



**MAINE'S WORKING WATERFRONT COALITION
PRESS CONFERENCE
Tuesday • May 27, 2003
Hall of Flags • State House • Augusta, Maine
11:15 a.m.**

AGENDA

Welcome/Opening Remarks Inc.	Elizabeth Sheehan, Coastal Enterprises, Susan Swanton, Maine Marine Trade
Association	
Fishing Industry Perspective	Dave Cousens, Pres. Maine Lobstermen's Association
Address by the Governor	Honorable John E. Baldacci
Remarks	Senator Dennis S. Damon Representative Leila Jane Percy
Opportunities	Interviews with Coalition Members and Supporters Photographs

Maine's Working Waterfront Coalition

A statewide group of industry associations, nonprofits, state agencies and individuals dedicated to supporting and enhancing Maine's working waterfront through policy, planning, investment and education

Threatened: a livelihood for many, a heritage for all.

Working waterfront is the Maine coast. Over the past 300 years, marine-related industry has been the central force shaping the way our coastal communities look and feel today. Ironically, it helped create an environment so attractive to interests outside of the industry that Maine's working waterfront is increasingly in danger of disappearing. In order to sustain this part of our shared heritage, and to protect this vital piece of our current and future economy, we must take action immediately and ensure that there will always be room on Maine's coast for people who make their living from the sea.

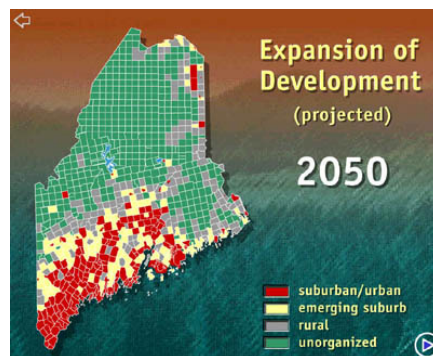
Facts

- Of the 7,000 miles that make up Maine's coast today, only 25 are devoted to commercial fishing activity.
- These 25 miles – a mere 0.36% of our shoreline – currently provide Maine's 10,300 fishermen access to the water in order to park their trucks, dock/board their boats, buy ice and fuel, and unload their catch
- In total, these 25 miles support over 26,000 fishing-related jobs and provide the access necessary to sustain an industry worth over \$740 million.
- In addition, water-dependent marine trades such as boat builders, boat yards and marinas employ nearly 3,000 people statewide, generating an additional \$85,000,000 in wages.
- In 2001, Maine's working piers and wharves made it possible for 269 million pounds of seafood to generate \$740 million dollars in economic income.

Will Maine be next?

As much of the rest of the country struggles against the forces of sprawl and gentrification, Maine has become all the more attractive as a place still relatively unspoiled. But for how long?

A recent study by the State Planning Office predicted that if current trends continue, the majority of Maine's coast – from Kittery to Mount Desert Island – will be classifiable as "suburban/urban" by the year 2050. How will this affect our water-dependent industries? For answers we may only have to look as far south as Cape Cod or Nantucket, where residential growth has all but eliminated the presence of marine industry – particularly the coastal access provided by the private residences of fishermen – from the waterfront. Not only has this hurt the industry, but it has changed the character of these places forever.

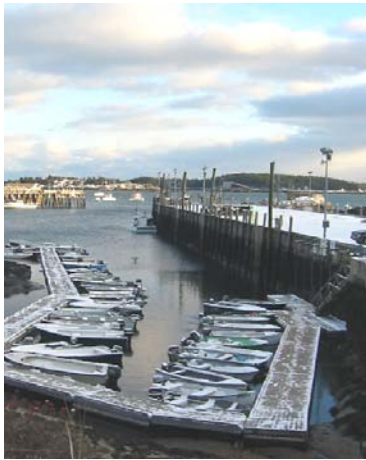


This is happening in Maine now. In a 2002 study of 25 coastal communities from the length of the coast, 84% indicated that lack of shore access is either already a problem or is expected to soon be a problem. All along the coast, land values are skyrocketing due to second-home ownership and gentrification. Faced with increases in property assessment of as much as 300%, many fishermen are simply unable to pay the resulting taxes, and are being forced inland. Some must drive miles

back to the coast where, if they are lucky enough to find an access point with sufficient parking, they often have to wait in line to load and unload their gear and catch.

