



Friends of Casco Bay

Casco BAYKEEPER®

FY24 Operating Plan

April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024

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Executive Summary to Our FY24 Operating Plan

This Operating Plan covers Friends of Casco Bay's proposed work from April 1, 2023 through March 31, 2024 and the attached budget supports this plan.

Organizationally, we are in the simultaneous process of writing a new Strategic Plan covering 2023-2028 while staff developed this operating plan. This plan was written in the context of the the 3/8/2023 draft Strategic Plan. Staff recognizes that some of our work and priorities may change depending upon the finalization of that Strategic Plan. By definition, the Strategic Plan is, well, *strategic*. The operating plan is *tactical*. While the Strategic Plan is eloquent and brief, the operating plan is the opposite—full of details, background, rationale for the work we are undertaking this year.

Our mission is to improve and protect the health of Casco Bay. We take a holistic view of this mission. We are working with communities along the coast as well as with partners in the watershed to reduce pollution and increase climate resiliency. While the majority of our work takes place *in the Bay*, we recognize that the cleaner the waters flowing into our coastal waters are, the healthier Casco Bay will be. We meet our mission through science, advocacy, and community engagement. These are the three legs of the stool upon which our work sits. Our work is strategic and integrated. All of our programs have elements of science, advocacy, and community engagement [see Appendix A].

This Operating Plan is ambitious but doable. Our staff is energized by this work and look forward to implementing it. **The most important work in front of the staff this Fiscal Year is:**

- Convening Maine Ocean Climate Collaborative meetings to move climate change work forward, including working with its Tech Team to explore replacements to our carbon dioxide sensors in our Continuous Monitoring Stations
- Advocacy to improve Maine's stormwater laws and implement nitrogen criteria
- Growing our partnerships in the community with an eye toward diversity
- Meeting our budget to fund this work, including increasing our membership and meeting our exceeding our goals for individual, corporate, foundation, nonprofit, and government giving.

Below are the priorities for our work in each program category this fiscal year and their connection to the 3/8/2023 **draft** Strategic Plan. The tactical details of this work is in the narrative of this document. **Our FY24 Operating Plan work as it relates to Strategic Plan Goals:**

Science Priorities

- **Strategic plan goal #1: Track changing conditions/climate change**
 - Maintain Three Continuous Monitoring Stations and Year 31 of Seasonal Sampling
- **Strategic plan goal #1: Communicate changing conditions to the public**
 - Timely data presentation and outreach products (working with communications staff):
- **Strategic plan goal #2: Stormwater and nitrogen pollution and emerging issues**
 - Work with Bigelow Laboratory to collect PFAS data in Casco Bay
- **Strategic plan goal #3: Improve how we collect data and how we measure the health of Casco Bay**

- Work with “Tech Team” of the Maine Ocean Climate Collaborative to explore new sensor technology
- Begin using WRDB database for better data management
- Overhaul of our Quality Assurance Project Plan

Baykeeping Priorities

- **Strategic plan goal #1: Respond to climate change (mitigation)**
 - Work on policies to ensure responsible development of offshore wind (through federal, state, and local processes) and policies to reduce pollution from transportation, Maine’s largest source of carbon dioxide, through Environmental Priorities Coalition’s state and regional transportation advocacy
- **Strategic plan goal #1: Respond to climate change (adaptation)**
 - Organize Maine Ocean Climate Collaborative to improve statewide ocean acidification data collection and climate change policy to ensure implementation of marine elements of Maine’s climate action plan
 - Work with Greater Portland Council of Governments on community resilience planning process
 - Work with Town of Brunswick and other municipalities on local response to changing conditions
- **Strategic plan goal #2: Stormwater and nitrogen pollution**
 - Advocacy to improve Maine’s Stormwater Rules (Chapter 500)
 - Work to tighten up Maine Pollution Discharge Elimination System (MEPDES) permits [Clean Water Act permits]
 - Advocacy to support Nitrogen Criteria for Casco Bay
 - Continue to work to implement MS4 General Permit: advocacy to ensure appropriate Low Impact Development Ordinance language
- **Strategic plan goal #4: Expanding outreach to be more representative**
 - Continue using environmental justice lens to ensure those affected by pollution and issues have their voices heard in the decision-making processes
 - Facilitating and evolving the rivers group

Community Engagement Priorities

- **Strategic plan goal #1: Respond to climate change (adaptation)**
 - Train and work with Water Reporters to post observations of a changing Casco Bay
- **Strategic plan goal #2: Stormwater and nitrogen pollution and emerging issues**
 - Engage our volunteers and members in supporting advocacy efforts through action alerts and educational events
- **Strategic plan goal #3: Improve how we collect data**
 - Improve and mature Water Reporter Program: grow the program and increase number and quality of the posts
- **Strategic plan goal #4: Expanding outreach to be more representative**
 - Senior staff meeting with groups lead by and serving historically underrepresented and marginalized communities in our watershed.
 - More training events and field trips with volunteers, supporters, and partners
- **Strategic plan goal #5: Evolve and Grow**
 - Continue implementing inclusive and family-oriented events
 - Collect baseline demographic data, as legally allowed, on our membership/volunteers

Communications Priorities

- **Strategic plan goal #1: Respond to climate change (adaptation)**
 - Develop least quarterly science stories using videos, infographics, charts, and other inclusive ways to communicate changes that are happening. Aim to write stories/analysis to 8th grade reading levels.
- **Strategic plan goal #2: Stormwater and nitrogen pollution and emerging issues**
 - Public events and work with partners to educate the public on better land-use practices
- **Strategic plan goal #4: Expanding outreach to be more representative**
 - Increase media outreach on our issues and work
 - Make our data accessible

Development Priorities

- **Strategic plan goal #4: Expanding outreach to be more representative**
 - Engage current members to have next generation involved (outreach to families)
- **Strategic plan goal #5: Evolve and Grow**
 - Sustainably grow our budget by meeting and exceed our annual budget goals to meet cost of living increases

Management and Administration Priorities

- **Strategic plan goal #5: Evolve and Grow**
 - Find a new office with adequate space, including needed larger lab space
 - Equity management goals include equitable search processes and family leave
 - Support the Board in its equity work, including discussions on what kind of expertise, experience, and representation we need on the board.

To accomplish this work, Friends of Casco Bay's staff will be the largest it has ever been: 10 people including our seasonal Pumpout Coordinator. The budget, attached, provides the necessary funding to implement this operating plan.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this plan, along with the budget that supports it.

Respectfully submitted,
Will Everitt
Executive Director
Friends of Casco Bay

Major Accomplishments from Last Year's Operating Plan [FY23]

Science:

- We completed our 30th year of collecting seasonal water quality data from Casco Bay. These data show temperatures in the Bay have warmed at an alarming rate, approximately 3° Fahrenheit since 1993.
- We passed the one-year mark of having three Continuous Monitoring Stations in the Bay.

Baykeeping:

- We celebrated a major victory to reduce one of the largest sources of pollution to Casco Bay. Stormwater is one of the largest sources of pollution into the Bay. In July 2022, we celebrated new protections that will reduce stormwater pollution flowing from Maine's most urbanized areas. These protections were included in a statewide stormwater permit following many years of advocacy by Casco Baykeeper Ivy Frignoca.
- We worked with Friends of the Presumpscot River and DEP to better understand water quality in the Presumpscot River, the largest river that flows into Casco Bay.
- We coordinated two key collaborations: Maine Ocean Climate Collaborative and began working with rivers groups in the watershed on shared priorities.
- We relaunched our Pumpout Program. After a two-year hiatus, our pumpout vessel, *Headmaster*, was back in the water for the boating season. Pumpout Coordinator Chris Gilday completed more than 300 pumpouts, keeping more than 11,000 gallons of sewage out of Casco Bay.

Community Engagement:

- We Nabbed Nitrogen! More Than 165 volunteers took part in Nabbing Nitrogen, a Clean Water Act day of action, collecting 178 water samples from Portland Harbor in August. The data from this community science event will support our advocacy to reduce nitrogen pollution into Casco Bay.
- We celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act throughout the year, including at We Are Water, our members annual meeting in July. This foundational environmental law, authored by Maine Senator Edmund Muskie, lies at the core of our advocacy to improve and protect the health of Casco Bay. Casco Baykeeper Ivy Frignoca also helped us to understand how the Clean Water Act works at events like, Listening to Casco Bay: the Clean Water Act, Climate Change, and More.
- Our Water Reporter network identified a large bloom in Maquoit Bay last summer. Soaring temperatures this summer coincided with large algal blooms and reports of dead softshell clams. Casco Baykeeper Ivy Frignoca and Staff Scientist Mike Doan visited the sites of the algal blooms for further investigation. This led to more coordination and collaboration with the Town of Brunswick.
- We hosted We Are Water, our Members Annual Meeting.
- We relaunched our Film Festival.
- We engaged more than 600 volunteers.

Communications:

- Friends of Casco Bay was cited in 50 news stories.
- Robby Lewis-Nash became a licensed drone operator. We used the drone to film *We Are Water*, a short film we debuted at the film festival.

Development:

- We had a banner fundraising year, meeting most of our annual budget goals by January.
- Collaborative partnerships and fundraising led to \$200,000 grant in support of improving our technology and water quality monitoring efforts.

Management and Administration:

- It was a year of staff transitions and successions: Will Everitt was hired as Executive Director. Sarah Lyman was promoted to Development Director. Heather Kenyon was hired to newly created Science and Advocacy Associate. Sara Freshley was hired as our Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator, which evolved from our former Community Engagement Coordinator position.
- The Board began its process to develop our next 5-year strategic plan.
- The Board created the EJDEI Committee to help us recommend practices and policies on inclusion and diversification to the board.



FY24 Operating Plan Complete List of Goals

Science:

- Maintain three Continuous Monitoring Stations (CMSs), each with data sonde with a pCO₂ sensor at Cousins Island in Yarmouth, GMRI float in Portland Harbor, and Holbrook Wharf in Harpswell, collecting hourly data year round. Sondes are swapped out roughly every two weeks, replaced with recalibrated equipment, data are downloaded, quality checked, and data graphs are designed and uploaded to the website.
- Seasonal Sampling, spring to fall, 14 sites to sample surface water quality, 8 sites by boat to sample water quality down through the water column
- Work with “Tech Team” of Maine Ocean Climate Collaborative (MOCC) to explore alternative technology new pCO₂ sensor and ways to improve our quality assurance methods
- Collect PFAS data in conjunction with Bigelow Labs
- Continue to build Heather Kenyon’s skills and knowledge for science staff redundancy
- Update our Quality Assurance Project Plan
- Design and release accessible data products from Seasonal and CMS sampling efforts, working closely with Program Team and Communications/Development Team
- Investigate and track nuisance and harmful algal blooms via Water Reporter and using our own drone
- Continue to develop internal data-handling protocols for ease of storage, quality assurance, and extraction for our analyses and for other scientists, using WRDB software
- Continue to collaborate with wide variety of partners and colleagues, to understand conditions in Casco Bay and to share data, techniques, and quality assurance protocols
- More efficient lab and storage space
- Refine systems for equipment maintenance and inventory
- Make the science of stewardship understandable and accessible to the public.

Baykeeping

- Move climate change policy forward
 - Coordinating MOCC to further develop state level ocean climate policy and monitoring network
 - Develop Offshore wind development responsibly through working at federal level, implementing Maine’s Offshore Roadmap, state legislation (on wind energy procurement), and working with Town of Yarmouth to repurpose Wyman Station as an offshore wind connection site
 - Working on regional transportation initiatives with EPC
 - Participate in GPCOG resilience planning process to help coastal communities adapt to changes
 - Continue to serve in Coastal and Marine Working Group of Maine Climate Council, implementation of marine aspects of state’s Climate Action Plan
 - Work with local municipalities to adapt to changes
- Work to reduce stormwater through stakeholder process for Chapter 500 stormwater regulations
- Help the State develop nitrogen criteria for greater Portland Harbor
- Continue to build relationships with river groups in the watershed
- Comment on 3-4 major Clean Water Act permits that are up for renewal while tracking Long Creek permit

- Continue implementation of MS4 permit: currently appealing weak Low Impact Development language in the statewide permit
- Continue to assist and support municipal adoption of fertilizer ordinances
- Track issues of concern: PFAS, cruise ships, oil spill preparedness, marine debris and microplastics, dredging
- Continue to track developments in aquaculture in Casco Bay with an eye toward protecting the health of the Bay
- Continue Pumpout Program and Habits for a Healthy Bay messaging to boaters
- Respond to public inquiries
- Look at all of our advocacy efforts with an eye toward environmental justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion

Community Engagement

- Onboard our new Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator Sara Freshley
- Mature Water Reporter Program
 - Organize at least 5 group meet ups/trainings and organize online trainings as needed to recruit, support, and clarify what is helpful in posts
 - Deepen our relationships with existing Water Reporters, meet one-on-one with at least 25 volunteers
 - Focus on engaging more current Water Reporters: have 100 volunteers post this FY
 - Continue to recruit
 - Continue to respond to Water Reporter posts
 - Find out what volunteers are concerned about and use that information to inform our work.
 - Connect Water Reporter work to Baykeeping priorities
 - Use Pumpout Program and boater communications to recruit more boaters as Water Reporters
 - As we continue river work, explore expanding our Water Reporter program further into the watershed
 - Use video as way to train Water Reporters
 - Work in the field as Staff to identify ways to further support Water Reporter work
- Explore relationships with nontraditional allies: senior staff meeting with organizations led by and serving historically marginalized communities in the watershed
- Organize our Annual Meeting at SMCC, hold our Film Festival in November
- Explore organizing community events in partnership with Friends of the Presumpscot River
- Rename our Casco Bay Matters series and use programs to educate our supporters about top Baykeeping issues.
- Work on environmental justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion criteria in coordination with Waterkeeper standards and with what makes sense in our community
- Coordinate Coastal Cleanups and Storm Drain Stenciling projects
- Encourage BayScaping through encouraging more ordinances and through special focus on South Portland 100 Resilient Yards program.

Communications

- Promote our stories in a wide variety of ways, mindful of our audiences
- Weekly story evaluation and development, send email stories at least every two weeks

- Meet with program staff to develop new communications. Priority stories to follow this year: Maine Ocean Climate Collaborative work, CMS data, stormwater, Back Cove stormwater project, MS4, Nitrogen Nab data, legislative priorities, river work, Water Reporter posts
- Operationalize learnings from the Members Survey
- Strengthen our relationships with news media: media outreach on our key Baykeeping and programmatic initiatives with goal of pitching one news story to media each month
- Update website platform (back end)
- Update website as our story bank with updated posts, information, video, photos, data
- Host a variety of online events, with special emphasis on “warm” approaches
- Use our drone for images/videos
- Employ a wide range of additional communications strategies and activities to engage our audiences (see extensive bulleted list at end of Communications section)
- Improve our social media strategy
- Implement learnings from survey
- Take advantage of and create visibility opportunities as they arise

Development/Fundraising

- Meet and exceed our fundraising goals in our budget
- Continue to grow our membership and deepen giving from individuals
- Advance our Anchor Society as recognition of those making planned gifts
- Focus on growing corporate giving, exploring new partnerships
- Continue to garner foundation and government support
- Plan and implement a fundraising plan to help offset costs of moving
- Assess whether we need a new database
- Work toward identify our new capital campaign
- Relaunch our gift membership program with focus on diversity and inclusion
- Remain nimble

Management and Administration

- Maintain excellent working environment for staff
- Continue to maintain our Baykeeper and pumpout vessels
- Continue upgrades in computer workstations,
- Move our offices
- Grow leadership, particularly of new staff
- Look at equity issues in our H.R. policies: implement a new family leave policy, vacation use policy
- Continue to grow our knowledge and engagement with environmental justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion issues especially where they intersect our mission; update our statement on environmental justice
- Continue to serve the Board and staff Community Engagement Committee, EJDEI Committee, and other board needs
- Work with Board on recruitment, leadership succession, other issues as identified by Board
- Manage the implementation of the budget.

