



## **Council / Working Group Meeting May 27-28, 2026**

**St. Andrews, New Brunswick**

Event times are Atlantic Time

### **Briefing Book**

*Virtual Access Details, p. 3*

*In-person events overview, maps, parking, pp. 4-5*

*Onsite contact:*

*Joan LeBlanc, GOMC, 978-866-7284*

*[jleblanc@gulfofmaine.org](mailto:jleblanc@gulfofmaine.org)*

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Virtual Access for the Meeting .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>In-Person GOMC Event Details</b>	
Overview of Events (Dates, Times, Locations).....	4
Maps / GOMC Event Venues .....	5
<b>Meeting Agenda .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Consent Agenda</b>	
Draft December 2025 Council / Working Group Meeting Record of Decisions .....	8
<b>Action Agenda</b>	
GOMC Member and Partner Updates	
• NOAA.....	11
• USGS.....	12
• RARGOM .....	13
Plans for Incoming New Brunswick GOMC Secretariat .....	14

**Virtual Access to the Gulf of Maine Council Meeting**

**Zoom Access Day 1 – May 27, 2026**

---

GOMC Meeting Time: 9:00 AM – 1:30 PM (AT) / 8:00 AM – 12:30 PM (ET)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88075283906?pwd=6nshHlInuEGdVpg80GZpA1PuW4XC2n.1>

Meeting ID: 880 7528 3906

Passcode: 303127

One tap mobile

+16469313860,,88075283906#,,,,\*303127# US

+19292056099,,88075283906#,,,,\*303127# US (New York)

+1 780 666 0144 Canada

+1 204 272 7920 Canada

Join by SIP

• 88075283906@zoomcrc.com

Join instructions (use this link to view additional call-in numbers)

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meetings/88075283906/invitations?signature=fEthFBv1mgSSJThE\\_3xpbkvQx92zmjchORAuV-LaZw](https://us02web.zoom.us/meetings/88075283906/invitations?signature=fEthFBv1mgSSJThE_3xpbkvQx92zmjchORAuV-LaZw)

**Zoom Access Day 2 – May 28, 2026**

---

GOMC Meeting Time: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM (AT) / 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM (ET)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88920727906?pwd=KrA8EJ3aNQDWcppyHdfrvbBsnTVoXe.1>

Meeting ID: 889 2072 7906

Passcode: 771855

One tap mobile

+13092053325,,88920727906#,,,,\*771855# US

+13126266799,,88920727906#,,,,\*771855# US (Chicago)

+1 647 558 0588 Canada

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

Join by SIP

• 88920727906@zoomcrc.com

Join instructions (use this link to view additional call-in numbers)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meetings/88920727906/invitations?signature=xhdk1vVvk5blExo88zdR0y2UBgWJfNEWhKKJKz4SPtVg>

## Overview of GOMC Events

### Tuesday, May 26, 2026, 6:00 PM (AT)

#### Optional - Gulf of Maine Council Group Dinner

- The Kennedy House, 218 Water Street, St. Andrews, NB
- Informal networking gathering for GOMC members arriving early.
- Attendees will pay individually.

### Wednesday, May 27, 2026, 8:45 AM – 1:30 PM (AT) / 7:45 AM – 12:30 PM (ET)

#### Joint Council / Working Group Meeting

- Hachey Conference Centre, St. Andrews Biological Station  
125 Marine Science Drive, St. Andrews, New Brunswick
- Continental breakfast and lunch provided on site.

