

From Vision to Action: A Commitment to Maine's Quality of Place
GRANT APPLICATION FORM

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Legal Name of Applicant Organization: University of Southern Maine	
Address: PO Box 9300, 96 Falmouth Street City: Portland County: Cumberland State: Maine Zip: 04104-9300	
Phone: 207-780-4480	Fax: 207-780-4549
E-mail: sbotman@usm.maine.edu	Web Site: http://www.usm.maine.edu
Year Organized/Established: USM: 1970; CBEP: 1996	Number of Paid Staff: USM: 1,951; CBEP: 3.5 FTE
Executive Director: Dr. Selma Botman	IRS Employer ID Number (EIN): 01-6000769

If your organization does not have municipal or 501c3 tax-exempt status, please complete the following information:

Name of Fiscal Sponsor Organization:
Fiscal Sponsor Contact Person:
Address:
City:
State: **Zip:**
IRS Employer ID Number (EIN) of Fiscal Sponsor:

Please include signed fiscal sponsor agreement with your proposal

Please provide your mission statement: The University of Southern Maine's Casco Bay Estuary Partnership (CBEP) is devoted to protecting and restoring the water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat of the Casco Bay ecosystem, while ensuring compatible human uses.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Contact Person: Matt Craig	Phone: 207-228-8359	E-mail: mcraig@usm.maine.edu
In the space provided, write a one-sentence project description: The <i>Presumpscot Conservation Planning: Vision, Values & Priorities</i> initiative is a multi-stakeholder, collaborative process to prioritize land conservation needs in the Presumpscot River watershed.		
Amount requested: \$35,885	Total Project Budget: \$50,135	The desired start and ending dates for the grant funds: July 2009 – October 2010
Is this a multi-year request? No If yes, please provide an estimate for year 2 and 3 requests? Year 2: Year 3:		
Top Three Foundation Supporters for the organization: Switzer Foundation.	Other Foundations Supporting this Project:	

Select the County or Counties Served by this Project:

Androscoggin	Aroostook	Cumberland	Franklin	Hancock	Kennebec
Knox	Lincoln	Oxford	Piscataquis	Penobscot	Sagadahoc
Somerset	Waldo	Washington	York	Statewide	

Select the primary field of interest addressed by your project:

Arts & Cultural Heritage	Health & Welfare	Environment	Land Conservation
Economic Development	Education	Social Services	Youth
Civic Engagement	Theater		

PROJECT BUDGET

The use of this form is required. Please be as specific as possible. If your project is a collaborative effort, we encourage you to engage the partners in the budget process. As a lead organization you may include budget expenses that will be distributed to partners. You may also include in-kind and other revenue from partnering organizations.

Anticipated Expenses and Revenue:

ITEM	1. Amount requested	2. In-kind donations	3. Other funding sources			TOTAL BUDGET (Add columns 1-3)
			Include Earned Income (see below) and indicate if funding is already secured			
			Amount	Source	Secured ?	
<i>Example: speaker fees</i>	\$750		\$250	XYZ Foundation	yes	\$1,000
Meeting and process facilitation	\$7,500		\$3,000	Casco Bay Estuary Partnership	No	\$10,500
Meeting space and other meeting expenses	\$1,000	\$1,000				\$2,000
Maps, meeting handouts, outreach materials for meetings and other events	\$1,000		\$1,000	Casco Bay Estuary Partnership	No	\$2,000
Gathering available data and information	\$7,000					\$7,000
GIS analysis and map production	\$8,000					\$8,000
Regional inventory of existing and potential conservation lands	\$4,000					\$4,000
Reports – Printing, web preparation	\$1,500		\$1,000	Casco Bay Estuary Partnership	No	\$2,500
CBEP staff, meeting, and administrative support		\$8,250				\$8,250
SUBTOTAL	\$30,750	\$9,250	\$5,000			\$45,000
USM Indirect @ 16.7%	\$5,135					\$5,135
TOTAL EXPENSES (Program + Personnel)	\$35,885					\$50,135

Anticipated Earned Income (if applicable):

ITEM	AMOUNT
Sales	0
Fees for Service	0
Other, <i>please specify:</i>	
TOTAL ANTICIPATED INCOME:	

I. Project Description

The University of Southern Maine's Casco Bay Estuary Partnership (CBEP) is requesting \$35,885 for the *Presumpscot Conservation Planning: Vision, Values & Priorities* initiative on behalf of the Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition (PRWC). CBEP maintains a leadership role within PRWC, and has successfully served as the lead organization on previous collaborative grant proposals.

