

# Today, you see a healthier Casco Bay

“When Ed Muskie laid out the nation’s framework for protection of the human environment, it was **the political equivalent of splitting the atom.**”

LEON G. BILLINGS, staff director of the Senate subcommittee that produced the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts

For millennia, Casco Bay’s estuaries flourished in healthy condition, before becoming badly polluted in Portland’s industrial era. More recently, **the Bay has been recovering.**

**You see the effects of the Clean Water and Clean Air Acts.** In the 1970s, laws set pollution limits for U.S. waters.

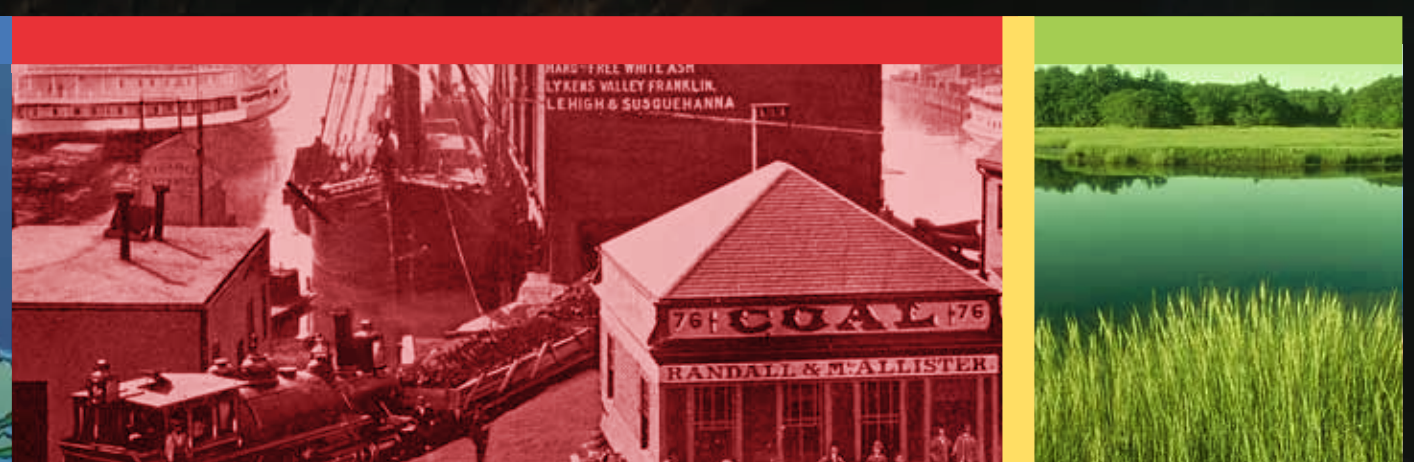
**You see the results of working together.** All levels of government, business, community advocacy groups, and individuals collaborate to protect and restore the health of Casco Bay.

**You see the benefits of a healthier Bay.** The Bay provides \$450 million in revenue from fishing, tourism and recreation. A healthy Bay benefits all who live, work and play here.

