



**New Hampshire State Conservation Committee
Conservation Moose Plate Grant Program
Fiscal Year 2026 Application Form**



This Application is for Conservation Projects in the following Project Categories:
Water Quality and Quantity, Wildlife Habitat, Soil Conservation and Flooding,
Best Management Practices, and Conservation Planning

Refer to the State Conservation Committee's *Application Instructions – Conservation Projects, FY2026*.

This form may require “Enable Editing” to complete.

Section I: Application Information

1. Applicant: Town of Seabrook, NH

2. Applicant Mailing Address: 99 Lafayette Road PO Box 456 Seabrook, NH 03874

3. Applicant Type *Select one*

- ☐ County Conservation District
- ☐ County Cooperative Extension Natural Resource Program
- ☒ Municipality (including agencies and commissions engaged in conservation programs)
- ☐ Qualified nonprofit organization (engaged in conservation programs)
- ☐ Public and private school (Kindergarten through Grade 12)
- ☐ Scout group

4. Project Title: Natural Resources Inventory for the Town of Seabrook, NH

5. Grant Request:

6. Project Category *Select One*

- ☐ 1. **Water Quality and Quantity:** Restore, enhance, maintain or protect.
- ☐ 2. **Wildlife Habitat:** Create, restore, enhance, manage or protect.
- ☐ 3. **Soil Conservation and Flooding:** Reduce or prevent erosion, or improve soils.
- ☐ 4. **Best Management Practices:** Plan and implement for agriculture, storm water or forestry.
- ☒ 5. **Conservation Planning:** Accomplish a conservation project or outcome that includes a public involvement component.

7. Legal Contact *Person authorized to sign Application*

Name: William Manzi

Title: Town Manager

Telephone: (603) 474-3252

Email: wmanzi@seabrooknh.org

8. Authorization to submit a State Conservation Committee Conservation Moose Plate Grant

Signature of Legal Contact

Date

9. Project Contact *if different from Legal Contact*

Name: Sara McNamara-Gagnon

Title: Coastal Conservation Coordinator

Telephone: (603) 679-2790 ext. 162

Email: sara@rockinghamccd.org

10. Project Location and Landowner Name

Street Address: N/A

Municipality: Town of Seabrook, NH

County: Rockingham

Landowner Name: N/A

11. Previous SCC Conservation Grant Awards

A. Recipient of a SCC Conservation Grant: Yes or No

B. Award Year of most recent SCC Grant: or NA

Targeted completion date for open SCC Grant: December 2027

Section II: Project Narrative

** See Application Instructions for Narrative content **

1. Executive Summary (500 Character Limit)

Seabrook proposes to conduct a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) featuring a comprehensive report, maps, GIS database, and StoryMap for municipal and public use. Using best available data, the data can be weighted and overlaid to determine highest natural resource value areas, based on town priorities. The NRI will be actively integrated into next steps of community planning, such as updating the 2011 Master Plan's Natural Resource and Land Use chapters, and guide future conservation efforts.

2. Project Description (4,500 Character Limit)

Under New Hampshire state statute RSA 36-A:2, Conservation Commissions must “keep an index of all open space and natural, aesthetic or ecological areas within the city or town, as the case may be, with the plan of obtaining information pertinent to proper utilization of such areas”. This project fulfills that obligation by identifying and addressing gaps in our current knowledge of the town’s natural resources and ecosystems as outlined in the 2011 Master Plan Natural Resource Chapter. The resulting information will serve as a valuable resource for the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and the broader community to inform key initiatives and future planning, support conservation efforts, and climate resilience actions. Additionally, the Project Team will actively engage with residents throughout the project to gather local knowledge of natural resources and incorporate community perspective. Public input will support the development of the report to ensure it reflects the values, priorities, and concerns of those who will benefit from its findings. The completed NRI will be publicly accessible and presented in a clear, user-friendly StoryMap on the town website.