Policy, Planning, Investment and Education – Current-use taxation is part of the solution.

We do not have to sit passively and watch as the Maine coast we know – which is so valuable not only to water-dependent industries and tourism, but also to our heritage and state pride - disappears lot by lot because of sprawl, use conflicts and a regressive tax structure. In fact, many have been hard at work for some time in search of a solution.



The Working Waterfront Coalition believes that allowing properties related to commercial fishing to be taxed on their current use, rather than their ‘highest and best’ use, can be a vital part of this solution. Such current-use taxation is already an option for farming and forestry - two of the three industries represented on our state flag. And there are indications of strong support for allowing the third industry on the flag – the maritime trades – to do likewise.

In fact, a statewide referendum in 1999 that would have allowed current use taxation for working waterfront failed by less than 1%. In the four years since this vote, the problem of coastal access has gained more attention as the forces driving it have escalated.

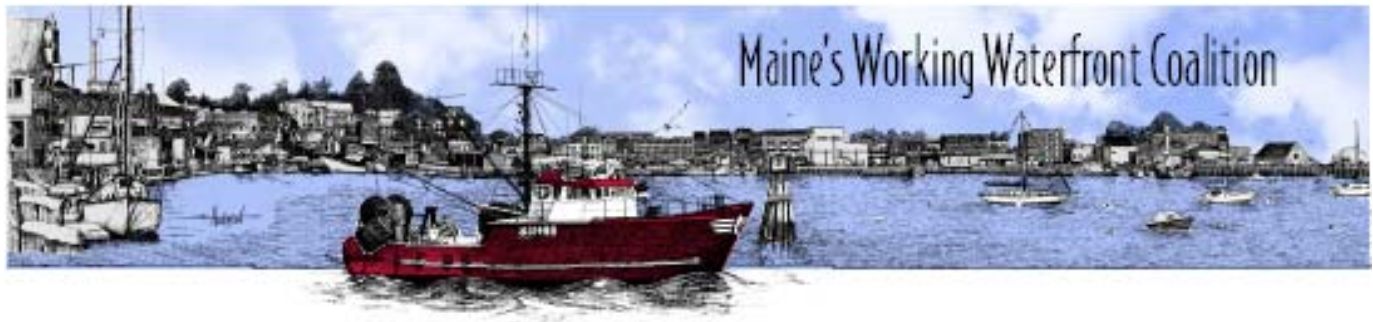
We believe that with strong organizational support and a concerted public education campaign, an effort to allow current use taxation on commercial fishing properties would be successful.

The Maine Working Waterfront Coalition includes representatives of the following organizations:

Associated Fisheries of Maine
Coastal Enterprises, Inc.
Island Institute
Maine Dept. of Marine Resources
Maine Fishermen’s Wives Association
Maine Lobstermen’s Association

Maine Marine Trade Association
Maine Sea Grant Program
Maine State Planning Office Coastal Program
Muscongus Bay Realty
Northend Cooperative
Sunrise County Economic Council





About Our Members

Associated Fisheries of Maine – Groundfish Group

Associated Fisheries of Maine is a trade organization of fishing and fishing dependent businesses. Associated Fisheries of Maine was established in 1956 for the purpose of “promoting, protecting, developing and assisting the Maine fishing industry.”

Coastal Enterprises, Inc.

Our mission is to help Maine people and communities, particularly those with low incomes, reach an adequate and equitable standard of living, learning, and working in harmony with our natural environment. www.ceimaine.org

Island Institute

Island Institute is a non-profit organization that serves as a voice for the balanced future of the islands and waters of the Gulf of Maine. We are guided by an island ethic that recognizes the strength and fragility of Maine's island communities and the finite nature of the Gulf of Maine ecosystems. Along the Maine Coast, the Island Institute seeks to: support the islands' year-round communities; conserve Maine's island and marine biodiversity for future generations; develop model solutions that balance the needs of the coast's cultural and natural communities; provide opportunities for discussion over responsible use of finite resources, and provide information to assist competing interests in arriving at constructive solutions. www.islandinstitute.org

Maine Coast Heritage Trust

Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) conserves coastal and other lands that define Maine's distinct landscape, protect its environment, sustain its outdoor traditions and promote the well-being of its people. Since 1970, MCHT has helped permanently protect more than 105,000 acres. These lands include valuable wildlife habitat, bold headlands, farm and forest land and 315 entire islands. MCHT provides conservation advisory services free of charge to landowners, federal, state and community officials, and local land trusts throughout Maine. www.mcht.org

