

Wastewater planning down to three plans

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ORLEANS -

The Wastewater Management Steering Committee has sifted through nine different options and come up with three alternate water treatment plans for Orleans. They hope to have it down to one detailed plan by the May Town Meeting, where they will make an informational presentation and ask for a special town meeting in the fall to consider the plan.

The committee examined 25 different possible locations for treatment facilities and also concluded that Orleans will likely need multiple disposal sites. They favored sites that would allow dual use for the wastewater (golf courses, baseball fields, etc.) and looked at the merits of centralized vs. decentralized systems. Out of that they came up with nine townwide plans and using 16 criteria, whittled that to three finalists.

The first plan would involve sewerage 2,390 lots, treating the sewerage at four sites, one in each of the town's watersheds and disposing of the water at 10 sites. The sludge would be handled at an upgraded tri-town plant.

The second plan would sewer 2,180 lots, treat the waste at a new tri-town plant and dispose of it on three sites. Sludge would also be handled at the tri-town plant.

Plan number three would handle 2,550 lots and treat the sewerage at a new plant in South Orleans. Disposal would be at two Brewster golf courses (Cape Cod National and Captains) and excess sludge would go to the plant.

Regionalization of the treatment plants could help lower the cost.

The advantages of the first plan are reduced transportation costs and a quick fix for Pleasant Bay problems of excess nitrogen. The disadvantages are acquisition costs of sites, higher sewerage costs and greater treatment costs than the other two plans.

The advantages of plan two are that the site is already being used for waste disposal, the town owns it, it is less sensitive to wastewater and there are economies of scale. The disadvantages are a possible shift in watershed boundaries and it may require other disposal sites.

Advantages to the South Orleans plan are it has the best reuse of water and nutrients (golf courses) and it allows for reduced fertilization at the courses. The disadvantages are that treatment sites are scarce; it requires collaboration with Brewster and would require liquid sludge transportation through town to the Tri-Town site.

The committee made a pair of more detailed presentations at Snow Library on Thursday (after press time) and more detailed information is available on the water committee Web site on the town's site.