



EBC Ocean and Coastal Resources Webinar: 3rd Annual Regional Agency Update
*The one thing each New England state agency wants you to understand
regarding coastal development projects and policy*

Friday, February 10, 2023

Virtual Program – Webinar

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Program Chairs

John P. Casey, Partner, Robinson + Cole
Stacy Minihane, Senior Associate, Beals + Thomas

AGENDA

9:00 a.m. **Welcome:** Payson Whitney, Chair, EBC Ocean & Coastal Resources Committee
Southern New England Area Leader, TRC

Program Introduction

- John P. Casey, Program Co-Chair, Partner, Robinson + Cole

9:20 a.m. Connecticut

Lost in the Flood or Out of Harm's Way: Coastal Land Use Policies in Connecticut

- Brian Thompson, Director, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP), Land and Water Resources Division

9:45 a.m. Rhode Island

Rhode Island Coastal Resources' Management Council's Expanding Focus on Public Access to the Shore & Changing Sea Levels

- Leah Feldman, Coastal Policy Analyst
Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) of Rhode Island

10:10 a.m. Networking Opportunity

10:30 a.m. Break

10:40 a.m. Massachusetts

Changing Coastal Flood Risk and Adaptation

- Julia Knisel, Coastal Shoreline & Floodplain Manager
Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM)

11:05 a.m. Maine

Maine Coastal Policy and Regulatory Overview

- Marybeth Richardson, Director, Southern Maine Regional Office
Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MaineDEP)

11:30 a.m. Moderated Discussion

Moderator: MK Schneeweis, Senior Environmental Planning Specialist
Beals + Thomas

Panel Members:

- Leah Feldman, Rhode Island CRMC
- Julia Knisel, Massachusetts CZM
- Brian Thompson, Connecticut DEEP
- Marybeth Richardson, MaineDEP

12:00 p.m. Adjourn

PROGRAM CO-CHAIRS

John P. Casey, Partner
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John Casey concentrates his practice on land use and environmental matters, with particular emphasis on coastal management, development, permitting, and littoral and riparian water rights. He is a member of Robinson+Cole's Land Use and Real Estate + Development Groups, and the partner in charge of the firm's New London office.

John began his legal career as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy, Judge Advocate General's Corps, fulfilling various legal duties while stationed at the Naval Submarine Base in Groton, Connecticut. After completing his military service, he worked for a litigation firm in New London, Connecticut, before joining Robinson+Cole in 2002.

Stacy Minihane, Senior Associate
Beals + Thomas
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Stacy is a Senior Associate at Beals and Thomas, Inc. (B+T) and leads B+T's Planning and Environmental Services Discipline. She is a Professional Wetland Scientist and MVP Certified Provider with expertise in local, state, and federal environmental permitting to support entitlement for a variety of projects, such as natural resource planning and restoration, renewable energy, and significant mixed-use developments. She actively reviews and comments on proposed regulatory changes and has coordinated extensively with various regulatory agencies about such changes, including involvement in technical advisory committees. Stacy is adept at the preparation and oversight of complex reports and permitting documentation, and also provides project peer review services for various Conservation Commissions in Massachusetts. She is also active in various state wetland and industry organizations, as well as the international Society of Wetland Scientists.

PANEL MODERATOR

Mary Kate Schneeweis, Senior Environmental Planning Specialist
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As an MVP Certified Provider, Mary Kate excels at engaging with large- and small-group input gathering and reaching consensus. Mary Kate leads B+T's MVP Planning projects and has also overseen Hazard Mitigation Plan updates. Her knowledge of GIS software and readily available sources of data allows her to supplement permit applications and planning efforts with detailed graphics that identify necessary information. She particularly enjoys applying her educational background in geological processes to the planning and permitting of resiliency improvements, as well as facilitating discussions about planning for climate change.

She is also a former member of the Natick Conservation Commission and previously served on the Charles River Dam Advisory Committee, whose purpose is information gathering, public outreach, and achieving agreement to address the future of this DCR-designated high hazard dam.

SPEAKERS

Leah Feldman, Coastal Policy Analyst
Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC)
4808 Tower Hill Road, Wakefield, RI 02879
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Leah Feldman is a Coastal Policy Analyst for the Coastal Resources Management Council of Rhode Island. Originally from New York, Feldman received her undergraduate degree from Colgate University with dual degrees in Environmental Studies and English Literature. She received her Master of Arts in Marine Affairs from the University of Rhode Island before being selected for the prestigious NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship, which placed her in New York State's Coastal Program working for the Department of State's Office of Community Planning, Development and Community Infrastructure. During her two years with the NOAA Fellowship, Feldman assisted the Ocean and Great Lakes Team in creating scenario planning focused resiliency efforts on Lake Ontario. In her current role with the CRMC, Leah Feldman focuses on issues regarding public access to the shoreline, community engagement, habitat and shoreline change policy efforts, and resilience.

Julia Knisel, Coastal Shoreline & Floodplain Manager
Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM)
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Julia leads the StormSmart Coasts program for the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management to help communities address coastal erosion and flooding while enhancing beach systems. She supports state hazard mitigation and climate adaptation and serves on the Resilient Massachusetts Action Team. Julia is a member of the Massachusetts Emergency Support Function Team to inform response and recovery from coastal storm events. Julia also collaborates with state, federal, and non-profit partners across New England on coastal hazards and resilience through the Coastal Hazards Resilience Committee of the Northeast Regional Ocean Council, which has been focused on advancing nature-based approaches to shoreline management.

Marybeth Richardson, Director
Southern Maine Regional Office, Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MaineDEP)
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Marybeth Richardson is the director of the Department of Environmental Protection's Southern Maine Regional Office in Portland. She has been with the Department since the early 1990's working mostly within the Land Resource Bureau as a project manager and supervisor, where she helped administer the Site Location Law, Stormwater Law, and Natural Resources Protection Act. Prior to and since becoming regional director, Marybeth has been involved with coastal sand dune issues, serving on the Steering Committee for the Maine and New Hampshire Beaches Conference and developing rules and policies related to development and erosion on Maine's southern beaches.

Brian Thompson, Director Land and Water Resources Division
Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP)
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Brian Thompson is Director of the Land & Water Resources Division and Coastal Program Manager at the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection. His responsibilities include programs for restoration, protection and managed use of Connecticut's water-related inland and coastal resources. Brian's academic background is in geology and marine resources policy, and he has previously worked in various environmental management capacities in the private sector and federal government.