

**Seacoast Film Festival
The Beaches Conference
June 14, 2019**

Moderator: Kristen Grant, Maine Sea Grant and UMaine Cooperative Extension
Note Taker: Julie LaBranch, Rockingham Planning Commission

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Theme – Film as a catalyst for engagement, discussion and action.

The Seacoast Film Festival began with 400 participants and grew to over 1,000 in 2019; success of first event secured its reputation; brings like-minded issues, organizations and people together, amplifies their voices, collective perspectives and experiences, diverse network of partners new and established. Donation only entrance fees reduces film licensing costs. SFF and Kittery Land Trust may develop a licensing program for use by others to reduce costs and reach more people, ideal for school showings.

Audience Comments:

Film brings the reality to life, real people and places we know, sense of place resonates with local audiences; down side is it too close to home/personal? Films both upbeat and heavy which brings many emotions to spur actions.

The film The Devil We Know is about PFAS contamination. After the SFF NHDES released water quality standards for PFAS which many thought were weak. Film screenings about PFAS were held to raise awareness, 20 events, 800 participants, 1,200 signature petition, 100's of letters; film central to outreach and momentum.