

The Three Bays Monitor

Vol. 1 - June 2000

Vox Populi: What the people say about the Three Bays

Thanks to all the folks who responded to our Fall 1999 questionnaire. Your comments help us better focus on specific issues and set our future action agenda. Here's a sampling of what we heard from you.

Sampson's Island and Dead Neck

The barrier build-up is great. The water is cleaner and the beaches are getting restored. However, there is a sandbar developing at the west end of Sampson's Island that has caused some groundings.

Water flow and navigation

The current has noticeably increased in Cotuit Bay. Also, the channel off Bluff Point and the Cotuit entrance channel to the Seapuit River have improved. The West Bay channel needs dredging, and there is some concern about siltation and poor navigability from Crosby's Yacht Yard to North Bay.

Wildlife and vegetation

There's a wonderful burst of life in our Bays. Birds and fish are thriving.

Water quality

There have been improvements in West Bay and North Bay. Still, problems persist in Prince and Warren's Coves, and the turbidity in the Eel River seems to have worsened.

Another questionnaire will be sent to you this fall. We hope you will be on the lookout for changes in the Three Bays.

A letter from the President...

Dear Friends:

As we look forward to enjoying the summer activities in the Three Bays Estuary, we must not forget that the health of the entire aquatic environment is being attacked by the overloading of our bays with nutrients and other pollutants. This is mostly due to the dramatic increase in the building of houses on the Cape. It is also due to the fact that the people who truly care about Cape Cod have not been heard.

The Three Bays Monitor is a newsletter that will help keep you up to date on what is happening on the local, state and federal levels so that you can join in and we speak with one voice. It's time to wake up our public officials to the fact that these waters are an important environmental, economic and recreational resource for all the citizens.

We play to publish the Three Bays Monitor every four to six weeks. We would appreciate any comments on how we can improve or add to the contents.

William Gahagen
President

...And a message from Mass. Audubon

The Massachusetts Audubon Society's Coastal Waterbird Program is again gearing up to manage the breeding shorebirds on Dead Neck and Sampson's Island.

Already, as of May 15, five pairs of Piping Plovers have arrived and are nesting on both the eastern and western ends of the island. Also, Least and Common Terns have begun nesting. As the plovers proceed with their breeding cycle, we will be roping off appropriate sections of beach habitat.

The Coastal Waterbird Program appreciates the continued cooperation of Audubon members and day-pass visitors who use the island. We would also like to extend our thanks to Three Bays Preservation, Inc. for funding the program for the second consecutive year.

We look forward to seeing you out there this summer!

Matthew Bailey
Cape Cod Coordinator
MAS-CWP

Coastal Birds Info

The Massachusetts Audubon Society, in conjunction with Three Bays Preservation, will be holding a slide presentation on the Coastal Waterbird Program on Dead Neck June 27, 7-8:30pm, at Freedom Hall, Main Street, Cotuit. The presentation is free and open to the public. For more information, call the Three Bays office at 508-420-0780.

Pump it out!

Boaters know first hand how important clean coastal waters are. Both treated and untreated boat sewage pose a serious threat to water quality. When present in high concentrations, bacteria from sewage is directly responsible for the closing of beaches and shellfish beds. By using pump out sites - wet vacuums that draw the sewage out of

boat holding tanks for proper disposal - you can dramatically reduce the levels of sewage found in coastal waters.

For a complete list of pump out sites in Massachusetts, call the Three Bays office.

Three Bays Preservation, Inc. Mission and Goals

Three Bays Preservation, Inc is a not-for-profit environmental organization created to protect, maintain and enhance the aquatic environment and related ecosystems in the area of West Bay, North Bay and Cotuit Bay on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and to take action to forestall and minimize threats to the health of the Three Bays system.

The goals of Three Bays Preservation are to:

- Restore and protect the Bays' habitats to ensure a diverse, balanced, and healthy population of fish, shellfish, wildlife, and plants.
- Assure that the beneficial uses of the Three Bay Watershed, including fishing, swimming, navigation and shell fishing, are improved and protected.
- Increase our scientific understanding of the Three Bays watershed and estuary and use that knowledge to stimulate appropriate public actions.
- Improve water quality by initiating action to eliminate and prevent pollution at its source, and minimize the discharge of pollutants from point and non-point sources.
- Maximize the exchange of water with Nantucket Sound by improving hydraulic flow and flushing through the use of dredging and other waterway modifications.
- Increase public knowledge about the Three Bays ecosystem and stimulate public involvement in the restoration and protection of the Bays.
- Establish partnerships with Town, County and State Agencies, as well as with other environmental interest groups, to achieve these goals.

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