

ATM 2021 Article 25 2021

For NRAB

Tidal Flows at Wellfleet Pier

Boating is a popular pastime in Wellfleet Harbor. As a result, the Town has built a large and much used facilities for boating use, both business and hobby. Maintaining access to these facilities is necessary to maintain availability for boaters. Arranging for necessary, periodic dredging is a key part of the responsibility not only of the Harbormaster but also of the whole Town.

The north channel of the harbor, adjacent to the Town pier, is much used as a docking site. However, every ten years or so, dredging is required to maintain used of the channel against tidal build-up of "black custard". This is expensive and can limit the use until dredging is completed.

The Mayo Creek marsh site is adjacent on the west side of the north channel. This has been closed to significant tidal flow for 100 years.

NRAB has raised the question as to whether reopening the Mayo Creek marsh to tidal flows would help disperse black custard settling in the north channel. Success would allow less frequent dredging ... more use at a lower cost.

An initial study has been completed by scientists at the Woods Hole Group (WHG). WHG is very familiar with issues in Wellfleet harbor, with a number of substantial reports on Duck Creek and the Herring River.

A copy of the study report is attached. A rough estimate is that the requirement of dredging might be delayed to approximately once every 20 years. A limiting factor is the dredging below the natural harbor bottom, needed to permit boating access at low tides.

This study was deliberately designed as an initial overview only. More detailed, quantitative work will be needed to confirm the findings and outline a plan of action, focused on more precise predictions of sediment accumulation. This work would also need recommendations to protect properties adjacent to a restored Mayo Creek.

This would likely be the responsibility of Committees and Town Staff with direct responsibility for harbor management.

We ask that NRAB takes two votes:

- Accept the study report and pay the full project cost to WHG
- Recommend the study to interested parties in Wellfleet who could help with future steps to implement the project.

