



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Coastal Program

The Coastal Program works with communities to conserve habitats that are important to them. We ensure coastal communities and their irreplaceable natural environments continue to thrive for future generations by working hand in hand with other government agencies, municipalities, nongovernmental organizations, universities, businesses, private landowners, and other partners.

Find the Coastal Program online at:

- [Webpage](#)
- [YouTube](#)



Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts

The Gulf of Maine Coastal Program protects and restores natural habitats that are important to fish, wildlife, and people in the Gulf of Maine watershed, which extends from the Canadian Provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick south to Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

More than 10 million people live in the Gulf of Maine watershed, which serves as an economic and cultural lifeblood for its inhabitants. The watershed is also home to multitudes of habitats and species, like the endangered Atlantic salmon, river herring, saltmarsh sparrow, and roseate tern. Ecosystem processes that are impacted by the effects of climate change and landuse are inextricably link to the habitats, species and people of the Gulf of Maine.

The Gulf of Maine Coastal Program will work with local communities to implement an ecosystem conservation approach to address habitat challenges in Maine and coastal New Hampshire – in approximately 20% of the Gulf of Maine watershed.

Since 2019:

Number of Projects: 90

Habitats Restored: 480 acres

Program Contributions: \$243,489

Habitats Protected: 133,459 acres

Partner Contributions: \$84,950,785

Streams Restored: 11 miles

Leveraging Ratio: 1 : 349

Fish Passage Projects: 26

(Program Contribution : Partner Contribution)

Program Highlights¹



Completed
More than 4,900
conservation projects



Worked with
More than 8,200
partners



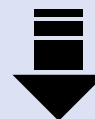
Leveraged
More than 1.2
billion in partner
contributions



Improved
More than 600,000
acres of habitat



Protected
More than 2.3 million
acres of habitat



Supported the recovery
and downlisting of
At least 15 species

1. Program highlight statistics calculated from data since 2000 and maintained by the Coastal Program.

Project Highlights

Aquatic Connectivity



The demolition of one of the three dams removed on Frost Gully Brook.

The Coastal Program works with communities to remove fish passage barriers to restore aquatic connectivity. In 2023, a diverse partnership including the Coastal Program, Freeport Conservation Trust, Trout Unlimited, Maine Water Company, Casco Bay Estuary Partnership, and other partners removed three dams on Frost Gully Brook.

Located in Maine, Frost Gully Brook is a small tributary of Harraseeket River and Casco Bay. Historically, the dams

provided drinking water and fire protection for the local Freeport community. However, improvements to the town's infrastructure have made the dams obsolete for decades.

In addition to restoring fish passage, the project improved water conditions and re-opened three miles of stream for native, recreational, and commercially important fish, including Eastern brook trout. Conservation efforts like this one is making Maine one of the best places to reintroduce wild Eastern brook trout.



Restored stream at the former location of a dam on Frost Gully Brook. Watch videos of the restoration project online at [Freeport Conservation Trust](#).

Hampton Seabrook Estuary Collaborative

The Coastal Program works with partners and communities to plan and implement ecosystem habitat conservation. For example, the Coastal Program helped lead the establishment of the Hampton-Seabrook Estuary Collaborative – a group of local, state, and federal organizations and agencies focused on improving the health and vitality of the Hampton-Seabrook Estuary (Estuary) and its communities in New Hampshire.

In 2020, representatives from the Collaborative, including the Coastal Program, Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership, and the Seabrook-Hamptons Estuary Alliance conducted a survey to better understand the available science and needs of the Estuary. This effort led to the development of resources that can help decision-makers and conservation practitioner to make informed landuse decision and implement meaningful habitat conservation. In addition, the Collaborative developed “The Commons” – a tool that help practitioners to identify projects, resources, and potential partners to support science and monitoring efforts in the Hampton-Seabrook Estuary.



Collaborative partners and the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services was awarded \$2 million from an America the Beautiful (ATB) Challenge Grant to conduct saltmarsh restoration work in Hampton and two other New Hampshire marsh systems.