#### **IMPORTANT: Accessing the Hachey Conference Centre**

*To reach the Hachey Conference Centre at Saint Andrews Biological Station, follow **Marine Science Drive to the main Station gate** and then take your **first left turn onto Ring Road**, this merges into Lobster Lane. The **Conference Centre is a wooden building on your right**. Park in the gravel parking lot on your left. The Station gate will likely be open due to construction occurring around the main Penhallow Building down by the water, but if the gate is closed, press the buzzer, give your name at the main security desk, and let them know you are attending the meeting in the Conference Centre.*

- *Please do not drive past the Conference Centre to avoid the construction activity.*
- *There will be a sign-in list at the Conference Centre, so please check in with Joan LeBlanc or Glen Herbert when you arrive so that you can be recorded.*
- *See map on next page for site details.*

### Wednesday, May 27, 2026, 1:40 PM – 4:00 PM (AT) (approximate times)

#### Huntsman Marine Science Centre / Fundy Discovery Aquarium Visit

- 1 Lower Campus Rd, St. Andrews, NB
- Includes aquarium exploration, highlights from the HMSC Director, and research tour

### Wednesday, May 27, 2026, 6:00 PM – approximately 9:00 PM (AT)

#### GOMC Awards Dinner and Ceremony

- The Algonquin Resort, Shaughnessy Ballroom, 184 Adolphus Street, St. Andrews, NB
- Doors open/networking & cash bar (6:00 PM), buffet dinner (approximately 6:15 PM)  
Presentation of Awards (approximately 7:00 PM)

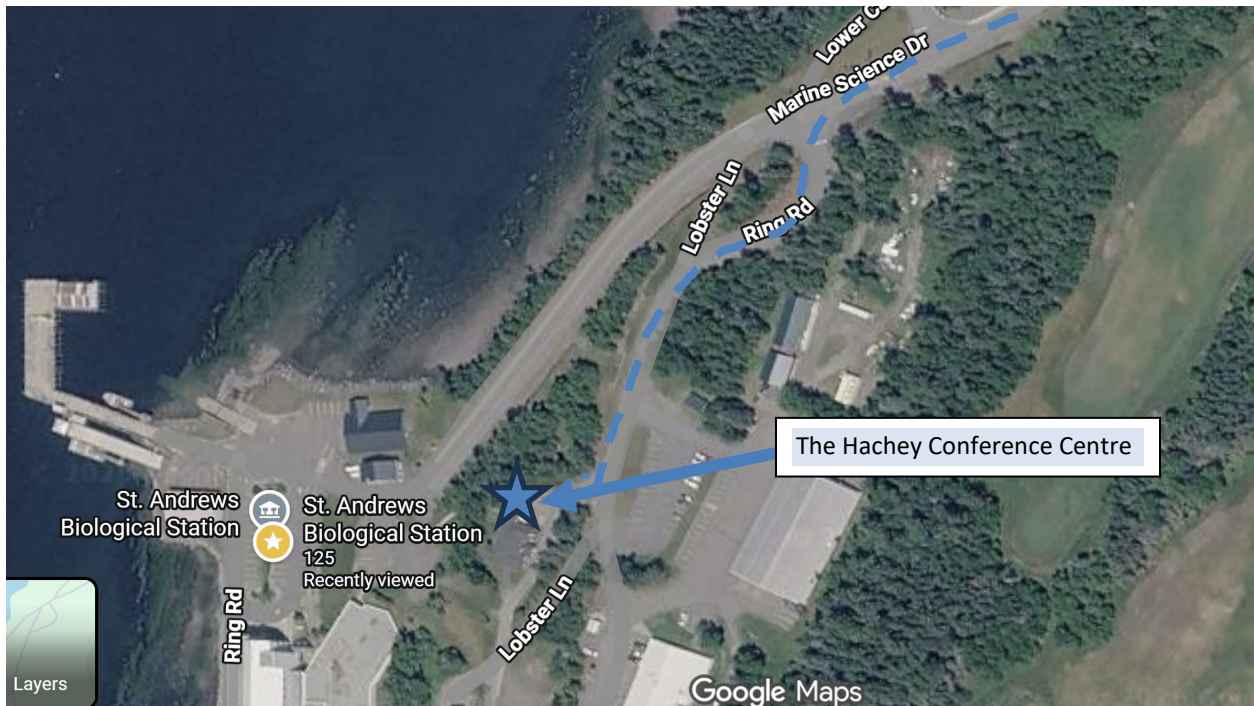
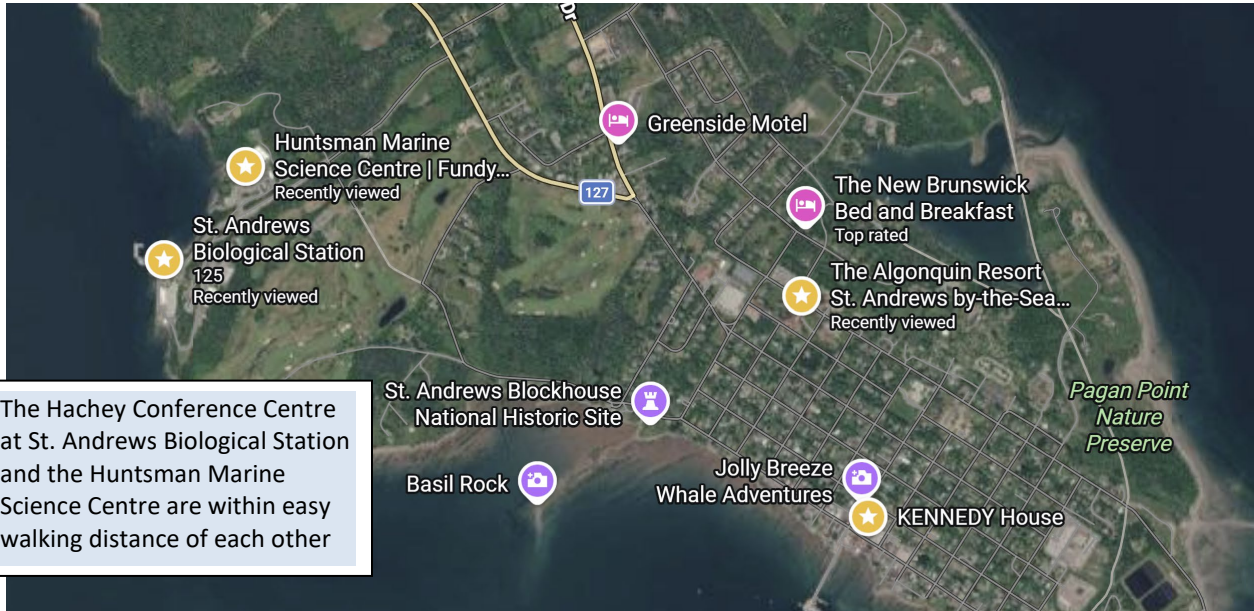
### Thursday, May 28, 2026, 8:45 AM – 12 PM (AT) / 7:45 AM – 11:00 AM (ET)

