmental planning and long-term sustainability of Blue Hill Bay. The maps and report will be resources for communities and organizations.

1. **Maps:** A set of maps including but not limited to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Archaeological &amp; Historic Sites</th>
<th>Past Commercial Fisheries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Sites</td>
<td>Hurricane Surge Flood Potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Lobster Fisheries State Districts</td>
<td>Current Crab &amp; Lobster Harvesting Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserved Lands</td>
<td>Population Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aquaculture Sites</td>
<td>Recreational Destination Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seafloor Composition</td>
<td>Point Source Pollution and Gravel Pit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Groundwater Threat Sites</td>
<td>Shellfish Classifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological Habitats</td>
<td>Transportation Features</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water Quality Monitoring Sites</td>
<td>Blue Hill Bay Watershed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shore &amp; Inland Fisheries</td>
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2. **Needs Assessment Report:** Typical example of chapters that may be included in the final Blue Hill Bay Needs Assessment report:

- Community Process and Methodology
- Related Plans and Documents
- History of the Region and Bay
- Who are they Stakeholders
- Blue Hill Bay Resources
- Threats to Our Resources
- Analysis of Existing Data and Maps
- Strategies for Regional Partnerships
Process Outcome
An equally important process outcome of this project outcome will be closer coordination among Blue Hill Bay towns as they collaborate in creating a shared vision and assessment of needs. Participants will learn more about their watershed and the ways communities can manage negative impacts of development on the watershed. This will be facilitated by including local and regional experts in the assessment process. Examples would include inviting DEP to discuss water quality, IFW to discuss habitat, DMR to discuss marine species and navigation, and land trust representatives to discuss conservation. Both product and process outcomes will contribute to long term sustainability of the bay and better inter-local collaboration.
### Project Schedule - phase, tasks milestone completion dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline/Completion Date</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Accomplishment/Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>Project Start Up</td>
<td>Team meets to discuss roles, responsibilities, and develop a work plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February - March 2012</td>
<td>Project start-up communications and conduct literature review of existing area plans and related documents</td>
<td>Develop a database and collection of related documents and press releases announcing the project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February - December 2012</td>
<td>Update existing landuse maps; create new assessment maps as needed</td>
<td>Obtain GIS data files of original draft maps; as well as new data layers and the production of new maps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February - March 2012</td>
<td>Create a municipality-stakeholder workgroup. This will be accomplished by attending selectman/committee and NGO meetings and personal phone calls.</td>
<td>Municipal and community organization stakeholder group contact list and email list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March - July 2012</td>
<td>Conduct a series of regular input-gathering workgroup meetings throughout the region (8 towns). These meetings will include guest speakers to help community members define problems and determine potential solutions.</td>
<td>Meeting minutes with lists of identified issues and potential action items for solving problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>June - September 2012</td>
<td>Develop draft needs assessment and maps</td>
<td>Draft Needs Assessment and Maps</td>
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<tr>
<td>September - November 2012</td>
<td>Conduct a series of community-based reporting-out presentations to allow for feedback on draft assessment and maps</td>
<td>Meeting minutes with suggested changes and edits for the assessment and maps</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2012 - April 2013</td>
<td>Develop a report based on community input and including the developed maps</td>
<td>Final Needs Assessment and Maps</td>
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</table>
## BUDGET

In kind match is anticipated to come from volunteer participation from town and community organization representative and Friends of Blue Hill Bay, as well as mileage, and any office expense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project/Task Description</th>
<th>BSAEC</th>
<th>HCPC</th>
<th>Project Expenses</th>
<th>Total Grant Amount</th>
<th>Community Participants In-kind Match</th>
<th>FOBHB In-kind Match</th>
<th>Total Project/Task Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project planning, start-up communications, and conduct literature review of existing area plans and related documents</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$3,100</td>
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<td>$1,000</td>
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<td>Update existing landuse maps; create new assessment maps as needed</td>
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<td>$7,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$11,000</td>
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<td>Create a municipality-stakeholder workgroup</td>
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<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$4,100</td>
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<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$5,100</td>
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<td>Conduct a series of regular input-gathering workgroup meetings throughout the region (8 towns)</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$11,000</td>
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<td>$3,000</td>
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<td>Conduct a series of community-based reporting-out presentations to allow for feedback</td>
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<td>Develop a report based on community input and including the developed maps</td>
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<td>$18,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<td>45 person days</td>
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Qualifications Statement

Consultants in Planning, Community and Economic Development, Recycling and Solid Waste Management, Healthy Communities and Environmental Analysis
About the Hancock County Planning Commission

The Hancock County Planning Commission is a multi-disciplined agency that provides a full spectrum of services in the areas of land planning, recycling and solid waste management, community and economic development and environmental analysis. Our primary clients are municipalities in Hancock County and Isle au Haut in Knox County.

