Portland Waterfront Sign: Take a Closer Look

Casco Bay Estuary Partnership

Montgomery Designs

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Today, you see a healthier Casco Bay

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 work 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.

Senator Ed Muskie said:

“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

Senator Ed Muskie, 1914-1996

Caspell Bay Estuary Partnership monitors many indicator species. To learn more, visit www.CascoBayestuary.org

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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.

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