Programs: Science, Baykeeping, and Community Engagement

Our staff have increasingly developed overlapping work plans to fully integrate our Science, Baykeeping, and Community Engagement goals, strategies, and activities. Our staff meet weekly as a whole. Internally, we have four staff teams: the Program Team, the Communications and Development Team, the Admin Team, and the EJDEI team. The first three of these teams meet weekly. The EJDEI team meets monthly. We value each staffer's individual areas of expertise, experience, and inspiration in order to set our course together.

One organization working alone cannot fulfill our mission. Partnerships are key to protecting the Bay. We operate in a number of coalitions, we created and lead partnerships, and we take part in a huge amount of collaborative work. Increasingly, our staff members are seen as leaders in the community. Managing relationships in the watershed and across that state is a vital part of our staff's work. More and more of our work involves engaging with communities around the Bay in conversations to explore how we can respond effectively, and support one another in that response, to the impacts of climate change.

1. Science: Water Quality and Other Environmental Monitoring

FY24 will mark our 31st year collecting data on the water quality and environmental health of Casco Bay. We maintain and continue to add to one of the largest and most important long-term data sets on marine water quality in New England. In 2023, we will refine and advance our existing ongoing water quality monitoring programs. This year we will see transition in three areas: our physical lab space, some of our data collection methods, and our data management.

We will focus on the Continuous Monitoring Program and the Seasonal Monitoring Program, in that order. The goal for FY24 is to recommit ourselves to collecting high quality data and sharing it with our public. We will continue to improve data quality and will deliver more timely data products. Presenting our data and communicating what we are seeing are our primary objectives as we engage our community and advocate for the health of the Bay. We will also maintain flexibility in the program as new opportunities and issues arise.

The Science Program will continue to be more intrinsically connected to the Baykeeper Program, especially with the addition of the new Science and Advisory Associate (this will be the first full year of having this position filled). We will also work closely with the Communications and Community Engagement staff in an effort to make all of the Friends of Casco Bay programs more synergistic.

Our monitoring efforts are of two types: ongoing and episodic. These two general categories allow Friends of Casco Bay to monitor water quality across the Bay, from the more urban areas around Portland Harbor to the more rural areas in eastern Casco Bay.

a. Ongoing Monitoring Programs

The two ongoing monitoring programs, Continuous Monitoring Station and Seasonal Water Quality, together provide temporal and spatial coverage for long-term water quality monitoring in Casco Bay. The data sets they produce are vitally important in supporting our outreach and advocacy.

Continuous Monitoring Station Program

We launched our flagship Continuous Monitoring Station at Cousins Island in Yarmouth in July 2016. FY24 will see the completion of seven full years, and the start of the eighth, of hourly

year-round measurements at this “cage of science.” FY24 will also see the completion of the second full year at our two newest stations, one in Portland Harbor, off a float at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, and one in Harpswell at Holbrook’s Wharf, in Cundy’s Harbor. Friends of Casco Bay does not own any of these physical locations, and maintaining good relationships with property owners remains a priority. These three long-term, hourly monitoring platforms are spread across the Bay in three distinctly different coastal environments.

This program has two goals: first, collect data on a frequent basis to track changes over time (long-term trends) in the water quality conditions in Casco Bay; and second, deepen our understanding of existing conditions, as well as the seasonal and annual changes in temperature, productivity, and acidification in the Bay.

The three stations are deployed close to the shore at the bottom of Casco Bay in approximately four meters of water at high tide. Each station consists of a YSI EXO2 data sonde and a Turner pCO₂ (partial pressure of carbon dioxide) C-Sense sensor. Measured parameters include depth, temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen, pH, chlorophyll, phycoerythrin (pigments found in cyanobacteria), turbidity, and the partial pressure of carbon dioxide. Derived calculations include total alkalinity, dissolved inorganic carbon, and calcium carbonate saturation state (omega aragonite). Water samples are collected to analyze levels of total nitrogen as well as pH and total alkalinity, the latter two to provide a measure of data quality assurance and baseline monitoring.

Maintenance of the stations takes place every two to three weeks; we swap out the deployed “cage” and instrumentation with a fresh array. The new instruments are clean, powered, and calibrated. Data from the previously deployed instruments are uploaded and the instruments are cleaned and prepped for a subsequent deployment. By rotating cages of equipment in this way we are able to ensure good data quality. Water samples are collected during each rotation for total nitrogen, pH and total alkalinity analysis.

FY24 will be a transitional year for the Continuous monitoring program. We will explore alternatives to the Turner C-Sense CO₂ sensor, as that particular instrument may soon become obsolete. Comparisons between our instruments and other methods and new sensors will be a large part of our work in 2023, and we will be working closely with the University of New Hampshire and the Wells National Estuary Research Reserve. The goal of this collaborative effort is to develop technology and quality assurance recommendations for continuously monitoring ocean acidification in Maine’s coastal waters in light of the problem plaguing monitoring efforts up and down Maine’s coast. We will have improved our monitoring program through this effort and overcome the challenges with technology we have been experiencing.

The quality of our science remains our top priority, and we will continue to refine and improve our protocols. The lab analysis of water samples for pH and total alkalinity will be used not only to check our data and calculations, but also to adjust some of the actual sonde measurements. In this way we can produce a more accurate baseline of acidification parameters to plot our Continuous measurements against. We will invest more time into staying up to date with relevant literature and technical reviews, continue to build our understanding of coastal carbonate chemistry, and grow our network of colleagues doing similar work.

Seasonal Water Quality Monitoring

The Seasonal Monitoring program includes discrete monitoring conducted during six events between spring and fall. Monitoring takes place monthly at twenty-two sites around Casco Bay. Shallow water sites have data and samples collected at the surface only, while deeper sites

include data collected at the surface, at one meter, and then every two meters to the bottom, providing a “profile” of the water column. These profile sites, as well as several surface sites, are monitored by boat, with the remaining surface sites monitored from floats and piers. These sites include a selection of former Community Steward Water Quality Monitoring surface stations, as well as the three Sentinel Profile stations, continuing both of those historic long-term datasets.

Parameters are measured using a YSI EXO2 data sonde and are the same as those measured in the Continuous Monitoring effort, with the exception of pCO₂. Secchi depth is measured, and water samples are collected to analyze levels of total nitrogen (TN). New in FY24 will be the requirement to ship TN samples out for analysis as soon as possible after each monitoring event. In FY24, the Seasonal program will also collect water samples during three events to be analyzed for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) through a Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences research effort. PFAS are a class of widely used, long lasting chemicals and are an emerging pollutant of concern. In FY23, we collected two water samples for PFAS analysis through a Waterkeeper Alliance project.

The Seasonal program provides us with an opportunity to connect with various stakeholders while we are in the field, as well as a chance to be out and about around the Bay; this community engagement component is often as valuable as the science. The Staff Scientist, Casco Baykeeper and Science and Advocacy Associate work together to conduct the Seasonal fieldwork, and the Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator and Staff Writer are occasional participants.

Episodic Science Efforts

We want to ensure that we do not simply conduct science for the sake of science, but that we continue to monitor that which leads us to improving the health of the Bay and modifying the behavior of those who live, work, and play in and around it. For that reason, the array of efforts that can be described as “episodic” tends to change from year to year.

One important effort is the tracking of macroalgal blooms. Nuisance macroalgal blooms are considered an indicator of nitrogen pollution, and Casco Bay has seen an increase in these blooms in recent years. In FY24, we are hoping these blooms will not be present, but we will be ready to document and track episodes as they occur. (See Baykeeping and Community Engagement sections on Water Reporter).

Other episodic initiatives historically have been pilot projects and initial filters for new issues, technologies, or techniques (such as pesticides and plastics samplings). These efforts provide us with opportunities to explore the “how” or “why” of an issue, and to better assess or understand any potential threats to the health of the Bay. We do not anticipate any additional Episodic efforts in FY24. We will, however, be engaged in planning and discussing several projects for FY25, including nitrogen nabbing, microplastics, phytoplankton tows, sediment nitrogen, and nearshore temperature monitoring.

b. New Science Program Capacity

We will continue to enhance the role of the new Science and Advisory Associate, Heather Kenyon. In addition to working on the calibration and rotation of our Continuous Monitoring Stations, to ensure that we have redundancy in this area, Heather will produce a Standard Operating Procedures document. Heather will also assist with data management and analysis, including WRDB use, GIS work, and conduct relevant research projects (see Baykeeping and Management and Administration sections).

c. Data Management and Analyses, and Lab Buildout

We will design and create a more efficient lab and storage space.

We will also refine new systems for scheduling equipment maintenance and replacement, and for tracking inventory of calibration buffers and other purchases. equipment maintenance, and make redundant inventory a top priority.

Data management and documentation will be a larger priority in FY23. We will overhaul the monitoring data filing system, produce ‘step by step’ notes on all procedures, and complete the required revisions to our monitoring program Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPP).

We will begin using WRDB (Water Resources Database), a free software download designed specifically for water quality data and widely used around the country, to manage our water quality data. This software will facilitate more efficient ways to do quality assurance on our data, organize data via metadata structure, work up data graphics, and fulfill outside requests for our data sets. This will be a major undertaking in 2023 and will completely upgrade our data management capacity. The addition of the Science and Advisory Associate will help make this long-awaited capacity possible.

Microsoft Excel and JMP software by SAS continue to be the spreadsheet and statistical packages we use for our data work.

d. Communicating Science

Data presentation and other products will continue to be a priority in FY24, as we strive to reach a broader audience and make our data more accessible. We will work with the Staff Writer to generate various outreach and education products. In addition, monthly updates for our website are generated from both Seasonal and Continuous monitoring data.

Specifically, after each monitoring event, data from the Seasonal Monitoring program are uploaded to our website via a backend mapping functionality of the Water Reporter app (see Community Engagement on Water Reporter). Daily means for each parameter from all three Continuous Monitoring Stations are graphed and displayed on our website. These online updates for both programs mark an important milestone for Friends of Casco Bay. Timely data product delivery will be an important component of our Science efforts this year.

We will prepare additional data presentations to add to the website and for our other communications. We will also continue to work with our Staff Writer to develop new science-based stories and videos from our data, perhaps in ways we have not yet explored. We will incorporate the Staff Writer and the Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator into our fieldwork as well as various meetings and activities. Sharing what we are doing in an inclusive, easily accessible way will remain a priority.

Staff may attend and present at one or more of the large regional conferences (Northeast Association of Environmental Biologists, Northeast Estuarine Research Society, Regional Association of Research on the Gulf of Maine, Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation), as well as present regularly at Friends of Casco Bay events.

e. Boat Operations

As captain of the *R/V Joseph E. Payne*, Mike is responsible for scheduling routine maintenance and identifying any issues with performance or safety. Our Pumpout Coordinator (see Pumpout)

will facilitate the more considerable boat maintenance projects, be responsible for launching and hauling, and act as an additional boat captain for our research efforts as needed. Once launched, the Baykeeper boat is kept clean and fueled, ready for use on short notice. The vessel is used for monitoring efforts, impromptu investigations, media moments, stakeholder meetings and outings, fundraising cruises, staff time on the Bay, and other functions. The boat will be stored out of the water from November to April, and tied up at Breakwater Marina (Port Harbor) during the rest of the year. A priority goal this year is to be on the boat at least once a week, with trips for Science, Community Engagement, and Baykeeping.

f. Collaborations

Our Science program works to support our advocacy efforts: we collect data to use it to make Casco Bay healthier and more protected. Mike and Heather will also work closely with Communications Staff to develop images and stories for our website and other communications channels. They will also work with the new Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator to promote and support various Community Science initiatives. This will include the ongoing Water Reporter effort and the tracking of macroalgal blooms. Additional projects may involve advising Brunswick on data collection efforts (see Community Engagement section). Externally, we will continue to foster close working relationships with Casco Bay Estuary Partnership, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Maine Department of Marine Resources, Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, University of New Hampshire, University of Maine, University of Southern Maine, Southern Maine Community College, University of New England, and Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Science.

We will also rely heavily on the Maine Ocean Climate Collaborative (see Baykeeper section) as we explore new sensor technology. We will be part of the Rivers Group (see Baykeeper section), and provide technical expertise as needed to other groups and communities. This will include serving as a technical advisor for the Town of Brunswick as they develop a monitoring plan for Maquoit Bay, and the urban creek monitoring effort by the City of South Portland. Mike remains part of the Maine Coastal Ocean Alliance technical advisory group, and will be overseeing a University of Maine capstone project. (see Appendix B – Our Working Relationships).

With a commitment to environmental justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion, staff will develop a list of organizations with whom we are not working closely but whose work, missions, or members intersect with our work to protect the Bay (see Community Engagement section). As appropriate, we will work to build relationships, share data and ideas.



2. Baykeeping: Advocacy for Clean Water and Climate Resiliency

a. Introduction to Baykeeping

Waterkeepers speak for our waters. Our Casco Baykeeper advocates for Casco Bay. She uses our data (and the data of outside colleagues) to address problems that plague the health of Casco Bay. This necessitates working at a local, state, and federal level for incremental, positive change. For example, permits issued under the Clean Water Act (CWA) must be renewed every 5 years. The CWA contemplates that permit terms evolve to address new and changing water quality conditions. Therefore, every five years, our Casco Baykeeper can advocate for more stringent terms and the use of newer technologies to reduce pollution.

In FY23, we augmented advocacy by hiring our first Science and Advocacy Associate (Associate). The Associate literally helps translate the science into action. Under the guidance of our Staff Scientist, she collects data, ensures quality analysis, and translates data into graphs and other optics that can be analyzed to support advocacy. She also uses her legal background and the advice and direction of the Casco Baykeeper to research and draft comments and other documents and has begun testifying on behalf of Friends of Casco Bay. We will continue to augment Baykeeping by periodically selecting Maine School of Law “externs” skilled enough to assist in our efforts. We will set forth a training calendar for our Associate that includes targeted science and legal education and in house training to continue to advance her skill. Our Staff Scientist, Associate, new Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator, and Casco Baykeeper function together as our Programs Team, and meet and think that way. We look forward to incorporating our Sara Freshley, who was hired as our Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator, into this team.

We strengthen Baykeeping by engaging community members in caring for the Bay, telling Baykeeping stories through communications, and programming such as field trips and webinars. Our Water Reporter Program advances and deepens our ability to track changes and identify problems. More and more our emails and programs engage our members in new and creative ways. We continue to evolve our understanding of and act to ensure Environmental Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (EJDEI) commensurate with our mission.

Our top issues of concern remain the causes and consequences of climate change, unsustainable land-use practices which alter hydrology and increase stormwater pollution, and adequate regulation of point source discharges through Clean Water Act (CWA) permits.

