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The Urban Harbors Institute

Urban Harbors Institute, University of Massachusetts Boston

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About UHI

The Urban Harbors Institute (UHI) is a public policy and applied-science research center focused on issues affecting urban waterfronts and coastal and ocean resources. Our mission is to increase understanding of the marine environment, improve management practices, and promote informed decision making at the local, state and national levels. UHI employs a multidisciplinary approach in all its research and education projects, blending science, policy, and management.

Education



Students from the Josiah Quincy School participate in a COASTSWEEP event

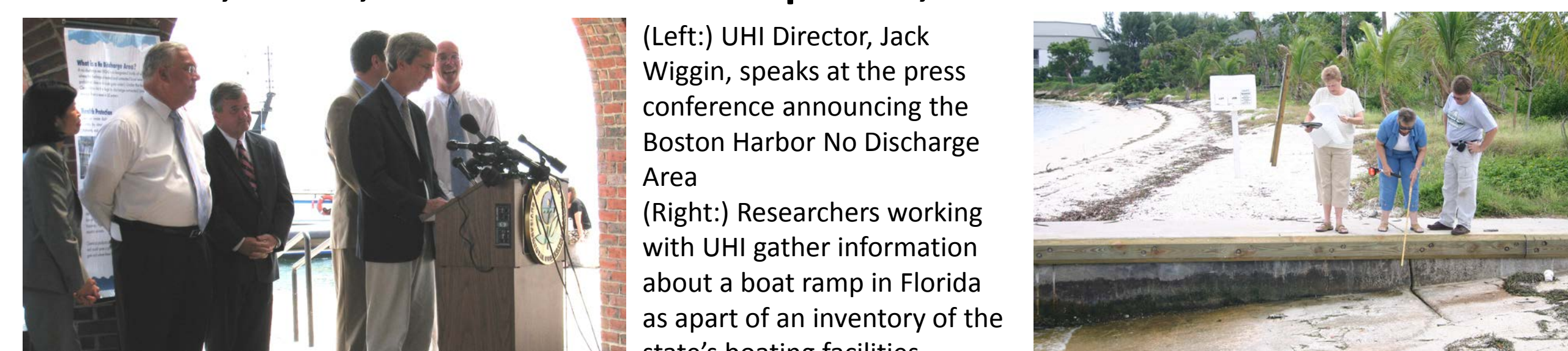
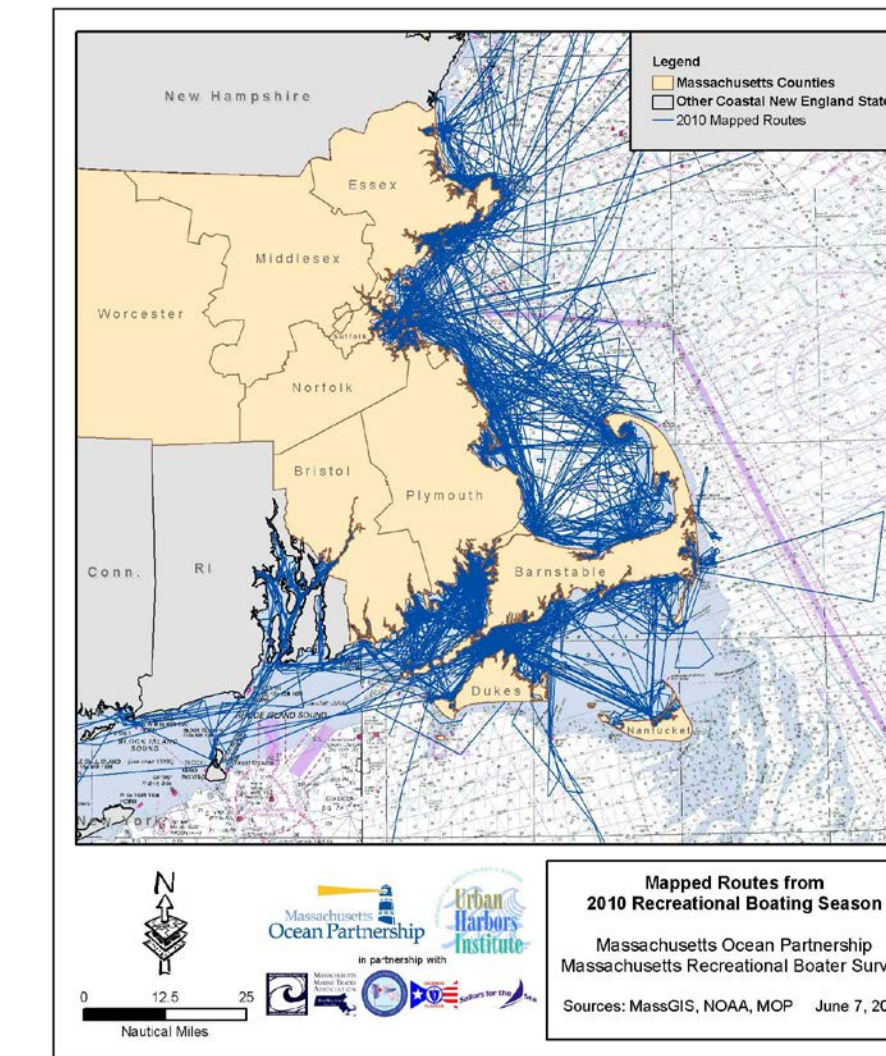
Many of UHI's projects and activities either directly or indirectly contribute to enhanced public education about the marine environment.

