

The Three Bays Monitor

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Popponesset Bay Report Released

This fall, the much anticipated release of the report on the condition of Popponesset Bay was released. This watershed also includes the Shoestring Bay area of western Barnstable. During two separate sessions, one in Mashpee and another in Hyannis, Dr. Brian Howes of the Massachusetts Estuaries Project (MEP) elaborated on the findings.

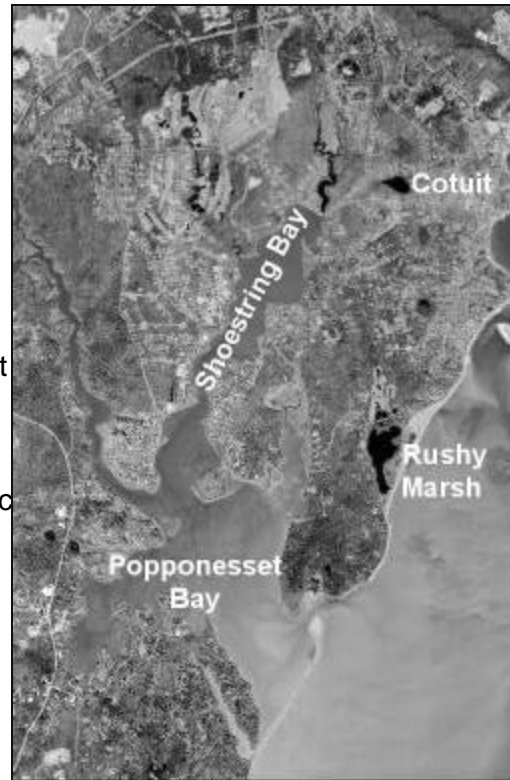
Why does this report mean so much to us at Three Bays Preservation? Because we are anticipating the release of our own report, which will be based on our own research of the Three Bays system, in the spring of 2005.

Analyses of the Popponesset Bay System was performed to assist the towns of Barnstable and Mashpee with up-coming nitrogen management decisions associated with the towns' current and future wastewater planning efforts, as well as wetland restoration, anadromous fish runs, shell fishery, open-space, and harbor maintenance programs.

As part of the MEP approach, habitat assessment was conducted on the embayment based upon available water quality monitoring data, historical changes in eelgrass distribution, time-series water column oxygen measurements, and benthic community structure.

The Town of Mashpee has recognized the severity of the problem of eutrophication and the need for watershed nutrient management, and is currently developing a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan, which it plans to rapidly implement. The Town of Barnstable has already completed and implemented wastewater planning in other regions of the Town not associated with Popponesset Bay. Both towns have nutrient management activities related to their tidal embayments, which have been associated with the MEP effort in Popponesset Bay.

The towns of Barnstable and Mashpee, in conjunction with the MEP, are currently working on implementation of a program with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the EPA. That will look at the feasibility of permitting non-sewering options to reduce the nitrogen loads from the upper Shoestring Bay watershed.



It is important to note that the analysis of future nitrogen loading to the Popponeset Bay/ Shoestring Bay Estuarine system focuses upon additional shifts in land-use from forest/grasslands to residential and commercial development. However, the MEP analysis indicates that significant increases in nitrogen loading can occur under present land-uses, due to shifts in occupancy, shifts from seasonal to year-round usage, and increasing use of fertilizers. Therefore, watershed-estuarine nitrogen management must include management approaches to prevent increased nitrogen loading from both shifts in land uses (new sources) and from loading increases of current land-uses.

The overarching conclusion of the MEP analysis of the Popponeset Bay/ Shoestring Bay Estuarine System is that restoration will necessitate a reduction in the present nitrogen inputs and management options to negate additional future nitrogen inputs.

The complete report can be viewed by visiting our web site at www.3bays.org and following the link to The Popponeset Report.

[Update on the Industrial Wind Park](#)

The Army Corp of Engineers has published the Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) for the proposed Cape Cod Wind Farm. The entire report can be found on the Army Corp website:
<http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/> .

You will need to follow the links to "Projects", and then to "Cape Wind Permit Application".

A simpler way to view the 26-page "Executive Summary" portion of the report is on the Three Bays Preservation web site at: www.3bays.org . Just follow the link to "DEIS Executive Summary".



Off-shore transformer station, similar to what is proposed for Nantucket Sound

Important Note: The period for public comment on the project has been extended until Feb 24, 2005. If you are unable to attend one of the public hearings, you can email your comments to the Army Corp at wind.energy@usace.army.mil

[Your Support Keeps Us Working](#)

As our 2004 Annual Appeal draws to a close, we thank you for your support, which has made it possible to continue being a strong advocate for cleaning and protecting our bays and maintaining our channels.

As the leading environmental group working with the Town and Commonwealth, Three Bays Preservation has been instrumental in exposing the precarious health of our bays, and implementing plans for future remedial action.

It's still not too late to make an additional year-end gift. You can mail your check, or, if you prefer to use your credit card, go to our web site at www.3bays.org and follow the link to "Catalogue for Philanthropy" for secure, on-line giving. As we are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, all contributions are fully tax deductible.

Thank you, and best wishes for the New Year!

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