#### Joint Council / Working Group Meeting

- Hachey Conference Centre, St. Andrews Biological Station  
125 Marine Science Drive, St. Andrews, New Brunswick (*see access details above*)
- Continental breakfast provided on site.

Map of GOMC Event Venues

Map of GOMC event venues in St. Andrews, NB (Algonquin Resort, St. Andrews Biological Station/Hachey Conference Centre, Huntsman Marine Science Center, and The Kennedy House)



**MEETING AGENDA – Day 1**

All Times AT

<b>Joint Council / Working Group Meeting • Wednesday, May 27, 2026</b> <b>Hachey Conference Centre, St. Andrews Biological Station</b> <b>125 Marine Science Drive, St. Andrews, New Brunswick</b>		
8:45 AM	<i>Continental breakfast and networking</i>	
9:00 AM	<b>GOMC Council Meeting Opens - Welcome and Overview of Meeting Agenda</b> <i>Rene Pelletier, NH Department of Environmental Services</i>	
9:05 AM	<b>Welcome and Remarks from New Brunswick Host</b> <i>Christie Ward, NB Dept. of Environment and Local Government</i>	
9:20 AM	<b>Opening Prayer</b> <i>Member of Peskotomuhkati Nation in Canada (invited)</i>	
9:40 AM	<b>Consent Agenda</b> <i>Draft December 9, 2025 GOMC Meeting Summary / Record of Decisions</i>	✓ For Decision
9:45 AM	<b>Saltwater Neighbors in and around the Gulf of Maine</b> <i>John Duff, J.D., LL.M., University of Massachusetts, Boston</i>	✓ For Information
10:15 AM	<b>BREAK</b>	
10:30 AM	<b>THEMATIC SESSION 1 – COASTAL CONSERVATION POLICIES AND FRAMEWORKS</b> <i>Facilitator: Christie Ward, NB DELG</i> Panel presentations and facilitated discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New Brunswick State of the Coast</b>, <i>Lindsay Graves, NB DELG</i></li> <li>• <b>Marine Protected Areas</b>, <i>Roberta Clowater, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, New Brunswick Chapter</i></li> <li>• <b>Musquash Estuary Marine Protected Area</b> <i>Bryden Bone, Fisheries and Oceans Canada</i></li> </ul>	✓ For Information
12:00 PM	<b>Highlights from the Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership / ACCESS Conference</b> <i>Peter Wells, Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership</i>	✓ For Information
12:15 PM	<b>Luncheon Roundtable</b> (lunch provided on site) GOMC members will share key updates for each jurisdiction and agency during lunch. Highlights will supplement the written updates provided in the meeting packet.	
1:30 PM	<b>Depart for Huntsman Marine Science Centre</b> GOMC members will walk to the nearby Huntsman Marine Science Centre. Plans for the visit include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Explore HMSC</i></li> <li>• <i>Highlights from HMSC Executive Director Chris Bridger</i></li> <li>• <i>Research Tour</i></li> </ul>	✓ For Information
4:00 PM	<b>Activities at HMSC will end at approximately 4:00 PM</b>	

**GOMC EVENING EVENT – Day 1**

<b>GOMC Dinner and Awards Ceremony • Wednesday, May 27, 2026</b> <b>The Algonquin Resort, Shaughnessy Ballroom</b> <b>184 Adolphus Street, St. Andrews, New Brunswick</b>	
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	<p><b>GOMC Dinner and Awards Ceremony</b>                  GOMC members, award winners, and guests will attend a dinner with a cash bar followed by the Gulf of Maine Council 2026 Awards Ceremony.</p>

**MEETING AGENDA – Day 2**

All Times AT

<b>Joint Council / Working Group Meeting • Thursday, May 28, 2026</b> <b>Hachey Conference Centre, St. Andrews Biological Station</b> <b>125 Marine Science Drive, St. Andrews, New Brunswick</b>		
8:45 AM	<i>Continental breakfast and networking</i>	
9:00 AM	<p><b>Gulf of Maine Council Meeting Opens</b>  <i>Rene Pelletier, NH Department of Environmental Services</i></p>	
9:05 AM	<p><b>THEMATIC SESSION 2 – COASTAL FLOODING AND GROUNDWATER MODELING</b>  <i>Facilitator: Marcel Belaval, USGS</i>                  Panel presentations and facilitated discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NH Groundwater Model</b> <i>Jayne Knott, JFK Environmental Services LLC</i></li> <li>• <b>Compound Coastal Flooding</b> <i>Janet Barclay, USGS</i></li> <li>• <b>NERACOOS Flooding/Inundation Modeling</b> <i>Jake Kritzer, NERACOOS</i></li> </ul>	✓ For Information
10:35 AM	<b>BREAK</b>	
10:45 AM	<p><b>Landscape-Scale Restoration: Coastal Systems, Fish Connectivity, and Wetlands</b>  <i>Adam Campbell, Ducks Unlimited Canada</i>                  Overview of Ducks Unlimited work and its connection to the health of the Gulf of Maine, with emphasis on coastal restoration and fish passage initiatives.</p>	✓ For Information
11:15 AM	<p><b>Gulf of Maine US / Canada Collaboration</b>                  Informal discussion about opportunities for collaboration identified during the GOMC meeting and associated networking events.</p>	✓ For Information and Direction
11:45 AM	<p><b>GOMC Leadership Transition and Plans for Upcoming Secretariat Year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>GOMC Secretariat passes from New Hampshire / USGS to New Brunswick</i></li> <li>• <i>New Brunswick team will highlight plans for the upcoming Secretariat Year</i></li> </ul>	✓ For Information and Direction
12:00 PM	<b>Meeting Adjourns</b>	

### **GOMC December 9, 2025 Meeting - Draft Record of Decisions**

GOMC Council and Working Group members participated in a half-day hybrid meeting on Tuesday, December 9, 2025. Several US participants joined the meeting in person at the NH Department of Environmental Services office in Portsmouth, NH.

