

Attending: Herb Gstalder, Laura Hewitt, Tom Slack, John Duane

Excused: Jake Puffer

Guests: John Riehl, Kathleen Bacon

Call to order 12:15

Pond Management Plan update – Herb Gstalder & Laura Hewitt
Meetings since last NRAB

CCNS - with Sophia Fox 9/28

*CCNS will complete the review of 2021 data in a few weeks (timeframe since extended to just before Thanksgiving.) When data review is completed, CCNS will give us a spreadsheet with data that define the health of a pond for each of the 8 ponds.

*CCNS will share data with Town of Wellfleet in future as they collect it. Caveat; depends on CCNS budget. Only secure for 2023 (and likely 2024).

Eastham/Jane Crowley Director of Health and Environment 10/5

*Eastham tests 9 ponds for the elements defining health of ponds. Use Center for Coastal Studies and UMass Dartmouth for labs

*Eastham proactively manages ponds and carries out remediation, including:

Alum

Application of Glyphosate to Phragmites

Hydro-raking

*Heightend septic requirements in sensitive areas

*"When you know one pond in Cape Cod, you know one pond."

Mass Alternative Septic System Test Center (**MASSTC**) 10/5

Brian Bumgaertel

Sara Wigginton

Bryan Horsley

George Heufelder

*There are 10-15 phosphorus-reducing I/A (innovative advanced) septic systems in development, but there are not enough of them in place for MASSTC to vet them/approve and recommend.

Other suggestions from MASSTC

*Shallow Leaching Field septic systems – cannot use in a flood plain (Gull Pond area technically showing up as flood plain, due to Herring River connection)

*Composting toilets

Hillary Lemos, **Health and Conservation Agent**, Wellfleet 10/21

*Reviewed structure and main elements of our work on plan (see below).

Third meeting of the **Cape Cod Pond Coalition** – (Cape Cod Coalition started) 11/7

*Two other towns have reached out who are working on pond management plans

*First time Truro has had representation at meetings, interest in discussions with them as some close by Truro ponds linked to Wellfleet pond chains

MAIN ELEMENTS OF PROPOSED POND MANAGEMENT PLAN

*Plan's Goal: Maintain Wellfleet's 8 Great Ponds in current state for 10 years. Do nothing that will accelerate natural rate of eutrophication.

- Includes water quality and plant growth in and on shoreline of ponds

*Data-driven plan. Establish a base line of significant elements for each pond that define health of a pond.

- Continuously monitor ponds for those elements for 10 years (with or without CCNS)

*Proactively manage ponds

- Establish town administration position responsible for maintaining health of ponds (may include need for funding)
- Undertake remediation efforts if required to maintain current health of ponds.
- Continually review regulations for septic systems, set-back requirements from ponds, fertilization as data becomes available and science progresses

*Encourage formation of citizens Wellfleet Ponds Coalition with mandate to monitor, advocate and educate.

Mashpee MVP plan – received info on nutrition remediation efforts in Mashpee and related funding. Will add that we are looking into this type of funding alternatives in our plan.

Questions: (John Riehl)

- Great and Long Ponds get heightened recreational usage. Is there evidence this is detrimental to water quality? Hasn't been main driver in discussions – mainly septic and some run-off, but hard to imagine that public usage and resultant surrounding plant damage doesn't increase nutrient run-off. Suzanne Thomas had tried planting around a few ponds some years ago with limited success, more could be done now as several have depleted vegetation to absorb rain and run-off.

- Plan is stated as oversight for 10 years, think should consider long-range goal of improvement of water quality.

NEXT STEPS

*Review status of plan with stakeholders

*Contact regional CCNS expert on use of Glyphosate/Imazapyr on Phragmites

*Study data for each pond when it is available and develop action plans if necessary.

*Determine likely lab costs

Board of Health meeting (11/9) update – Kathleen Bacon

*BoH draft regulations indication that at 1/1/23 there will be meaningful changes to septic rules, DEP mandating compliance with 208 Watershed - to implement nitrogen reducing septic systems

*Title Vs will need updating with sale or construction, cesspools will require upgrades as non-compliant

*Barnstable County working on providing loans to assist with cost

State of Wellfleet Harbor – John Duane

*Barnstable County denied funding request; Pleasant Bay Harbor Study in Orleans was funded by private citizen donations

*Excellent septic presentation by MASSTC; suggest adding link to our NRAB pages

*Wellfleet Harbor Conference – Herring River restoration is starting; funding is set to replace the Chequessett Neck bridge; as this area connects and is uniquely tied to the Harbor, NRAB should connect with Jeanette Kerr and Carol Ridley to look into potential Federal and/or State funding. (John Duane and John Riehl to pursue discussions.)

*Draft letter to SPAT to partner with NRAB in pursuit of Harbor Survey update approved 4-0.

*John Riehl – At Wellfleet Harbor Conference learned there is technology that can take frozen harbor samples and test for DNA to determine species present

Shellfish – brief update on committee work

Open Space – Tom Slack

Looking into funding so prepped to be able to purchase properties if they become available.

Leadership of NRAB – tabled to when Jake Puffer can join the meeting. Laura Hewitt to continue as temporary Chair for another meeting.

Minutes from 9/27 meeting approved as presented 4-0.

Adjourned 1:45