



# Submerged Lands Newsletter

A yearly update of developments in the Bureau of Parks and Lands - Submerged Lands Program for submerged land lessees, easement holders and other interested parties.

## The Submerged Lands Program

Maine’s submerged lands and publicly owned waters belong to everyone. Our coastal waters, Great Ponds and international boundary rivers are held in trust for all citizens to use and are managed for Public Trust Rights that include fishing, fowling, and navigation. These waters and the lands beneath them are a finite resource that must accommodate many uses such as commercial and recreational fishing, recreational boating, commercial shipping, aquaculture, and other users. Private water-dependent structures such as wharves, piers, and floating docks are allowed provided they do not unreasonably interfere with the public’s use of these public waters. Permanent structures of any size and large temporary structures require a lease or easement issued by the Bureau of Parks and Lands (Bureau) for the right to be placed on or over publicly owned submerged lands. Permanent is defined as occupying submerged lands owned by the State of Maine for seven consecutive months during any one calendar year. These leases may only be granted if the structure is a water-dependent use and can be located so that it does not interfere with Public Trust Rights or access to waterfront properties. New non-water-dependent structures including, but not limited to, residential dwellings, restaurants, and fill are not a Public Trust Right and are thus generally not permitted, regardless of size.

## Submerged Lands Supports Public Water Access

The Submerged Lands Program uses revenue collected from submerged lands conveyances to fund public water access projects, provide effective harbor management, and ensure continued Public Trust Rights for Maine Citizens. Below are the recipients of our seventh annual Harbor Management and Access Grant program.

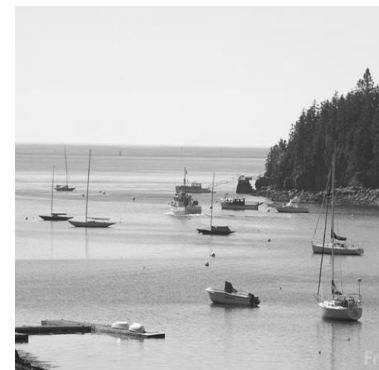
### Submerged Lands Staff

**John Noll**, Program Director  
(207) 287-4919  
John.Noll@maine.gov

**Karen Foust**, Coordinator  
(207) 287-6128  
Karen.L.Foust@maine.gov

**Anja Parlin**, Technician  
(207) 287-4970  
Anja.Parlin@maine.gov

*How are we doing?  
Feedback & comments  
are welcome.*



### **Harbor Management and Access Grant 2023 Recipients**

Town	Project	HMA Funds Requested	Waterbody	Waterbody Type	Type of Use
Castine	Repair Storm Damaged wharf retaining wall	\$15,000	Castine Harbor	Coastal	Recreational/Commercial
Chebeague Island	Float Replacement	\$10,800	Casco Bay	Coastal	Recreational/Commercial
Lincolntonville	Hoist Replacement	\$12,000	West Penobscot Bay	Coastal	Commercial
Sorrento	Ramp Replacement/upgrade	\$15,000	Sorrento Harbor	Coastal	Commercial/ Recreational
Wells	Float Replacement	\$15,000	Wells Harbor	Coastal	Commercial/ Recreational

## Additional Projects Funded in 2023



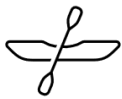
Boating Facilities Program for reconstruction of **Colonial Pemaquid** boat launch facility and **Meddybemps Lake, Toddy Pond** and **Kennebec River** boat ramps.



Bureau of Parks and Lands for **Fort Popham** public pier rehabilitation.



Inland Fisheries and Wildlife for reconstruction of **Prong Pond** boat ramp in the Moosehead area.



**Maine Island Trail Association** for ongoing management of coastal islands.



State of Maine **Harbor Masters Association** for annual harbor master training and certification.



Maine Department of **Marine Resources** for shellfish monitoring

## Annual Reminders

**Sale of Property**—If you have sold or are planning to sell your property, please remember that your submerged lands lease or easement must be transferred or assigned to the new owner. To transfer a lease, please contact us for an application that would be filled out and returned by the new owner. The \$100.00 application processing fee can be paid by either party. Changes in ownership name from an individual to a Trust also require a transfer of the conveyance.

**Modifications**—Please keep in mind that any changes to your structure, including the addition of floats (seasonal or permanent), may require your lease or easement to be updated. If you are planning any modifications, please contact us.

**Renewals**—Most leases and easements are issued for a 30-year term. Several months prior to the end of the term, the Bureau sends notice that you will need to apply for a new 30-year conveyance. This is sent during the summer months when it is easier to check measurements and take photographs. The renewal process includes sending notification to the municipality and in certain situations, to others within close proximity to the site, informing them that a renewal application is being reviewed by the Bureau.

### **2023 SUBMERGED LANDS PROGRAM ACTIVITY SUMMARY**

In 2023 the Bureau received 190 applications; 13 remain pending and 177 were reviewed and resolved. The 177 applications include 49 projects that were exempt and did not need a conveyance and 128 resulted in the issuance of a lease or easement. Of these 128 leases and easements there were 17 amendments, 19 renewals of expiring conveyances, 44 transfers, and 48 new conveyances. The Bureau also approved 2 Sunken Log Salvage Authorizations.

The following list indicates the types of leases and easements approved or amended in 2023 and the total number of leases and easements in the Submerged Lands Program.

	Leases	Easements
Private piers/floats	45	19
Utility cables and pipeline	6	3
Commercial marine facilities	18	2
Commercial Fishing	2	8
Public service or public facilities	13	9
Dredging	3	—
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>41</b>

**Total Program Conveyance Totals: Leases—1,585 Easements—847 Dredging Leases—6**