Municipal planning involves solving a multitude of highly complex issues involving numerous disciplines. The Hancock County Planning Commission (HCPC) specializes in bringing the various separate components of the process together to achieve a well-organized and efficient program that meets the specific requirements of our client. We are distinctive, in that we serve as a partner with client's staff and volunteer committees, providing professional assistance as a client needs these services.

Our agency consists of an experienced staff and professionals who collectively exhibit expertise in the following fields:

- Comprehensive Planning
- Land Use Ordinance Drafting
- Housing Analyses & Strategies
- Natural Resources
- Growth Management
- Economic Development
- Community Development Block Grants
- Industrial Park Development
- Agriculture Revitalization
- Waste Water Treatment Grant Assistance
- Grant Administration
- Downtown Revitalization
- Traffic/Transportation
- Public Participation
- Environmental Research & Analyses
- Land Use Planning
- Solid Waste Management & Recycling
- Sustainable Development
- Subdivision & Site Plan Application Review
- GIS Mapping
- Community Health Assessment & Planning

The HCPC is dedicated to the principles of technical and professional excellence. We pride ourselves on maintaining the highest professional quality, while achieving the two primary objectives of completing projects on time and within budget. Our low impact forestry and promotion of locally grown foods project was granted a Project of the Year Award in 2000 by the American Planning Association.

Successful project completion is achieved through the assignment of experienced members of a project team, under the direction of a well-qualified project manager. The key to successful project completion is the project manager, who is involved with the project from inception to completion.

We are proud of our record of successful service to our clients, which is our primary objective, and invite you to survey our qualifications. If we can help, please give us a call. For an overview of our services, check our website at: www.hcpcme.org.

Mission Statement:

The Hancock County Planning Commission is a partner with local and county government to:

- Protect our heritage and resources
- Plan for the future, and
- Promote a sound economy
  for the people of Hancock County
WHAT WE DO

There are two general types of service that are provided to the Hancock County Planning Commission's communities; basic and reimbursable. Basic services are those provided without charge to towns who are dues-paying members or those that are tied to a specific state or federal grant. Reimbursable services are those services provided for a fee. Such services are normally done on a contractual basis. While certain state and federally funded services are available to non-member communities, most basic services are restricted to dues-paying members. Reimbursable services are available to all Hancock County towns, although members enjoy substantially reduced rates. Also, priority for services is given to member communities.

OUR BASIC SERVICES

The Hancock County Planning Commission currently provides the following services:

- **Brownfields Assessment**
  
The HCPC is working with an environmental consultant and a county advisory committee to identify potential brownfields (abandoned or underutilized sites that may be contaminated). Clean-up plans will be prepared for up to three sites.

- **CDBG Technical Assistance**
  
The HCPC normally receives a grant each year from the State of Maine to help communities apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. This program has been used by many HCPC towns in improving substandard housing, creating or retaining jobs, and upgrading community facilities.

- **Code Enforcement Officer Assistance**
  
We can provide code enforcement officers (CEO's) with information on the latest state training requirements and help with related matters such as setting up fair permit fee structures, job descriptions and developing permit application forms.

- **Floodplain Management**
  
We can help towns with all aspects of floodplain management, including interpreting current maps and regulations and serving as a liaison with the appropriate state officials. We can also help towns join the National Flood Insurance Program and adapt a floodplain management ordinance to reflect their needs.

- **Information on State and Local Land Use Laws**
  
The staff keeps abreast of changes in Maine land use law. The HCPC is the place to call with questions on the latest state requirements for shoreland zoning, subdivision review, mobile home parks, or any similar state law.

- **Joint Purchasing of Supplies**
  
The HCPC coordinates the joint purchase of road salt for interested towns. We are exploring other joint purchasing ventures.
Model Ordinance File
The HCPC has a file of land use ordinances and regulations that towns can use to guide the development of their own ordinances. Both hard and electronic copies are available.

Newsletter
Our informative quarterly newsletter covers topics such as land use law (updates to laws as well as recent court cases), available grant funds, updates on transportation and solid waste issues, smart growth and community health.

Other Services
Other services provided by HCPC include making available information on proposed changes in state law, the latest U.S. Census data and related statistics and population projections, the HCPC library resources and shared planning experiences of other towns. HCPC staff members are also available to attend hearings and meetings with local officials. Given our high level of staff expertise, we can provide a range of other planning-related services.

Regional Transportation Planning
The HCPC organizes corridor committees in collaboration with the Maine Department of Transportation. We provide staff support for the committees serving Hancock County and are involved in various special transportation studies such as scenic byways, trails and multimodal centers. We have extensive information on transportation infrastructure, traffic patterns and safety conditions.

