

Town of Brunswick, Maine

COASTAL RESOURCE OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Shellfish Committee

CC: Fran Smith, Town Clerk

FROM: Dan Devereaux, Coastal Resource Manager

DATE: December 2, 2025

SUBJECT: Coastal Resource Manager's Report

Update on Shellfish Committee Projects, Initiatives, and Environmental Issues

Chapter 11 Ordinance Updates Town Council Public Hearing December 1st. This will have already happened. Fran to provide update on public hearing outcomes.

- **Student Apprentice Program:** The committee aims to implement a student apprentice program by adding specific language to the ordinance. A separate policy outlining the program's requirements has already been adopted. This initiative originated from discussions held by the Shellfish Ordinance Rewrite Task Force. If enacted, Brunswick will be the first community in the state to implement such a program, which is modeled after the successful lobsterman apprentice program that has operated for many years in Maine.
- **Reporting Requirement for Harvesters:** In last year's revision, a requirement for harvesters to report their landings was set to begin during the 2026 licensing year. The proposed amendments detail the legal obligations of the program and the consequences for non-compliance with reporting requirements. Staff members have been researching options for harvesters to report their landings through either paper forms or a dedicated application. Our GIS coordinator has developed a program, and we are working on a step-by-step policy to explain how to report using either method. We expect to present this to the Shellfish Committee during their December meeting.

Harvester Reporting Request:

Based on shellfish inventory surveys conducted this fall the projection for harvestable softshell clams are robust for the 2026/27 season. It would be incredibly helpful when determining the number of licenses to be issued for next season that shellfish harvesters make a concerted effort to begin reporting their shellfish landings December 1st when Maquoit Bay opens. We would be able to use this data to help determine extraction amounts that can be deducted from the harvestable shellfish stock projected for the following season.

Fishermen's Forum:

The Maine Fishermen's Forum has been scheduled for March 5th -7th. Both tradeshow and seminar RFP applications are currently open. [Maine Fishermen's Forum March 5-7 2026 Info](#) If you have ideas and wish to present, please reach out to the contacts on the website or Marissa McMahan.

GIS Shellfish Management Mapping:

We are currently in the process of converting shellfish data generated by google earth into our town GIS coastal resource management layers. Since the inception of the Coastal Resource Office in 2018, we have mapped growing area year by year. Having this information transferred to the municipal GIS ensures that the shellfish data will be held without any outside interruptions from third party influences like google. We have also been able to connect historical shellfish survey data and photographs of each specific growing area.

Northeast Aquaculture Conference and Exposition:

The biennial Northeast Aquaculture Conference & Exposition (NACE) was created in 1998 by the Maine Aquaculture Innovation Center with the goal of bringing together producers, service providers, vendors, researchers, students and managers from across the northeast region to discuss pressing issues and relevant research on shellfish and aquaculture. The conference will be held in Portland from January 7th to January 9th at the Holiday Inn by the Bay. FMI or to register click [here](#).

Creating a Nitrogen Loading Model:

We are exploring expounding on the recent septic system data to understand what additional information we will need to work toward creating a model that helps determine the nitrogen discharges at each drainage basin in Brunswick. Even though nitrogen measurements are not part of the NSSP shellfish classification program, information generated from nitrogen influence models can help us further identify areas that are more susceptible to large algal blooms.

Maine Seagrass Summit:

As a participant in the Maine Seagrass Consortium, I attended and participated in the Maine Seagrass Summit held at the Lemont Block here in Brunswick on December 17th. The summit discussed ongoing research into eelgrass declines, Maine DEP eel grass mapping efforts coast wide, individual biologist and diver observations, green crab disturbance, and other variables impacting seagrass habitats.

Simpson Point Rehabilitation:

The RFP has gone out to solicit bids to complete the rehabilitation of the Simpson Point Boat launch. We hope to get this work done during the off season this winter. It has been brought up in previous meetings about the possibility of reopening the boat launch to motorized vessels. There have been several failed attempts by this committee and the Town Council to have the ramp reopened. As it currently stands, Simpson Point boat launch is closed as part of the Mere Point Boat Launch DEP permit, which indicates that Simpson Point will restrict all trailer launch of boats with submerged propellers.

CBEP Grant (Manomet LOS):

Manomet is requesting a letter of support to apply for resiliency grant funding to continue the work they have been conducting in collaboration with the Town. Below is description.

- We propose to test the durability and effectiveness of biodegradable netting materials in addressing a challenge in the wild shellfish fishery — to recruit and protect wild shellfish populations in a less labor-intensive way. Biodegradable netting has been used in other coastal restoration applications, including salt marsh, oyster, and mussel restoration. The primary question we hope to answer with this project is: how do different biodegradable netting materials hold up to different environmental conditions, predators (e.g., green crabs), and fouling in the intertidal zone? We will test two types of biodegradable netting – (1) coconut fiber, and (2) a biodegradable net made by BESE used in mussel/salt marsh restoration, alone and in combination. These materials will be placed and secured on intertidal mudflats, and monitored regularly for signs of degradation, fouling, or displacement. When the nets are removed or have degraded, we will count and measure all shellfish within the area where the nets were placed, as well as adjacent and similar sized areas where there was no netting present

Update on Maquoit Bay Sanitary Survey:

A new septic system design for the failing system we found on Mere Point Rd. has been submitted to the Code Office for review. They will be working to replace the system soon. Identified animal husbandry practices are currently being followed up on.

Recap State Shellfish Advisory Council (11/21/25 Meeting): [Agenda](#)

- Veteran discounted state commercial shellfish licenses. Legislation introduced
- Economic Shellfish Study update -GMRI
- NE Shellfish Sanitation Meeting April 8-9, 2026, Harraseeket Inn Freeport Maine
- Storm influences on softshell clam market price
- Green crab composting possibilities
- Regional DMR Shellfish Meeting (Town Committee to discuss the best approach)

Conservation Closure:

Portions of Catlin Shore are still closed for conservation.

Maine DEP Watershed Manager Meeting:

Presented the Septic System Risk Analysis to a large group of watershed managers in Augusta. To view the story map presentation click [here](#).

Shellfish Inventory Surveys remaining:

Catlin Shore, Clay Cove, Getchell Ledge. These areas will be surveyed in the month of December.