

# The Three Bays Monitor

Vol. 10 - January 2002

## **Ambitious State Program Explores Pollution/Solutions in Estuaries**

Vox Clamantis. Translated from the Latin, it means, “The voice of one crying.” In other words, you’re on your own. In the past, we at Three Bays Preservation, Inc. have sometimes felt the phrase applied to us. After all, our crusade on behalf of the estuaries has enjoyed considerable success, but it hasn’t exactly set the world on fire.

Well, no more. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has joined the cause. The state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), in conjunction with the University of Massachusetts School of Marine Science and Technology (SMAST), recently announced the establishment of “The Estuaries Project, Southeastern Massachusetts Embayment Restoration.”

The \$12.5 million, six-year project will explore pollution problems and possible solutions in 89 embayments from the South Shore to Cape Cod and the Islands, including the Three Bays. Funded by the state, county, and municipalities, the project will bring much-needed scientific and governmental attention to issues that are familiar to members of Three Bays: nutrient overloading, fertilizer runoff, storm water runoff, to name a few.

When seen in combination with the recent news that the Three Bays have been designated a federal no-discharge zone, this project should bring cheers throughout the Town of Barnstable and the membership ranks of Three Bays Preservation, Inc. As we’ve always said, the water helps to define us as a community and our estuaries are too important to lose.

“There’s no question we’ve had some very good news lately,” said Three Bays Program Manager Lindsey Counsell. “It takes organizations like ours to spread the word and to lay the groundwork for the types of action we’re seeing. It’s really gratifying. We’re looking forward to working cooperatively with the various Town departments on this important project.”

With the political strength of the state and the technical expertise of SMAST behind this project, Counsell said he is hopeful that the analysis of pollution problems and the recommended solutions will be taken seriously by important decision makers in our own community and throughout the Commonwealth.

For more info, visit the DEP website:

[www.state.ma.us/dep/smerp/smerp.htm](http://www.state.ma.us/dep/smerp/smerp.htm)

## **Windmill Alert: Paying Attention to Which Way the Wind Blows**

It may be cold outside, but things are certainly hot on Cape Cod. Generating this heat is a proposal to build 170, 40-story windmill towers in the heart of Nantucket Sound. Private developers are behind this \$500 million project that would monopolize a 28-square-mile public resource.

The gigantic windmills would be visible from south facing land and beaches in the Town of Barnstable. Moreover, recreational boating organizations and commercial fishing organizations have come out staunchly opposed to the project.

Business groups, including the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce and the Hyannis Area Chamber of Commerce, also oppose the enormous project. The Hyannis Chamber, according to its position paper, “Strongly encourages Cape Cod’s political and regulatory leadership to work to bring Cape Wind Associates’ entrepreneurial venture as proposed to an end and do it quickly to avoid any more wasted time and money.”

No one opposes clean, renewable energy, but not at the expense of our beautiful Nantucket Sound.

A new group – the Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound – has set up a website where folks concerned about this potential blight can learn more and get involved:  
[www.windmillscapecod.org](http://www.windmillscapecod.org).

## **Dredging Complete**

Birds, boaters, and other water lovers should be smiling. Three Bays Preservation, Inc. just completed its latest round of dredging. The project removed 9500 cubic yards of sand from the Cotuit entrance channel, thus improving both navigation and the flushing action of the bays. The sand was subsequently deposited on Sampson’s Island, where two acres of new bird habitat were created. Three Bays Preservation, Inc. secured the necessary permits, and we’re grateful to the Town of Barnstable for funding the use of the county dredge.

## **Thanks to the Tides: Three Bays Preservation Awarded 15K Grant**

Three Bays Preservation, Inc. would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the Tides Foundation, which has recently awarded us a \$15,000 grant to help underwrite our organization’s general expenses. We have already received the first \$7500 check, and look forward to the second installment next November.

Since 1976, the Tides Foundation has worked with a variety of non-profit organizations that are dedicated to promoting human rights, justice, and a healthy, sustainable environment. In the past 10 years, the Foundation has awarded more than \$170 million to non-profits working in these areas.

Three Bays joins an impressive list of environmental groups that have benefited from the generosity of the Tides Foundation. These organizations include Friends of the Earth, the Sierra Legal Defence Fund, and the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council.

We're grateful for the help.

## **Doing Right by Our Website**

We take seriously every opportunity we find to communicate the details of our campaign to understand and remedy pollution problems in the Three Bays estuarine system.

To that end, we have recently updated our website, allowing members and non-members alike to discover what our organization has done and where we are going.

In addition to our friendly staples – including local weather and important environmental links – the website now features easy access to reports that previously had only been available in hard copy. These include the “Water Quality & Habitat Health of the Three Bays Estuarine System” report and our pathbreaking DNA analysis of fecal organisms found in the water.

Moreover, you can now access previous copies of the Three Bays Monitor, as well as articles about our organization that have appeared in the local press. Please take a moment and (virtually) visit us: [www.3bays.org](http://www.3bays.org). We'd love the company!

## **Coming Your Way: A New Questionnaire**

We've said it before, but it bears repeating. We are a membership-driven organization. Recognizing this, we are preparing our third annual questionnaire, which we plan on sending to members in February. Some of the questions are new – for example, when was the last time you pumped out your septic system? Others will be familiar – such as, are you noticing an improvement in the water quality of the bays?

All the questions, though, have a bearing on what we do as an organization. Please take a moment and give us your comments. Who knows? In your answers may lie the keys to protecting the bays we all love.