The below work plan summarizes the major accomplishments of FY23, identifies major Baykeeping goals for FY24, and other issues of concern. A typical Baykeeping week is always atypical as we pivot to respond to public concerns or emerging issues to the extent possible while fulfilling the goals set forth in our work plan.

b. Highlights from last year

In order to understand where we are going, it benefits to know where we are coming from. Last year witnessed pivotal evolutions in Baykeeping as we broadened our reach into the watershed and expanded the communities and people with whom we work. Here is an overview of advocacy accomplishments this past year:

Climate Change work last year: Climate change continued to be our major focus. Our advocacy has been weighted to addressing the consequences of climate change, and supporting actions to reduce the causes of climate change. With the prospect of offshore wind development

in the Gulf of Maine, we are spending more time on supporting responsible development of clean energy. This means we are more directly acting to reduce the causes of climate change.

We met all goals identified in last year's plan except participating in stakeholder processes to revise Maine's Chapter 500 stormwater rules. We did not participate in that effort because it did not occur. Instead we regularly communicated with DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) to encourage them to begin the process and began gathering resources and trying to identify technical assistance to help us during the process. We have been told the revisions will start in April 2023, but have been waiting for a start date since September 2022. FY23 Highlights include:

- Maine Ocean Climate Collaborative (MOCC): We started MOCC to continue the work we spear-headed through the Maine Ocean and Coastal Acidification (MOCA) partnership, a wholly voluntary network of scientists and policy-makers working together to advance our understanding of ocean acidification and act to address it. That partnership sunset with the advent of the Maine Climate Council. We served on the Coastal and Marine Working Group (CMWG) of the Council. That group recommended that a coast-wide network of public and private scientists continue to collaborate to build upon the MOCA foundation. Our Staff Scientist and Baykeeper started the MOCC for this purpose, and because we were engaged in a series of separate conversations about OA research and policy that would benefit from a more unified forum. MOCC identified supply chain and equipment challenges (including discontinued sensors) as a significant barrier to high quality monitoring. Friends of Casco Bay, in collaboration with two other organizations in MOCC, received a significant 2-year grant to test new equipment and ascertain if we can adopt coast-wide uniform methodology and protocols to monitor ocean acidification. Through facilitating this network, Friends of Casco Bay remains a state leader in addressing ocean acidification.
- Offshore Wind (OSW): We advanced our knowledge and advocacy in lockstep with many of our state and regional partners. We served on the Environment and Wildlife Working Group of the Offshore Wind Road Map and wrote a series of comments designed to prioritize environmentally-considerate siting of OSW farms to avoid harm to habitat and species. We also joined a network of other nonprofits to help shape state legislation that sets goals for the State to acquire energy from OSW. This work will continue in FY24.
- Regional Resilience Planning: The Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) received a grant to help coastal Casco Bay communities be resilient to some impacts of climate change through regional plans that identify and prioritize actions that can be taken to address coastal flooding and sea level rise. We supported the grant proposal and now sit on the steering committee overseeing the project. We are providing technical support and data and will continue to do so in FY24.
- Coastal and Marine Working Group: We continue to serve on this working group of the Maine Climate Council, although our tenure is coming to an end and we are awaiting news of whether we will be reappointed. This work may continue in FY24, depending on state priorities for reappointments to this group.
- Other: We provided some short-term assistance to municipalities grappling with climate change. We responded to complaints of algal blooms and clam die offs in Maquoit Bay secondary to high near shore temperatures. We received notable media coverage related to this issue.

Reducing pollution through the Clean Water Act and state laws and regulations last year:

This work continued to be the bread and butter of Baykeeping as we were often the only

advocates working on these issues. Last year, we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Prior to the CWA, the lower Presumpscot was known as the dirtiest little river segment, industries dumped toxins directly into Portland Harbor, and coastal Casco Bay was clogged with sewage. The CWA established a permit program that basically forbid point source (piped) discharges of pollutants to federal waters unless a person/business first obtained a permit that set limits on the amount of pollution that could be discharged and dictated how the effluent must be treated before discharge. These permits, known in Maine as MEPDES permits, renew every 5 years. That means, every 5 years, we can comment on draft renewal permits to address new pollutants or lingering problems. We track all permits up for renewal, review drafts and compare them to our data, and comment on those permits that must be strengthened.

The CWA also requires states to set a water quality classification system that describes the conditions that must be met for each class of water and that assigns water segments to a class. For example, the stem of the Presumpscot River from downtown Westbrook to head of tide is a Class C water. Class B waters must be of such quality that they are suitable for the designated uses of drinking water supply; fishing; agriculture; recreation in and on the water; industrial process and cooling water supply; hydroelectric power generation, except as prohibited. The habitat must be characterized as unimpaired. We compare waters to their classifications and advocate to upgrade waters to the next highest class when possible and to ensure that waters within each class are not degraded.

In addition, the State of Maine has passed laws to regulate stormwater and control other sources of water pollution. These laws are implemented through rules developed by Maine's Department of Environment Protection (DEP). We advocate for stronger rules and for rules that consider the impacts of climate change.

With that backdrop, in FY23 we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the CWA through a series of events. We won our first appeal of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit and filed a second appeal. We requested but did not push for updating the Maine Construction General Permit (MCGP). Other actions must occur first.

Here are highlights from our work to reduce pollution last year:

- MEPDES permits: We commented on the Great Diamond Overboard Discharge and Freeport Wastewater Facility discharge permits. In both instances, we questioned DEP's analysis of nitrogen data and its failure to set nitrogen testing or limits. EPA now also has questioned DEP's analysis and has asked DEP for justification to support its methodology. We will continue to track this issue and press for analysis that considers near field impacts and actual data. Both permits are pending.
- Nitrogen Criteria: We continued to participate in a stakeholder process to develop numeric nitrogen criteria. We took DEP on a boat trip to discuss the proposed criteria which we believe are not protective enough. The process has been stayed, and we understand that EPA also has questioned DEP's proposed criteria.
- DEP is long overdue in issuing CWA permit renewals. We held meetings about the Long Creek General Permit and other overdue permits, but no drafts have been issued for public comment. There are two potential issues: (1) DEP is understaffed in its permitting division; and, (2) by not issuing permits DEP does not need to impose more stringent permit conditions. We will evaluate how to handle this moving forward.
- We filed our second appeal of the MS4 permit, when the State approved weak and incomplete model LID ordinances submitted by MS4 communities to comply with the modified permit.

- We advocated for an upgrade of the lower stem of the Presumpscot. When it became clear that the effort would fail, we pressed for and secured an agreement to collaboratively monitor the Class C lower stem of the Presumpscot, from Saccarrapa Falls in downtown Westbrook to head of tide. We facilitated an *ad hoc* coalition to evaluate the data against Class B water quality criteria and to determine if the segment could be upgraded. We incorporated community into this project through a field trip with our colleagues, Friends of the Presumpscot River. DEP will monitor the river again in 2023. Their focus will be on determining the ability of the river to provide habitat as defined in Maine's water quality standards. Through this process, it has become clear that DEP now has identified other issues that would preclude an upgrade. The Presumpscot monitoring project revealed a pressing issue: How should continuous monitoring data be interpreted and applied for purposes of determining whether water bodies meet water quality classifications? We set a series of meetings with key stakeholders, DEP and the EPA to explore and address this question. The resolution of this issue will impact all tributaries in our watershed, wherever continuous monitoring is conducted. We will continue this work in FY24.
- Rivers Group: We worked with the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership to convene a select group of people/organizations working to improve and protect the health of our watershed. The goal of this nascent group is to identify issues we could collaboratively work on to better protect water quality. We have identified a co-leadership structure between CBEP and us to facilitate this effort and will evolve this group in FY24.

Nonpoint Source (NPS) Priorities: Stormwater that flows through pipes, such as MS4 systems, is point source pollution and can be regulated under the CWA. That is why advancing the MS4 permit is so important. All stormwater that sheets off our landscapes directly into waterways is known as nonpoint source or NPS pollution. NPS pollution is not regulated by the CWA. Instead the CWA provides grants to study the sources and create management plans to reduce NPS pollution. Waterbodies listed on the NPS Priority List are given priority for such funding.

We met our FY23 NPS goals. In addition, we supported the fertilizer ordinance adopted by Portland and spoke in favor of Brunswick adopting a fertilizer ordinance. We provided some technical assistance to the committee working on this.

Legislative Agenda: We must have sound laws to improve and protect our waters. The most efficient and best way to accomplish this is to ensure we enact sound laws and defeat laws that do not protect our watershed. Last year, we continued to track federal legislation through several sources that compile relevant bills and regulatory actions into newsletters. We also occasionally review a database that the WKA created regarding federal actions. Based on these sources, we take periodic, judicious actions to either file short comments on behalf of Casco Bay or to sign on to letters. At a State level, we continued to participate in the Environmental Priorities Coalition (EPC) organized by Maine Conservation Voters. The EPC provides tremendous benefits to our regional organization. We receive once a week briefings that consolidate information regarding bills of interest to Casco Bay. We support a priority agenda that we select with other members. We attend trainings and briefings for EPC members. Finally, we use the connections made through the EPC to collaboratively advance our mission. In addition, we review the list of bills submitted each legislative session and create a spreadsheet of bills related to our mission that we track and sometimes act on.

In FY23, we supported a legislative agenda to address climate change, improve and protect water quality (especially of the Presumpscot River), and ensure environmental justice.

c. FY24: Baykeeping Goals for This Year

The Program Team: Our Baykeeper, Staff Scientist, Science and Policy Associate, and new Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator will work as the program team. We will continue to develop and set training goals for the Associate and look forward to working with our new Community Organizer. As with our science program, in FY24, Baykeeping will focus on high quality work within our current areas of concern. We will continue to be responsive to public concerns. We will assist the public as we can and assess whether new issues brought to our attention need our focus relative to our mission. As we have capacity, we will work to address emerging issues that “come over the transom.”

Major Advocacy Issues in FY24:

The major issues we are working on this year include **climate change, reducing pollution through existing permits and regulations, and reducing nonpoint source pollution**. We will assess legislative bills as well as emerging issues.

Climate Change: Climate change will remain our major focus. Top climate change priorities for this year will include:

- Coordinating the MOCC network as it implements a pilot project (which we received a significant grant for) to test new OA monitoring equipment and plan public programming to report the results.
- On the mitigation front, we support responsible development of offshore wind as a green power source. We are doing this at the federal level (commenting on federal permits, research array), state level (implementation of the Offshore Roadmap and legislation on energy procurement), and at the local level (working with Yarmouth citizens on transitioning Wyman Station)
- Also on the mitigation front, we are working through the Environmental Priorities Coalition to improve our transportation infrastructure at the state and regional level. In Maine, transportation is the number one source of carbon dioxide.
- Continue serving on CBEP management and executive committees to effectively work with CBEP, as it convenes and funds collaborative work to reduce the consequences of climate change throughout our watershed.
- Continue to serve on the Coastal and Marine working group (CMWG) of the Maine Climate Council. (We still have a seat on the CMWG and are waiting to learn if we will be reappointed) to implement Maine’s Climate Action Plan.
- Serving on the Advisory Council of the GPCOG-led community resilience planning process to help coastal Casco Bay communities plan and act to address climate change.
- Selectively working at a municipal level to provide technical support for work that helps improve and protect water quality in the lower watershed. Right now, this work includes working with the Town of Brunswick.
- Continue facilitating and evolving the Rivers group: this is a nascent effort. Our goals of organizing the Rivers group are to better coordinate the shared missions of reducing pollution in our watershed and to expand our partnerships for clean water. We hope to have this group prioritize and coordinate shared work, grow the group, have it “name” itself, and have its self-identify as members.
- Participating in various other local collaborative efforts to reduce and address the consequences of climate change.

- Supporting legislation that improves water quality, land use regulations, and planning of our coastal and marine resources (we are assessing bills right now).
- Continue work on how to interpret continuous monitoring data as DEP updates its Standard Operating Procedures and we and they increasingly rely upon continuous monitoring.

Reducing Pollution and Protecting Water Quality: MEPDES permits, triennial reviews, nitrogen criteria: This continues to be our forte and one of the best means by which we improve and protect water quality. We continue to focus our comments on nitrogen removal, biological oxygen demand, and other pollutants of concern.

Top priorities for this year include:

- 2nd MS4 Appeal: We have appealed DEP's approval of the draft LID ordinances submitted by municipalities under the Permit Modification.
- Participating in stakeholder processes to revise Chapter 500 stormwater rules and other coastal land use regulations. DEP has not started this yet, but indicates it will this year.
- DEP is behind in issuing permit renewals. We will continue to comment when opportunities arise and at some point, will consider what we might do about the backlog of permits which includes: the East End wastewater treatment plant permit, the South Portland permit, the Freeport permit, the Great Diamond OBD permit, the Long Creek Permit, and the Maine Construction general permit. We expect two major permits on the Presumpscot to be renewed this year too: the Westbrook Waste Water Treatment Facility and the Sappi/SD Warren permit.
- Continuing to comment on and participate in stakeholder processes to adopt Nitrogen criteria.

Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution: This continues to be a difficult issue to address due to the lack of regulatory hooks. Revision of Chapter 500 stormwater rules and development of stringent municipal LID ordinances are two of the best ways we can address NPS. In addition, we will:

- Continue to encourage and assist municipal adoption of fertilizer ordinances.
- Continue to work with Water Reporters to track seasonal nuisance algal blooms and use the observational data to support our advocacy.
- Explore developing public education about issues such as the over-application of road salts which runoff into our tributaries and make them too salty to support freshwater life.
- We will continue to track and comment on the NPS priority list.

Legislative Agenda: Our focus will be on legislation to responsibly develop OSW, require consideration of climate change in land use management and regulation, and environmental justice. Legislatively, we continue to work mostly at a state level, with occasional support for federal legislation or budgets that improve and protect our watershed, and some assistance at a municipal level, as our limited capacity permits. We will continue to employ the methodologies identified in the FY23 section on Legislative Agenda.

Emerging Issues and Other Issues of Concern: Below are issues we works on as time permits. In addition, most weeks our program staff also responds to numerous requests and pollution complaints from the public. We also present and represent our organization in many public forums.

- PFAS: We working on an internal memorandum that summarizes the science and policy in effect to date in our watershed and will assess what work lies ahead on this issue (see Science above).
- Cruise Ships: We have an extern preparing an overarching memo on cruise ships that visit Portland Harbor that will provide an overview of regulations and known pollution control measures.
- Oil Spill Preparedness: Our Baykeeper and Associate will continue to participate in the ME/NH Area Committee and our Staff Writer will be prepared to fly our drone in the event of a spill.
- Aquaculture Siting: This issue continues to be contentious, with more long term, large lease applications in Casco Bay. Several areas of Casco Bay are becoming noticeably congested with lease sites. We engage in conversations about this topic at a municipal and state level, but do not lead advocacy in this area.
- Marine Debris and Microplastics: This is an area that we should prioritize more but we need to develop policy and program hooks. We continue to address this issue through beach cleanups and storm drain stenciling. We also support legislation to reduce single use and other plastics.
- Portland Harbor Dredge: The Portland Harbor Commission has not received federal grant funding for the dredge, despite three attempts. We wrote letters of support each time, and helped create a video to support the 4th attempt. The 4th attempt is pending.

d. Mobile Pumpout Service

Our Mobile Pumpout Service plays multiple and essential roles – the direct reduction of sewage discharges into the Bay, a gateway program to introducing our work to people who use the Bay, the education of boaters through the program’s ambassadorial function, and liaison between DEP and those marinas whose pumpout facilities are in out-of-service mode.

