

Task: Regional Challenge Grant – Creation and Staffing of a Sea Level Adaptation Working Group for Saco Bay, Including Biddeford, Saco, and Scarborough

Task ID:

Applicant ID: Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission

Timeframe: July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010

Grant Amount: \$25,000

Local Match: \$12,500 cash, \$12,500 in-kind Planning & GIS services from three Participating Communities (\$4,167 cash, \$4,167 in-kind from each)

Overview

In the early summer of 2009, the Town and City Managers of Saco, Scarborough, Old Orchard Beach, and Biddeford, have discussed the idea of the creation of a Saco Bay Sea Level Adaptation Working Group (SLAWG) for the purpose of developing and implement regional climate change adaptation strategies, to respond to rising sea levels and to become more resilient to coastal storms. A Regional Challenge Grant from the Maine State Planning Office is desired, so that a steering committee, with two members appointed from each community, can develop a detailed plan leading to the creation of the SLAWG. The steering committee would develop the parameters of such a working group, developing its structure, bylaws, charge and work plan, with the assistance of SMRPC and participation of GPCOG.

At this time, the Town of Old Orchard Beach is not interested in joining in this project, although it is likely that over time, given the number of adaptation projects OOB is pursuing which have regional components, the Town will find it in its best interest to participate.

Specific Subtasks

Subtask 1: Make presentation to Councils in Biddeford, Saco and Scarborough to obtain support and seek appointments to Steering Committee.

SMRPC will request a 1st drawdown of 10% of the grant amount, or payment of \$2,500, upon completion of Subtask 1. Meetings with Councils will be held in September.

Subtask 2: Convene and hold a series of meetings with Steering Committee and create report.

Once the steering committee is established from subtask 1, SMRPC, with input from GPCOG, will develop a detailed plan and possible interlocal agreement, leading to the creation of the SLAWG. It is anticipated that the interlocal agreement will have at least three municipalities as parties, and will agree to utilize SMRPC for its staffing and administration. Maine State Planning Office may attend meetings and may provide input. The steering committee would develop the parameters of such a working group, developing its structure, bylaws, charge and work plan.

Duties of the SLAWG could include:

- Commenting on federal or state beach nourishment/erosion control efforts that affect more than one community, including management or deposition of dredged materials.

- Identifying infrastructure vulnerable to storms and sea level rise such as culverts, storm drains, bridges or tide gates; using regional approaches to plan for improvements; and obtaining grants or appropriations for construction projects on a regional basis, or supporting individual municipal grant or appropriation requests for such projects.
- Recommending the standardizing of floodplain management standards and building code interpretations across jurisdictions to improve resiliency of individual private structures.
- Recommending standardizing of ordinance review standards affecting the shorelands adjacent to Saco Bay, as well as standardizing review and controls for water activities across jurisdictions, for structures and activities affected by sea level rise or coastal storms. Such water activities may or may not include land-based development, and could include aquaculture, marina, or green energy production projects.
- Providing non-binding comments on various applications for development review affecting Saco Bay that may be vulnerable to sea level rise or coastal storms, to those individual review authorities having jurisdiction.

It is estimated that six meetings of the steering committee will be held from October 2009 to December 31, 2009.

SMRPC will request a 2nd drawdown of 40% of the grant amount, or payment of \$10,000, upon completion of Subtask 1.

Subtask 3: Present steering committee results and present interlocal agreement to create SLAWG.

During January-February 2010, the results of subtask 2 will be presented to the Councils. A need for six meetings is predicted. Adjustments may need to be made to any interlocal agreement to satisfy all parties and respond to commenters, with follow-up meetings as necessary.

SMRPC will request a 3rd drawdown of 25% of the grant amount, or payment of \$6,250, upon completion of Subtask 3.

Subtask 4: Convene the SLAWG and begin to assemble a work program according to the steering committee report and interlocal agreement. It is estimated that four meetings of the SLAWG will occur this period. Projected timeframe: March – June 2010.

Subtask 5: Progress report. By July 15th, 2010, SMRPC will provide a progress report for FY 2010.

SMRPC will request a 4th and final drawdown of 25% of the grant amount, or payment of \$6,250, upon completion of Subtask 5.