Smart Growth
The HCPC is an information resource on “smart” growth, one of the antidotes to sprawl. Our staff has undergone specialized training in smart growth and can inform towns about latest smart growth techniques. We also have print and video materials on this topic.

Solid Waste Management
The HCPC serves as a clearing house for information on construction and demolition debris management (CDD) options. We also provide information on composting operations and ways that towns can increase recycling credits. We can help towns improve management of their transfer stations and reduce the volume of waste that is shipped to Penobscot Energy Recovery Company. We are also active in household hazardous waste management. We also work with communities to plan one-day household hazardous waste and universal waste collection events.

Subdivision Review Assistance
We can help towns with all aspects of subdivision review including interpreting the state law and helping to review the actual application.

Use of the Planning Advisory Service
We are members of the Planning Advisory Service (PAS), a national organization providing support services to professional planners. We use their informational services to supplement our own library and the resources of the Maine Municipal Association.
Community Health Assessment and Planning

We help towns identify their current health assets and needs based upon information compiled by various state agencies, the Bureau of Census and studies conducted in the communities. We assist towns in identifying projects to encourage physical activity, better nutrition, safer roads and other environmental improvements. We assist in identifying long-range strategies for healthier communities.

Workshops

The HCPC sponsors or cosponsors numerous workshops on topics of current interest to planning boards, selectmen, and other local officials.

HOW ARE BASIC SERVICES PROVIDED?

Normally, these services are initiated by a simple phone or walk-in request. In fairness to all our towns, requests are provided on a first-come first-served basis. While there is no charge for professional staff time, we do charge for secretarial time, photocopies, computer disks, maps, and postage. Our services are primarily for town officials, including selectmen, planning boards, conservation commissions, zoning boards of adjustment, comprehensive planning committees, and other town boards and staff. Basic service may vary according to our funding in a given year.

WHAT BILLABLE SERVICES ARE PROVIDED?

We take a flexible approach to providing billable services. Major services provided include, but are not limited, to:

- Capital Improvement Programs
  
  We have been involved in the preparation of numerous Capital Improvement Plans. Using statistical analysis computer software, we can assist in estimating future revenues and expenditures as well as the impact of a given expenditure on the tax rate.

- CDBG Administration
  
  We have administered Phase II and Phase III CDBG projects for towns around Hancock County. Our staff has a close working relationship with the Maine Office of Community Development and is familiar with CDBG regulations and relevant state agency procedures. We have staff with the state certification necessary to administer CDBG projects.

- Computer Mapping
  
  We provide GIS (Geographic Information Systems) services including data conversion, overlay analysis, tax analysis and large format maps. We maintain an archive of current and historic maps for Hancock County towns. Recent projects include updating shoreland zoning maps, site analysis using high resolution aerial photographs and designing large format color maps for comprehensive plans.

- Community Revitalization Strategies
  
  We help municipalities identify community needs and set priorities in community improvement efforts, including rehabilitation of substandard housing, revitalization of a downtown area or public facilities improvements. We've also been active in waterfront improvement projects.
Comprehensive Plan Assistance
We have extensive experience in preparing comprehensive plans both within Hancock County and elsewhere in Maine and northern New England. Rather than consultants, we view ourselves as partners with the town in the preparation of a plan.

Fiscal Environmental and Traffic Impact Studies
We are equipped to prepare or review fiscal, environmental, and traffic impact studies. While the HCPC charges for such services, the town, through its ordinances, may require that the subdivision applicant reimburse the town.

Grant Preparation and Administration
Our staff has experience in grant writing and can help towns prepare grant applications. We are familiar with many state and federal programs and have a strong working relationship with most state agencies.

Graphics/Design
We produce sketches and drawings that can be used for public presentations as well as computer-generated graphs. We have developed many design sketches for use by towns in state and federal grant applications. These sketches can also be used to formulate site lay-out options for transfer stations, parking areas and other public facilities.

Land Use Ordinance Preparation
Using our extensive library of zoning and other land use ordinances from towns in Hancock County and the State of Maine as a whole, we can draft ordinances for a town and prepare revisions as requested. We also have access to the resources of Maine Municipal Association and the Planning Advisory Service to keep cognizant of the most current court cases and innovative zoning techniques that are used across Maine and the country.

Market Research & Economic Development Strategies
The HCPC helps towns prepare and implement economic development strategies. Specific steps could include, but are not limited to, market research activities, feasibility studies, supporting local economic development committees, recommending appropriate zoning for an industrial park and marketing industrial sites. We are experienced in preparing Tax Increment Financing (T.I.F.) packages.