The Town of Seabrook will hire a qualified environmental consultant through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process to conduct the NRI alongside the Project Team. The Project Team will include town staff, board and commission members, residents, members from local organizations, the Coastal Conservation Coordinator, and the consultant. This initiative will leverage the most current data - such as high-resolution LiDAR imagery - and scientific models, including the 2022 Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM), to address existing gaps in the town’s understanding of its ecosystems.

The consultant will prepare a NRI report that describes the town’s natural resources including: their location(s), size, values, and threats; example photographs; potential means and priorities for protection; and a comprehensive suite of materials, including maps, a StoryMap, and a GIS database. The report will provide the community with information on important, naturally occurring resources that are integral to Seabrook’s sustainability and quality of life. Maps will be prepared in both digital and hard-copy format using ArcGIS or similar software and the best available digital orthophotography or mapping as base maps. Products will integrate existing available GIS datasets - such as the upcoming 2025 NH State Wildlife Action Plan - with aerial imagery interpretation and any collected field information, if needed. All work will meet the objectives of a NRI as described in “Natural Resources Inventories: A Guide for New Hampshire Communities and Conservation Groups” (UNH Cooperative Extension, 2016).

Meaningful community engagement is essential in the development of a town plan to ensure residents’ values, priorities, and concerns are reflected in the final product. The Project Team will be responsible for engaging local residents throughout the NRI process to integrate community priorities with technical data. The Project Team will leverage existing communication channels with organizations such as the Seabrook Middle School, Library, Student Adventure Zone (SAZ), Friends of Seabrook Community (FOSC), and Seabrook NH Rail Trail to increase awareness, accessibility, and inclusion of all ages and backgrounds for community engagement activities. Activities will include:

- A **community-wide survey** to gather residents’ perspectives on local natural resources, their vision for the NRI, most valued outdoor spaces and recreational areas, and any environmental concerns or issues they feel should be addressed.
- A **photo and writing contest** to encourage residents to share photographs or writings inspired by Seabrook’s natural beauty.

- **Public review session(s)** to present and gather feedback, ensuring public voices are incorporated. Public sessions may be recorded and posted on the town's website for residents to view at home and submit feedback before finalization.
- A **final public presentation** to unveil the completed NRI report and accompanying StoryMap to help residents understand how the NRI and StoryMap are used, and for residents to explore findings.

These community engagement activities are essential in developing a community-driven tool, building support, increasing awareness, and creating long-term stewardship for Seabrook's natural resources.

3. Regional Context (3,000 Character Limit)

A NRI will fill a vital gap within the Hamptons-Seabrook Estuary (HSE) and the broader regional context of conservation efforts, future planning, and climate resiliency. While regional plans set overarching goals, they rely on detailed local data to be effective. A NRI supplies that foundation by identifying data needed to put forth these changes and align the town's goals with regional priorities. This project would complement many recent and ongoing projects, including:

- The Seabrook-Hamptons Estuary Alliance (SHEA) advancement of the 2023 Estuary Management Plan by aligning Seabrook with neighboring communities (Hampton and Hampton Falls) who have recently completed NRIs, providing the most comprehensive documentation and mapping of natural resources in the HSE, and providing detailed mapping and GIS analyses to support SHEA's 2025-2028 HSE Baseline Assessment.
- Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) Advancing Resiliency in the Hamptons-Seabrook Estuary (2025) and update to the 2015 Regional Master Plan
- Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (GBNERR) NH Marsh Migration Mapping Tool (2025) and NH Salt Marsh Plan (2023)
- Piscataqua Region Estuary Partnership (PREP) State of Our Estuaries Report (2023) and its 2024-2034 update to the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (2010)
- NH Department of Environmental Services Coastal Program (NHDES CP) salt marsh restoration, perennial pepperweed management, and development of a hydrodynamic model in the HSE.

The timing aligns with Seabrook's ongoing Master Plan update, specifically the 2011 Natural Resource and Land Use chapters. While the existing plan identifies many of the town's key environmental assets, incorporating advanced GIS analysis and modern mapping tools will provide a more accurate, multi-layered, visually engaging representation of Seabrook's natural resources.