Our goal is work with boaters to reduce the negative impact boating can have on the health of the Bay. Last year, we kept more than 11,000 gallons out of the Bay and engaged more than 150 boaters. The effectiveness of this program hinges in large part on the boating and mechanical skills, as well as the character of the person who fills the Pumpout Coordinator position. We are excited that Pumpout Coordinator Chris Gilday will be coming back for his second season on our team. We will build off of our Healthy Habits messaging, began in FY22, to recruit more boaters to use our service and to join us as members, volunteers, and event attendees.

Thanks to our work with the state’s Pumpout Program, Casco Bay was awarded the first No Discharge Area status in Maine in 2006. Since then, many other regions along the coast of Maine have attained No Discharge Area status. In order to attain this, regions have to have a requisite number of pumpout stations, and, in order to meet the spirit of the law, as well as the letter, these stations need to be operational and accessible at all tides. We will continue to notify DEP when stations are nonoperational.

The Pumpout Program is 90% funded by a DEP administered federal grant program. When grant support from Portland Water District, the City of South Portland, and pumpout fees are accounted for, the program more than pays for itself.

3. Community Engagement

“We are the water, we are the Bay.” The goal of our community engagement work is to better protect the health of Casco Bay by connecting people with this incredible place and by providing meaningful and accessible ways for people to take part in our mission.

We engage our community to raise awareness that Casco Bay is essential to the quality of life in the region, deepen understanding of conditions around the Bay, inspire the community to champion policies and behaviors that support clean water, provide ways for volunteers to get involved, and build affection for our coastal waters.

More than ever before, our areas of program work, Science, Baykeeping, and Community Engagement, are integrated. Our program staff, Casco Baykeeper, Staff Scientist, Science and Advocacy Associate, and Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator, will work closely together on shared work plans via regular team meetings.

In FY24, we expect to host more events and meet-ups with our volunteers as we onboard our new Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator.

Since FY21, staff have deepened our understanding and increased our sensitivity to issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice. In FY24, our Executive Director and other senior staff as appropriate will work to form new organizational relationships with organizations that serve, are led by, and represent people of color and historically marginalized people in the Casco Bay watershed. This may result in new partnerships in our work and will likely require additional training and/or consulting for our staff.

Friends of Casco Bay began as an all-volunteer organization 34 years ago and today the volunteers remain essential to our success. Volunteers are eager to work with us and as of the writing of this plan, we have more volunteer “supply” than we have opportunities to offer. For the first time in our organization’s history, we will have a staff person whose full-time job will be to coordinate our volunteers. The new staff position will work with staff to develop more ways for volunteers to engage in our mission. See Appendix C for our FY23 Volunteer Metrics.

A key part of our Community Engagement work is meeting with the Community Engagement Committee of the Board in order to brainstorm ideas, receive feedback on ideas, and to workshop plans. Currently, the committee meets on the first Monday of each month in person and via zoom.

a. Water Reporter Program

Water Reporter is our flagship volunteer program. With 200 square miles of water and 578 miles of coastline, Casco Bay is large and our staff cannot be everywhere at once. That is why we rely on our community of Water Reporters to collect observational data, helping us to act as the eyes and ears of Casco Bay.

As an organization guided by science, we know the importance of careful observation. Our Water Reporter program enables volunteers to help us track how the Bay is changing. Water Reporter is an app that enables observers to photograph, describe, and share what they are seeing around the Bay, both good and bad.

We use 7 hashtags in Water Reporter posts to remind us of all of our areas of interest, and we remember them by thinking WATERS.
W #wildlife (Share the wildlife you see)

A #algae (Report algae blooms)

T #trash (Report marine trash)

E #eelgrass (Share changes in eelgrass growth) and #erosion (Identify coastal erosion sites)

R #reportpollution (Report pollution: sheen, foam, discolored discharges)

S #sealevelrise (Revisit the same location to capture high tide impacts) and #saltmarsh (Share changes in areas of saltmarsh over the seasons and years)

[Note: Multiple hashtags may be used.]

We seek four primary outcomes from our Water Reporter Program:

- Engage the community in observing and learning about Casco Bay, thereby deepening their relationship with the Bay and desire to improve and protect it.
- Real-time information that are related to our Baykeeping work. This allows staff, and specifically the Baykeeper, to keep on top of what is occurring and advocate for changes.
- Documentation over time of how the Bay is changing.
- “Bottom up” science on issues of concern to our volunteers. While we are training volunteers to be on the lookout for concerns that are important to our mission, volunteers also have the opportunity, through the app, to document other issues that may not be on our radar that are of concern to them.

These observations strengthen our advocacy efforts because photos and reports are sent to regulators, enforcers, legislators, and other decision-makers, alerting them to conditions in the Bay. We use these observations in our communication efforts to highlight ways the Bay is changing. We also share these observations with other scientists, which bolsters our collaborative relationships, and through our online communications informing those who are not Water Reporters.

Over 400 people have signed up with us on the Water Reporter app. Volunteers are able to see and comment on others’ posts and get insights on what is going on around the Bay. Water Reporters’ documentation has helped to spur emergency responses to pollution and algal blooms, identify impaired streams flowing into the Bay, and document evidence of climate change. Over time, Water Reporters’ contributions are helping us amass a collection of visual data on the health of the Bay and how it may be changing.

Our overall goal this year is to mature this program. Specifically, we will:

- Onboard our new staffer! We will ensure our new Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator knows Water Reporter so she can conduct trainings for our volunteers.
- Organize meet-ups between our new staffer and current Water Reporters and training opportunities with our staff. We will organize at least 5 group meetups. We will conduct online trainings as needed.
- Have our new staffer meet one-on-one with at least 25 individual Water Reporters (a mix of new and long-time volunteers).
- Focus on engaging more current Water Reporters in posting their observations; deepening current volunteers’ involvement. Use high tides, algal bloom tracking, and eelgrass tracking as ways to increase engagement while improving our overall understanding of the health of the Bay. Goal: have at least 100 volunteers post this FY.
- We will tie Water Reporter work in with Baykeeping priorities, including stormwater/nonpoint source pollution, tracking algal blooms, and using observational data to collaborate with municipalities and other partners to better protect the Bay.

- Increase the use of Water Reporter in Brunswick, Harpswell, and Phippsburg: we currently see fewer posts there. Track this as a metric for a focus of this year.
- Contact the developer of the app and continue to advocate for improvements to make the app easier to use.
- Explore offering text notices for Water Reporters as an alternative or in addition to email.
- Enhance our onboarding/orientation process; this will be an initial focus of our new staffer once they are up-to-speed with Water Reporter.
- We will also utilize these conversations as a way to listen to the concerns of the volunteers, putting our diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice principles into practice. We will ask our volunteers, “What are you concerned about around Casco Bay?”, and use that to influence our Water Reporter work. This allows us to have more diversity in our ideas, and be more inclusive in our thinking about what is impacting Casco Bay. It also makes the program well-rounded citizen science, with ideas flowing in both directions. We will also aim to identify and remove barriers to participation in the program, whether they be technological, logistical, or otherwise.
- We will continue to inquire of our colleagues about any emerging issues they are concerned about and consider encouraging observations for any areas that align with our mission. Continue collaboration with similar Citizen Science projects, including Gulf of Maine Research Institute’s [Coastal Flooding Citizen Science project](#), and Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative through their [Climate Change Observatory Network](#). As we learn of other groups around the Bay collecting observational data we will maintain an awareness of their work and progress, likely through occasional meetings. This allows for collaboration.
- Create at least one, focused, Water Reporter training videos.
- As we continue to work with river groups, begin expanding our network further into the watershed.
- We realized the need to better publicize ways Water Reporters are making a difference. We will focus at least 6 email/newsletter stories with this focus. We will celebrate and acknowledge the work of our Water Reporters. We will create opportunities for photographers to profile our Water Reporters in the field to help us celebrate and promote them as volunteers.
- We will continue to use the Water Reporter mapping functions to display our Seasonal Water Quality Data, Water Reporter posts, and any additional information we identify.

b. Advocacy Actions

There are times we need to mobilize community members to act on behalf of Casco Bay.

Our advocacy alert emails encourage folks to advocate for good legislation and against bad laws that affect Casco Bay. Each action taken by our folks is considered a volunteer action and is tracked in our database.

In FY24, we will:

- Work to send more action alerts than in past years as a way to get members’ voices heard on issues that affect the health of our waters.
- Advocacy action topics may include offshore wind, nitrogen criteria, and priorities that come out of the legislative season.
- Our Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator will work with program staff to do special outreach to populations that may be helpful on specific topics and those who may be most affected. This work will be planned issue by issue.
- For more information, see the Baykeeping and Communications sections of the plan.

c. Special Community Engagement Focus: Freeport and Brunswick

In FY23, due to the intrepid reporting of volunteers and partners in the Brunswick region of the Bay, we discovered that Maquoit Bay and Middle Bays were experiencing extremely high temperatures and algal blooms. Clam mortality events were reported there. Town officials in Brunswick are considering launching a water quality monitoring effort in the region. They are also considering local ordinances to reduce stormwater and nitrogen pollution. In FY24, staff, including our Staff Scientist, Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator, and Casco Baykeeper, will work with town officials as they explore options. We may end up working with the town to:

- Organize a Nitrogen Nab in that region (note: Maquoit borders Freeport as well as Brunswick)
- Provide consulting on a water quality monitoring effort
- Mobilize Water Reporters in support of this work
- Engage our members to advocate for stormwater protections and better ordinances in Brunswick.

d. Educational events to engage the community

In FY20, we launched *Casco Bay Matters* events as signature presentations to educate community members about topics vital to the health of the Bay and mobilize attendees to act. We host periodic presentations and panel discussions on issues of current concern. Casco Bay Matters events are free and open to the public. These events provide opportunities for concerned citizens and local decision-makers to learn about and discuss issues affecting the health of our coastal waters, as we share our data, showcase our advocacy work, and prepare the community to engage and take advocacy actions. In 2021, we started featuring guests from partner organizations to strengthen our events. This has been well received, enhanced our work, and strengthened our partnerships. Last year, we used the 50th-anniversary of the Clean Water Act as a lens to view our work.

In FY24 we will:

- Hold at least three educational online events and explore moving back to an in-person option for them.*
- Rebrand our Casco Bay Matters Events: We started these events in 2019. In 2020, George Floyd was murdered and the Black Lives Matter movement took off (it was founded in 2013). Today, to some of our members, “Casco Bay Matters” sounds like it is appropriating “Black Lives Matter.” Staff consistently get questions from members about this issue, with our members worried, concerned, or angry that we are trying to steal Black Lives Matter’s messaging and branding, or worse, that we think that Casco Bay is more important than Black lives. Because we support Black Lives Matter, because of public confusion, and because the Casco Bay Matters branding is distracting both our intentions and the attention of Black Lives Matter, staff are recommending that we change the name.
- In addition to advocacy and science-focused events, we will explore holding events that highlight the quality of life the Bay offers: for example, events focusing on art and the Bay or history and the Bay. This provides partnership opportunities with people and organizations we rarely work with.
- Implement what we have learned from our 2022 members surveys in our engagement work.

e. Events with our community

Friends of Casco Bay is a community-focused environmental organization. In person events are an important tactic for us to build community, meet new and longtime supporters, share important updates, and celebrate our mission. In FY24, we will:

- Organize our Members Annual Meeting at SMCC, which is an accessible location that encourages as many members and supporters to attend as possible (there is plenty of parking, public transportation opportunities, and a view of the Bay) *
- Organize at least one house party as a fundraiser for our work
- Explore meet-up possibilities on the water (such as a kayak event or boater flotilla)
- Organize at least one walking tour, similar to our event with Friends of the Presumpscot last year. *
- Organize our annual film festival in November (see Development section) *
- Explore organizing a set of community events in partnership with Friends of the Presumpscot River*

*Events marked with an asterisk are ones that lend themselves to being more inclusive/community and family-oriented. Staff will work with the Community Engagement Committee and others to brainstorm ways to be more inclusive and reach more diverse audiences and more communities/organizations.

f. Internships and Externships

We add to staff capacity by offering internships and externships. We offer internships to undergraduates and externships to graduate law students. Both provide special opportunities to experience environmental nonprofit work. Students are exposed to a nonprofit working in the larger arena of environmental advocacy, using hands-on science and community engagement. The law student externships provide exposure to a unique blend of legal and regulatory work in an applied setting. We have a strong track record of providing internships that teach students, engage them meaningfully in our work, and help them shape career goals.

In FY24 we will:

- Offer a spring legal internship
- Put our other internship opportunities on hold until our Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator, who oversees internship recruitment, is fully onboarded.
- When we reopen other internship opportunities, we will continue to make our internships more equitable. An important aspect of this is listing our opportunities with schools that have diverse student bodies, especially for our undergraduate opportunities. We will also make a commitment to paid internships so more students could have an opportunity to engage with us, not just those who can afford to do unpaid work.

g. Coastal Cleanups

Litter and marine debris that wind up on the shores of Casco Bay can pollute the water, hurt marine life, and impair the quality of life for those who live, work, and play on Casco Bay. Coastal Cleanups are a great hands-on community service activity. Volunteers record data about the trash they pick up, and those data are submitted to Ocean Conservancy's online database, Clean Swell, to help create awareness and public policy for pollution reduction in marine waters. Due to the wide range of folks interested in reducing trash, the one-off nature of Coastal Cleanups, and these often being corporate community service days, these activities have typically attracted a more diverse audience than we see at our other events.

In **FY24**, we will:

- Host at least two public cleanups, including a Coastweek event in September in the greater Portland area.
- Look for ways to expand the diversity of those participating in cleanups, including redefining “coastal” cleanups; trash along any street or anywhere in the watershed can pose a concern for Casco Bay.
- Create a plan that can be implemented in the event of a significant storm to organize additional cleanups to remove debris.
- Offer cleanups as a community service activity for corporations, from mid-May through mid-September.

h. Storm Drain Stenciling

Storm Drain Stenciling is a hands-on way for volunteers to “take to the streets” and create greater awareness about the need to reduce pollution. We provide stenciling kits and easy-to-use instructions to help groups organize stenciling events. There are a number of benefits from this low-cost, easy-to-manage volunteer recruitment activity: a hands-on activity that helps the health of the Bay, team building, and education. By painting “DO NOT DUMP” messages near storm drains in the neighborhood, people learn about the connection to Casco Bay and become local advocates for reducing stormwater pollution.

In **FY24**, we will

- Encourage and support the borrowing of Storm Drain Stenciling kits by individuals who host stenciling events with family, friends, community groups, or coworkers.
- Offer storm drain stenciling as a community service activity for corporations, from mid-May through mid-September
- As stencils need to be replaced, we will create new, smaller stencils.

i. Other Opportunities and Organizational Needs

We will recruit volunteers to help with our large mailings, such as our Annual Fund and monthly Membership mailings. We will also recruit volunteers to assist with other organizational needs, including fulfilling our day-of-event needs.

j. Community Events Organized by Other Groups

We are in high demand! Other groups ask us to speak about the health of Casco Bay, at gatherings of scientific colleagues, neighborhood groups, municipal boards, and civic organizations. Speaking engagements provide an opportunity for us to bring our data and work to the community in a personal and easily understandable form.