Shared Planner Services
We can provide a professional planning on a part-time basis to a town that may need some planning services but does not need someone full-time.

The key to our services is that they are tailored to the needs of the individual municipalities. This means that we offer our advice as trained professionals and suggest courses of action that help towns shape the desired future of their communities.
HOW ARE BILLABLE SERVICES PROVIDED?

When a town requests billable services, the HCPC prepares a detailed scope of work that describes the proposed product and the budget. Unless otherwise indicated, all work is done within an agreed-upon budget rather than at an hourly rate. When the HCPC and the municipality agree upon the final scope of work, a contract is developed. The HCPC staff will be pleased to help with the development of cost estimates.

WHAT OTHER SERVICES DOES THE HCPC PROVIDE?

The HCPC will consider any planning efforts that involve more than one municipality. The HCPC is always looking for new ways for communities to work together. For example, we prepared Scenic Byway applications for portions of Route 3, Route 182 and Routes 1/186. We have coordinated a number of multi-town lake studies, which have involved the monitoring of phosphorus and other water quality issues.

HCPC EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

The Hancock County Planning Commission is governed by an Executive Board comprised of eleven members, two of whom are county representatives appointed by the county commissioners and the others are elected from the three county commissioner districts. The current (FY 2010-2011) board members are listed below:

- Roderic Franzius, Chairman
- Dave Milan, Vice Chair
- Ray Jones, Treasurer
- Beverly Sanborn, Secretary
- Denis Blodgett
- Peter Colman
- Beverly Newman
- C.W. Comer

Hancock

Bucksport

Gouldsboro

Cranberry Isles

Brooksville

Blue Hill

Surry

Sorrento

County Commissioner Representative:

- Janet Michaud
- Steven Walton

Gouldsboro

Franklin
Resumes of Key Personnel
Mr. Martin has been working in regional planning commissions in northern New England since 1979. His comprehensive plan experience ranges from small, rural towns facing a population decline to rapidly growing resort communities and outer suburbs of the greater Boston area in southern New Hampshire. He has also prepared Capital Improvement Programs (CIP's), fiscal impact statements, solid waste management studies, Community Development Block Grant applications and regional studies on housing, land use and transportation. His specialties include housing, solid waste management and recycling, community facility analysis and innovative citizen participation techniques. In his present position, he is responsible for the overall management of the agency as well as many projects.

EDUCATION:

Master of Community Planning with concentration in environmental planning. University of Rhode Island.

Bachelor of Arts, summa cum laude, with concentrations in political science and geography. Macalester College, St. Paul, Minnesota.

CDBG APPLICATION ASSISTANCE PROVIDED:

Maine


CDBG DOWNTOWN PLANNING STUDIES PREPARED (Maine and New Hampshire):


COMPREHENSIVE PLANS PREPARED:


OTHER PROFESSIONAL DOCUMENTS PREPARED:

Maine: Transportation Development Plan Update for Northern Maine (1980); Metal Mining Impact Study for Ashland and Portage Lake (1982); Hancock County Construction and Demolition Debris Management Plan (1994); Route 3 Corridor Study (co-author); Land Use Ordinances for Brooksville, Hancock, Lamoine, Orland, Otis, Trenton. Tremont, Surry, Gouldsboro and Verona Island (1997-2010). Various technical assistance materials on land use planning and solid waste.

Jim Fisher has extensive experience in action-oriented research and development in the United States and other regions of the world. He has published over 30 articles, book chapters and professional papers on topics including economic development, environmental planning and research methods.

**EDUCATION:**
- Ph.D. in Regional Planning, University of North Carolina
- Master of Regional Planning, University of North Carolina
- Bachelor of Arts, Bowdoin College
- Additional Studies: Wright State University, Carleton College, University of Poona, India

**RESEARCH, PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE:**

*Planner, Hancock County Planning Commission, Ellsworth, Maine 1999 – present.*
Working with communities in a variety of development initiatives, particularly related to local infrastructure needs, transportation, geographic information systems, tourism, sustainable development and health. Prepared numerous corridor management plans, feasibility studies, trails plans, marketing plans and related print and web-based communications.

*Manager of Research, Central Maine Power/MainePower, Augusta, Maine 1996 – 1998*
Lead research manager for public opinion tracking, communications research and electricity deregulation. Worked initially with regulated monopoly to understand the impacts of restructuring, then transitioned to the competitive affiliate to develop proposals for marketing electricity to customer aggregations.

*Visiting Assistant Professor, Bates College, Lewiston, Maine 1995-1996*
Instructed courses in the Sociology Department including Introduction to Sociology, Urban Sociology, Environment and Development and Urban Planning. Advised student thesis papers including application of geographic information systems and sociological issues in environmental movements.