PRWC formed in 2004, following a three year plan development process, to implement the goals and objectives outlined in the [Presumpscot River Management Plan](#) ("the Plan"). Among other high priority action items, the Plan identified the need to prioritize land conservation efforts. However, limited resources during that process led participants to focus on identifying land conservation priorities immediately adjacent to the Presumpscot's main stem. It has become increasingly clear that this conservation vision needs to be extended in order to incorporate conservation goals across the watershed and integrate a broader range of conservation priorities.

In February 2009, PRWC identified the need to expand upon the Plan in order to develop a shared vision for land conservation in the 205 square mile watershed area as among its top priorities. PRWC convened an initial meeting with representatives of land conservation organizations and municipalities in March. The meeting led to creation of a working group that has begun to identify next steps, and initiated efforts to raise funds and gather commitments for participation from stakeholders.

CBEP, working closely with its partners in the Coalition, proposes to convene a multi-stakeholder, collaborative process to establish shared land conservation vision, values & priorities for the lower [Presumpscot River watershed](#). The lower Presumpscot watershed includes the drainage downstream of Sebago Lake and encompasses parts of Buxton, Cumberland, Falmouth, Gorham, Gray, North Yarmouth, Portland, Raymond, Standish, Westbrook, Windham, and Yarmouth. In recent decades, the Casco Bay region has exhibited especially rapid growth. While it represents just a few percent of the land area of the state, it remains home to nearly a quarter of Maine's population.

The project we propose would have five phases. The funding requested here covers the substantial start-up costs for initiating this effort. Considerable progress in later phases can be made by leveraging existing capacity of CBEP and other project partners to convene meetings and facilitate discussion. PRWC will seek additional funding through CBEP, other project partners, and outside funders to support project completion.

Phase I: Inventory cultural, ecological, and recreational information relevant to land conservation.

Phase II: Analyze and discuss the information with stakeholders and the public, and place it in the context of community values and the missions, visions, values, and priorities of stakeholder groups.

Phase III: Develop and reach consensus on shared land conservation vision, values, and priorities for the Presumpscot River watershed.

Phase IV: Work with stakeholders to incorporate the shared vision into their plans for land conservation. This phase will define the PRWC's ongoing role in implementation.

Phase V: Share results and findings with the broader community, including the general public, through a watershed-wide outreach campaign.

A common conservation vision, with supporting values and priorities, will foster collaborative approaches to conservation, leading to greater success identifying and protecting high-value habitat, culturally significant areas, and agricultural lands. This vision will provide a blueprint or roadmap supporting a locally meaningful Quality of Place for generations to come.

CBEP and PRWC will actively seek broad public engagement throughout the project. We will host a series of public forums timed to provide guidance and feedback at key stages of the process. Anyone

wishing to participate more intensively will be encouraged to do so. We will actively seek participation from “unusual voices” to ensure that a wide range of viewpoints are represented. Both CBEP and PRWC work to maintain their inclusiveness, and each has considerable experience working with diverse groups of stakeholders.

Once the project is completed, products will include:

- Stronger ties among land trusts, municipal conservation commissions, state agencies, and other stakeholders in land conservation;
- A common vision for land conservation;
- A set of agreed upon values to guide priority setting with regard to land conservation;
- Maps, geospatial data and supporting information anchoring those values in local geography and highlighting conservation priorities; and
- A final report summarizing results and documenting consensus vision, values, and priorities.

II. Opportunity to Advance Quality of Place Recommendations

This project will address two specific recommendations from the Governor’s Council on Maine’s Quality of Place toward promoting regional landscape conservation.

First, *this project recognizes and supports the crucial role of private landowners in protecting Maine’s quality of place.* A primary goal of the project is to develop a vision that supports conservation of open space, environmental, recreational, and cultural resources on private land and in collaboration with private land owners. Numerous land conservation efforts in watershed have been driven by land trusts and conservation commissions working side by side with private landowners. Such efforts have generally received broad public support. Development of a shared vision for land conservation – and communication of that vision to the community at large – creates the opportunity for landowners to see the value of private conservation in a larger context. It also helps land conservation organizations think creatively about ways to partner with private land owners to achieve shared goals.

Second, *this project recognizes, incentivizes, and rewards regional landscape conservation.* The project we propose takes a regional perspective from the very beginning. By convening a regional conversation on conservation priorities, PRWC and other stakeholders recognize the need to step outside conventional local political boundaries to identify and preserve broader ecological and cultural landscapes. We expect this project will result in a broader, more inclusive understanding of what Quality of Place means than individual stakeholder groups would be able to develop on their own.

This project will *strengthen the link between the natural and built environments* by articulating how natural and built environments together generate the unique Quality of Place that characterizes the region. While we cannot guarantee the outcome of a shared visioning process, we anticipate products that enhance Quality of Place with an integrated land conservation vision that identifies conservation values across the natural and built environments.

