

Our Beautiful Bay

**Frenchman Bay Partners
Newsletter**

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Meet the New Executive Committee



From left to right: Bridie McGreavy (secretary), Fiona de Koning (executive officer at large), Bob DeForrest (executive officer at large), Chris Petersen (vice president), and Jane Disney (president).

Frenchman Bay Partners Conservation Targets:

Frenchman Bay Partners Gain Momentum

At the [annual meeting](#) in early February, the Frenchman Bay Partners voted in their first executive committee. Jane Disney, of Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory, is the president and Chris Petersen, of College of the Atlantic, is the vice president. Bridie McGreavy, Ph.D candidate in Communications and Journalism at the University of Maine, is the secretary. Fiona de Koning, of Acadia Aqua Farms, and Bob DeForrest, of Maine Coast Heritage Trust, are the executive officers at large. The partners also began creating subcommittee working groups for each of the four ecological targets: eelgrass, mudflats, benthic habitat, and diadromous fishes. A subcommittee for communication was also created to assist the secretary.

The executive committee held their first meeting in March to discuss subcommittees, committee policies, and plans for summer 2013. You can find minutes from these meetings and more news from the Frenchman Bay Partners [website](#).

Regional Shellfish Committee Applies for Grant

The [Regional Shellfish Committee](#), one of the Frenchman Bay Partners, recently applied for a Maine Community Foundation capacity building grant. The proposal was entitled the "610 Project," in reference to the partners' goal of trying to get all 610 acres of restricted clam flats in Frenchman Bay opened in the next five years. This grant will build capacity towards conducting [watershed surveys](#) in the future, which will require funding above and beyond the initial grant. The 610 Project will support a clam harvester to serve as a liaison to an advisory committee of Frenchman Bay Partners. Under the direction of the advisory committee, the clam harvester liaison will recruit and train volunteers to take water samples as in a watershed survey. The samples, along with several clam census surveys, will help inform a technical plan for a future watershed survey focused on one restricted clam flat with high productivity and acreage. The technical plan, along with an informational brochure to homeowners in the proposed watershed survey area, will be the major products of the grant.

Mussel Harvesters and MDIBL Agree on Eelgrass Restoration Plans

The [Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory](#) (MDIBL) hosted a meeting and dinner for local mussel harvesters in late January. The purpose of the gathering was to: 1) appreciate the mussel harvesters for their collaboration on eelgrass restoration projects in the past, and 2) garner their input on proposed eelgrass restoration areas for the future. The mussel harvesters who attended either drag for wild mussels or harvest mussel seed for aquaculture in Frenchman Bay. The harvesters present at the meeting represented all four bottom-dredge mussel processors in the State of Maine.

Jane Disney, president of the Frenchman Bay Partners and staff scientist at MDIBL, gave a presentation on MDIBL's history with eelgrass restoration from 2007 to present and spoke about the dramatic decline in eelgrass habitat in Frenchman Bay between 1996 and 2008. Among other threats like pollution,



Eelgrass



Mudflats



Diadromous Fishes



Subtidal Benthic Habitats

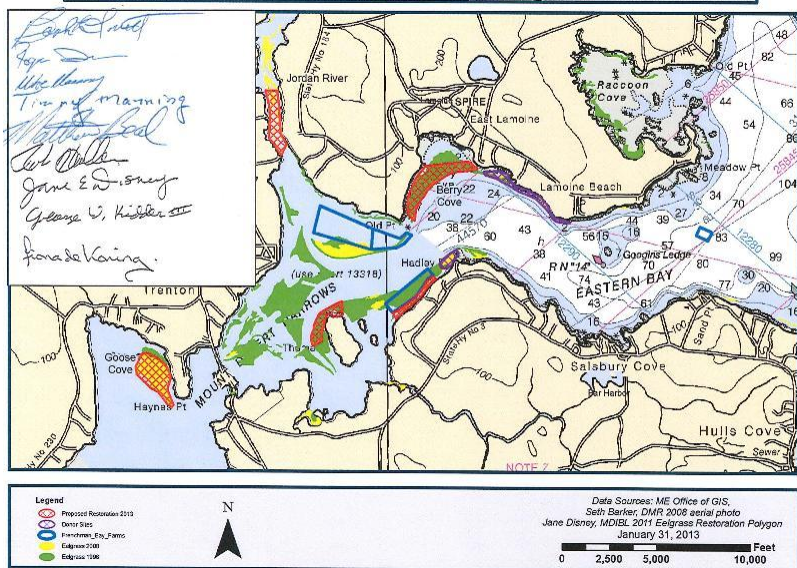
**Featured Partner:
Acadia Aqua Farms**

shoreline erosion, and invasive species, fishing practices have the potential to be harmful to eelgrass.

The first major outcome from the meeting was the agreement around designated eelgrass "donor sites," totaling 39 acres, located immediately to the west of Hadley Point and along the Lamoine shoreline. Eelgrass transplants will be harvested from these areas for restoration projects. The second outcome was agreement about proposed eelgrass restoration sites, totaling 228 acres, including areas at Hadley Point and around Thomas Island in Bar Harbor, in Goose Cove in Trenton, and the Jordan River, and Berry Cove in Lamoine.

Bob DeForrest, executive officer at large for the Frenchman Bay Partners and project manager at Maine Coast Heritage Trust, created real-time GIS maps as the harvesters made suggestions on the proposed areas. Harvesters and MDIBL scientists signed the [map of eelgrass restoration areas and donor sites](#), which represents the agreement of MDIBL scientists and community partners to restrict their restoration efforts to these areas and mussel harvesters to refrain from harvesting in these areas. The [positive outcomes from this meeting](#) are a testament to the willingness of different bay users to trust each other and work together toward preserving the resources in Frenchman Bay.

Proposed Upper Frenchman Bay Eelgrass Restoration





[Acadia Aqua Farms website](#)

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Partner Profile: Acadia Aqua Farms



Acadia Aqua Farms is a local mussel aquaculture business owned and operated by Theo and Fiona de Koning. They have been offering wholesale "Dutch style" Frenchman Bay farmed mussels for the past three and a half years. Dutch style mussel farming refers to seabed aquaculture and [Acadia Aqua Farms](#) is the only company in the northeastern United States doing this type of aquaculture. While they are not yet sold in grocery stores, you may have eaten some of these mussels at a local restaurant. You can find [great recipes](#) on the Acadia Aqua Farms website as well, so even if you can't yet buy them in your local grocery, you can still steam your mussels [European style](#). Acadia Aqua Farms opened initially as a daughter company working under another seafood company seven years ago, but Fiona says that Theo's family has been farming mussels in the Dutch style for five generations (since the time of Napoleon!) and Theo and Fiona are in the process of including the sixth generation-their oldest son-in the family business. The multi-generational independent family business approach is still relatively unique in the working waterfront, and Acadia Aqua Farms boasts a successfully growing business model. Acadia Aqua Farms has been a Frenchman Bay Partner for almost as long as the family-owned company has been operating in Frenchman Bay.