

Community-Based Habitat Enhancement Program 2012 Request for Proposals



The Casco Bay Estuary Partnership requests proposals for projects through its Community-Based Habitat Enhancement Program. **Proposals must be received by March 16, 2012.**

For more information on any aspect of this RFP, please contact Matt Craig, CBEP Technical Program Coordinator, at 228-8359 or mcraig@usm.maine.edu.

BACKGROUND

The Casco Bay Estuary Partnership (CBEP) works to preserve the ecological integrity of Casco Bay and ensure compatible human uses of the Bay's resources, through public stewardship and effective management. The Community-Based Habitat Enhancement Program combines *Habitat Conservation* and *Stewardship*, two core CBEP focus areas, to support on-the-ground stewardship projects with clear environmental outcomes. 2012 marks the second year of this Program.

GOAL

The goal of the Community-Based Habitat Enhancement Program is to support local, community-based projects that combine habitat enhancement activities with strong educational and/or stewardship components. Priority will be given to projects that protect or improve aquatic habitat and water quality. Through this Program, CBEP provides partial funding to on-the-ground projects that may not necessarily address priorities identified by the Casco Bay Habitat Restoration Committee, but give community members, particularly youth, an opportunity to be involved with habitat enhancement and stewardship. (For more information, see CBEP's *Protecting & Restoring Habitat* [factsheet](#).)

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for funding, projects must meet specific criteria:

The project must occur in the [Casco Bay Watershed](#) (see map, right).

Projects should support implementation of at least one of the following Action Items from the [Casco Bay Plan](#) (2006 update):

- Habitat Conservation, Action #3 (support local restoration activities)
- Stewardship, Action #1 (support youth educational activities related to Casco Bay)
- Stormwater, Action #5 (promote vegetated buffers and Low Impact Development)



Casco Bay, and the Casco Bay Watershed

ELIGIBILITY (continued from pg. 1)

Applicant organizations must be legally recognized entities. Examples of suitable partners include:

- Land trusts
- Youth conservation corps
- Schools
- Snowmobile clubs
- Watershed groups
- Municipal/county/state governments
- Conservation commissions
- Non-governmental organizations
- Civic groups
- Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts
- Neighborhood associations

For-profit corporations are not eligible to apply for funding. However, collaborative partnerships that involve businesses are welcome.

Priority will be given to projects that result in the protection or improvement of aquatic habitat and water quality, such as:

- Riparian buffer planting ([example](#))
- Fish passage improvements at identified barriers ([example](#))
- Coastal clean-ups; removal of trash, waste, marine debris ([example](#))
- Community and watershed-scale efforts to infiltrate stormwater runoff, such as construction of rain gardens, downspout disconnects, and BMPs to reduce effective impervious surface area ([example](#))
- Stream bank stabilization using natural materials ([example](#))
- Livestock exclusion from rivers and streams ([example](#))
- Restoration of sites identified in an existing restoration inventory or plan, including:
 - Gulf of Maine Council [Potential Restoration Sites](#) in the Casco Bay Watershed
 - [Lower Presumpscot River Habitat Restoration Inventory](#)
 - Royal River Habitat Restoration Inventory ([map 1](#), [map 2](#), [map 3](#))
 - [Gulf of Maine Atlas of Tidal Restrictions](#)
 - [Restoration of Fringing Marsh Habitat in Casco Bay Estuary](#)
 - 319 watershed management plans
- Project-based environmental education

Additional stewardship and habitat enhancement activities that do not directly benefit aquatic habitat and water quality, such as invasive species removal, may be considered, but on a less competitive basis.

The following types of projects will generally not be considered:

- Projects that are required due to regulatory permit obligations
- Trail work, unless it will result in direct water quality improvements
- Water quality monitoring
- Use of rip-rap or other hard structures
- Educational signs
- Storm-drain stenciling
- Classroom-based activities or field trips that do not focus on habitat enhancement

Applicants are encouraged to contact CBEP for clarification about project eligibility prior to submitting proposals.