Simultaneously, the town is reevaluating its open space ordinance, which has had limited effectiveness due to lot size and development density constraints, resulting in missed opportunities for developmental designs that prioritize natural resource protection and minimize environmental impacts. This project will provide data to inform revisions to the ordinance and the town's approach to open space planning.

The NRI would also serve as a basis for developing targeted strategies to protect and manage Seabrook's natural resources. Outcomes include recommendations for updates to local regulations and ordinances to better reflect current environmental priorities. The NRI may also highlight the need for more detailed studies or support updates to key town plans, such as:

- Cains Brook Management Plan (NHDES, 2006)
- Adaptation Strategies to Protect Areas of Increased Risk from Coastal Flooding Due to Climate Change in Seabrook, NH (RPC, 2009)
- Seabrook Hazard Mitigation Plan (RPC, 2018 – Draft)

Overall, a Seabrook NRI will be a key tool for local and regional planning, regulatory improvements, and climate adaptation strategies.

4. Conservation Priorities (4,000 Character Limit)

The NRI focuses will include key resources such as water bodies, wildlife habitats, agricultural lands, forests, unique geological features, cultural and historic assets, conservation and public lands, unfragmented areas, zoning and parcel data, climate conditions and projections, and existing regional conservation plans. Resources will be documented and mapped using the most current and credible resources. In addition, recommendations and next steps will be provided to strengthen local policies, regulations, and ordinances to protect each of the following conservation priorities:

Water Quality and Quantity

Freshwater features such as watersheds, streams, rivers, water bodies, freshwater wetlands, and vernal pools support ecosystem resilience and floodwater storage. Coastal features like saltmarshes, estuaries, dunes, beaches, and intertidal and tidal zones also maintain ecosystem health and buffer against storm surge and sea level rise. Groundwater systems (aquifers and well protection areas) are essential for drinking water and agriculture. With growing concerns over rising groundwater and increased salinity, the NRI will support sustainable management, adaptive planning, and protective measures for water resources.

Wildlife Habitat

Seabrook's diverse landscapes - grasslands, peatlands, wetlands, swamps, marshes, dunes, shorelines, vernal pools, and headwater streams - provide critical habitat for native plants and animals, including rare, threatened, or endangered (RTE) species. The NRI will identify wildlife corridors and prioritize wildlife conservation areas to help maintain connectivity between habitats, genetic diversity, and species resilience. It will also address the pressures of habitat fragmentation and invasive species.

Soil Conservation and Flooding

By analyzing soil characteristics and their distribution, the NRI helps identify areas prone to erosion, informing land use decisions that promote healthy, stable soils essential for agriculture, forestry, and ecosystem function. Mapping land cover and forest resources further supports strategies to prevent soil degradation, as vegetation plays a critical role in stabilizing soils and reducing runoff. Additionally, mapping floodplains and floodwater storage areas is key for mitigating flood risks.

Best Management Practices (BMPs)

The recommendations and next steps included in each section of the NRI will serve as a guide for implementing BMPs across a range of land use and conservation efforts. The NRI will provide a framework for applying BMPs that minimize environmental impact, support ecosystem health, and promote sustainable land use. Additionally, the next steps often encourage partnerships, public involvement, and continued data collection, which are all essential to refining and maintaining BMPs over time. In this way, the NRI not only identifies environmental concerns but also lays out actionable, science-based approaches for addressing them through effective and locally relevant management practices.

Conservation Planning

The NRI will identify data gaps and integrate findings into town planning tools such as the Master Plan, zoning ordinances, and tax maps. This approach allows planners to align conservation goals with land use

regulations and incentives, helping to prioritize areas for protection, restoration, or compatible development.