- Involvement with educational organizations such as COSEE OCEAN and the Massachusetts Marine Educators create important partnerships with formal and informal educators.
- Graduate assistantships and undergraduate internships provide students with real-world experience.
- Research papers, reports, and plans produced by UHI help to educate audiences about important ocean and coastal issues and studies.
- The annual COASTSWEEP beach cleanups engage thousands of people in gaining an appreciation for improving conditions of the coastal environment

Applied Research

The focus of many UHI projects is on improving conditions of both the natural and human environments, which requires conducting research to understand and address ocean and coastal issues. Some examples of applied research topics include:

- **Ocean and Coastal Planning** – UHI conducts research in support of state, regional, and federal efforts to improve management of ocean resources for (1) the ecosystem services provided, and (2) to promote coexistence and growth of traditional and emerging ocean uses, such as offshore renewable energy.
- **Habitat Protection and Restoration** – UHI collaborates with communities, watershed associations, and state agencies to prepare watershed plans, natural resource inventories, and management plans. UHI helped lead the effort to identify habitat restoration opportunities in the Boston Harbor area.
- **Harbor and Waterfront Planning** – UHI works with ports and coastal communities to maintain water-dependent uses; protect living resources; grow coastal economies; and increase public access to coastal waters. Among the communities are: Belfast, ME; Gloucester, MA; Nantucket, MA; New Bedford, MA; Salem, MA; and Southampton, NY.



(Left:) UHI Director, Jack Wiggan, speaks at the press conference announcing the Boston Harbor No Discharge Area
(Right:) Researchers working with UHI gather information about a boat ramp in Florida as part of an inventory of the state's boating facilities

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is a major component of nearly all of the Institute's work. Community members, those working in ocean and coastal-based industries, and advocates for environmental quality, bring knowledge and perspectives to complement the Institute's science, policy, and technical analyses. Broad stakeholder participation enriches the process, improves the outcomes, and strengthens the likelihood that management recommendations will be implemented. Some examples of projects designed to engage communities include:

- **COASTSWEEP** – the State's annual coastal cleanup program supports thousands of volunteers as they remove marine debris from the Massachusetts coastline
- **Massachusetts Recreational Boater Survey** – recreational boaters participated in a season-long survey, providing spatial and economic data to improve understanding of ocean use patterns and the economic importance of boating in Massachusetts.
- **The Nantucket Shellfish Management Plan** – fishermen, scientists and community members shared information and provided guidance for a management plan to sustain shellfish resources, improve habitat and ensure the future of a highly-valued industry.



Harbor masters, scientists, and coastal managers meet to discuss the Boston Harbor No Discharge Area designation

Additional Information

For more information about the Urban Harbors Institute's projects, publications, and staff, visit www.uhi.umb.edu or call 617-287-5570.