In FY24 we will: Carefully weigh each request we receive. When we accept, we shall do so strategically, weighing other commitments and work. We will explore building capacity in being able to do public presentations by recruiting and training board members or volunteers to be ambassadors for us.

k. BayScaping

Our BayScaping program was created to work with Casco Bay communities, both municipal officials and residents, to keep pesticides and fertilizers from polluting the Bay. We take a holistic view of why lawn care choices matter and why the increase in storm intensity and drought conditions due to climate change make these decisions even more important. Our MS4

stormwater victory gives incentives to towns in the Greater Portland area to develop ordinances to restrict lawn care chemicals.

In FY24, we will:

- Work with the City of South Portland's Sustainability Office and its 100 Resilient Yards project to encourage more sustainable lawn care practices.
- Direct community members looking for answers to lawn care questions to our helpful BayScaping partners, primarily [Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District's Yardscaping Programs](#), and to [South Portland's Grow Healthy South Portland website](#).
- Steer any municipality considering a fertilizer or pesticide ordinance to South Portland's and Portland's Land Care Ordinances as examples.

I. Casco Bay Curriculum

Casco Bay: A Changing Estuary contains classroom activities centering on Casco Bay and the changes it is undergoing. In recent years, we have deprioritized considering how to best disseminate these curriculum activities.

In FY24, we will:

- Repurposing the activities for use in our future kids' gift membership program. This has been in our plan for two years, but due to leadership transitions and staff capacity has fallen off our plates. With full staffing, we plan on launching this.
- Remain open to distributing curriculum activities if key volunteers or community partners become available to work on this with us.



Communications and Development

Communication is paramount for advocating for policies and changes needed to improve and protect the environmental health of Casco Bay. It is crucial to tell stories that resonate with those who live, work, and play on the Bay in order to galvanize support for our mission, to show the value of our work, to inspire giving, and to engage community members in our efforts. Both our fundraising and outreach efforts can be described as building relationships through storytelling. Through cultivating and maintaining relationships with individual supporters and with individual members of the media, we are building a stronger, more visible, and more sustainable organization.

Our communications and development team shares story ideas, timelines, and language for outreach materials and proposals, with each other and with program staff. We work closely with program staff to ensure our stories are accurate and up-to-date. We process many of our ideas with the Board's Community Engagement Committee, which meets monthly, year-round.

1. Communications

a. Telling, Showing, Sharing, and Promoting our Stories

Stories are the most effective communications tool. The communications and development team meets weekly to brainstorm and identify stories we want to tell.

In addition to stories, the team drafts event invitations, action alerts, social media posts, and other communications that use engaging language and images to “hook” a reader in the same way that a good story would. These communications almost always include links to our stories for additional context.

The communications and development team is ever-aware of development deadlines (such as foundation proposal due dates and annual fund mailings) and programmatic efforts (such as volunteer training events or legislative hearings). We work to adapt the stories for use in our grant proposals—and vice versa. We continue to use a “digital first” strategy, sharing written content and videos on our website, via email, and social media. Our goal is to produce a weekly email that shares an engaging story, event invitation, action alert, or other communication with an eye-catching photo and a great subject line.

We track the metrics of the communications we share online, via email, our website, and social media. We use these data to consider the most effective communications for our printed materials. Building upon our diversity, equity, and inclusion work, we will be mindful of how we use words as we seek to connect with all communities that live, work, and play by Casco Bay.

Acknowledging that our strategic plan is still being drafted. We continue to analyze the data from our membership survey. Communications staff anticipates the need to be flexible with respect to altering or adding to the work described in this operating plan.

b. Audiences

An important question for all our communications is, “who is our audience?” Generally, our priority audience is our existing donor base (2,045 households that have supported our work over the past two-year period) and current volunteers (730 who volunteered in the past 2 years). We also want to connect with the broader public to encourage more involvement with our work. We have nearly 40,000 constituents in our database. Of these, most have never donated or volunteered with us, while some are lapsed donors. For some people we have only email

addresses, and for others we have only mailing addresses. For some communications, we customize our message for a specific audience, which may include lapsed supporters, volunteers, boaters, residents in specific communities, etc.

A key intent of our communications is to help recruit the support of the Not-Yet Donors and Not-Yet Volunteered, and Lapsed Donors and Past Volunteers, moving them up into the Recent Donors/Members and Volunteers Category. Social media and traditional media stories support our communications to all these audiences.

	Just Mail	Mail and Email	Just Email	subtotals
Recent Donors/Members and Volunteers*	610	1971	194	2,775
Lapsed Donors and Past Volunteers	1550	2654	246	4,450
Not-Yet Donors and Not-Yet Volunteered	20,717	10,344	1,641	32,702

* *Households/foundations/businesses that donated in FY22 or FY23, or individuals who volunteered in FY22, and FY23.*

** *Our database houses more than 39,725 constituents. Each year, in our development efforts, we try to focus on specific regions or populations, to recruit new members/donors. This also allows us to do recruitment in manageable, affordable chunks.*

c. Priority Stories for FY24

Our work at Friends of Casco Bay often presents us with timely stories that cannot be foreseen, what a media outlet would call “breaking-news.” For example, one of our most memorable stories from FY23 was about an algal bloom in eastern Casco Bay and associated clam mortalities. Aside from continuing to cover breaking-news stories like this, the following list includes stories we already know we want to tell in FY24:

- Maine Ocean Climate Collaborative: This collaborative effort to monitor ocean acidification along the coast has been led by Friends of Casco Bay. We want to tell stories about this work that celebrate our leadership and the collaborative as a whole.
- Continuous Monitoring Stations and Seasonal Sampling: we will continue to use our data to tell stories about the health of the Bay, educate our audience about the various parameters and environmental phenomena we track, and reinforce the importance of our data collection programs with a particular emphasis on our Continuous Monitoring Stations (which set us apart from other environmental and marine nonprofits).
- Stormwater: Stormwater remains a focus of our advocacy at Friends of Casco Bay. In the coming year we will tell stormwater stories about the following stormwater issues, as appropriate:
 - Back Cove stormwater project: The first section of Portland’s Back Cove stormwater storage conduit project may conclude in the fall of 2023. We advocated for the city to pursue projects like this to address stormwater pollution. We want to tell a story that will help build public support for this costly and much

needed infrastructure, knowing that we will continue to advocate for the city to invest in stormwater management.

- MS4 permit, second appeal: We will continue to advocate for a stronger MS4 permit and write stories about this work.
- Chapter 500 stormwater rules: Maine is likely to begin revising its statewide rules that regulate stormwater. When that process begins it will be a new focus of our communications about stormwater.
- Nitrogen Nab data analysis and Nitrogen Criteria: Nabbing Nitrogen was a major community science event in FY23. Once we have the data from that event, we want to share our analysis with the public. We will also use this data and other Friends of Casco Bay data to supplement stories about our science and advocacy work to set regulatory limits on nitrogen pollution in Maine.
- Legislative priorities: There are a handful of bills that affect Casco Bay that we will focus on advocating for in the 2023 legislative session. For example, two of these bills address aspects of Offshore Wind policy in Maine and the environmental permitting authority of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection.
- Presumpscot River work: our efforts to advocate for the health of the largest river that flows into Casco Bay will continue to evolve in FY24. We will communicate our analysis of the river data we collected in FY23 and how it is informing our advocacy moving forward.

d. Website

In the internet age, a strong website is crucial to the operations and reputation of any public facing organization. In addition to supporting our work overall, the Friends of Casco Bay website is foundational to our communications and development work. Every communication we create – stories, videos, event invitations and descriptions, action alerts, etc. – are all grounded on our website. Staff, board members, volunteers, donors, and the general public can head to our website to learn about issues we work on and support us with a click of the “donate” button. We constantly reference our website in our communications, press releases, membership mailings, and grant applications. It is even printed on the buttons that we hand out at our film festival.

Our website works sufficiently well to meet all of these needs. However, it could work exceptionally well with some improvements. Looking forward, there are two website issues we must address:

- WordPress, the platform that our website is built on, has changed its programming. Sometime in near future parts of our website will stop functioning properly unless we do some substantial work to update it.
- The most used parts of our website (like our homepage) are in good condition. However, our website holds a lot of content and information, some of which is out of date or hard to find. We want to update these parts of our website with improved language, navigation, and images.

To address these issues, we want to resolve the underlying software challenges by redesigning some of the website, and then update content as necessary. Taking on these issues in the opposite order would create more work, as any content updates would have to be translated to the new design. Ideally, we will collaborate with a website designer on the first step. In the past, our staff has designed our website. This work requires substantial time that pulls staff away from their core responsibilities. Website design, as opposed to routine maintenance, also benefits from expertise our staff lack. Working with a website designer would help us to efficiently build the most effective website structure for our organization. Our communications and development

staff would then be responsible for updating content and regular website maintenance, as they do now.

We would also like to add a layer of security to our website by adding monitoring to our website hosting service. This service would address suspicious activity on our website and prevent unauthorized logins.

e. Building Relationships with News Media

As of mid-February FY23, our work was cited 50 times in media stories, up from 36 stories in FY22. Media coverage in FY23 included articles about our advocacy efforts (like the MS4 permit), our pumpout program, Nabbing Nitrogen and Water Reporters, and more [See Appendix D for a complete list]. We will continue to build relationships with news outlets, journalists, and reporters in order to tell our stories to the general public.

In addition, we will assess opportunities to improve the overall narrative about our work in the media. The media industry has changed dramatically over the lifetime of our organization and our media outreach strategy has not kept pace. Ten years ago, local media would ask us to comment on most any issue related to the Bay. Today it is the other way around, where we are often the ones promoting stories. This may be due to the overall decline in the number of reporters and producers working on local beats, in addition to other factors. In FY24, communications staff will reassess our media outreach strategies (for example, how we pitch stories to media outlets) with the goal of improving our visibility in the public sphere.

f. Drone

In FY23, Staff Writer Robby Lewis-Nash was trained and licensed to commercially operate a drone. There are many capabilities and applications for the drone. With respect to communications, we have captured photos and videos of Casco Bay and other expansive natural features that previously would have required working with an airplane pilot and photographer. With further training, the drone can be used in our programmatic work for assessments, investigations, and mapping. For example, the drone could be used in tandem with mapping software to assess the extent of an algal bloom. In FY24, Robby will continue to develop his photography and videography skills with the drone. Working with our science and advocacy staff, we will explore additional applications for use of the drone outside of communications.

g. Improving our photo library

Photos are crucial to any good story. Media professionals know that a good headline on its own will not attract most modern readers—you must have a compelling photo. Friends of Casco Bay has thousands of photos that span more than 30 years of improving and protecting the health of the Bay. However, only a small portion of these photos are consistently used in our communications. These frequently used photos are ones that best visualize the three general stories tell most often:

- The Casco Baykeeper advocating for the Bay.
- Science staff collecting data, or generally “doing science.”
- Volunteers and community members being engaged.

Many of these photos are staged and they are almost always taken by a professional photographer. For example, a good science photo not only shows Mike holding a data sonde, it also has great lighting and a compelling composition. In FY24 we will prioritize scheduling professional photo shoots with our staff and bringing photographers to events to capture high-quality images. Robby will also use our drone to capture photos of the Bay and other expansive

natural features that frequently arise in our storytelling. Creating a larger library of photos that dynamically visualize the stories we tell the most will prove an invaluable communications and development asset.

h. Social Media

The social media landscape has shifted significantly in recent years. Platforms have changed their algorithms in ways that broadly lower the visibility of posts and content from non-profits, unless those organizations pay to “boost” their posts. In FY24, communications staff will reassess our social media strategy with respect to these changes, aiming to strengthen our visibility online and maintain connections with our membership.

i. Overview of Communications work in FY24

In FY24, communications staff will:

- Meet weekly to evaluate story ideas that may resonate with our audiences, identify priority stories for production, and assess progress on stories in development. We will collaborate with program staff to ensure accuracy and credibility.
- Meet every other month with science staff to discuss program developments and identify substantial science stories.
- Tell stories about our Baykeeping and advocacy efforts — especially when we need to galvanize public support for an issue.
- Highlight the efforts of Water Reporters, volunteers, and our members in our stories.
- Continue to tell our stories through video when appropriate. We will also pursue professional development and training opportunities to improve our video storytelling.
- Continue to build Robby’s experience as a drone operator.
- Work to segment our email and mailing lists based on specific audiences (e.g. donors, boaters, volunteers, residents of a specific town, inland and coastal communities, etc.).
- Analyze the data from our membership survey. Use what we find to improve our communications. Consider sending an additional membership survey.
- Track the readability score of half our communications and review the data quarterly, aiming for an 8th-10th grade reading level to improve accessibility. We will also research methods to make our communications more accessible to readers for whom English is a second language.
- Explore new ways to visualize our data through charts and infographics with the goal of better conveying our scientific analysis and the value of our data collection programs.
- Publicize and tell stories about our events, including sharing recordings of educational events when applicable.
- Continue to improve the event skills of our staff by scheduling tech run-through rehearsals (and any additional invited panelists/presenters) internally prior to public events and other training as appropriate.
- Plan holiday/themed-day communications and events as appropriate (for example, Earth Day, Boater Week, etc.).
- Advance our visibility through cohesive visual branding in our documents, publications, buttons, website, emails, social media, presentation materials, displays, signage, and other materials. Our materials — printed, electronic, and otherwise — will reflect our organizational values.
- Develop two printed newsletters (sent in May and October) and a printed annual report (sent in early November), in coordination and support of our Annual Fund.

- Continue to update our branding document, to help staff and others understand and highlight the characteristics and values that make Friends of Casco Bay distinct from other organizations and vital to our community.
- Use our initiatives to garner stories and/or op-eds in media outlets and personalize our media outreach. We will tailor specific story ideas to pitch to targeted news media outlets or to individual reporters/producers. We will consider inviting individual reporters (especially TV) to accompany us on our boat or any time we have a highly visual activity. We will generate media alerts and send invitations to individual reporters for events we host.
- Work with South Portland to promote the city's 100 Resilient Yards project, an educational initiative about sustainable lawn care.
- Adjust our communications as necessary to support organizational and programmatic EJDEI goals that arise from our board and staff's committees.
- Incorporate the analysis and findings of our FY23 member survey into our communications strategies and explore an FY24 survey.
- Include the relevant work of partner organizations and adjacent projects in our stories to show our dynamic and collaborative approach to science, advocacy, and community engagement.

2. Development

The mission of the Development team is to ensure Friends of Casco Bay's long-term success through developing and sustaining diverse funding sources. Relationship building is crucial to our work. Key to this effort is being able to tell stories that highlight our effectiveness and that resonate with a donor's values and view of the world. We work to integrate our stories into our development work and our development work into our communications efforts.

We are operating in a challenging economic environment. The community feels the economic uncertainty of inflation, high energy prices, and concern about a recession. The gap in income inequality among individuals in our community and across the country continues to widen. Maine is the oldest state in the nation, making our donor base older and their funds at risk. Recent changes to tax law discourages donations by those using the standard deduction, often lower income Americans. Yet, as interactions with our donors and our successful FY23 fundraising efforts show, our community values our work, and there is capacity among individual donors, foundations, local businesses, and government agencies to support it.

We have detailed plans to continue to grow our individual income — and to buttress our foundation, government and corporate line items. The plans are donor-centered and focused on building long-term relationships, keeping in close contact with our supporters, and deepening their commitment to our work.

a. Individual Giving

Individual giving is essential to our long-term success. It has the highest potential for growth while simultaneously building organizational strength in the community. During times of economic uncertainty, we prioritize individual donor relations and fundraising, the source where more effort can directly result in more donations. We will reach our membership and individual giving goal through our renewal mailings, prospect lists, events, our Annual Fund, and through special appeals for specific programs and projects. We will continue to personalize our requests for support. Our Annual Fund mailings will be sent in late May and late October. We will

expand our membership through utilizing our database to identify relationships we can strengthen. New members will continue to be an important part of our base building.

