**EBC 6th Annual Ocean and Coastal Resources Regional Agency Update**

*The seas are rising! How do you measure it – and how do you respond*

Tuesday, March 3, 2025

Virtual Program – Webinar

*This program made possible thanks to the support of:*

**Gold**

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**Program Chairs**

John P. Casey, Partner, Robinson + Cole

Mary Kate (MK) Schneeweis, Senior Environmental Planning Specialist, Beals + Thomas

**AGENDA**

**9:00 a.m.** **Welcome & Introduction**

- MK Schneeweis, Program Co-Chair
  Senior Environmental Planning Specialist, Beals + Thomas

**9:10 a.m.** **Federal Resources for Future Sea Level Planning**

- John A. Callahan, Ph.D., Climate Scientist, Ocean Associates, Inc. and the Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS) National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

**9:30 a.m.** **New Hampshire: State-level guidance and community-based support for coastal flood resilience**

- Kirsten Howard, CFM, Resilience Program Coordinator
  Coastal Program, Watershed Management Bureau, Water Division
  New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NH DES)

**9:50 a.m.** **Using the Latest Sea-level Rise Projections to Inform Connecticut's Resilience Funding Programs**

- Christopher R. Field, PhD, Office Director, Planning and Resilience
  Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse
  Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (CT DEEP)

**10:10 a.m.** **Networking Break**

**10:25 a.m.** **Break**

**10:30 a.m.** **Planning for Sea Level Rise: Standards and Mapping Tools in Rhode Island**

- Emily Hall, Coastal Geologist, Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (RI CRMC)

**10:50 a.m.** **Sea Level Rise Capital Planning and Projects in Massachusetts**

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

**11:10 a.m.** **Removing Barriers for Resilient Infrastructure in Maine**

- Nathan Robbins, Climate Change Specialist, Commissioner's Office
  Maine Department of Environmental Protection (ME DEP)

**11:30 a.m.** **Moderated Discussion**

**Moderator:** John Casey, Chair, EBC Ocean & Coastal Resources Committee
Program Co-Chair, Partner, Robinson + Cole

**Panel Members:**

- John A. Callahan, NOAA
- Christopher Field, CT DEEP
- Emily Hall, RI CRMC
- Kirsten Howard, NH DES
- Julia Knisel, MA CZM
- Nathan Robbins, ME DEP

**12:00 p.m.** **Adjourn**

## PROGRAM CO-CHAIRS

**John P. Casey,** Partner
Robinson + Cole
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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.

**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

**John A. Callahan,** Ph.D., Climate Scientist, Ocean Associates, Inc. and the Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS)
National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
john.callahan@noaa.gov

John Callahan is an applied climate scientist at Ocean Associates, Inc, working at the NOAA National Ocean Service Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS), where he serves as a subject matter expert on climate science, sea level rise, and coastal hazards. His work spans several disciplines and includes a combination of scientific research, operational products, and public and professional engagement. John has contributed to national efforts of the US National Climate Assessments (NCA5 & NCA6), the US Climate Variability and Predictability (US CLIVAR) program, and the NOAA Sea Level Calculator. He also led the development of the sea level rise projections for the State of Delaware in 2017 and 2025. Before working at NOAA, John held

positions as a coastal hazards scientist at the Delaware Geological Survey and a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and Spatial Sciences at the University of Delaware. He holds BS degrees in Physics and Mathematics from Temple University and MS degree in Geography and PhD in Climatology from the University of Delaware.

**Christopher R. Field,** PhD, Office Director, Planning and Resilience
Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse
Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection
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Chris serves as the Director for the Office of Planning and Resilience at the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. Before joining government service, he worked at the intersection of science and policy, developing an interdisciplinary research program on the socio-environmental dimensions of sea-level rise for his PhD at University of Connecticut and as a fellow at the National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (SESYNC). Before joining the state, he worked as a policy analyst for the U.S. Legislative Branch.

**Emily Hall,** Coastal Geologist
Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council
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Emily Hall (she/her) is the Coastal Geologist for the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council and works to advance resilient shoreline systems. As a member of the professional staff, she manages permit review for living shorelines, dune restoration, and beach nourishment projects. Professional service has included membership on the RI Geographic Information System (RIGIS) Executive Committee, Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) Resiliency Subgroup, and RI House of Representatives Beach Erosion Commission. Previous research has combined sedimentological analyses and remote sensing techniques to investigate changes in geomorphology, carbon sequestration, and ecological community structure across coastal wetlands. She holds a MS in Geological Oceanography from URI.

**Kirsten Howard,** CFM, Resilience Program Coordinator, Coastal Program
Watershed Management Bureau, Water Division
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Kirsten Howard is the Resilience Program Coordinator for the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Coastal Program and has 15 years of experience advancing coastal resilience in New England and around the United States. She supports New Hampshire's 17 coastal communities as they plan and prepare for hazards such as sea-level rise and storm flooding, providing technical assistance, facilitation, and grant support. Kirsten is an architect of the New Hampshire Coastal Flood Risk Summary and co-leads the Flood Ready Neighborhoods Project with NH Sea Grant colleagues. She is a Certified Floodplain Manager and holds a B.A. from Brown University and an M.S. from the University of Michigan. She lives in Portsmouth with her husband, two daughters, and dog.

**Julia Knisel,** Coastal Shoreline and Floodplain Manager
Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM)
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02114
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Julia Knisel is the Coastal Shoreline and Floodplain Manager for the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management with over 20 years of experience working to increase community resilience to coastal storms and sea level rise. Coastal erosion and flooding data, planning tools, and Coastal Resilience Grants are key initiatives of the StormSmart Coasts Program, which she manages. Julia values the role of the Northeast Regional Ocean Council and its Coastal Hazards Resilience Committee in building partnerships across New England and advancing nature-based approaches to shoreline management. Julia has a B.S. in Biology/Marine Science from the Pennsylvania State University and an M.S. in Marine Policy/Coastal Zone Management from the University of Maine.

**Nathan Robbins,** Climate Change Specialist, Commissioner's Office
Maine Department of Environmental Protection
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Nathan Robbins is the Climate Change Specialist at the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. For nearly 20 years, Nathan has worked within state and local governments in New England to implement best practices for climate resilience and mitigation. Nathan manages the Maine Climate Hub, supports the Department's work on the Maine Climate Council, and facilitates a cross-agency regulatory forum for implementing Maine's climate policies. He is also a coordinator of the Maine Climate Change Adaptation Providers Network, a statewide group of practitioners who work with or within communities to implement climate change solutions. He has a master's degree in Resource Management & Conservation from Antioch University New England and a bachelor's degree in Biology from Wheaton College (MA).