*Research Director and Assistant Professor, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio 1991 – 1995*
Directed research on a $5 million study of the effectiveness of early intervention and case management for persons seeking substance abuse treatment. Managed a staff of 5 persons in addition to student assistants. Designed research, supervised quality controls and produced analyses and publications.

*Visiting Assistant Professor, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio 1989 – 1991*
Instructed courses on community planning and health care administration, including Finance and Budgeting, U.S. and International Economic Development Methods, and Quantitative Methods. Advised student papers including issues of urban growth, poverty, location analysis and housing.

*USAID Research Consultant, Monrovia, Liberia and Cochabamba, Bolivia 1987, 1988*
Conducted research primarily on the impacts of economic conditions on health and habitat in urban and peri-urban communities. Resulted in recommendations for improved services for those living in poverty.

*U.S. Fulbright-Hayes Scholar, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, Dhaka 1984-1986*
Conducted research in rural Bangladesh on the impacts of rural development on economic capacity of locations and human migration. Research culminated in a successful doctoral dissertation.

*ESL and Health Outreach, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Association, Raleigh, NC 1982 – 1984*
Instructed English as a Second Language and provided health outreach services to under-served migrant farmworkers in eastern North Carolina.

*U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer, Ministry of Agriculture, Ambato, Ecuador 1979 - 1981*
Worked as an agriculture extension agent and community organizer in rural Ecuador. Assisted small farmers to optimize production on very small parcels of land, including fruit, grain and vegetable production. Assisted in organizing community activities, school gardens and planning.

**PUBLICATIONS, REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS:** 30+ publications, reports and presentations available upon request.
Sheri Walsh became a Maine resident in 1997, with her move to Winter Harbor from Panama City, FL. Her strong background in office skills and office management, along with her experience in government and non-profit organizations enable Sheri to meet her present challenges as administrative assistant and planning technician for HCPC. She is also a Certified CDBG Program Administrator, Notary Public and Dedimus Justice.

**EDUCATION:**
- 2001-2006       University of Maine, Augusta, part-time, Business Administration.
- 1987           Navy Ombudsman Training, Subic Bay, Philippines
- 1987           Navy Alcohol Substance Abuse Prevention, University of Arizona
- 1978-1982       Wayne Memorial High School, Wayne, Michigan

**WORK EXPERIENCE:**

Certified CDBG Administrator: June 2005 to present (see projects listed on next page)

Administrative Assistant & Bookkeeper, Hancock County Planning Commission; 7/04 to present Duties include typing comprehensive plans and ordinances; CDBG applications; correspondence; bookkeeping, including accounts payable and receivable, payroll and payroll tax preparation, bank reconciliation and tracking project expenses; data collection for comprehensive plans and other studies; general budget preparation; billing of state and federal programs; computer (Word, Excel, Internet, Access, QuickBooks); preparing layout of quarterly newsletter; bulk mailings.

Administrative Assistant; Winter Harbor Grammar School: 7/02 to 7/04 Duties include Assistant to the principal, office manager and supervisor of support staff. Tasks included accounts receivable, accounts payable, banking, public assistance, correspondence, newsletter preparation, event management, preparation of meeting minutes, bulk mailing, property management, compiling federal and state reports, budget preparation, and general overall operation of school.

Senior Account Manager; MBNA America Bank 5/99 to 7/02. Duties included management of multimillion dollar account portfolio, controlling bank losses, preparing alternative payment arrangements to avoid loan defaults, restructuring loans and conducting training sessions for new account managers.

Financial Secretary; Dr. James Campbell 4/96 to 7/97 Computer word/spreadsheet, public assistance, telephone assistance, knowledge of the orthodontic practice, insurance and patient billing, verification of orthodontic benefits, reviewing credit reports, structuring loans.

Office Manager; C.E. Jones Painting 4/95 to 4/96 Duties included correspondence, computer, bid preparation, pay requisitions/drawdowns, telephone, mail distribution, maintenance of supplies. Payroll, tax preparation, banking

Office Manager; Gloria Gurdziel, M.D. 8/91 to 8/94 Duties included correspondence, computer, insurance and patient billing preparation, telephone, typing psychiatric reports, mail distribution, maintenance of supplies, tax preparation, making appointments and maintaining patient medical and financial records

Office Manager; Bay Family and Child Center 5/90 to 8/91 Duties included correspondence, computer, insurance and patient billing preparation, telephone, typing psychiatric reports, mail distribution, maintenance of supplies, tax preparation, payroll, making appointments and maintaining patient medical and financial records.