In **FY24**, we plan to:

- Continue to look to the Board to help our efforts through signing renewal letters, penning notes on Annual Fund and special appeal letters, inviting friends, family, and colleagues to our events, and offering gift memberships.
- Maintain and strengthen our connections with donors through individual donor meetings, and continue to introduce Will Everitt as Executive Director as we do. We will learn from each meeting and adapt the strategy.
- As appropriate, donor meetings will include an ask to connect us with additional potential donors, including the next generation in the family. This will grow our base, diversifying our individual donor support and reaching a younger demographic.
- Use our membership cycle to renew existing members, re-recruit lapsed members, and encourage increased gifts.
- Create a mailing to invite lower-level donors (~\$55/year or less) to become Calendar Islands Circle (monthly) donors, inviting them to give \$5 or more a month.
- Encourage additional gifts through Annual Fund mailings and through Special Appeals which support specific programmatic efforts.
- Gain new members through events and through a series of mailings including an ask letter targeted acquisition mailings. The new potential members will primarily come through two paths: (1) being introduced to us through our current relationships and (2) purchasing lists (ex. boaters, people who live in certain geographic areas). We will explore house party style *friend*-raising events, encouraging guests to bring their family members to introduce the next generation of donors. As the geographic coverage of our work grows, we will focus on expanding our donor support in the same areas.
- Create a more focused plan to recruit for our Anchor Society, our planned giving circle. We will highlight the Society via our events and distribute Anchor pins to current members of the society. We will invite current Anchor Society participants to share their stories and encourage others to join them, in part through a video.
- Develop a kids' membership package, aimed to connect with the youngest supporters of our work.
- We will explore new ways to invite donors to experience our data collection, while ensuring the efficiency of our science work. This could include board members with boats providing an opportunity for donors and other partners to visit the Baykeeper boat as we conduct our monitoring work.
- Use a combination of online, in person, and hybrid events. Hybrid events are held with an aim to be inclusive, regardless of where participants live, their ability to attend events or pre-existing conditions, or other factors. We want everyone to be welcome at our events.
- Reboot our gift membership program with two goals: 1.) ensure all community members can take part in our work by offering free memberships to anyone who requests to be on our membership list and anyone in the community we identify as being a *Friend* of the Bay, but is unable to make a financial contribution. 2.) grow our supporter base through offering one year gifts of membership to those recommended by Board and Staff, with the intention of inviting them to join the following year.
- Consider new ways to employ online giving as a fundraising tool, learning from trial efforts completed in FY23. This includes mini campaigns to support specific programs, and end of the calendar year messages to those who have not given. We may also explore text based giving.

- Keep our donors informed of the impact of their gifts. Demonstrate the results and changes we achieve in the community through emails, events, phone calls, and individual meetings. New donors, Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund donors, and donors who give \$100 or more or who are Calendar Islands Circle Donors will receive a special update about our work.
- Continue to ensure that all gifts *no matter their size* are acknowledged in a personal way, with a hand-signed letter and note.
- Continue to encourage donors to support any (and all!) of our 4 restricted Funds: the Climate Change Fund, the Baykeeping Fund, the Emeritus Fund for Advocacy, and the Boats Fund.
- Encourage individual giving through the Boat Donation Program, which exists in partnership with Maine Maritime Funding Association. Maine Maritime Funding Association is planning to change their outreach to increase donations of higher value boats that could result in support for our work. We will send at least one email to boat owners/pumpout customers about our boat donation program, and may do a mailing to boat owners and marinas about the boat donation program.
- Continue to engage volunteers to help us with fundraising mailings and events, while using those opportunities to build relations with them.
- Incorporate the analysis and findings of our FY23 member survey into our development strategies.
- Explore starting a Alumni Giving Circle as we now have many past employees and interns who have worked with us over the past 34 years.
- Improve and increase the efficiency of the systems that support this work.
- Keep a close eye on the effectiveness of our efforts and pivot as needed.

b. Foundation Giving

We will develop proposals for:

- General Operating Support (unrestricted)
- Climate Change and Ocean Acidification work: addressing the consequences of climate change to our watershed and our increasing emphasis on reducing the causes of climate change, including our work through the Maine Ocean Climate Collaborative
- Baykeeping: Climate change, Water Quality, Stormwater, and Offshore Wind Advocacy, Casco Bay Rivers Network
- Water Quality Monitoring: Continuous Monitoring Stations and Seasonal Sampling
- Water Reporter
- Capital support (e.g. new office/move, including lab buildout; equipment)
- Other endeavors as appropriate (Nitrogen, PFAS, Stormwater, Educational and Community Engaging Events,).

We will meet all applicable deadlines, including reporting requirements. When we meet deadlines, including the “long shots,” we can garner some unexpected grants. We will send out more than 100 foundation proposals. We will attempt to build relationships with trustees of foundations when possible and appropriate. We will use photos in our proposals to make them more dynamic and to better tell our stories, when possible and appropriate. The nature of foundation fundraising is fickle. Very few foundations fund the same organizations with any regularity. Others will not consider proposals from an organization they have funded in the past year. We may review Maine Philanthropy Center’s updated Foundation Directory and add new potential funders to our plans.

c. Corporate Donations

We have a corporate ask schedule much like our foundation plan and we plan to put renewed effort into our outreach to corporations. Our prospect list will include companies mined from our database, Board connections, other nonprofits' annual reports, MaineBiz lists, and companies that use "Casco Bay" in their names. We will work to connect the health of the Bay with business interests in our region. Sponsorship of specific events, including the Film Fest can be an important strategy for garnering support from some businesses. Increasingly, corporate support is tied to quid pro quo agreements that Friends of Casco Bay has historically rejected. We may need to reconsider these opportunities to grow corporate support.

d. Government Grants and Contracts

The Casco Bay Estuary Partnership (CBEP), supported by EPA funding, is at the heart of our government support. While CBEP support is not at its historically high levels, we have seen a recent increase as the partnership will help support the maintenance of three Continuous Monitoring Stations and due to a renewed focus on our relationship and collaboration with the Partnership. Another key government source is the funding of our Pumpout Program by Maine DEP via US Fish and Wildlife Service funds. Our pumpout program receives 90% of its support from this source. We will also try to raise government funds through Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund grant proposals, South Portland Water Resource Protection, Portland Water District, EPA proposals, NOAA proposals, and other government opportunities. Our work with the Maine Ocean Climate Collaborative or future plastics work may provide new opportunities for government support.

e. Organizational Memory

In addition to the fundraising work, our development staff and database are integral to the effectiveness of all events, email signups and communications, volunteer information and time tracking, and the pumpout program.

Our constituent database (sometimes referred to as our fundraising database) acts as our organizational memory, containing detailed donor histories, all of our volunteer information, and pumpout customer information. It also houses our online donation, event registration, and email platform. This results in efficiency and a full picture of our supporters in one place, which we use to deepen relationships.

Our current database, Blackbaud's RE NXT no longer works seamlessly with Microsoft products. Processes that used to be heavily automated, our daily thank you letter merges, our monthly renewal process, and our twice yearly annual fund mailings, are more challenging. In FY24, we will assess our database needs and, if appropriate, shift to a new database vendor in early 2024 before our current contract ends. This will be a heavily vetted process as we consider all of our database uses and prioritize the needed efficiency of each.

We will work with staff to ensure all of our key partners are in the database. We will continue to make our contact records complete and accurate. We will track our contacts with donors and create accurate solicitation and results reports.

f. Capital Campaigns and Other Fundraising Efforts

Supporting our move: Should we find that we have the opportunity to move into new office space during this fiscal year, we will craft a fundraising strategy to help offset costs, identify in-kind opportunities for donors, and leverage the move as a great visibility opportunity for the

organization. Our move will also require detailed attention to updating materials, and we will take the opportunity to refresh them for example, adding a QR code to Membership envelopes.

Supporting our new vehicle: We will also make plans for a “mini” capital campaign to support buying a new vehicle (see capital assets below).

Upcoming Capital Campaign: Once the Strategic Plan is complete, we will work with the Board to identify the next capital campaign and timeline for roll out in this five year period. We need a long runway for these efforts to build in time for planning and proper coordination with our other efforts. Planning will include time for a major donor quiet fundraising component where we will aim to raise 80% of funds before launching a public effort to complete the campaign.

Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund for Technology, Monitoring, and Community

Engagement: We will continue to celebrate and report the outcomes made possible by our \$1.5 million Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund. The Fund is being used to understand how Casco Bay is being affected by climate change. More than 660 community members have supported the Fund, including more than 100 new donors. We will continue to cultivate the first-time donors who came aboard via the Fund into becoming “regular” supporters of our work.

g. Remaining Nimble

We will remain nimble across our fundraising work and leave room for incorporating ideas for the current strategic planning process. We will take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves. We will remain open to imaginative ideas, learn from mistakes, and build upon successes. We will revisit and evaluate this plan monthly. We will revise our development strategy and tactics as needed, including adjusting our fundraising as necessary to support organizational and programmatic EJDEI goals that arise from our board and staff’s committee work on these issues.



Management and Administration

1. Current Staff

Here is the composition of the Staff at the beginning of FY23, showing the year each person came aboard:

Mike Doan, Staff Scientist and Boat Captain	1997
Will Everitt, Executive Director	2006
Jeff Fetterer, Office Manager	2007
Sarah Lyman, Development Director	2011
Ivy Frignoca, Casco Baykeeper	2016
Robby Lewis-Nash, Staff Writer	2021
Susan Bosco, Development Assistant	2022
Chris Gilday, Pumpout Coordinator	2022
Heather Kenyon, Science and Advocacy Associate	2022
Sara Freshley, Community Organizer and Volunteer Coordinator	2023

FY24 will mark our highest level of staffing in our history. We have hired a strong staff. Staff have expertise in their respective fields. Of note, we have expertise in: marine biology and water quality monitoring; the Clean Water Act and regulatory protections; writing for general audiences; environmental advocacy; community organizing; fundraising; and event organizing. We are developing more expertise in film and video production and website design.

Turnover is low and of the last five people have left staff, three left due to retirement, one moved out of country, and one started a new business based on skills earned at Friends of Casco Bay.

While we have a hierarchical structure, with Executive Director having final authority on budgets, organizational development, staffing structure, and program work, our operating plans are developed as a team. We depend on the expertise of staff in their realms to inform and deepen the work.

Will will work with staff to develop internal leadership, identifying personal goals for each staff and working with them on plans to reach them.

We update our emergency succession plans annually, for use in the (we hope unlikely) event of an unplanned temporary absence of staff. These plans identify the key roles and responsibilities of each staff person, which staff members would fulfill certain responsibilities in one's absence, and identify the activities so unique to that individual that the activity simply might not be attended to until their return.

Looking ahead

We have assembled and retained our staff by maintaining a good benefits package and by running a fair and flexible workplace. In return, we expect high quality engagement, exchange, and discourse, along with collaboration, appreciation of the big picture, and attention to detail. We provide professional development opportunities, such as attending classes, workshops, trainings, seminars, and conferences. Staff members also provide teaching content on various subjects in a wide variety of contexts, from classes at UMaine Law and other colleges/universities, to the Maine Association of Nonprofits.

Compensation was frozen in the FY09 / FY10 / FY11 budgets, and when revenue goals were met, an accrued bonus that had been included in the budget was released and in two cases supplemented with additional funds. The FY12 budget contained a 3% increase in compensation integrated into the numbers, not accrued, and this was greatly appreciated by Staff. The FY13, FY14, and FY15 budgets each contained a 2% increase; in addition, a couple of modest adjustments were made during FY13 and FY15, for merit and for partial compensation in lieu of health insurance for those leaving the plan to join spousal coverage. The FY16 budget included a 3% increase. The FY17 and FY18 budgets contained a 2% increase, with a couple of modest base adjustments. The FY19 budget contained a 3% increase, with some small adjustments to base pay. The FY20 and FY21 budgets each contained a 4% increase and FY22 saw a 3% increase. With world-wide logistical issues and a war in Ukraine, world-wide inflation in FY23 spurred us to a 6% COLA increase. As cost of living increases due to the ongoing pandemic, the global political situation, continued world-wide logistical challenges, and continued war in Ukraine, the FY23 budget proposes a 8% cost of living increase. We recognize this is significant. The cost of living increase is an important investment in our intellectual capital, given the continued performance of the Staff and by extension, the organization. This is also an important equity issue, ensuring that staff are not losing economic ground while serving our organization.

As of FY24, our staff members collectively have 88 years of service to the health of Casco Bay. We are integrating our work more effectively than ever. In addition, the engagement with our Board in guiding our work and with our Volunteers in assisting with the work are central and unifying dynamics to our culture and our success.

Human Resources policies

Some of our current human resources policies are not equitable. For example, we have no official family leave policy. We offer zero support to staff who wish/need to put family members on our health plan. We will be looking at these issues and revising our family leave policy this year.

Staff are being encouraged to take accrued vacation time off, especially if they are overdue for a break. Vacation time is a critical element of mental and professional health. Using vacation time also benefits the organization by returning re-energized staff people to us and by reducing our liabilities (vacation time owed to staff is a liability on our balance sheet). This year we begin implementing a phased-in (over a two year period) vacation policy that will encourage staff to only carry two-weeks of vacation time into the next FY, beginning at the end of FY25.

2. Technology and Capital Assets

In FY23, we:

- Continued to upgrade computers and printers, as we have, on a revolving basis.
- Continued to upgrade office and home workstations
- Bought a drone

In FY24 we will

- Continue to keep our Baykeeper and pumpout boats well-maintained
- Explore what options are best to replace our aging truck, perhaps with an electric vehicle
- Continue to upgrade computers and printers
- Continue looking for suitable office space
- Identify and acquire a new phone system in conjunction with our move.
- Be prepared to upgrade our photocopier if the need arises.

- Continue to deepen and improve the ways we use Google Workspace for working on shared documents and the like, which has proven especially useful in doing remote work collaboratively.
- Continue to work with PGM (Peter Montano’s company) as our Controller to help oversee our financial reporting and bookkeeping.

We have learned that certain donors respond very favorably to making contributions for specific “hard assets,” and to that end, we will engage in specific campaigns designed to support our ongoing capital needs.

3. Board

Friends of Casco Bay's Board of Directors meets monthly on the third Tuesday, from September through June except for December from 5:30-7:30. The Board’s Community Engagement Committee meets on the first Monday of the month from 5:30- 6:30 p.m. The newly-formed EJDEI Committee meets the second Monday of the month, 3:00-4:30 p.m. The Executive Committee meets as needed. Committee chairs and the President remain mindful and creative in crafting agendas that we hope engage people as much as possible as we move our mission forward.

The Executive Director works with the Board President, and when appropriate, the Executive Committee, to develop agendas for these meetings, and the Communications Staff works with the E.D., the Board President, and especially the Chair of the Community Engagement Committee to develop that committee’s monthly agenda.