BUDGET & CONTRACT

Successful applicants will enter into a contract with the University of Maine System, acting through CBEP, and funding will be dispersed following an invoice for work performed, unless otherwise agreed to by CBEP in advance. The contract will serve as a formal agreement between CBEP and the applicant. Proposals, including any revisions, will serve as the basis for contracts.

Fund requests will be capped at \$5,000 per project unless prior approval is granted by CBEP. Funds are intended to primarily support implementation of projects on-the-ground. Applicants are welcome to contact CBEP to request additional funding, and for suggestions about how to fund larger restoration projects. Cost-sharing with multiple sources of funding is encouraged.

Cost-sharing from non-federal sources will be counted by CBEP as match. Applicants will be asked to track and report non-federal match. Proposals should include an estimate of anticipated cost sharing, and specify whether contributions are non-federal in origin, as well as whether additional sources of funding have been secured. Match can take a variety of forms, including: cash; volunteer labor; donated goods or services; technical support or equipment loaned by municipalities, and so on. Although projects do not need to meet a specific match threshold to receive funding, the extent of non-federal match will be considered during review of proposals.

Any funding not expended by October 31, 2012 will automatically revert to CBEP unless agreed to otherwise in the contract. All project activities are expected to take place during the 2012 field season. Projects with a timeline beyond 2012 should contact CBEP to discuss eligibility.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The suggested maximum length for proposals is up to five pages. Proposals should include:

Cover Letter – The cover letter should contain the project title, amount of funds requested, a brief project description, name of applicant organization, and key staff contact information.

Project Narrative – Briefly describe the proposed approach, outputs, and expected outcomes, including:

- Geographic scope: latitude/longitude, description of project footprint, estimated area affected.
- Statement of need and project objective(s).
- Project plan – A list of work tasks to achieve objective(s);
- Anticipated benefits. What environmental outcomes do you hope to achieve?
- Indicate whether a permit is required and if so, how permitting will be handled.
- Describe the outreach/PR associated with the project. Applicants are encouraged to coordinate project activities with National Estuaries Day, September 29, 2012, if convenient.
- Letter(s) of support from property owner(s) (required).
- Map and photo(s) of the existing site conditions (optional, but encouraged).

Budget & Budget Narrative – Applicants must submit a budget (see example budget, pg. 4) with an accompanying narrative which details project costs and explains how costs relate to implementation. Please identify the source of non-federal match and describe how match advances implementation. Volunteer labor may be valued at \$21.36 per hour¹. Contributed professional services can be valued as match at documented professional rates. Other federal funds or non-federal cost-share funds that cannot be counted as match, but will still contribute to the overall project, should also be described in the budget narrative.

¹ Based on 2010 rate. Current rate can be found at http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time.

Example Budget Format:

	Amount Requested from CBEP	Matching Funds	Other Funds*	Total Budget
Budget Categories				
Supplies/Materials**				
Equipment***				
Travel				
Personnel				
Other costs				
Total Project Costs				

*Includes federal funds or other non-federal funds that cannot be counted as match

** Includes consumable items, such as trees, mulch, etc.

*** Includes items that will continue to have use beyond the duration of the contract, such as tools

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION & REVIEW

Electronic copies of proposals must be received by March 16, 2012. Paper copies are discouraged unless necessary. Proposals may be submitted to mcraig@usm.maine.edu, or delivered to:

Matt Craig/2012 CBHE Program
 Casco Bay Estuary Partnership
 229 Wishcamper Center
 PO Box 9300, 34 Bedford St.
 Portland, ME 04104-9300

A subcommittee comprised of CBEP’s Board, staff, and partners will evaluate proposals. Proposals will be evaluated for adherence to the RFP, and scored according to the following criteria:

- The degree to which the project incorporates local community member/youth participation
- The degree to which the project addresses the Program goal, stated on pg. 1
- The extent of aquatic habitat and water quality benefits
- The likelihood that the proposal will achieve the stated objective(s)
- The reasoning of the project plan
- The soundness and detail of the project budget, including the degree of non-federal match
- The degree to which funds will be used for on-the-ground project implementation

CBEP reserves the right to exclude additional activities not specified above from funding, if deemed inconsistent with goals of this Program.