



2025 Essex Heritage Photo Contest RULES & REQUIREMENTS

Deadline for Submission: Friday, December 19, 2025

Photographers Get Snapping!

All photographers are invited to submit images that capture the unique character of the Essex National Heritage Area and showcase the historic, cultural, and natural places of Essex County.

Photographs must be taken within the Heritage Area (Essex County) and represent one of the contest categories listed below. A list of communities in the Essex National Heritage Area can be found at:

<https://essexheritage.org/explore/cities-and-towns/>

2025 CONTEST CATEGORIES: Images will be judged in three categories:

<i>Contest Category</i>	<i>Criteria</i>
Magic Moments	Beauty surrounds us here in Essex County, and those “Magic Moments” where the perfect shot appears before you can happen whenever, wherever. Show us photos where you captured the picturesque quality of the Essex National Heritage Area by being in the right place at the right time.
Around Town	Whether you’re exploring a bustling downtown or strolling the quiet streets of a historic district, the lived-in environments of Essex County always have a story to tell. Show us the unique architecture, cobblestone alleyways, built structures, or public art installations that define the character of our towns and cities.
Your Favorite Places	With so much to see and do in the Essex National Heritage Area, it’s hard to pick a favorite place. For many of us, there are special spots we visit multiple times a year – or even every day! Show us your favorite places in Essex County, whether it’s a historic site, a scenic trail, or an iconic view.

Youth Category (Ages 5-17)	Young photographers of all skill levels are invited to submit photographs to the Essex Heritage Photo Contest! The theme for this year is <i>Young Perspectives</i> . Youth contestants should submit photos that let us see the wonders of Essex County through their eyes.
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HOW TO ENTER & SUBMIT PHOTOGRAPHS:

1. **ENTRY FORMS:** Entrants must complete and sign one Entry Form for their photographic submission(s). A Model Release may also be necessary. Both online and downloadable forms are available at EssexHeritage.org/Programs/Photo-Contest/. A maximum of **FOUR (4)** photographs per photographer is allowed. Entrants are encouraged to submit no more than **TWO (2)** photographs per contest category.
2. **ENTRY FEE:** Individuals must include a \$10 entry fee with their submission(s) to the contest. For Essex Heritage members, the discounted entry fee is \$5. Checks should be made payable to: Essex Heritage. Electronic payment options will also be available. **Please note: the entry fee is PER PERSON, not per image.**

Essex Heritage relies on your participation and active engagement to fulfill our mission, support our partners, and encourage stewardship of our treasured resources.



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JUDGING: Entries will be judged based on creativity, photographic quality, and effectiveness in conveying the beauty and/or unique character of the Essex National Heritage Area in one of the contest categories.

A panel of judges will select three winners from each category, in addition to an overall Grand Prize winner. The highest ranked eligible photographs will then be shared via Essex Heritage's social media for public voting of the People's Choice award (please contact Essex Heritage if you would like to have your photos omitted from public voting).

RIGHTS: Photos that violate or infringe upon another person's copyright are not eligible. For a photo in which a person is recognizable, you must provide a model release from the subject or, in the case of a minor, the subject's parent or guardian. A **Model Release** is printable from: EssexHeritage.org/Programs/Photo-Contest/

Photographers retain all rights to their work, but grant Essex Heritage and our partners, including but not limited to the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, the right to use, reproduce, distribute, publicly display and/or use submitted photographs in print or electronic publications, including promotional materials, websites, and social media. *Essex Heritage will always attempt to credit any reproduced photograph(s).*

WINNING IMAGES: Winners will be notified by staff and announced in February 2026. There will be up to twelve (14) prizes awarded, including the youth category winners. Photographers can only win one prize per contest.

Winning images will be displayed at the National Park Service Visitor Center in Salem (2 New Liberty Street, Salem, MA) for 6-8 weeks. Winning images will also be used in Essex Heritage publications as well as posted on the Essex Heritage website at EssexHeritage.org and other social media outlets.

HOW TO ENTER & SUBMIT PHOTOGRAPHS:

1. Fill out and sign ONE (1) Entry Form and sign a Model Release if necessary (see above). The entry form is available both as an online form and downloadable printable from: EssexHeritage.org/Programs/Photo-Contest/
2. Submit up to FOUR (4) photograph(s) one of three ways:
 - a. Via flash drive
 - i. Mail to Essex Heritage, 10 Federal Street Suite 12 Salem, MA 01970 (Attention: Photo Contest).
 - b. Via file sharing link
 - i. Email a link to your shared Dropbox or Google Drive folder (preferred) to PhotoContest@EssexHeritage.org
 - c. Via email
 - i. Email the image as an attachment to PhotoContest@EssexHeritage.org (we prefer to receive the highest quality version of your photo available, in which case, a file sharing link may be preferential depending on the file size of your submission.)

IMAGE GUIDELINES: Minor adjustments, including spotting, dodging, and burning, contrast and slight color adjustment or the digital equivalents, are acceptable. If judges believe that a photograph has been significantly altered, they reserve the right to disqualify it.

- Images must be submitted digitally, labeled with the title and photographer.
- Photos should be taken and shared at the highest resolution possible.
- We recommend digital image size set at a minimum of 300 ppi.
- Photos must be in a .jpeg, .jpg, or .gif format.
- All photos must have been captured between January 1, 2025, and December 18, 2025.