Maine Dept. of Marine Resources

The Department of Marine Resources provides leadership in marine policy, the management of marine resources, the development of sustainable marine resource based business and the protection of the marine environment. Our vision is of a Department of Marine Resources that provides the highest quality of public service where all people are treated as customers. www.maine.gov/dmr

Maine Fishermen's Wives Association

"Working together as one, our horizons are unlimited". In light of regulatory changes to fisheries management a small group of fishermen's wives banded together in 1977 to increase their awareness of the industry and to help their husbands keep abreast of changes that could affect their businesses and their way of life. This small group soon became The Maine Fishermen's Wives Association. Today, we continue to supply current information to their husbands, represent them at meetings, keep in touch with government representatives, and help conduct the land side of the business as efficiently as possible. Our efforts include seafood promotion, protection of waterfront access and recognition of the heritage of the commercial fishing industry and the important role it plays in Maine's economic future.

Maine Lobstermen's Association

Founded in 1954, the Maine Lobstermen's Association (MLA) works to keep the lobster industry healthy and protect our traditions and way of life. Founded on the principles of unity and cooperation; the MLA was formed by lobstermen to empower Maine's lobster industry by speaking with a united voice. With nearly 1200 members, the MLA is the largest commercial fishing industry group on the east coast, representing the interests of lobstermen from Eastport to Kittery. The MLA represents the industry on a broad range of issues in the federal, regional, state and local policy and management arenas. www.maine lobstermen.org

Maine Marine Trade Association

The mission of the Maine Marine Trade Association (MMTA) is to promote the growth and prosperity of the Marine Industry in Maine; to foster cooperation among Marine Businesses with outside industries; to encourage and assist with sound environmental practices in the marine industry. MMTA represents more than two hundred marine related businesses including boat builders, boatyards, marinas, dealers, dock & float builders, sailmakers, naval architects and many others. These members firms are located throughout the state from Kittery to Eastport and inland through many lake regions.

Maine Sea Grant Program

Maine Sea Grant supports marine science research and outreach activities to promote the understanding, sustainable use, and conservation of ocean and coastal resources. Based at the University of Maine, our statewide program works in partnership with marine industries, scientists, government agencies, private organizations, and a wide range of marine resource users. Maine Sea Grant is part of the National Sea Grant College Program, a network made up of 30 programs located in each of the coastal and Great Lakes states. www.seagrant.umaine.edu

Maine State Planning Office Coastal Program

The Mission of the Maine Coastal Program is to balance conservation of the coastal environment with human demands and activities. www.maine.gov/mcp

Sunrise County Economic Council

The Sunrise County Economic Council (SCEC), is a private, nonprofit organization formed by local people to identify, support and initiate activities that will benefit Washington County's economy. Since it was formed in 1993, SCEC has helped the region work together to identify and act on its own potential through long-term strategies and local initiatives. www.sunrisecounty.org

MAINE'S WORKING WATERFRONT COALITION

Media Advisory

for May 27, 2003 Press Conference

For immediate release May 20, 2003

WHO: **Maine's Working Waterfront Coalition**, comprised of a diverse group of marine-related organizations representing more than 30,000 jobs, has formed to support and enhance Maine's working waterfront through policy, planning, investment and education.

WHAT: **Maine's Working Waterfront Coalition** will be hosting a press conference to illustrate how the \$740 million fishing industry is in jeopardy due to the rapidly disappearing access to the waterfront. Another \$612 million in sales generated by the 3,000 employees in Maine's boat builders, dealers and marina businesses is also threatened.

Maine's Working Waterfront Coalition will offer solutions to this growing problem that threatens the economic foundation and cultural strength these industries provide to the state of Maine.

The Honorable Governor John E. Baldacci will be joined by guest speakers **Senator Dennis Damon** (D-Mount Desert), **Representative Leila Jane Percy** (D-Phippsburg) and **David Cousens**, president of the Maine's Lobstermen's Association.

