



**NOAA** NATIONAL OCEANIC AND  
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



Contact: Maggie Mooney-Seus  
978-281-9175

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
June 12, 2012

### **NOAA issues award to Gloucester Health Department Official for restoration efforts**

NOAA's Restoration Center today announced that Gloucester's Manager of Health Services Charles Max Schenk will receive an "Excellence In Restoration" award for his leadership in the Mill Pond mud flat and salt marsh restoration project, which took place from 1998 - 2012.

"The key to any successful restoration effort is committed partners," said John Catena, supervisor, Northeast Region, NOAA Restoration Center. "While a number of organizations worked long and hard on this 10-year project, much of the project success is due to the leadership, ingenuity and determination of Max Schenk. Max was involved in every aspect of this project from grant writing and contract management to outreach and communications."

Schenk has also provided valuable support on other NOAA Restoration Center supported projects in Gloucester, including the Eastern Point Salt Marsh Restoration project, Dun Fudgin intertidal restoration project and improvements to the Little River Fish ladder.

In 2005, Schenk was a recipient of the NOAA Volunteer of the Year award, which recognizes individuals for resourcefulness and leadership in balancing the human use of America's coastal and ocean resources with the needs of the resources themselves.

Schenk has worked with a number of regional organizations to develop partnerships and advocacy coalitions for environmental and cultural causes. His involvement with conservation initiatives began in 1998 as a volunteer for the Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge in Newburyport, Massachusetts. He has played leadership roles for the National Estuaries Program affiliate - the Eight Towns and the Bay Committee, the Massachusetts Bays Estuary Association, Cultural Alliance of the Lower Merrimack Valley, and Gloucester's Conservation Commission.

The Mill Pond restoration project entailed modifying an existing concrete dam that regulates water flow into Mill Pond, a salt pond that is located inland from the Annisquam River Estuary. By improving tidal influence and increasing salinity levels, algal growth and invasive species like phragmites are being reduced so that native salt marsh plants and in particular soft shelled clams can recolonize this 30-acre site. The restored marsh system will also provide habitat for a variety of fish and bird species and serve as a natural buffer against flooding. The new tide gate has the ability to be manually operated during significant rain or tidal events and reduce stormwater flooding. This is a major concern to nearby residents who suffered an estimated \$1 million in flood damage in 2006.

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and our other [social media channels](#).