The Presumpscot’s rich cultural resources range from ancient native villages founded on abundant salmon runs to the Cumberland and Oxford Canal. Such resources provide opportunities to preserve and promote the natural and built environments simultaneously. Significant cultural resources such as industrial mills and dams serve as direct linkages between human and aquatic ecological communities. Today they form the backbone of a built environment that embodies the Presumpscot’s industrial past. At the same time, the river’s industrial heritage provides a unique opportunity to protect land along the river, which remains undeveloped largely because of past residents’ desire to avoid the pollution and fumes associated with past uses.

III. Potential Impact

CBEP and PRWC believe that approaching land conservation on a watershed basis is the best way to serve both the human and ecological communities that rely on the watershed. Recent studies suggest that the ability of Maine's streams to support aquatic communities becomes degraded when impervious surface exceeds 6-10% of the watershed. There is a direct correlation between the character of a landscape and the health of the aquatic ecosystems within it. Similar relationships link landscape structure to terrestrial biodiversity, human health, and community wellbeing.

By bringing together a broad group of stakeholders, providing them with relevant information and using consensus decision-making, this project will produce an integrated vision for land conservation rooted in a regionally defined sense of place. This shared vision will increase the effectiveness of existing conservation efforts, and generate novel partnerships to garner resources in support of Quality of Place. The effort will coordinate the complementary conservation and planning capacities of land trusts, private land owners, local government and other stakeholders.

At its heart, this process is about developing a regional understanding of what "Quality of Place" means to stakeholders and the public. The project will nurture awareness of landscape among participants and the general public, thus enhancing sense of place for the community at large. While the outcome of discussions cannot be known, the discussions themselves will lay the groundwork for new networks and spur creative collaborations.

After this project is completed, land trusts, municipalities, and other groups will use the shared conservation vision to guide their planning. The vision will empower a pro-active approach to land conservation and provide common ground for protecting large tracts of land that cross service area and/or municipal boundaries or that serve multiple interests and constituencies. Organizations will leverage this regional alignment to attract funding, supporters, and volunteers.

We will track process towards this goal by documenting specific milestones and by tracking effectiveness of the process for developing a shared conservation vision. Milestones will include identifying stakeholders, gathering relevant data, preparing it to support broadly based visioning conversations, convening those conversations, developing a draft conservation vision statement, working with stakeholders to refine the vision, publicizing results and encouraging use of the vision to guide decisions. To monitor the process of developing a shared vision, we will track participation (and strive to maximize inclusivity and participation) and actively seek feedback and suggestions from participants by offering evaluation forms at events.

IV. Demonstrate innovative practices and/or tools

Despite more than a decade's worth of academic writing on ecosystem based management and community based conservation that highlights the importance of community involvement in conservation planning, broadly based efforts to develop community-wide visions for land conservation priorities are still rare. This project represents one of the first large-scale efforts in the region to take a watershed approach to land conservation combined with a community-based visioning process.

While the project is novel in scope, it builds upon and draws inspiration – and technical support – from prior efforts. The Maine Land Trust Network (MLTN) has worked to coordinate land conservation efforts on a regional scale for years. The Portland North Land Trust Collaborative (PNLTC) has recently undertaken conservation planning for the shared service area of its three member land trusts. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) applied their "Greenprinting" process to facilitate public development of regional conservation priorities in the Bangor area. The Center for Community GIS (CCGIS) has demonstrated the value of nimble application of GIS to facilitate public discussion of conservation priorities, most recently in support of the PNLTC and TPL planning efforts.

Representatives of all these organizations attended our initial scoping meeting in March. Lessons learned in prior efforts are already part of our planning process. These groups stand ready to share lessons, support and expertise as resources permit. Indeed, Jessica Burton, Executive Director of PNLTC, serves on our Ad Hoc Steering Committee and we are considering whether to formally engage TPL and the CCGIS in support of this project.

By integrating the expertise and experience of others, we expect to refine a process which could be replicated in other watersheds throughout Maine and beyond. Partners within PRWC, including CBEP, participate in local, regional, and national conferences where innovative approaches to conservation are exchanged with organizations nationwide. We expect this process to offer a powerful model for land conservation planning as a core element of watershed management.

V. Collaboration Readiness

PRWC was formed for the purpose of implementing the Plan and serving as a center for collaboration toward a healthy Presumpscot watershed. The Plan has three focus areas: restoring fisheries, mitigating and reducing cumulative impacts, and *improving and preserving open space*. PRWC meets every other month to discuss projects, upcoming events, and important issues. Smaller committees meet more frequently to work on specific projects. PRWC has established a multi-year track record of collaborative projects that have produced tangible benefits for aquatic ecosystems and local communities. Major accomplishments include: the [Presumpscot Watershed Initiative](#), a 3-year water quality improvement effort funded through a \$740,000 EPA grant, and the [Sebago to the Sea Trail](#) collaborative, which aims to create a continuous trail from Sebago Lake to Casco Bay.