In FY24, staff will assist the Board in the following ways:

- We will continue to work with the Board to find ways to safely meet up in person and offering online options as we are able. GMRI’s board room has been an inexpensive option for us to do both.
- We will support the Board as it continues to develop and implement the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan.
- Staff provide logistical support for Board meetings, including scheduling Zoom meetings and taking minutes. Staff schedule space to meet, provide snacks, and arrange audio visual capacity.
- Staff will work with the board to implement our fundraising plans. Board members are invaluable in our fundraising efforts, with many Board members adding notes to our outgoing monthly membership renewal letters, and with all Board members adding notes to our Annual Fund and Special Appeal letters, twice a year. Some have also taken on assisting us with thanking donors and volunteers, sending hand written notes.
- Staff will continue to engage Board members in building and maintaining community relationships, policy issues, program efforts and accomplishments, governance, events, and connections to resources – financial and otherwise. We look forward to discussing ways the board can help expand our reach with diversity in mind.
- With an inclusion lens, Staff continue to encourage the Board to engage in discussions and planning about Board recruitment and Board leadership succession. We will continue to meet with new friends of the organization and explore nominations and the nominating process to improve board recruitment practices.

4. Financial Considerations

Financial Stability

Friends of Casco Bay has a strong balance sheet, with plenty of working capital, and only one item of debt of any significance: Accrued Vacation Liability. We have four dedicated funds used to support operations: the Baykeeping Fund, the Emeritus Fund for Advocacy, and the Boats Fund, Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund, all housed at the Maine Community Foundation.

Monthly interim financial reports will continue to be prepared, emphasizing year-to-date budget versus actual performance, along with balance sheets and periodic invested funds updates.

FY23 Surplus and use

We are projecting a large surplus for FY23 because: (1) Our expenses were under budget because we did not move and because we did not hire all of our staff on day one of our FY and (2) we had an exceptional fundraising year thanks to the growth of our donor base and due to fundraising partnerships (\$200,000 grant as part of MOCC Tech Team). The FY24 budget foresees using a portion of this projected surplus by temporarily restricting and releasing unrestricting net income to help us grow into our budget as we hit full staffing, our new database, our new copier, and an office move.

5. FY24 Budget Highlights

The Operating Plan for FY24 describes our plan for improving and protecting Casco Bay for the year April 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024. A budget is the identification of the resources we believe it will take to accomplish the elements laid out in Operating Plan. The budget represents a best guess at a point in time based on reasonable assumptions. Reality will prove to be different. We budget as conservatively as we can and hope to underestimate revenue and overestimate expenses, as realistically as possible. We strive to break even in operations, before depreciation, a noncash expense; this is an essential signal to funders that we live within our means.

The Budget is presented in a simplified version and in detail as a five-page document attached to this plan. This document is formed from other in-depth financial information, including a compensation and benefits budget, estimated funds release calculations, and a monitoring budget.

To meet the goals of the FY24 Operating Plan, expenses are budgeted at \$1,374,745. This is compared to our FY23 budget of \$1,226,165 and our FY23 (projected) actual expense of \$1,100,000.

The FY24 Budget identifies: \$795,000 in operating revenue from a wide variety of sources. We are going into this fiscal year with \$194,800 in funds awarded/given in FY23 but for use in FY24. Our invested funds are also providing significant resources: \$163,316 in total.

Finally, the budget proposes that we use \$200,000 of unrestricted surplus funds raised in prior years for strategic use in next year's budget. In FY24 we will:

- Plan for an office move, build out, move contingencies, and an increase in rent and utilities: \$80,000
- Technological investment in new website platform, new computes, copier, and new membership database: \$25,000

- Replacement of our aging truck and catch up on deferred boat maintenance: \$30,000 (assumes downpayment and monthly payments on vehicle this FY. Future costs will be in future budgets).
- Continue to use a Controller: \$14,000
- Replace vital probes and sensors: \$39,000
- Contingency expenses: \$12,000

By releasing \$200,000 for FY24, we plug a budget gap and give us another year to "grow" into the full costs of the new office, while being fully staffed up. We used this budget strategy last fiscal year, but ultimately did not need these releases due to being under budget in expenses, did not need to move our office, and had an extremely successful fundraising year.

6. Notes to Detailed Proposed Budget

The attached detailed proposed budget has a "See Operating Plan for notes" column. Here are those notes.

1. Total Government & Quasi-Governmental: projects \$50,000 from DEP grants toward the pumpout program. Most of the rest is CBEP contracts to support our CMSs and other monitoring efforts.
2. Releases of Unrestricted gifts: \$223,000 includes a \$15,000 grant from Brewer Family Foundation and an \$8,000 grant from L.L.Bean, both received late in FY23 for work we have not done yet, and a release of \$200,000 in unrestricted funds. See Budget Highlights section above.
3. Releases for programs include \$167,000 of the Broad Reach MOCC Tech Team grant and \$4,800 restricted grant from Ferris-Olson Family Foundation for work in FY24.
4. Release for CMS Data is from our Climate Change and Casco Bay Fund. Releases from Baykeeping Fund is an approximation in this draft. It is our intention to release 5% of 12 rolling quarterly averages for this fund. We will finalize this number in the next draft of the budget presented at the March board meeting. Boats Fund and Advocacy Fund releases are \$10,000 as we have historically done.
5. See compensation info above in FY24 Staffing section, included federal 8% COLA calculation.
6. Includes Waterkeeper Alliance regional meeting and hosting MOCC meetings.
7. Trainings includes a planned EJDEI workshop for staff.
8. Bulking up volunteer expenses in anticipation of more meet ups and field trips.
9. We need to update our website platform.
10. Increased costs to mailing and production.
11. We are exploring replacing our truck with a hybrid or electric truck. The budget assumes a down payment and monthly payments.

12. Many of our Sonde sensors are expiring. This is normal, but we have increased costs this year because of when we purchased the redundant equipment for the CMSs.
13. This is equipment for the MOCC Tech Team to test as we search for a replacement to our carbon dioxide sensor. We will ultimately own half of the equipment purchased (Wells Reserve owning the other half).
14. The Broad Reach Tech Team grant came to us, but \$44,000 is headed to support UNH and Wells Reserve as they work with us on this collaborative effort.
15. Our new rent will be considerably more expensive than the \$1,600 a month we pay to SMCC. We will likely have \$5,000/month occupancy costs and increase in utilities (we do not pay electricity or internet to SMCC).
16. We upped the contingency in office relocation because we will likely need to build out a lab space. Additionally, much of our furniture belongs to SMCC. There will be other unknowns with the move.
17. We will continue to use Peter Montano's firm, PGM as our controller and Nicholson, Michaud, and Nadeau as our accounting firm for our 990s and financial statement compiling.
18. We are exploring whether we need to move to a new development database. See Development section above.
19. Net income before depreciation, which is a noncash expense.

Appendix A - FY24 Program Matrix

Program	Science	Community Engagement	Advocacy
Science: Water Quality & other Environmental Monitoring	Continuous Monitoring Stations Seasonal Monitoring Technology update QAPP update Laboratory and boat operations	Water Reporter In person and online presentations about key issues Images, graphs, reports, etc. to the public about our science efforts	Encouraging more monitoring in CWA permits Championing monitoring by DEP/state agencies MOCC and river groups' acidification/climate change monitoring efforts Nitrogen standards
Baykeeping: The eyes, ears, and voice of Casco Bay	Advocacy is informed by sound science Staying on top of Climate Change science Casco Baykeeper helps staff our WQM efforts Tracking algal blooms with the aid of Water Reporters Pumpout Program: metrics keeping sewage out of the Bay	Advocacy is informed by community input Water Reporter In person and online presentations about key issues Public events Media events CBEP management committee Pumpout service ambassadorial work	Addressing threats as they arise Climate Change and Acidification Policy CWA discharge permits CSO remediation Legislation/ ordinance tracking and testimony Other issues: BayScaping ordinances, Marine Debris, Dredge/CAD monitoring, PFAS, Oil Spill Preparedness Watchdogging pumpout stations around the Bay
Community Engagement	Data presentations on website: translating science to the general public Water Reporter observations In person events and field trips with volunteers/supporters	In person and online presentations about key issues, community speaking events, tabling at community events Our special events Media releases Email communications Social Media Newsletter	Action alerts In person and online presentations about key issues Encouraging supporters to get their voices heard on issues affecting the Bay Environmental Justice work

Appendix B – Our Working Relationships

PARTNERSHIPS WE COORDINATE

Maine Ocean Climate Collaborative: Bigelow Labs, Bowdoin College, Casco Bay Estuary Partnership, Downeast Institute, Friends of Casco Bay, Governor’s Office on Policy, Innovation, and the Future (GOPIF), Island Institute, Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries, Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Department of Marine Resources, and Wells Reserve

Rivers group coordination: Friends of the Presumpscot, Presumpscot Regional Land Trust, Royal River Conservation Trust, Maine Rivers, Casco Bay Estuary Partnership

Other Individual relationships by category include:

GOVERNMENTAL and QUASI

GOVERNMENTAL

Maine Climate Council
Coastal and Marine Working Group
(Kathleen Leyden primary contact)
Community Resilience Working
Group (Judy East primary contact)

Casco Bay Estuary Partnership
Management Committee (Curtis
Bohlen)
Nutrient Council, Nutrient Criteria
Committee (Curtis Bohlen)
Monitoring Committee (Curtis
Bohlen, Matt Craig)
NMR, Royal River, Habitat
Restoration: (Matt Craig)
Public Education (Victoria Roundy)
Funding (Marti Blair)

Maine Department of Environmental
Protection
Science and Regulation (Angie
Brewer, Don Witherell)

Data and Continuous Monitoring (Rob
Mohler, Emily Zimmerman)

Pumpout Program (Pam Parker)

Permitting and Regulations (Greg Wood;
Cindy Dionne)

Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund collaboration
(Mark Margoram)

Maine Department of Marine Resources
Maine Coastal Program (Kathleen
Leyden, Teresa Torrent)
Shellfish Health and Algal Outbreaks
(Kohl Konwit, Bryant Lewis)
OA: Jessica Waller and Cheyenne
Adams

Aquaculture: Flora Drury
Sea Level Rise (Gail Bodge)

Maine Department of Agriculture,
Conservation and Forestry
Marshes and Coastal Habitats:
Kristen Puryear

Maine Geological Survey: Pete
Slovinsky

Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund
Maine Conservation Corps
Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve
(Jeremy Miller, Jason Goldstein)

Portland Water District
East End Wastewater Treatment
Facility, Peaks, Cape (Scott Firmin,
Charlene Poulin)
Funding (Carrie Lewis)
Communications (Michele
Clements)

Environmental Protection Agency Need to
update for new administration
Eelgrass: Phil Colarusso
Stormwater: Newton Tedder

Ocean Acidification/Nutrients: Matt
Liebmann

US Coast Guard
Captain of the Port/Sector Commander

Continuous Monitoring Station
establishment logistics (CDR John A
(Andy) Goshorn)

Maine/New Hampshire Area Committee
Environmental Response

US Geological Survey
State Dredge Team

NOAA
Marine Debris (Demi Foxx)

Ocean Acidification: Libby Jewett,
 Beth Turner (NECAN = Northeast
 Coastal Acidification Network)
 Harbor Commissioners (town
 harbor masters, marine resource
 officers, and shellfish managers)
 Shellfish Commissions
 Casco Bay Lines
 City of Portland
 Public Works/Water Resources
 Parks and Rec – Back Cove Yardscaping
 site and sea level rise (Jeff Tarling)
 Water Quality Stakeholder Group
 Ordinances (Troy Moon)
 Back Cove Yardscaping/BayScaping
 One Climate Future (Troy Moon)
 South Portland
 Water Resources Division
 Stormwater management Fred Dillon
 Ordinances (Julie Rosenbach)
 One Climate Future (Julie Rosenbach)
 Pesticide ordinance
 Portland Downtown
 Falmouth
 Brunswick
 Coastal Resources - Dan Devereaux
 Marine Resources Officer/Harbor Master
 Dan Sylvain
 Planning: Jared Woolston
 Harpswell
 Marine Resource Officer/Shellfish: Paul
 Plummer
 City Councilors
 Legislators
 Congressionals

RESEARCH and EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences
 PCO₂ and pH Monitoring (Nicole
 Price, Brittney Honisch)
 Citizen Science (Nick Record)
 Color (Barney Balch)
 Major Donors whom we have in
 common
 Gulf of Maine Research Institute
 Meeting space
 Periodic Program Content Check In and
 Information Sharing (Labaree, David
 Reidmiller, Graham Sherwood)

Volunteer Initiatives (Sarah Kirm)
 Sea Level Rise (Gail Bowness)
 Climate Change (David Reidmiller)
 IT/Facilities vis a vis CMS
 deployment at Coast Guard Dock
 (Tim Reich)
 Darling Marine Center, University of Maine
 Damian Brady, Kathleen Thornton,
 Jessica Liberti. Larry Meyer
 Southern Maine Community College
 Marine Sciences (Brian Tarbox)
 Landlord
 University of Southern Maine
 Media Studies
 Karen Wilson
 University of Maine
 David Townsend
 University of Maine School of Law
 University of New Hampshire (Chris Hunt)
 Bowdoin College
 Bates College
 Colby College
 College of the Atlantic
 St. Joseph's College
 Mark Green
 University of New England (UNE)
 Maine College of Art (MECA)
 Schools - curriculum

OTHER NONPROFITS and COALITIONS

Maine Ocean and Coastal Acidification
 Network
 Maine Sea Grant
 Northeast PSP Group
 Northeast Coastal Acidification Network
 NECAN
 Waterkeeper Alliance
 Waterfront Alliance
 Island Institute
 Conservation Law Foundation (CLF)
 Beyond Pesticides (DC)
 Ocean Conservancy
 Gulf of Maine Marine Educators
 Association (GOMMEA)
 Maine Science Teachers
 Cornerstones of Science
 Surfrider
 Downeast Environmental Institute
 Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

Royal River Conservation Trust and various
 land coalitions
 New Meadows – various coalitions
 Presumpscot River – various groups
 Friends of the Basin
 Quahog Bay Conservancy
 Harpswell Heritage Land Trust
 Manomet
 MaineShare
 Maine Association of Nonprofits
 SkillBuilders (teaching)
 Advocacy Advisory Committee
 Gubernatorial Forum Steering
 Committee
 Environmental Priorities Coalition
 Kennebec Land Trust
 Friends of Fort Gorges (Paul Drinan)
 Friends of the Eastern Prom
 Sail Maine
 Maine Island Trail Association
 Friends of Merrymeeting Bay
 Maine Coast Observing Network
 Friends of Frenchman Bay
 Friends of Penobscot Bay (WKA affiliate)
 Cumberland County Soil and Water
 Conservation District
 Adventure Scientists (Abby Barrows -
 plastics)
 Marine and Environmental Research
 Institute (Susan Shaw)
 South Yuba River Citizens League
 (SYRCL) – Wild & Scenic Film
 Festival
 Green Drinks
 Social Media Breakfast
 Scarborough Land Trust
 Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative
 Maine Conservation Alliance
 Maine Conservation Voters
 Yacht clubs, sailing groups

CORPORATE (clean ups, stenciling,
 sponsorships, science)

Aquaculturists
 Harvesters
 Kayak and Sailing companies
 Port Harbor Marine
 Other marinas and boat yards
 Pumpout facilities
 Boat maintenance
 SeaTow
 TD Bank
 Key Bank
 Idexx
 Yelp!
 Allagash
 Ocean Navigator
 LT's Inc
 Oakhurst
 RBC Wealth Management
 Pumpout Customers

VOLUNTEERS and DONORS

Key Volunteers
 Board
 Cleanups
 Color by Numbers
 Water Reporter
 Stenciling
 Office work
 Photos, Videos
 Events
 Hosts
 Master Gardeners
 Various Foundations, Trusts, Donor Advised
 Funds
 Donors and Members

NEWS MEDIA

Appendix C – Volunteer Metrics

** Our FY23 metrics are initial numbers as of February 25, 2023

Volunteers	FY23**	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
Volunteers	656	363	269	547	236
Total hours volunteered	1536.5	1470	818	2004	1033
Water Reporter Metrics	FY23**	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
<u>Cumulative metrics</u>					
Number of Water Reporters in the Friends of Casco Bay group	435	307	255	205	108
Number of posts in the watershed since launching in July 2018	3,057	2454	1,739	991	367
<u>Year by year metrics</u>					
Number of Water Reporters who posted during the fiscal year	104^	54	57	85	54
Average number of posts per Water Reporter who posted	4.5^	11.5	13.1	7.3	6.8
Number of posts in the watershed	603^	715	748	624	367
Number of posts shared with our group during the fiscal year	487^	620	556	* 586	* 367
% number of posts shared with our group	81%^	87%	74%	* 94%	* 100%
Number of algal blooms noted or tracked this year	TBD	23	22	18	6
*The Commons, creators of the Water Reporter app, manually shared most of the FY19/20 posts with us. Moving forward, only volunteers can share their posts with us. ^ Includes Nabbing Nitrogen					
Coastal Cleanup Metrics	FY23**	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
Number of cleanups	7	3	0	22	8
Number of participants	114	35	0	285	89
Estimated pounds of trash collected	1538	83	0	937	553
Storm Drain Stenciling Metrics	FY23**	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
Number of events	1	8	0	4	3
Number of participants	5	27	0	46	33
Storm drains stenciled	98	185	0	322	277

Appendix D – FY23 Media Report

This media report includes traditional media pieces featuring Friends of Casco Bay’s work, such as newspaper stories and TV segments, and other significant “mentions” of our work made in print, email, etc.