#### **Meeting Participants**

Tori Aver, Nova Scotia Department of Intergovernmental Affairs; Matthew Baker, Nova Scotia Department of Energy; Carolina Bastidas, MIT Sea Grant; Marcel Belaval, USGS; Alison Brizius, Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management; Priscilla Brooks, Conservation Law Foundation; Todd Chaudhry, USGS; Steve Couture, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services; Devon Domeyer, Maine Coastal Program; Jim Craddock, Yellohoose (GOMC IT); Demi Fox, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Janet Duffy-Anderson, Gulf of Maine Research Institute; Kathlene Farrell, Nova Scotia Department of Intergovernmental Affairs; Luke Gaulton, Fisheries and Oceans Canada; Lindsay Graves, New Brunswick Department of Environment and Local Government; Glen Herbert, Fisheries and Oceans Canada; Don Hudson, The Chewonki Foundation; Danielle Kamberalis, NOAA Marine Debris Program; Joan LeBlanc, Gulf of Maine Council; Justine Lundsted, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Regina Lyons, US Environmental Protection Agency; Alison Smith, New Brunswick Department of Environment and Local Government; Tyler Soleau, Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management; Kate Swails, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Lauren Tisdale, US Environmental Protection Agency; Theresa Torrent, Maine Coastal Program; Sharri Venno, Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians; Christie Ward, New Brunswick Department of Environment and Local Government; Scott Weese, Environment and Climate Change Canada; Erin Wilson, Maine Coastal Program

#### **Nova Scotia Offshore Wind Update**

Matthew Baker, NS Department of Energy, provided an update regarding Nova Scotia's offshore wind planning activities. NS plans to develop up to 60GW of fixed bottom wind energy across four planning areas in the Gulf of Maine. The first offshore wind project, which is proposed by Wind West, would support energy markets in Atlantic Canada and the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. Details regarding Nova Scotia offshore wind planning are available at: <https://novascotia.ca/offshore-wind/>

#### **Advancing Coastal Restoration Projects**

GOMC members discussed some of the challenges associated with permitting and implementation of coastal restoration projects such as salt marsh restoration, living shorelines, shellfish restoration, and dam removals. Members expressed interest in convening an in-depth session on these topics at a future GOMC meeting.

#### *Key points of discussion:*

- In NH, challenges to salt marsh restoration include identifying land ownership, understanding restoration techniques (some are experimental), and monitoring

- There is a need to incentivize the monitoring of living shorelines approaches / current monitoring requirements often serve as a barrier
- Maine is working on streamlining permitting for living shorelines
- In NB, permitting framework doesn't align with living shorelines
- NROC is working on a new living shorelines theme for the Northeast Ocean Data Portal
- Maine is developing a living shorelines viewer to highlight case studies in Maine
- Sourcing of native vegetation to support restoration projects can be challenging
- NH has completed an inventory of coastal infrastructure, identifying sites that may be suitable for living shorelines
- It is important to understand how to define and showcase 'successful' living shorelines projects
- Understanding how wave action risks dovetail with flood and safety risks is also important
- USGS noted that remote sensing can be a cost-efficient tool for monitoring/understanding coastal change (USGS can share information about some of the tools they use)
- Coastal relocation is another key issue to consider in the mix of coastal resilience and adaptation

#### **New Brunswick Clean Water Act Update**

Alison Smith of NB Dept. of Environment and Local Government provided an overview of New Brunswick's efforts to update its Clean Water Act to: 1) modernize and strengthen protections for water quality, water quantity, and aquatic ecosystems; 2) update permitting and management frameworks to reflect current practices and science, and 3) improve transparency and access to information for water-related programs. NB completed a consultation period of stakeholder engagement to inform the Clean Water Act update. Next steps include publishing a report about 'what we heard' in winter 2026, publishing a position paper in summer 2026, amending the Clean Water Act in 2026 and 2027, and amending regulations in 2027 and 2028. Details are available at:

<https://www.gnb.ca/en/gov/engagement-consultation/updating-clean-water-act.html>.

