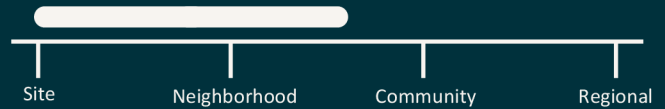


Location

SCALE

Route 77 bridge crossing, Scarborough



High tide event flooding on US Route 1 across marsh. Photo by PPH.

DESCRIPTION:

The Route 77 bridge crosses over the Spurwink Salt Marsh. The route connects Scarborough and Cape Elizabeth, splitting the marsh in two. The salt marsh provides the communities with storm and flood protection, fish and wildlife habitat, recreational and commercial harvesting opportunities, and pollutant filtration.

TRAVEL CORRIDORS & INFRASTRUCTURE:

Route 77 blocks tidal flow, and therefore does not allow the culvery enough water to pass through. Not only does this increase chances of extreme flooding, but it affects the function of the marsh in the area. The road is highly prone to severe flooding, causing risks to accessing critical infrastructures and the safety of residents. When flooding occurs, residents often take a minor detour anyway. Some residents have concerns regarding how a permanent closure could impact traffic.

HABITAT

Salt marshes are critical ecosystems because of their abilities to buffer in storms and surges by absorbing water, reducing damage while filtering runoff. They provide food and shelter for over 75% of fisheries species, as well as birds like the waterfowl, Eastern black rail, wood stork, and salt marsh sparrow.

ECONOMY:

Scarborough has received a grant from the Maine Natural Resource Conservation Program to remove the road and restore the marsh. With ongoing water damage to the road, maintenance could cost millions.

This project is made possible through a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, with support from Gulf of Maine Research Institute, The Builders Initiative, and Jane's Trust Foundation.

COASTAL HAZARDS



Storm Surge



Sea Level Rise

VULNERABILITIES



Essential Infrastructure



Habitat



Travel Corridors

STRATEGY TYPE



Policy/Program



Nature-based



Hardscape

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY SITE?

The Route 77 bridge is highly prone to flooding, putting infrastructure and residents at risk. It also interferes with the health of the Spurwink Salt Marsh.

STRATEGIES:

- In April, 2024, Scarborough and Cape Elizabeth unanimously agreed to use funds provided by the Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program to remove a 1/4 mile section of road. The road crosses over a section of the Spurwink Marsh between towns. Removing the section of road will restore saltwater marshland and allow for natural tide flow, as well as save both Towns the resources that would have been used for future disruptions.