Chairman of Volunteer Records; American Red Cross 5/87 to 12/89 Duties included correspondence, compiling volunteer status reports, tracking volunteer training, planning recognition ceremonies, answering telephone, typing reports, mail distribution, maintenance of supplies, education and training of volunteers, and public relations
CDBG Project Administration:


CDBG Technical Assistance:

Barbara S. Arter served as Project Director, Author, and/or Contributor on the following management initiatives:

Watershed Science and Planning
- International Boreal Conservation Campaign Aquatic Resources of Canada’s Boreal Forest
- Penjajawoc Stream Watershed Management Plan, Bangor, Maine
- Dennys River NPS Watershed Management Plan
- Narraguagus River NPS Watershed Management Plan

Bay Management and Marine Habitat and Fisheries
- Taunton Bay Mudflat Management Plan
- Maine State Bay Management Program
- Gulf of Maine Regional Habitat Monitoring Data System
- Quality Assurance Program Plan for the Gulf of Maine Council Gulfwatch Program
- Gulfwatch Contaminants Monitoring Program 2006 Data Report

Migratory Fish Habitat Restoration
- Diadromous Species Restoration Research Network
- Pleasant, Sheepscot, & Narraguagus Rivers Water Quality Monitoring Plans
- Status and Trends of Water Chemistry in Maine Atlantic Salmon Watersheds
- USFWS/NOAA Atlantic Salmon Recovery Plan Water Quality Recovery Team
- Atlantic Salmon Stream Crossing Best Management Practices Guidelines

Water Quality Assessment

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT
BSA Environmental Consulting. March 1999 to present.

Project Director, Conservation Planner, and Author.
Ms. Arter is experienced in all aspects of environmental and conservation assessment, planning, and program administration. She specializes in coastal watershed science, freshwater and nearshore-marine fisheries management, water quality assessment, and land-use planning. She excels at collaborating and networking with state and federal agencies, university researchers, conservation organizations, land-trusts, natural-resource harvesters, industry, municipal governments, and private landowners in order to develop ecosystem-based management tools. She is the project director of over thirteen conservation planning initiatives and the co-author or contributor of an additional eleven. (See List of Publications with web links attached.)

Conservation Initiatives
Watershed Science and Planning
Led several EPA funded projects designed to work with stakeholders to restore watershed function and hydrology, improve water chemistry, and enhance habitat in impaired streams. Work led to restoration strategies for improved stakeholder coordination, land-use planning, land-trust activity, in-stream channel and riparian restoration, awareness and outreach, water-quality monitoring, and program evaluation in over 300 restoration sites in major watersheds.

Bay Management and Marine Habitat and Fisheries
Played a leading role in developing multi-stakeholder supported plans using ecosystem-based principles to manage near-shore fisheries in small bays in the Gulf of Maine. The resulting recommendations address local and state governance, education, habitat protection, shellfish and baitworm management, and shorebird and water chemistry research. Additional projects include developing monitoring tools for salt marsh and seagrass beds and contaminants in blue mussels.

Migratory Fish Habitat Restoration
Coordinated several projects funded by the National Science Foundation and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (USFWS, NOAA) to address habitat restoration and water quality, quantity, and chemistry in coastal streams containing Atlantic salmon and other migratory fish species. Projects review fish passage, soils and geology, marine and freshwater systems, forestry and agricultural practices, land-use and development patterns, wildlife habitat, commercial fisheries, public policy, and contaminant and nutrients.

Water Quality Assessment
Assisted the Maine Department of Environmental Protection in coordinating water quality and watershed monitoring throughout the state and to improve overall assessment of statewide water quality and stream health trends.
University of Maine at Augusta, Bangor, Maine. 1998-2001. **Senior Lecturer.** Complete responsibility for the following college classes: General Biology, Human Ecology, Marine Biology, Anatomy and Physiology, Microbiology.


University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee. 1984-1991. **Biology Laboratory Program Manager.** Coordinated and managed biology teaching and research activities of 6 life science departments; taught and supervised laboratory activities, and developed protocols for 1600 students and 45 instructors for college biology classes.

**PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

2010 **Regional Association for Research on the Gulf of Maine.** October 2010. Portsmouth, NH. Diadromous Species Response to Climate Change


PROFESSIONAL COMMITTEES AND PROJECT CONTRIBUTION

Contributed to or provided technical comment on the following committees and/or initiatives:

- Diadromous Species Restoration Research Network (2008-2010)
- Penobscot River Science Exchange/Steering Committee (2005-2010)
- The Maine Coastal Plan: Final Assessment and Strategy under Section 309 of the Coastal Zone Management Act (2006)
- Maine State Legislature’s Natural Resources Committee Joint Hearing on Significant Wildlife Habitat Rules (2006)
- Maine Bay Management Study (2005-2006)
- Maine Atlantic Salmon Liming Committee (2002-2006)
- KRIS Sheepscot Database and GIS Mapping Project Technical Advisory Committee (2003-2005)
- University of Maine PEARL Database and GIS Mapping Initiative (2003-2005)
- Project SHARE Atlantic Salmon Restoration Committee (2000-2005)
- Project SHARE Atlantic Salmon Research Committee (2002-2006)

