GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Sea Level Rise and Climate Change

Goals

1. Plan and implement strategies to reduce the social, economic, and environmental impacts of climate change and create a more resilient community.
2. Reduce the Town's contributions to climate change including but not limited to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and increasing our carbon sequestration.

Key Issue

We recognize that climate change will continue to bring unprecedented weather events and cause other indirect challenges for the Town which could tax our infrastructure, energy systems, economy, and natural resources, and put people at risk. The Town may experience a myriad of impacts from climate change ranging from but not limited to road washouts, flooding, drought, wildfire, increase of invasives, tidal surges, and more frequent extreme weather. The scope, scale, and uncertainty of these impacts will require a high level of expertise, support, and collaboration to ensure the Town is socially, economically, and environmentally resilient. We must be proactive in our understanding, planning, and actions to reduce these risks from climate change.

Recommendations

1. Develop and implement a Climate Action Plan which includes a vulnerability assessment.
2. Continue strengthening standards, beyond the minimum FEMA Flood Insurance Program requirements, for new or replacement construction in areas that flood, with potential premium savings to policy holders (see Figure 23 on page #, in Sea Level Rise & Climate Change Inventory & Analysis).
3. Participate in the FEMA National Flood Insurance Community Rating System (CRS) program, so flood insurance policy holders in Bowdoinham can get the best available flood insurance rates (see Figure 25 on page #, in Sea Level Rise & Climate Change Inventory & Analysis).
4. When replacing items in the Capital Investment Plan such as roads, bridges, drains, buildings or other properties at risk from flooding use the most current flood risk standards to elevate roads and bridges, improve road surfaces, and increase culvert sizes, to make them more flood-proof.
5. Consider the long-term benefits and costs for more resilient designs, when making capital budget decisions.
6. Maintain a digital Shoreland Zoning Map and locate the position of the highest annual tide level for Bowdoinham, so that the edges of the shoreland zone are accurate on the map, as sea level rise increases (see Figure 24, on page #, in Sea Level Rise & Climate Change Inventory & Analysis).
7. Consider natural ways to make shorelands more resistant to erosion, such as installing native plantings and creating berms, rather than putting in hard structures that may just shift the location of the erosion problem.
8. Encourage public or private purchases of uplands adjacent to tidal marshes, to allow marshes to migrate, as sea level rises.
9. Participate in Regional or State studies of sea level rise and climate change impacts.
10. Encourage the reduction of impervious surfaces in shoreland areas to improve drainage.

11. Maintain enrollment in the Community Resilience Partnership program and other programs that offer municipal assistance for resiliency and to address climate change.