WHEN: 11:15 a.m. Tuesday, May 27, 2003 in the Hall of Flags, Maine State House

WHY: **Economic livelihoods are threatened.**

Maine's fishermen must have access to the water in order to unload their catch, buy ice and fuel, repair gear and access their boats. Maine's boat yards, boat builders and marinas also need access to the water to bring their product – boats – to their marketplace – the water.

- In 2001, Maine's working piers and wharves made it possible for 269 million pounds of seafood to generate \$740 million dollars in direct economic impact.
- Water-dependent marine trades such as boat builders, boat yards and marinas employ nearly 3,000 people, generating \$85 million in wages.

A shared heritage will become obsolete.

Over the past 400 years, marine industries have been the central force shaping Maine's economy and heritage. All along the coast, land values are skyrocketing leading to a turnover in working waterfront to second-home ownership. The quality of life, sense of place and economic backbone provided by Maine's working waterfront is threatened.

- Less than 1 percent of Maine's 7,000 miles coast is devoted to working waterfront.
- Faced with rising property valuations of as much as 300%, fishing families and marine businesses are simply unable to pay the resulting taxes and are being forced out of their communities.

For more information contact Jennifer DeChant, marketing coordinator at 882-7552 or Coalition members Susan Swanton at 773-8725 or Hugh Cowperthwaite at 772-5356

Maine's Working Waterfront Coalition

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What Maine People Say About Our Working Waterfront ...

Commercial Fishing Industry

"As traditional access is sold off, new owners post land and access is lost. We (the town) intend to protect and maintain to keep things the way they are." Oscar Look, Commercial Fishermen/Harbor Master, Addison

"It is critical that we have current use taxation for working waterfronts. If we don't, then the working waterfront will disappear. In fact, it is disappearing now. If we don't do this soon, there will be very few people in the fishing business. And that will threaten the lobster fishery, which by itself is critical to the state's economy, not to mention a way of life that we all think so much of." Dana Rice, local fisherman/Selectman, Gouldsboro

"The responsible preservation of Maine's working waterfront is essential to both the economic and social integrity of the State." Nora Warren, Manager, Vinalhaven Fisherman's Co-op

"When the fish come back and there is a chance for some industry here, where is it going to go? (The working waterfront) is disappearing." Frank O'Hara, Sr., O'Hara Fisheries, Rockland

"I'm highly concerned about taxes - even more concerned when they sent out the tax bills two or three weeks ago. Everything on the waterfront doubled. That put everyone on notice pretty quickly... The result is that people who work on the waterfront can't afford to live there - so you funnel all of the activity into fewer and fewer places... it's going to be a bedroom community here and all of the fishermen are going to be pushed away." Dan Miller, St George lobsterman and Chair of Lobster Management Zone D

"93% of the waterfront property in Phippsburg is owned by non-residents. A recent property re-evaluation resulted in some values going up 700%." Proctor Wells, Commercial Fishermen, Phippsburg

"Protecting the working waterfront is very important. About 95% of the boats in Cape Porpoise are commercial fishing boats. The boats here depend on this access to the water." Allan Daggett of Cape Porpoise Lobster Co., Cape Porpoise

"People need to understand that the working waterfront is a nonrenewable resource. When access is lost, it will never be regained." Pat White, lobstermen York

"With the well known escalating cost of coastal Maine waterfront skyrocketing to unprecedented levels, the limited twenty five miles of working waterfront needs and deserves special attention to preserve a major industry, our fisheries!" Ralph M. Lombardi, Muscongus Bay Realty

Boating Industry

"We are currently building boats in the 80 foot range which makes them unable to be moved other than from the shed to the water so inland is not an option for us. If we have to move inland we have to convert to a production type of business and downsize dramatically, that is not our plan. If we were forced to do so we would stop building boats and go to a service yard only

meaning an immediate job elimination for 75 employees.” *JB Turner, Managing Partner, Lyman Morse Boatbuilding, Thomaston*

“Our industry is joined at the hip to the commercial fishing industry. The boats we build are used by fishermen, our boatyards and marinas provide needed goods and services. We depend on each other – if one of our industries hurts so does the other. The loss of working waterfront is hurting us all.” Steve Bunnell, President, Bunnell Marine Consulting, Camden

