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Letter From the President of
Friends of Blue Hill Bay
(From the Fall 09 Newsletter)

This year marks Friends of Blue Hill Bay's tenth anniversary, a remarkable milestone for a grassroots non-profit organization. As Blue Hill Bay's only advocate we have worked diligently to see salmon farms removed from the bay, fund scientific research and map the bay's many uses. We have had our concerned voices heard by the State's governors, legislators and departments of Environmental Protection and Marine Resources.

None of this could have happened without the tremendous support of all our members over the past ten years. Thank you. And it also could not have happened without the tireless support of our volunteer Board of Directors. We have operated all this time with just one paid, very part-time (and overworked) administrative assistant who handles all of our communications, mailings and accounting.

The Board recently decided it is time to hire an executive director who can tackle all the issues in front of us. Barbara Arter was selected from more than 12 well qualified candidates. She brings to our organization a strong background in environmental policy making and tremendous energy to take FOBHB into its second decade. Please join the Board in welcoming her.

We continue to have several issues that impact a healthy future for Blue Hill Bay including pollution, aquaculture, dragging and dredging. This newsletter addresses many of our concerns and is intended to bring you up to date.

The good news is that the Department of Marine Resources has initiated a ban on fishing and dragging for scallops in Blue Hill Harbor, Morgan Bay, and the upper part of the Bay in an attempt to rebuild the scallop resource. There is also an effort underway by the Penobscot East Resource Center to encourage a more sustainable regional fishery by selling locally with a more environmentally friendly footprint. However we are also being challenged by the continued pollution from salmon farms further Down East, potential dredging of Blue Hill Harbor and the issues of red tide during the summer months.

In other news the bay still has five shellfish aquaculture lease sites and new shellfish aquaculture leases are being planned in neighboring waters of Deer Isle and MDI. Also, the state has recently decided to investigate the potential of ocean wind energy near Isle Haut. These are all issues that are being closely monitored by FOBHB.

No newsletter would be complete without an appeal for your support. In order for us to continue our work, ensuring we have a clean and healthy bay for the future, your help is needed. Please join us again as we work for our bay.

Enjoy this issue of the newsletter and cheers to another 10 years.

~ Don Eley, President