PRWC members include: Maine DEP, NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. EPA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, CBEP, Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District, Cumberland Mainland and Island Trust, Friends of Casco Bay, Friends of the Presumpscot River, Maine Audubon, Portland North Land Trust Collaborative, Portland Trails, Portland Regional Land Trust Presumpscot River Watch, Windham Land Trust, City of Westbrook, Town of Cumberland, Town of Falmouth, Town of Gorham, and the Town of Windham. Contact information for Executive Committee members is available on the [PRWC web page](#).

For this project, the Ad Hoc Steering Committee of CBEP, Portland North Land Trust Collaborative, Portland Trails, Presumpscot Regional Land Trust, and the Town of Windham will be the core project team, working with other local land trusts and municipalities as the project moves forward. Contact information for this group is provided below:

Will Plumley	Friends of the Presumpscot River	wplumley@ethos-marketing.com	892-4597
Jessica Burton	Portland North Land Trust Collaborative	portlandnorth@gmail.com	699-2989
Nan Cumming	Portland Trails	nan@trails.org	775-2411
Richard Curtis	Presumpscot Regional Land Trust	rcurtis@artel-usa.com	854-0860 x 304
Brooks Moore	Town of Windham	bmore@town.windham.me.us	894-5960 x 2
Matt Craig	Casco Bay Estuary Partnership	mcraig@usm.maine.edu	228-8359

VI. Organizational Readiness

CBEP has a twelve-year track record of developing and supporting collaborative approaches to protecting and restoring the water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat of the Casco Bay ecosystem, while ensuring compatible human uses. In 2000, in response to the significant changes on the River, CBEP convened a broad-based stakeholder group to develop the Presumpscot River Management Plan.

The University of Southern Maine/CBEP has served as PRWC’s fiscal sponsor since its formation in 2004. CBEP, working closely with PRWC, is well positioned to take on this project because:

- CBEP and PRWC already engage key land conservation stakeholders in the watershed.
- CBEP and PRWC are structured to cultivate collaboration. We are a *coalition* and a *partnership*. We each work by building bridges and strengthening our partners.
- PRWC already serves as a nexus for addressing topics related to the Presumpscot River, and is the appropriate entity to convene this initiative.
- PRWC is committed to an open, inclusive, and consensus-driven process. It takes time to identify and invite potential stakeholders, to let the discussion open out before narrowing and making decisions – even with regard to methodology – and to build trust and excitement. Only then can we successfully gather public input, collect information about our common landscape, sufficiently inform public discussion, and embark on collaborative analysis and decision making.
- PRWC benefits from its fiscal relationship with USM/CBEP, which provides project management and accounting oversight for tracking implementation status against grant funds.

Overall, the strength of the PRWC’s credibility to engage stakeholders comes directly from the participation of Coalition member organizations themselves. PRWC is well known as the primary forum for discussing issues and addressing problems related to protecting and improving the watershed. Among municipalities, PRWC is increasingly known for partnering with CBEP to attract funds for environmental improvement projects, such as the Presumpscot Watershed Initiative. PRWC representatives have given presentations to most of the municipal government bodies in the watershed, and PRWC enjoys active participation from representatives of several watershed towns. PRWC has proactively sought to raise its visibility in the public’s eye. The first Presumpscot River Fest was held in 2008, and we have developed additional outreach materials to further increase visibility.

USM/CBEP is requesting funding from the Environmental Funders Network on behalf of the Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition. Funds will be used to launch the project and for facilitation, process management, outreach to stakeholders, and Phase I inventory development. First and foremost, we request these funds to develop our full team of stakeholders and establish group structure and process. Our request will provide enough funds to complete Phase I and we will seek additional funding to complete the project as we move forward. This is seed money that we can leverage for matching funds. Lack of EFN funding will slow the project down as we work to line up other sources of funding, but the project will move forward based on PRWC’s determination that this is a priority area for the Coalition to focus our efforts at this time.

Project Timeline

July – December, 2009	Select a facilitator/process manager. Identify and invite stakeholders beyond the core group. Establish group process and structure.
January – March, 2010	Define project methodology. Identify and select partners to assist.
April – October 2010	Phase I: Develop an inventory of information
Nov. 2010 – April 2011	Phase II: Analyze and discuss
May – October, 2011	Phase III: Develop and reach consensus agreement on land conservation vision, values, and priorities
Nov. – December, 2011	Phase IV: Set final expectations for implementation
January - April, 2012	Phase V: Share results and findings with the broader community