4/19/2022 Maine Won't Wait News and Updates (GOPIF Email); Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) newsletter email includes promotion of local citizen science initiatives to join. Water Reporter is listed among them.

<https://www.maine.gov/climateplan/stories/how-contribute-climate-science-become-citizen-scientist>

5/3/2022 Maine Public; Coalition of New England environmental groups say BOEM should consider environmental impacts before siting/leasing offshore wind projects in federal waters, Ivy is quoted. <https://www.mainepublic.org/environment-and-outdoors/2022-05-03/conservation-groups-call-for-federal-review-of-offshore-wind-impact-on-gulf-of-maine-ecosystems>

5/4/2022 Portland Phoenix; Discussion of the environmental and economic impacts of cruise ships in Portland and Bar Harbor. Ivy quoted in support of the No Discharge Area, and questioning impacts of air pollution. <https://portlandphoenix.me/cruise-control-questions-about-economics-pollution-accompany-ships-returning-to-portland/>

5/23/2022 Times Record; Story about Will being hired as Executive Director, almost a verbatim reprint of our media release. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/05/23/friends-of-casco-bay-hires-new-leader/>

5/23/2022 Munjoy Hill News; Story about Will being hired as Executive Director. <https://munjoyhillnews.net/friends-of-casco-bay-hires-executive-director-workingprogress/>

6/6/2022 Portland Press Herald; Briefs section includes most of the information in our media release about relaunching the pumpout program. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/06/06/briefs-359/>

6/6/2022 News Center Maine; Short segment noting that we are launching our pumpout program with additional text that provides a link to our website.. <https://www.newscentermaine.com/article/news/local/the-week-ahead-june-6-2022-friends-of-casco-bay-habitat-for-humanity-maine-gun-safety-coalition-give-back-program/97-81b46e65-79bd-4e54-98ea-0da323df8d84>

6/6/2022 News Center Maine; Two-minute story about our pumpout program including quotes from Chris and Will. <https://www.newscentermaine.com/article/news/local/sewage-pump-out-program-returns-for-casco-bay-boaters-environment-wastewater-pollution-management/97-e13a1a64-d24d-448d-8bbd-a78ed3b2fc25>

6/15/2022 Portland Phoenix; Reporter Evan Edmonds joined Chris for a morning on the pumpout boat. Main story is about our pumpout program, with a sidebar about Will's new position as Executive Director. <https://portlandphoenix.me/pump-out-service-returns-to-help-boaters-and-the-bay/>

6/17/2022 Penobscot Bay Pilot; Reprint of the #LoveMaineWaters media release announcing the project (a social media project we support with Maine Marine Trades, Maine Island Trail Association, and Maine Coast Fishermen's Association). <https://www.penbaypilot.com/article/nonprofits-associated-maine-waters-collaborate-social-media-campaign/161826>

6/21/2022 Soundings Trade Only; Story announcing #LoveMaineWaters (a social media project we support with Maine Marine Trades, Maine Island Trail Association, and Maine Coast Fishermen's Association). <https://www.tradeonlytoday.com/columns-blogs/maine-mta-launches-lovemainewaters>

6/26/2022 Portland Press Herald; Obituary for Richard Stanley Merrill, suggests donations to Friends of Casco Bay in lieu of flowers. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/06/26/obituaryrichard-stanley-merrill/>

6/29/22 KOB 4; Coverage of the WKA drone training in DC (June 2022). Robby featured in photos and captions (must click through photo reel to see them). <https://www.kob.com/news/business-money/enviros-train-drone-pilots-to-find-and-pursue-pollution/>

6/29/22 The Public's Radio; Coverage of the WKA drone training in DC)... <https://thepublicsradio.org/article/enviros-train-drone-pilots-to-find-and-pursue-pollution>

6/29/22 Herald Chronicle (TN); Coverage of the WKA drone training in DC)... https://www.heraldchronicle.com/news/national/catching-water-polluters-drones/image_101c5574-a204-51fd-8d45-08b2ac9872d6.html

6/30/2022 AP News; Coverage of the WKA drone training in DC)... <https://apnews.com/article/pollution-climate-and-environment-4a695ddd6da392ceb96d53aa8897900b>

7/8/2022 Lakes Region Weekly; Brief profile of Mary Cerullo, highlighting her children's books about ocean creatures. Mentions her work at Friends of Casco Bay. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/07/08/inside-gray-july-8/>

7/6/2022 Portland Press Herald; Article about Maine's revised MS4 stormwater permit and cleaning up pollution. Ivy is the first quote, includes comments from partners: Fred Dillon, Doug Roncarati, and Damon Yakolev. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/07/08/maine-requires-larger-communities-to-step-up-fight-against-stormwater-pollution/>

7/15/2022 Scarborough Leader; Bayscaping webpage cited as a source of information for this article about organic lawncare. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/07/15/summer-tips-for-transitioning-to-organic-lawn-care/>

7/18/2022 Bangor Daily News; Published our media advisory about our Annual Meeting as a public notice. <https://www.bangordailynews.com/event/we-are-water-50th-anniversary-of-the-clean-water-act-celebration-members-annual-meeting/>

7/28/2022 Times Record; Susan Olcott's column discussed the CWA50, in the context of our work to protect Casco Bay and Gary Lawless's poem, For Casco Bay for Us. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/07/28/intertidal-casco-bay-has-benefited-from-clean-water-act/>

10/12/2021 Women Mind the Water; podcast host Pam Ferris-Olsen (and volunteer Water Reporter) interviews Ivy Frignoca about Baykeeping and Water Reporter. <https://womenmindthewater.com/activist-series/activist-series-ivy-frignoca>

8/4/2022 Bangor Daily News; Published our media advisory about Nabbing Nitrogen as a public notice. <https://www.bangordailynews.com/event/nabbing-nitrogen-join-our-clean-water-act-day-of-action/>

8/4/2022 Forecaster; Published our media advisory about Nabbing Nitrogen as a public notice. https://www.pressherald.com/forecaster/forecaster-calendar/?_escaped_fragment_=/show/?start=2022-01-22#!/details/Nabbing-Nitrogen-a-Clean-Water-Act-Day-of-Action/10428637/2022-08-07T08

8/8/2022 Maine Public; Reporter Carol Bosquet interviewed Ivy about the Nab and nitrogen pollution in the Bay. <https://www.mainepublic.org/2022-08-08/volunteers-sample-portland-harbor-for-nitrogen-levels>

8/8/2022 WMTW; Meteorologist Sarah Long interviews Ivy for a story about Nabbing Nitrogen. <https://www.wmtw.com/article/volunteers-nabbing-nitrogen-portland-casco-bay/40848762>

8/9/2022 Honest Columnist; Short story about Nabbing Nitrogen, same text as WMTW story. <https://honestcolumnist.com/health/volunteers-nabbing-nitrogen-in-portland-harbor-to-study-health-of-casco-bay/>

8/15/2022 Portland Press Herald; Coverage of the algal blooms in eastern Casco Bay, heavily borrowing language from our email story. Includes quotes from Ivy and Mike. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/08/15/soaring-temperatures-may-have-caused-large-algal-blooms-and-soft-shell-clam-deaths/>

12/12/2021 Engineering News Record; discusses living shoreline initiatives in Casco Bay and mentions *Friends* as a supporting organization. <https://www.enr.com/articles/53217-maine-coastal-towns-join-to-prevent-flooding-using-nature-based-methods>

8/18/2022 Times Record; Susan Olcott's column discussed Team Zostra, the Casco Bay Bioregional Learning Journey, and eelgrass. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/08/18/intertidal-seagrass-stewards-protect-ocean-superheroes/>

8/18/2022 Wings Environmental News; Published Susan Olcott's column from 8/18/2023. <https://wingsenvironmental.com/intertidal-seagrass-stewards-protect-ocean-superheroes/>

12/31/2021 Maine Women Magazine; profile of Ivy Frignoca as Casco Baykeeper. <https://www.mainewomenmagazine.com/erin-ovalle-december-2021/>

8/26/2022 Portland Press Herald; Fall tips for organic lawncare from the Scarborough Conservation Commission and Sustainability Coordinator cites our website as a source of information. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/08/26/in-the-know-fall-tips-for-transitioning-to-organic-lawn-care/>

8/30/2022 Portland Press Herald; Eddie Wooden, donor and Friend of Casco Bay, receives the Conservationist of the Year award from the Scarborough Land Trust.. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/08/30/briefs-369/>

8/22/2022 West End News; Interview with Doug Roncararti about Portland's stormwater management projects and CSO abatement. Mentions Friends of Casco Bay as leading storm drain stenciling and awareness. <https://thewestendnews.com/casco-bay-stormwater-doing-your-bit-to-protect-it/>

9/16/2022 Conservation Law Foundation; Media advisory about BOEM declining environmental groups' request (including us) to do a full environmental impact review of proposed offshore wind leasing sites. <https://www.clf.org/newsroom/feds-decline-full-environmental-review-of-offshore-wind-in-maine/>

2/23/2022 Portland Phoenix; new MS4 permit will reduce pollution. Article summarizes and links to [Friends' story](#) about Maine's new MS4 permit. <https://portlandphoenix.me/updated-stormwater-rules-expected-to-reduce-pollution-in-casco-bay/wind-in-maine/>

9/16/2022 Maine Public; BOEM declines environmental groups' request (including us) to do a full environmental impact review of proposed OSW leasing sites. <https://www.mainepublic.org/environment-and-outdoors/2022-09-16/advocates-call-for-better-regulation-of-offshore-wind-in-the-gulf-of-maine>

9/20/2022 National Fisherman; BOEM declines environmental groups' request (including us) to do a full environmental impact review of proposed OSW leasing sites. <https://www.nationalfisherman.com/national-international/environmental-groups-tell-boem-to-slow-gulf-of-maine-wind-plan>

2/23/2022 Portland Phoenix; new MS4 permit will reduce pollution. Article summarizes and links to [Friends' story](#) about Maine's new MS4 permit. <https://www.islandinstitute.org/working-waterfront/casco-bay-group-honors-clean-water-heroes/>

9/26/2022 Working Waterfront; Published our media release about the Casco Bay Awards from our Annual Meeting in July. <https://portlandphoenix.me/updated-stormwater-rules-expected-to-reduce-pollution-in-casco-bay/wind-in-maine/>

10/1/2011 Press Herald; Greenbacker Capital volunteered with Friends of Casco Bay, helping to clean up trash and debris from the East End Beach in Portland on 9/29. (No link available). <https://portlandphoenix.me/updated-stormwater-rules-expected-to-reduce-pollution-in-casco-bay/wind-in-maine/>

10/4/2022 Times Record; Revisits summer algal blooms and clam mortality event in eastern Casco Bay. Attributes to high temps, rain, and fertilizers/pesticides in runoff. Cites our data for rising water acidity and temps. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/10/04/extreme-heat-heavy-rain-lawn-runoff-blamed-for-brunswick-clam-die-off/>

10/9/2022 Portland Press Herald; Three photos from our We Are Water, Members Annual meeting were posted in Scene & Heard. (No link available).

10/25/2022 Sun Journal; Alexander Mihalov, a past Friends of Casco Bay legal extern, was hired by Skelton Taintor & Abbott as an associate attorney.
<https://www.sunjournal.com/2022/10/25/alexander-mihalov-joins-skelton-taintor-abbott/>

11/7/2022 Bangor Daily News; Published event information from our Cinematic Celebration media advisory. <https://www.bangordailynews.com/event/a-cinematic-celebration-for-casco-bay/>

11/8/2022 Forecaster; Short story with quotes from Robby and Will about the Cinematic Celebration. <https://www.pressherald.com/2022/11/08/friends-of-casco-bay-film-fest-puts-spotlight-on-environmental-connection/>

11/9/2022 Maine Public; Story in response to our media release about 30 years of seasonal temperature data that show waters are warming in Casco Bay.
<https://www.mainepublic.org/environment-and-outdoors/2022-11-09/report-details-rapid-warming-in-casco-bay>

11/10/2022 Bangor Daily News; BDN partners with Maine Public to share stories, republished the same Maine Public story above (warming waters in Casco Bay).
<https://www.bangordailynews.com/2022/11/10/news/portland/casco-bay-warming/>

11/11/2022 WGME Channel 13; Short segment in response to our media release about 30 years of seasonal temperature data that show waters are warming in Casco Bay.
<https://fox23maine.com/news/local/casco-bay-temperature-rising-at-alarming-rate-study-finds-invasive-green-crabs-toxic-algae-blooms-shellfish-die-offs-friends-of-casco-bay-maine-climate-change>

12/12/2022 Working Waterfront; Posted our media release about 30 years of seasonal temperature data showing the Bay is warming. <https://www.islandinstitute.org/working-waterfront/casco-bay-data-shows-rapid-warming/>

1/12/2023 News Center Maine; Short segment featuring Water Reporter photos of Winter Storm Elliott. <https://www.newscentermaine.com/video/news/holiday-storm-predicted-to-likely-exceed-threshold-for-federal-disaster-aid-in-maine/97-2f08abe7-0a97-47d3-a778-336ec01b40df>

2/9/2023 Maine Biz; Overview of climate change grants from Maine Community Foundation, featuring photos of Mike with monitoring equipment.
<https://www.mainebiz.biz/article/maine-center-for-coastal-fisheries-among-recipients-of-climate-related-grants>

2/14/2023 Portland Press Herald; Briefs section of PPH includes a synopsis of the MCF grant awards, including our monitoring award. <https://www.pressherald.com/2023/02/14/briefs-388/>