EDUCATION

**Bachelor of Science, Forest and Natural Resource Management.** (1981) Oklahoma State University. Specializing in forest ecology and management

**Master of Science, Ecology.** (1984) Specializing in riparian forest ecology. Oklahoma State University

**Graduate Course Work:** (1986-1988) Hydrology, Ecology. University of Tennessee
List of Publications and Websites
March 1999 to present.

Project Director and/or Principal Author of the Following Conservation Initiatives:


Friends of Blue Hill Bay. September 2009-Present. www.fobhb.org


http://salmonhabitat.org/docs/nrwmp.html

Contributing Author on the Following Projects:


http://www.seagrant.umaine.edu/extension/coastcom/sustour.htm

USFWS/NOAA Atlantic Salmon Recovery Plan Water Quality Recovery Team. NOAA. December 2005 to present.


NOAA Atlantic Salmon Water Chemistry Enhancement Strategic Plan. NOAA. December 2002 to Present.


http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/docmonitoring/stream/urban/index.htm

December 7, 2011

Tom Martin, Executive Director
Hancock County Planning Commission
395 State Street
Ellsworth, ME 04605

Re: Blue Hill Bay Needs Assessment Proposal

Dear Tom:

The Town of Blue Hill is writing to express our support for the Hancock County Planning Commission proposal to conduct a needs assessment of Blue Hill Bay. Our town benefits in many ways from Blue Hill Bay, and we hope that this study will identify ways we can sustain the bay, support local fisheries and businesses and the quality of life we enjoy on the bay.

Our town will support this initiative by appointing one or more representatives that can participate in the planning and execution of this needs assessment. We will also be happy to host public meetings in our town to invite residents to share their knowledge and desires for Blue Hill Bay.

Thank you for taking the lead on this project.

Sincerely,

James M. Schatz, for the Board of Selectmen
To: Tom Marin, Executive Director  
From: Town of Brooklin  
Date: 12/06/2011  

RE: Blue Hill Bay Needs Assessment Proposal  

The Town of Brooklin is writing to express our support for the Hancock County Planning Commission proposal to conduct a needs assessment of Blue Hill Bay. Our town benefits in many ways from Blue Hill Bay, and we hope that this study will identify ways we can sustain the bay, support local fisheries and businesses and the quality of life we enjoy on the bay.

Our town will support this initiative by appointing one or more representatives that can participate in the planning and execution of this needs assessment. We will also be happy to host public meetings in our town to invite residents to share their knowledge and desires for Blue Hill Bay.

Thank you for taking the lead on proposing this project.

Albert Smith Chair Selectman

Mike Roy Selectman

Debra Brewster Selectman
December 6, 2011

Tom Martin
Executive Director
Hancock County Planning Commission
Ellsworth, Maine 04605

RE: Blue Hill Bay Needs Assessment Proposal

Dear Tom:

I am writing to express Friends of Acadia’s support for a “Blue Hill Bay Watershed Community Needs Assessment,” proposed by the Hancock County Planning Commission. FOA’s mission is to preserve, protect, and promote stewardship of the outstanding natural beauty, ecological vitality, and distinctive cultural resources of Acadia National Park and surrounding communities. The health of Blue Hill Bay, and sustainable practices that affect the bay, are important factors in sustaining Acadia National Park’s ecological vitality and in ensuring strong and vibrant local communities that care about the park.

Thank you for proposing to gather key stakeholders to work on this study, and for guiding the process.

Sincerely yours,

Marla O’Byrne
President and CEO

cc: Edward L. Sarnek, Chairman, Friends of Acadia’s Board of Directors
    Sheridan Steele, Superintendent, Acadia National Park
Mr. Thomas Martin  
Hancock County Planning Commission  
395 State Street  
Ellsworth, ME 04605  

December 6, 2012

Dear Tom;

On behalf of Healthy Acadia, I am writing to express our strong support for the Hancock County Planning Commission proposal to conduct a needs assessment of Blue Hill Bay Watershed.

Healthy Acadia is a non-profit community health coalition and designated Healthy Maine Partnership providing essential public health services throughout Hancock County, Maine. Our organization is currently refining Community Health Improvement Plans for the region, based on recently completed assessments involving all eight of the communities which make up the watershed of Blue Hill Bay. Among the top key issue areas identified by community members living in these towns was the need to sustain a healthy environment, free from toxins and protected for future generations. In our rural communities, we found this issue to be closely tied with economic viability as our fishing, aquaculture and related industries are the lifeblood of our coastal communities. The working waterfront, and sustaining access and integrity of this resource were among the priority goals identified in Healthy Acadia’s Community Health Improvement Plan.

