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UNH Great Bay Coast Watch Seeks Volunteers

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DURHAM, N.H. -- The University of New Hampshire Great Bay Coast Watch (GBCW) is looking for dedicated individuals to help monitor the water quality of Great Bay and the New Hampshire coast.



GBCW coordinator Ann Reid (center) checking water quality at Little Bay with volunteers Sylvia Jones and Steve Loos.

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March through October. Additional teams monitor phytoplankton populations on a weekly basis at five coastal sites and one offshore site. Phytoplankton are single-celled algae that form the base of the marine food chain and may produce a harmful algae bloom known as "red tide."

Other watch activities include walking the shorelines seeking causes of erosion, monitoring storm drains, collecting rainfall runoff samples and assisting the N.H. Department of Environmental Services with boat-based sampling and shellfish monitoring.

A nationally recognized program, GBCW is New Hampshire's leading citizen volunteer group for monitoring water quality in salt water and estuarine systems. The watch needs volunteers for its upcoming sampling season set to begin in early March.

GBCW volunteer teams sample water quality at 21 sites along the Seacoast and around Great Bay monthly from

Community outreach is also an important watch activity. Volunteers can train to give presentations about GBCW activities to local organizations and town boards. They also conduct demonstrations in schools, on public cruises and at local festivals.

To learn more about volunteering and GBCW activities, contact Ann Reid at NH Sea Grant Extension at 603-749-1565 or ann.reid@unh.edu. The GBCW Web site is <http://www.gbcw.unh.edu>.

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