Land Conservation

By documenting recreation and scenic resources such as coastlines, pasturelands, salt marshes, and other visually or recreationally significant landscapes, the NRI identifies areas that contribute to quality of life, tourism, and public engagement with nature. Efforts in open space preservation, land conservation, and saltmarsh migration planning are vital to maintaining these shared natural assets amid development and climate pressures.

5. Long-Term Project Management and Stewardship (2,000 Character Limit)

A NRI is a critical tool that can significantly strengthen a grant proposal by providing a solid foundation for conservation and land use planning. A NRI is data-driven and demonstrates project need, potential impact, and, in New Hampshire, fulfills a legal requirement for Conservation Commissions under RSA 36-A. Having a NRI will help identify and facilitate the advancement of future regulatory needs and conservation planning in Seabrook by supplying the necessary data needed to justify policy changes and educate the public on the importance of protecting and efficiently managing natural resources.

This NRI will lay the groundwork for long-term, sustainable stewardship of natural resources. This information will provide baseline data to support informed decision-making, guide conservation priorities, shape management strategies, and assess environmental impacts. A key component of this proposal is community engagement, which is designed to build a strong connection between residents and their local environment. Involving community members in the NRI process fosters a sense of ownership, broadens understanding among stakeholders, and encourages the development of future community-led conservation and stewardship initiatives.

6. Applicant Institutional Capacity and Project Partners (2,000 Character Limit)

The Town of Seabrook has successfully engaged consultants to carry out natural resource planning and restoration initiatives. Past efforts include the Pollution Elimination and Prevention Survey of Commercial Businesses Located on Route 1 in the Cains Brook Watershed, Seabrook, NH (NHDES CP, 2001), Cains Brook Management Plan (NHDES, 2006), Cains Brook Salt Marsh Restoration Project (VHB, 2014-2017), and the Master Plan update (Mettee Planning Consultants, 2011).

In the 2011-2020 Master Plan (originally 2000) update, Seabrook demonstrated project management and collaboration skills in a process similar to what this NRI proposes. The town received a state-funded grant from the NH Office of Energy and Planning under the Housing and Conservation Planning Program (HCPP). Through this grant, Seabrook conducted an inventory and analysis of historic and natural resources, population and housing resources, and potential build-out under existing zoning.

The Master Plan update was a collaborative effort between town staff, department heads, town board and commission members, a consultant, and local residents. A community-wide survey, sponsored by UNH Cooperative Extension, was administered to gather residents' input on a range of topics including historic and natural resources protection, recreation, health, education, transportation, employment, and population growth. The final plan included an Implementation Guide to annually review to ensure alignment with town goals and priorities.

The proposed NRI project would follow a similar model - led by a qualified consultant and supported by town staff, board and commission members, local organizations, and residents. The NRI will directly complement the ongoing update to the Master Plan, while the Master Plan, in turn, will inform priorities for natural resource protection and land use planning. Together, these two efforts will create a more comprehensive and integrated foundation for future planning and decision-making.

7. Water Quality and Quantity Projects Only *(Project Category 1 only)*

- A. Best Management Practices** (1,000 Character Limit)
- B. 319 Projects** (1,000 Character Limit)
- C. Pollution Estimate Reductions** (1,000 Character Limit)

Section III. Budgets * See SCC website for Budget Forms *

- ☐ **Task Budget(s)**
- ☐ **Total Project Expense and Revenue Budget**

Section IV. Appendices * See Application Instructions for Appendix information *

- ☐ 1. Landowner Consent. Required, except for projects that are not project specific.
- ☒ 2. **USGS Topographic Map: Project Location – Regional Context. Required.**
- ☒ 3. **Aerial Map: Project Site Boundary. Required.**
- ☐ 4. Natural Resource Maps. Optional - as Applicable.
- ☐ 5. Project Site Plan. Optional - as Applicable.
- ☐ 6. Permits and Approvals. Optional - as Applicable.
- ☐ 7. Photographs. Optional - as Applicable.
- ☒ 8. **Letters of Support. Optional.**
- ☐ 9. Other Supporting Documentation. Optional - as Applicable.