

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND LOBSTER FESTIVAL AT PRESCOTT PARK
CELEBRATING 400 YEARS OF LOCAL SEAFOOD**

Featuring a Seafood Cook-off, Games, Music, Fishing Boat Tours, and More

PORTSMOUTH, N.H.—September 9, 2009—The New Hampshire Fish and Lobster Festival, a result of a special collaboration between Prescott Park Arts Festival, City of Portsmouth, Seacoast Local, Seacoast Eat Local, Slow Food Seacoast, and UNH Sea Grant, will be held on Saturday, Sept. 19, 2009, from noon to 4p.m. at Prescott Park in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Admission is free.

Visitors can walk the decks of a local fishing boat, taste freshly landed local seafood prepared by Seacoast chefs, learn to identify local fish, watch an on-location cook-off competition, investigate the Gulf of Maine ecosystem, sing a song and hear a tale or two. Children are invited to play games, and storytellers will engage youngsters with classic tales from the sea. Everyone is invited make a fish print to wear, or investigate models of fishing nets, while musicians from the Portsmouth Maritime Folk Festival perform throughout the grounds. The sea-chanty rock band Sharks Come Cruising will take the stage from 3 to 4 p.m.

Dubbed the "Fishtival," this first-ever interactive festival celebrates 18 miles and 400 years of New Hampshire fishing communities and traditions in the waterfront setting of Prescott Park, and is designed to advance the region's fishing industry by educating the public about the benefits of purchasing seafood locally.

To highlight the diversity and quality of the local fishing industry, chefs from restaurants and markets across the region will prepare creative, delicious samplings fresh from local boats. Each participating restaurant was assigned, by lottery, a different locally-caught seafood species to prepare and serve. For a nominal fee (\$3 for fish and oysters, \$6 for lobsters) celebration attendees can taste each of the species and the unique preparations. "Catch of the day" designation includes MONKFISH prepared by Jumpin' Jays Fish Café; SQUID prepared by Philbrick's Fresh Market; SKATE prepared by Robert's Maine Grill; HAKE prepared by Seaport Fish; MACKEREL prepared by Fresh Local; LOBSTER prepared by The Blue Mermaid; FLOUNDER prepared by Portsmouth

Brewery; COD prepared by Green Monkey; POLLOCK prepared by River House Restaurant; HADDOCK prepared by Portsmouth High School Culinary Arts; and BLUEFISH prepared by Old Salt Restaurant. Additionally, Portsmouth Lobster Company will provide whole steamed lobsters and Little Bay Oyster Company will present freshly shucked oysters.

"Iron Chef" fans will also love the chef cook-off competition between chefs Ben Hasty of the Inn at Exeter and Alex Maxon, a professional chef and fisherman from Newburyport. Dubbed the *Seafood Throwdown*, the chefs will be asked to prepare an undisclosed locally caught species on-site and with a limited amount of time to travel to the Portsmouth Farmers' Market to collect supplies, and then return to the park to prepare, cook, and plate samples for the judges.

Also during the afternoon, there will be opportunities to meet a lobster, or peek through a microscope at planktonic forms of seafood animals. Aboard fishing vessels, captains will show how they bring in their haul; on land, interpreters from Strawberry Banke Museum will share the surprising variety of industry and recreation along Portsmouth's waterfront, past and present, during a brief walking tour. Local fishmongers will show how to process several species of whole fresh fish, and share fish selection and preparation tips. Aboard the Gundalow, enjoy a musseling demonstration and try your hand at a boatbuilding tools activity.

"This is a great example of a collaborative effort for an important community issue," said Ben Anderson Executive Director of Prescott Park Arts Festival. "An unprecedented number of community organizations have come to the table to make this unique celebration happen."

The NH Fish and Lobster Festival is produced by a variety of community organizations collaborating to support the local fishing industry. The event began with the City of Portsmouth Fishing Industry Committee, established by Portsmouth City Council in November 2008 to preserve and promote the local commercial fishing industry and educate the public about the commercial fishing industry's economic contributions to job creation, tourism, and community population and demographic diversity. Out of that committee grew awareness of the role the public can play to support

our dwindling community of local fishing boats during a time of far-reaching changes in federal regulations.

"One of the ideas behind the festival is to get people excited about our local fishing community as a local food resource," said Karen Marzloff, director of Seacoast Local and co-chair of the festival committee. "If we can create more ways for people to 'buy local' and 'eat local' we can help local boats stay in business, keeping their knowledge and skills alive while the industry struggles with enormous regulatory challenges."

Funding for the event is provided by UNH Sea Grant, Friends of the South End, the NH Division of Ports and Harbors, City of Portsmouth, Esther's Marina, NH Commercial Fishermen's Association and New England Grassroots Environmental Fund.

Coinciding with the event will be the fifth annual Fairy House Tour, presented by the Friends of the South End and the CELEBRATEPINK 5K Road Race and Walk, part of the New Portsmouth Community Road Race Series. The Fairy House tour includes a stop in Prescott Park and offers participants an opportunity to experience the joy and magic of fairy houses. The road race and walk winds through downtown Portsmouth, over historic Memorial Bridge, ending near Prescott Park.

More information on the NH Fish and Lobster Festival can be found at www.prescottpark.org. To find more information about the movements to support New Hampshire's local fishing industry go to www.nhseafood.com where the NH Seafood Fresh and Local brand promises fresh quality fish from local boats.

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