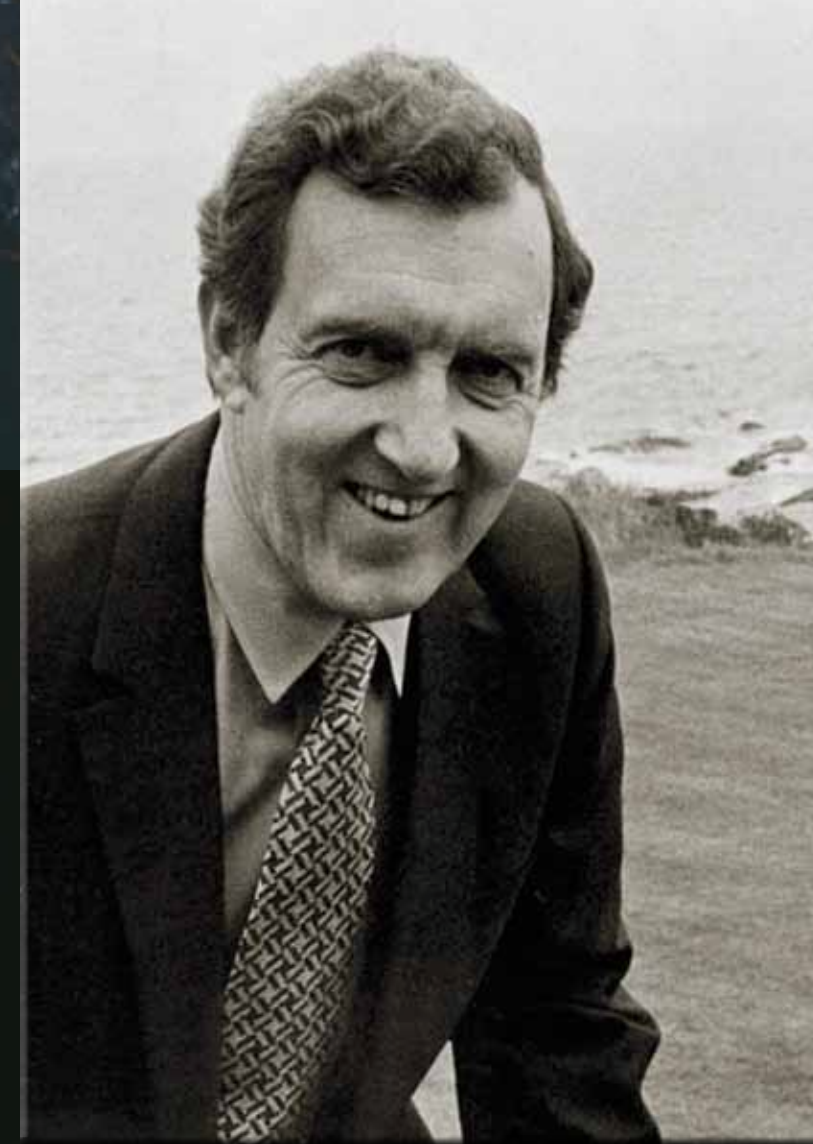
**You see the difference one person can make. MAINE: Home of the Clean Water Act.** Maine’s own Senator Ed Muskie was a driving force behind the Clean Water Act. Raised in a mill town, he saw first-hand the effects of pollution. He realized that our health and economy depend on protecting our air, water, and land.

CLEAN WATER ACT 1972 • • • • •

- **GLACIERS ACTIVE**  
22000 years ago
- **CLIMATE WARMS, glaciers retreat**  
14500+ years ago. Sea levels rising
- **PRODUCTIVE ESTUARY**  
Sustainable rich habitat for thousands of years
- **POLLUTION BUILDS**  
Industrial era dirty history 1850s - 1970s
- **BAY RECOVERY**  
1970s - today



Senator Ed Muskie, 1914-1996



# Take a closer look

## Serious issues remain.

Population growth and the ongoing effects of decades of pollution mean that the hard work must continue.

**The way we grow is a concern:** More asphalt means more runoff. Stormwater from paved surfaces threatens the Bay’s health.

## Today, Global concerns, individual actions.

Point source industrial pollution was easier to spot and control. Today, the small actions of individuals are contributing to bigger problems, including climate change. Here, much of the pollution in the Bay comes from sources such as lawn fertilizers, road runoff, and failing septic systems.

**The good news** is that each of us can do small things to clean up our air and water. And that those small things make a difference.



[ Joe Payne, BayKeeper, Friends of Casco Bay, and a member of the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership ]

## Together we’re making progress.

Success stories: The amount of conserved land has increased dramatically. Our stormwater runoff system is being improved. Swimmers enjoy more days on healthier beaches. *“When it comes to vessel discharges, Casco Bay is the best protected Bay in the country,”* says Joe Payne, speaking about our No Discharge Area, Grey Water, and Zero-tolerance Oil Discharge laws.

## How can you help?

Learn how you can make a difference. **PLEASE LOOK at the signs behind you.** Then start cleaning up the Bay at home!



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## How do we know our Estuary is healthy?

The Casco Bay Estuary Partnership monitors many indicator species. To learn more, visit [www.CascoBayEstuary.org](http://www.CascoBayEstuary.org)



**SOFT SHELL CLAMS:** Today, with rigorous monitoring, 70% of the Bay’s shellfish flats are usually open: an improvement that supports a \$15 million industry.



**WATERBIRDS:** Surveys tally 150 species of waterbirds. Changes over time are indicators of Casco Bay’s health.



**EELGRASS:** Eelgrass beds are home to many species and are an important filter. Development, pollution, boat propellers, and more can damage eelgrass beds.