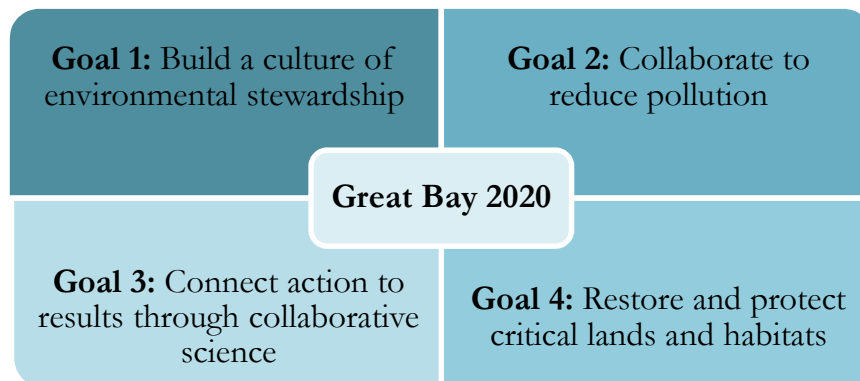# Great Bay 2020

What is Great Bay 2020?

A five-year vision for investment and action to protect water quality in the Great Bay estuary and its watershed.
Great Bay 2020 is a framework that identifies goals, strategies, and a range of opportunities to support a healthy estuary. In 2014, five organizations came together to develop this vision by talking to local and regional organizations about the opportunities and challenges in the Great Bay watershed. Dozens of partners contributed to this "blueprint" for collective action. Great Bay 2020 will help us collaborate and increase our collective impact, and it provides an opportunity for philanthropists to understand where their investments can effect the greatest change.

Our Vision

We envision a healthy Great Bay estuary distinguished by clean water, accessible lands for recreation and education, habitat for fish and wildlife, resilience in the face of a changing climate, and engaged communities that are committed to supporting the estuary and its watershed for generations to come. To reach this vision, we have set four complementary goals that emphasize collaboration and collective action:

Goal 1: Build a culture of environmental stewardship

Goal 2: Collaborate to reduce pollution

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Goal 3: Connect action to results through collaborative science

Goal 4: Restore and protect critical lands and habitats

Strategies & Anticipated Outcomes

Goal 1: Build a culture of environmental stewardship. Residents of communities in the Great Bay watershed will embrace a culture of stewardship focused on appreciating the values that a healthy estuary provides and protecting those values through actions to support improved water quality. The main strategy is to develop a communications and marketing campaign to promote a public culture of stewardship based on the Great Bay quality of life and our shared values.

- More than 75 teachers and 1,500 students will engage in Great Bay data discovery and stewardship projects.
- 75 local residents will be part of the Great Bay-Piscataqua Waterkeeper's network of citizen activists (Clean Water Advocates for Great Bay).
- Communities will promote the use of this stewardship campaign.
- Local stewardship groups will be active in every subwatershed.

Goal 2: **Collaborate to reduce pollution.** Municipalities, regulators, advocacy groups, and technical support organizations will collaborate to strategically address the major sources of water pollution in the Great Bay watershed. The strategy for this goal includes a combination of regulatory frameworks, incentives, and technical assistance, to promote coordination between municipalities and encourage the adoption of innovative approaches to reduce pollution.

- Five sewage treatment plants will receive substantial upgrades, significantly reducing nitrogen pollution.
- At least 12 more communities will adopt innovative local ordinances to reduce stormwater pollution to help meet water quality regulations.
- The state's first intermunicipal subwatershed plan to reduce nitrogen pollution will be implemented by 2020.
- A replicable model to reduce pollution from septic systems will be developed by 2020.

Goal 3: **Connect action to results through collaborative science.** Community leaders, resource managers, regulators, large landholders, and others will collaborate with the science and environmental monitoring community to better understand the health of Great Bay and how that health is impacted by our actions. To reach this goal, we will establish the Great Bay Science to Action Collaborative (GBSAC) to facilitate collaboration between organizations, agencies, and stakeholders, including municipalities and private landowners.

- Existing data collection will be better coordinated.
- Communities will have increased trust in scientific data and its interpretation.
- Science from different sources will be better integrated to support management decisions.
- Emerging data will be incorporated into Great Bay community discussions.

Goal 4: **Restore and protect critical lands and habitats.** Municipalities, nongovernmental organizations, public agencies, and land managers will support and advance the protection and restoration of critical lands and habitats that are necessary to improve the health and resilience of Great Bay estuary. The strategy for this goal combines establishing a network of conservation areas on land and restoring nearshore oyster reef habitat to improve water quality.

- 5,000 acres of high-value conservation land will be permanently protected.
- 25 or more acres of new oyster reef will be established in Great Bay.
- Three to five million oysters will be added to the bay, filtering up to 100 million gallons of water each day.
- Growing numbers of citizens, schools, and businesses will be engaged in estuary restoration.

An Invitation to Collaborate

We invite you to help us realize this vision by becoming a sponsor of Great Bay 2020. As a sponsor, you will be in a uniquely powerful position to catalyze the change needed to protect the precious resource that is the heart of our region. We need your support to help fill the critical gaps we have identified and make these important outcomes possible. You can focus your support on a particular goal, strategy, or partner, or you can contribute to the Great Bay 2020 vision as a whole. This framework will help us collaborate, better track the results of our efforts, and expand our collective impact more than ever before.

To learn more about Great Bay 2020 and how you can help, please contact Trevor Mattera at Trevor.Mattera@unh.edu or (603) 862-1310. We look forward to working with you to make the Great Bay 2020 vision a reality.