“A waterfront that is home to thriving industry is a beautiful thing. A harbor with fishing boats and boatyards, cargo terminals and marinas, fish processing facilities and supply houses are proof positive that Maine people have a place to go to work every day. When I see those activities, diverse as they are, existing in one place I feel proud that we still have working waterfronts, because they so define the Maine coast. We need to support this kind of activity to ensure that what we recognize as our heritage will be an integral part of our future.” Susan Swanton, Executive Director, Maine Marine Trade Association, Portland

“By definition a marina has to be on the water. I can’t ply my trade anywhere else.” Fred Muehl, President, York Harbor Marine Service, York Harbor

State and Local Officials

“There is a strong commitment to allow fishermen the right to make a living. We are currently working on a grant to create berthing space for transient boaters, which would take some pressure off the commercial area.” George Finch, City Manager, City of Eastport

“Fishermen are resistant to change and do not always realize that they need to secure access. The town bought Finn Beach when the fishermen did not feel that they needed it, now they have a new pier.” Arthur Totman, Harbor Master, Machiasport

“In Jonesport, 7 waterfront properties changed hands in 1998. The following year 1999-2000 there were 32 waterfront properties sold.” Mike Kirby, Planning Board, Jonesport

“Unless you can park a truck, access means nothing.” Ralph Smith, Chair of Selectmen, Jonesport

“The real estate prices in Southwest Harbor are driving people this way. There are 3-4 private piers which are leased to fishermen, and that could change.” Burt Allaire, Planning Board, Winter Harbor

“Planning for the fish pier started in 1979 and construction began in 1983. It takes time to create a facility like this.” Steve Johnson, Pier Manager, Stonington

“If the landowner wanted to sell the property, the town would need some time to act. Working with the town takes time and everything has to be together before the spring town meeting.” Gene Thurston, Harbor Master, Southwest Harbor

“Commercial fishing will find it hard to compete with real estate sales.” Wayne Hamilton,
Harbor Master, Searsport

“Fishing is the life-blood of this community.” Richard Jellison, Harbor Master, Swans Island

“There is daily competition for parking among contractors, ferry traffic, recreational boaters and fishermen.” David Sleeper, Harbor Master, Islesboro

“Loading and unloading gear on the town dock is a problem. The floats are too small to handle all of the commercial & recreational use.” Kevin O’Hearn, Harbor Master, Vinalhaven

“People are paying ridiculous money for property. This offsets the tax base for everyone else. Many kids who grew up here cannot afford to live here.” David Schmanska, Harbor Master, St. George

“Property is being sold off. Houses are selling for at least 200% of their value. In a few years it will just be a few co-ops that are left providing access.” Craig Elliot, Selectmen, Bristol

“25 years ago there was not a place in town where you could not cross property to access the water. An education pamphlet that explains people’s rights would be helpful.” Steve Barnes,
Shellfish Warden, Bremen

“There is no more tie up space and we can't fit any more moorings in the harbor. We are currently revising our mooring plan to fit more boats.” Ross Maddocks, Harbor Master, Boothbay Harbor

“It's encouraging to see such a broad array of industry, non-profits and agencies working together to protect and enhance Maine's working waterfronts" "Collectively, they represent a potent force for change." Jim Connors, Maine Coastal Program

“There are 218 miles of coastline in Harpswell. One quarter of that is zoned for Commercial Fishing. Zoning does not guarantee access.” George Swallow, Chairman of Selectmen, Harpswell

“The town dock is 50 feet wide and is the only public deepwater access point in Freeport. All other access points are tidal.” Jay Pinkham, Harbor Master, Freeport

“There have been complaints of a lack of affordable berthing (\$5.00 to \$15.00 a foot). The fish pier is considered the best place to be and it's maxed out.” Benjamin Snow, Manager, Marine Operations & Administration, City of Portland

“There were two recent property sales that were zoned commercial marine related. Both were sold: one was converted into a park and the other a private residence.” Bill Day, Chairman of the Harbor Commission, Biddeford

“Commercial fishing access in the river is a problem; Government Wharf is the only place to load/unload fish/bait.” David Billings, Harbor Master, Kennebunkport

“New coastal property owners don't understand the historical rights that people have to access the water.” Milton Hall, Chairman of the Port Authority, Kittery

“Rarely, if ever, do groundfishermen, lobstermen, nonprofits and state agencies join together on an issue like this. This demonstrates how critical sustaining and preserving the working waterfront is to all of us.” *Sue Inches, Maine Department of Marine Resources*