



Submerged Lands Newsletter

A yearly update of developments in the Bureau of Parks and Lands - Submerged Lands Program for submerged land lessees, easement holders and other interested parties.

The Submerged Lands Program

Maine’s submerged lands and publicly owned waters belong to everyone. Our coastal waters, Great Ponds and international boundary rivers are held in trust for all citizens to use and are managed for Public Trust Rights that include fishing, fowling, and navigation. These waters and the lands beneath them are a finite resource that must accommodate many uses such as commercial and recreational fishing, recreational boating, commercial shipping, aquaculture, and other users. Private water-dependent structures such as wharves, piers, and floating docks are allowed, provided they do not unreasonably interfere with the public’s use of these public waters. Permanent structures of any size and large temporary structures require a lease or easement issued by the Bureau of Parks and Lands (Bureau) for the right to be placed on or over publicly owned submerged lands. Permanent is defined as occupying submerged lands owned by the State of Maine for seven consecutive months during any one calendar year. These leases may only be granted if the structure is for a water-dependent use and can be located so that it does not interfere with Public Trust Rights or access to waterfront properties. New non-water-dependent structures including, but not limited to, residential dwellings, restaurants, and fill are not considered a Public Trust Right and are thus generally not permitted, regardless of size.

Storm Damage

If your leased structures have suffered any damage from storms such as the January 2024 winter storms, please contact our office and let us know if you plan to rebuild. We can also amend your conveyance to reflect any physical changes to the footprint of your structures.

Submerged Lands Supports Public Water Access

The Submerged Lands Program uses revenue collected from submerged lands conveyances to fund public water access projects, provide effective harbor management, and ensure continued Public Trust Rights for Maine Citizens. Below are the recipients of our eighth annual Harbor Management and Access Grant program.

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Important Dates

- January 1 - Annual Lease Fee Invoices Sent
- February - 1 Payments Due
- April 1 - HMA Grant Opens
- May 15 - HMA Grant Closes
- June - Easement Registrations Invoices Sent
- July - Renewal Notices Sent
- July - Revaluation Notices



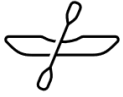
Southwest Harbor 2024

2024 Harbor Management and Access Grant Recipients				
Town	Project	HMA Funds Requested	Waterbody	Type of Use
Belfast	Float Replacement	\$14,910	Belfast Harbor	Recreational/Commercial
Bristol	Boat Ramp Replacement	\$15,000	New Harbor	Recreational/Commercial
Brooksville	Float/Ramp Replacement	\$7,200	Smith Cove	Recreational/Commercial
Chebeague Island	Float Replacement	\$11,625	Casco Bay	Recreational/Commercial
Scarborough	Hoist Replacement	\$15,000	Scarborough Anchorage	Commercial
Southwest Harbor	Town Dock Repair	\$15,000	Southwest Harbor	Recreational/Commercial
Wells	Float Replacement	\$15,000	Webhannet River	Recreational/Commercial
Wiscasset	Pier Removal/New Floats	\$15,000	Sheepscot River	Recreational/Commercial

Additional Projects Funded in 2024



Boating Facilities Program for reconstruction of **Toddy Pond** boat launch facility and engineering for a new launch facility at **Square Lake**.



Inland Fisheries and Wildlife for construction of a new hand-carry boat ramp at **Salt Pond, Blue Hill**.



Maine Island Trail Association for ongoing management of coastal islands.



State of Maine **Harbor Masters Association** for annual harbor master training and certification.



Maine Department of **Marine Resources** for shellfish monitoring



More information about what we do can be found on our website: https://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/about/submerged_lands.shtml

Annual Reminders

Renewals—Most leases and easements are issued for a 30-year term. Several months prior to the end of the term, the Bureau sends a notice that you will need to apply for a new 30-year conveyance. This is sent during the summer months when it is easier to check measurements and take photographs. The renewal process includes sending notification to the municipality and in certain situations, to others within close proximity to the site, informing them that a renewal application is being reviewed by the Bureau.

Modifications—Please keep in mind that any changes to your structure, including the addition or removal of floats (seasonal or permanent), may require your lease or easement to be updated. If you are planning any modifications, please contact us.

Sale of Property—If you have sold or are planning to sell your property, please remember that your submerged lands lease or easement must be transferred or assigned to the new owner. To transfer a lease, please contact us for an application that would be filled out and returned by the new owner. The \$100.00 application processing fee can be paid by either party. **Changes in ownership name from an individual to a Trust also require a transfer of the conveyance.**

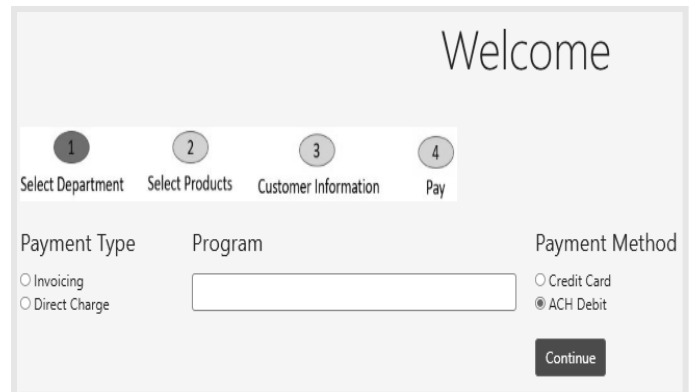
Online Payments with PayMaine!

We can now accept payments online for some of our annual rental fees and application fees.*

- Step 1: <https://gateway.maine.gov/acf/PayMaineEntry>
- Step 2: Select Invoicing or Direct charge
- Step 3: Select Submerged Lands from the list
- Step 4: Select ACH debit or credit card
- Step 5: Click the Continue button

Have your customer ID or invoice number ready. Payments are subject to service fees. * Not available for Slip Rental fees. Additional payment instructions online at:

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/about/submerged_lands.shtml



2024 SUBMERGED LANDS PROGRAM ACTIVITY SUMMARY

In 2024 the Bureau received 196 applications. 24 remain pending. In 2024 the Bureau reviewed and finalized 184 applications; of which 29 applications were resolutions from 2023 submissions. Of the 184 processed; 41 projects that were exempt and did not need a conveyance, 3 applications were withdrawn and 140 resulted in the issuance of a lease or easement. Of these 140 leases and easements there were 29 amendments, 14 renewals of expiring conveyances, 53 transfers, 42 new conveyances, and 2 Sunken Log Salvage Authorizations. The following list indicates the types of leases and easements approved or amended in 2024 and the total number of leases and easements in the Submerged Lands Program.

	Leases	Easements
Private piers/floats	58	17
Utility cables and pipeline	10	1
Commercial marine facilities	24	3
Commercial Fishing	4	8
Public service or public facilities	10	1
Dredging	2	—
Sunken Log Salvage	2	—
TOTALS	110	30

Total Program Conveyance Totals: Leases—1,606 Easements—823 Dredging Leases—8