A focused Needs Assessment of the Blue Hill Bay Watershed will support important environmental issues, and we share HCPC’s goals of ensuring that our land, water, air, and built environments are clean and free of toxic contaminants. This important project will help assure our coastal natural resources, including rural landscapes, farms, and waterways have the best opportunity to be protected and accessible future generations. We recognize the importance of public outreach and participation for the success of this initiative, and pledge to work with HCPC to host and conduct information gathering workshops, as well as help share information with the constituents throughout the region.

Over the years, we have witnessed the positive outcomes resulting from this kind of cooperative, participatory planning and community engagement process. The Hancock County Planning Commission is a respected leader that has the trust of each of the municipalities involved in the Watershed Region. With your leadership, we believe this project holds excellent potential to improve coastal cooperation and enhanced resource management.

We are pleased to pledge our full support to this much needed planning project!

Sincerely,

Douglas J. Michael, MPH  
Executive Director
December 7, 2011

Tom Martin, Executive Director,
Hancock County Planning Commission
395 State Street
Ellsworth, ME 04605

RE: Blue Hill Bay Needs Assessment Proposal

The Marine Environmental Research Institute (MERI) is extending support for the Hancock County Planning Commission proposal to conduct a needs assessment of Blue Hill Bay. Because we are the only organization doing long-term monitoring of the Blue Hill Bay ecosystem, it will be difficult to accomplish this project without access to our water quality data.

MERI conducts primary marine ecological toxicology investigations and has been measuring basic indicators of ecosystem health in Blue Hill Bay for nearly a decade. We will release a comprehensive 8-year State of the Bay report in 2012 that provides the baseline for assessing conditions in the Bay relative to known or anticipated environmental and biological stressors. Our monitoring program also complements our Seals as Sentinels ecotoxicological research project, which for 10 years has tracked the level of toxic contaminants in the tissues of pinnipeds and commercially important fish stocks in the Gulf of Maine, including a study of contaminants in farmed salmon.

MERI can support this initiative by providing appropriate materials that document the condition of and threats to the Blue Hill Bay ecosystem based on our research and published findings.

Sincerely,

Dr. Susan D. Shaw
Director
To: Tom Marin, Executive Director  
From: Town of Mount Desert  

Date: 12/06/2011  

RE: Blue Hill Bay Needs Assessment Proposal  

The Town of Mount Desert is writing to express our support for the Hancock County Planning Commission proposal to conduct a needs assessment of Blue Hill Bay. Our town benefits in many ways from Blue Hill Bay, and we hope that this study will identify ways we can sustain the bay, support local fisheries and businesses and the quality of life we enjoy on the bay.

Our town will support this initiative by appointing one or more representatives that can participate in the planning and execution of this needs assessment. We will also be happy to host public meetings in our town to invite residents to share their knowledge and desires for Blue Hill Bay.

Thank you for taking the lead on proposing this project.

Durlin E. Lunt  
Town Manager
To: Tom Martin, Executive Director  
From: Town of Surry  
Date: 12/06/2011  
RE: Blue Hill Bay Needs Assessment Proposal

The Town of Surry is writing to express our support for the Hancock County Planning Commission proposal to conduct a needs assessment of Blue Hill Bay. Our town benefits in many ways from Blue Hill Bay, and we hope that this study will identify ways we can sustain the bay, support local fisheries and businesses and the quality of life we enjoy on the bay.

Our town will support this initiative to the best of our ability in the planning and execution of this needs assessment.

Thank you for taking the lead on proposing this project.

Sincerely,

Stephen Bemiss, Chairman  
Surry Board of Selectmen
December 6, 2011

To: Tom Marin, Executive Director

From: Town of Tremont

Date: 12/06/2011

RE: Blue Hill Bay Needs Assessment Proposal

The Town of Tremont is writing to express our support for the Hancock County Planning Commission proposal to conduct a needs assessment of Blue Hill Bay. Our town benefits in many ways from Blue Hill Bay, and we hope that this study will identify ways we can sustain the bay, support local fisheries and businesses and the quality of life we enjoy on the bay.

Our town will support this initiative by appointing one or more representatives that can participate in the planning and execution of this needs assessment. We will also be happy to host public meetings in our town to invite residents to share their knowledge and desires for Blue Hill Bay.

Thank you for taking the lead on proposing this project.

Sincerely,

Millard Billings
Town Manager