#### **New Brunswick Coastal Planning Initiative**

Alison Smith also provided an update regarding NB's efforts to develop a coastal plan that will focus on addressing erosion, sea level rise, storm surge, and other risks to natural ecosystems, built infrastructure, and the well-being of residents, especially as development continues in high-risk coastal areas. NB recently completed a period of engagement with surveys to solicit input and will host additional engagement and publish a draft State of the Coast plan in 2026. Details are available at:

<https://www.gnb.ca/en/gov/engagement-consultation/coastal-plan.html>

#### **GOMC Website Redesign**

Jim Cradock and Joan LeBlanc provided an update regarding the development of a new GOMC website and shared a preview. The new site will highlight themes - such as climate and coastal resilience, habitat and marine life, coastal and marine spatial planning, environmental monitoring, marine debris, and working waterfront - and provide more images and opportunities to highlight Gulf of Maine news items. A beta version will be available for internal GOMC review in early 2026.

### **GOMC Plans for 2026**

GOMC members expressed interest in convening an in-person GOMC meeting and concurrent awards program in New Brunswick during the Spring of 2026. GOMC will meet with the NB team to explore options. GOMC will circulate a call for awards nominations in early 2026.

### **GOMC Roundtable Discussion**

GOMC members shared updates and announcements relevant to the Gulf of Maine, including:

- Joceyn Runnebaum has joined the GOMC as the new Maine Coastal Program Director.
- The Massachusetts Final ResilientCoasts Plan was released in November 2025.  
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/resilientcoasts-initiative#final-plan>
- Massachusetts launched a statewide Biodiversity Plan in August 2025.  
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/biodiversity-goals-for-massachusetts>
- NH DES is moving forward with several coastal planning efforts, including development of a hydrodynamic sea level rise and storm surge model, a watershed resilience plan, and a groundwater rise model. Details regarding the hydrodynamic model:  
<https://www.des.nh.gov/about/boards-and-committees/coastal-flood-risk>
- The Regional Association for Research on the Gulf of Maine (RARGOM) plans to host a science meeting in 2026. Several GOMC members, including Joan LeBlanc, Theresa Torrent, and Carolina Bastidas, are assisting with planning.
- NOAA's new Gulf of Maine Marine Debris Action Plan will be published soon. Preparation of the plan has involved input from US and Canadian partners throughout the region.
- NOAA also noted the following awards for marine debris removal projects:  
<https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/funding-opportunities/noaa-marine-debris-program-awards-13-new-projects-funding-remove-marine-debris>
- Maine has refreshed its Blue Carbon Network and hosted a symposium this past fall.  
<https://sites.google.com/view/maine-blue-carbon-network/home>
- DFO has reaffirmed that marine conservation targets of 30 x 30 remain a priority.
- Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians is working with Canadian agencies to develop a stewardship plan for the Saint John River.
- The Cashes Ledge Area in the Gulf of Maine was officially added to NOAA's inventory of potential national marine sanctuaries in early 2025. Link to recent write-up by CLF:  
<https://www.clf.org/newsroom/clf-proposes-cashes-ledge-as-national-marine-sanctuary/>
- USGS's recent Gulf of Maine science efforts include developing a new marsh migration analysis for Maine and Massachusetts, and working in collaboration with BOEM on seafloor mapping of benthic habitat.

Meeting materials and presentations available at: <https://www.gulfofmaine.org/public/gulf-of-maine-council-on-the-marine-environment/about-the-council/meeting-documents/>

*Record of decisions prepared by Joan LeBlanc, GOMC Council Coordinator*

## NOAA May 2026 Updates

### OCM Funding

- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's [National Coastal Resilience Fund](#) received 575 pre-proposals totaling \$852M, including 82 from New England (\$131M, 14%). Proposal reviews are ongoing and applicants will be informed later this month if they're invited to submit a full proposal.

