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NEWS RELEASE

Conservation Groups Praise Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program Funding in Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill

NEW HAMPSHIRE – Today, conservation leaders in New Hampshire thanked Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) for her leadership to restore funding to the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP). Inclusion of CELCP funding in the Infrastructure and Jobs Act is a positive and much needed step towards protecting our coastline in New Hampshire and across the country.

This important program provides grants to states and local governments to conserve coastal and estuarine areas that support flood protection, water quality improvement, wildlife habitat, coastal economies, and climate resilience. This renewed investment in CELCP is essential to safeguard our coastal communities from sea level rise and extreme storms that threaten lives and livelihoods. CELCP has completed coastal conservation projects in 29 states and now can build off this successful history with the opportunity of substantial new funding.

“We are very grateful for Senator Shaheen’s leadership in securing funding for the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program in the Bipartisan Infrastructure bill. This funding will be vital as we work to protect the important coastal resources of New Hampshire,” **said Jim O’Brien, Director of External Affairs, The Nature Conservancy in New Hampshire.**

“New Hampshire has benefitted enormously from the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program. Some of our state’s most important natural areas-places like Great Bay and the Forest Society’s Moose Mountains Reservation- have been protected because of the assistance from CELCP. We want to thank Senator Shaheen for her leadership to restore the funding for it. As the climate change crisis continues to threaten New Hampshire’s fragile coastal wetlands and estuarine areas, CELCP is needed more than ever.” - **Society for the Protection of NH Forests**

“CELCP has protected signature landscapes in New Hampshire’s coastal watershed, including the popular and beloved Piscassic Greenway in Newfields and Newmarket,” **explains Brian Hart, Executive Director, Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire.** “Restoring CELCP will provide critical funding to bolster existing efforts to protect the most significant lands in the Coastal Watershed for water quality, climate resilience, wildlife, and people.”

"The Trust for Public Land is thankful for Senator Shaheen's successful efforts to revitalize the CELCP program in the bipartisan infrastructure bill that is headed to President Biden's desk," **said Shelby Semmes, Vice President and New England Regional Director.** "For many years CELCP benefitted New Hampshire's Seacoast by protecting properties like the Winnicut River Headwaters in North Hampton, the Isinglass River Corridor in Strafford, and Sagamore Creek Headlands in Portsmouth. The urgency to do more of this work now couldn't be greater given the climate crisis we face. We look forward to working with communities using CELCP to contribute to climate and coastal resilience, ecological protection, and appropriate public access."

About the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program

Since 2002, the [Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program](#) (CELCP, pronounced “Kelp”) has protected more than 110,000 acres, conserving coastal and estuarine lands, and conservation easements, including over 16,000 acres protected as in-kind matching contributions. CELCP provides grants to states and local governments to protect important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical or aesthetic values, or are threatened by conversion from their natural or recreational state. The federal CELCP grants require matching funds which leverage additional state, local, and private dollars.