### Data Updates

- [Benthic Data Hub](#) provides a convenient, centralized platform for accessing benthic habitat data
- Updated [Sea Level Calculator](#) launched. Updates include new tool tips, a user help portal, additional learning resources and the most requested user features such as, being able to download the data for a specific quick view and a more mobile-friendly design.

### Marine Debris Updates

- Late last year, the NOAA Marine Debris Program [announced 13 projects](#) awarded for funding under the NOAA Marine Debris Removal and Interception Technologies grant awards for fiscal year 2025.
- Ocean Conservancy, with support provided by a 2024 award from the NOAA Marine Debris Program, is requesting applications for their [Large Marine Debris Removal Project](#) for the removal of large marine debris, including derelict fishing gear, from remote and hard-to-reach marine environments. Applications are due on May 31, 2026 by 5:00 PM ET.
- The new edition of the [Gulf of Maine Marine Debris Action Plan](#) was published in April. If you are interested in becoming involved in implementation or would like to learn more, please reach out to Demi (demi.fox@noaa.gov).
- The New England Aquarium, in coordination with the NOAA Marine Debris Program, will host an in-person symposium for all active Northeast Region grantees and Marine Debris Action Plan participants in early December 2026. Please reach out to Demi for additional information.

## USGS May 2026 Updates

### USGS Woods Hole Coastal and Marine Science Center

- GeoPackage containing an inventory of non-proprietary studies by developers and other researchers to describe the seabed geohazards on the United States' Atlantic and Pacific continental shelves. [GeoPackage of Seabed Hazards to Offshore Infrastructure | U.S. Geological Survey](#)
- Data Release - Map series depicting performance metrics to help guide restoration planning and investment, through identification of priority marshes in northeast coastal parks [Geospatial data in support of structured decision making for northeast coastal parks | U.S. Geological Survey](#)
- Journal Article: Assessing decadal-scale coastal change likelihood to define the accuracy and application of scientific information <https://www.usgs.gov/publications/assessing-decadal-scale-coastal-change-likelihood-define-accuracy-and-application>
- Digital Shoreline Analysis System (DSAS) - A standalone application that calculates shoreline or boundary change over time, enabling users to calculate rate-of-change statistics from multiple historical shoreline positions. - [Digital Shoreline Analysis System \(DSAS\) | U.S. Geological Survey](#)
- Coastal Ecosystem Prediction System (CEPS) - Ongoing project, working to deliver nationwide predictions of marsh habitat changes with sea-level rise (2nd year of a 3-year pilot study that includes Plum Island Estuary in Massachusetts). <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/d3e9fac989b948dca95fc66445f7b4d6>

### USGS New England Water Science Center

- GOMC related publications (since May 2025):
  - [Erosion potential and flood vulnerability of streams and stream crossings at Acadia National Park, Maine | U.S. Geological Survey](#)
  - [An automated geographic information system-based hydraulic modeling tool for developing preliminary culvert designs for stream crossings in Massachusetts | U.S. Geological Survey](#)
  - [Low streamflows in Massachusetts: Variability over space and time and relations with climatic and basin variables | U.S. Geological Survey](#)
  - [Water-resources inventory and assessment at Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument | U.S. Geological Survey](#)
  - [Effects of groundwater withdrawals for water bottling and municipal use, Wards Brook Valley, Maine and New Hampshire | U.S. Geological Survey](#)
- Monitoring Networks
  - GOM [Surface Water Discharge and Water Level monitoring network](#) (Water Data for the Nation)
  - [Water Information From Space](#): WISP is an interactive dashboard with real-time satellite hydrology data and streamflow and water level data.
  - Coastal Water Quality monitoring in GOM includes 3 new GOM sites, in partnership with MA [Coastal Water-Quality Monitoring in Massachusetts | U.S. Geological Survey](#)

**RARGOM May 2026 Updates**

**RARGOM Science Meeting**

The Gulf of Maine Council is working with NERACOOS, CLF, and numerous academic and organizational partners on the RARGOM Steering Committee to plan RARGOM's next annual science meeting, which will take place on November 4, 2026, at the University of New Hampshire. Details provided below.



**SAVE THE DATE**

**2026 RARGOM Annual Science Meeting**

Wednesday, November 4, 2026  
University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH

**Navigating Change in the Gulf of Maine: Science, People, and the Next Generation**

- Exploring a changing system: biological, ecological, physical, and chemical perspectives
- Connecting science, communities, and management
- Building resilience and advancing remediation
- Innovating with emerging tools and approaches
- Finding the bright spots: stories of progress and hope

This year's meeting will feature keynote speakers, presentations, lightning talks, a poster session, and a networking reception to catch up with colleagues and make new connections. Students and early-career participants are especially encouraged to participate.

Registration and abstract submission details for posters and presentations coming soon!

*The Regional Association for Research on the Gulf of Maine (RARGOM) Science Meeting serves as a vital and inclusive platform for sharing innovative research and fostering collegiality among Gulf of Maine scientists and environmental decision-makers. RARGOM meetings provide a venue for attendees to network with peers, gain inspiration from expert keynote speakers, and access opportunities for regional collaboration.*

*Meeting details and updates will be posted to the  
RARGOM website at <https://www.rargom.org/annual-science-meeting/>.*

<b>Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment Meeting Briefing Note</b>				
<b>Title of Agenda Item:</b> GOMC Plans for Upcoming New Brunswick Secretariat Year				
<b>Submitted by:</b> Christie Ward, NB DELG, Lindsay Graves, NB DELG, and Joan LeBlanc, GOMC				
<b>Type of Item</b> (place X in appropriate box)	<b>For Decision</b>	<b>For Direction</b> x	<b>For Information</b> x (Internal GOMC)	<b>For Information</b> (External)
<p><b>Background:</b>                      New Brunswick Department of Environment and Local Government will lead the Gulf of Maine Council during the two-year Secretariat from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2028. The Gulf of Maine Council anticipates conducting the following activities during the 2026 / 2027 Secretariat Year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Joint GOMC Council / Working Group Meetings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Host a virtual joint Council / Working Group meeting in December 2026.</li> <li>○ Host an in-person Council / Working Group meeting in May or June 2027. The meeting location has not yet been determined. The leadership team welcomes US partners to host the 2027 spring in-person meeting in the US if there is interest.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <u>GOMC Awards Program.</u> GOMC will host a 2027 awards program. Potential plans include issuing a call for nominations in early 2027 and hosting an awards program in conjunction with the 2027 GOMC Council / Working Group meeting in the spring.</li> <li>• <u>GOMC Secretariat Team.</u> The GOMC Secretariat Team will meet on a virtual basis either monthly or as needed.</li> <li>• <u>GOMC Two-Year Work Plan.</u> GOMC will update its work plan during the summer of 2026 to reflect the organization’s focus on bi-national collaboration, networking, and sharing of tools and resources aimed at promoting a healthy and sustainable Gulf of Maine ecosystem.</li> <li>• <u>RARGOM Science Meeting.</u> GOMC will continue working in partnership with several regional partners to plan and host the RARGOM Science Meeting scheduled to take place at the University of NH in Durham, NH, on November 4, 2026.</li> <li>• <u>Other Activities and Regional Collaboration.</u> GOMC will collaborate with partners such as NERACOOS, NROC, and GMRI; explore opportunities to improve understanding about environmental conditions in the Gulf of Maine; convene opportunities for dialogue on priority topics; and explore opportunities to secure funding for initiatives that will advance the GOMC’s mission to ensure a healthy and sustainable Gulf of Maine watershed, including potential establishment of a Gulf of Maine regional program (via the US EPA).</li> </ul>				
<b>Actions, Outcomes, or Decisions Requested</b> (optional):				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback welcome</li> </ul>				