



MONTHLY REPORT DECEMBER 2020

Commercial and Recreational Fisheries

- On December 1, Duck Creek opened to commercial shellfishing. It was a stormy day and an early morning tide, and turnout was low.
- We experienced a mild December, weather-wise. We have had only one below 28 degrees day this year, and we were able to open mid-tide as the temperature rose.
- Commercial shellfishermen harvested approximately 46 bushels of quahogs, 67 bushels of oysters, 13 bushels of blood clams and a bushel of bay scallops. The low blood clam and bay scallop harvests represent significant losses for our dragger fleet in 2020 due to the pandemic.
- Markets are still down with low activity on the flats. Most boats have come out of the water for the winter.
- Recreational shellfishermen landed approximately 9 bushels of quahogs and 14 bushels of oysters. Again, this is a rough estimate as best as we were able to capture while on commercial patrol. Recreational shellfishing can occur anywhere from Chipman's Cove south to Lieutenant's Island.
- 2021 commercial and recreational shellfishing permits went on sale on December 1. During the month, 89 commercial, 256 recreational and 3 veteran shellfishing permits were sold, totaling \$32,586, up more than \$9,000 compared to December 2020 sales.

Enforcement

- We received a couple of complaints about shellfishermen parking on private property to access Duck Creek and traversing the property instead of the access path to the beach created by the landowner. We educated them, and there have been no other issues.
- A handful of grant holders left messages informing us about working at night to get gear off their grants in prep for winter. Not only is this greatly appreciated, it is a regulation.
- We communicated again with all grant holders about overwintering changes and sent a link to the new agreement.
- We pulled a stuck truck off a farm.

State and Town Relations

- The Shellfishermen's Farmers Market launched on the Town Pier on Saturday, December 12, with 76 people pre-ordering online and probably 100 sales total (including extra shellfish sold on site to people who didn't know that they should pre-order online). This event continues to be an incredible success with about a dozen shellfishermen providing product. Close to 400 pre-orders were made during the three markets held this month, with more than 200 at the market between Christmas and New Year's Eve alone. It would not be possible without the participation of wholesale dealer Holbrook Oyster, which is processing all the shellfish and selling the wild product and donating its time and reporting responsibilities to the effort. The Wellfleet Shellfishermen's Association and President Ginny Parker, as well as Ryan Curley have been instrumental in this success by setting up a one-stop shop website for pre-orders, a Facebook page, e-newsletters and order confirmations, and all of the coordinating

logistics between shellfishermen, donating countless hours in the process. This project is looking incredibly promising for this winter – and the future. We would also like to thank the Selectboard for its direction and support and the state DMF and DPH staff who expertly guided us through this process, as well as Wellfleet SPAT who helped us get the word out and supplied us with recipes to distribute to attendees.

- The department continues to work with the Army Corps of Engineers, the Dredging Task Force, grant holders and others affected by the dredging incident in October. We participated in multiple meetings and site visits and did a walk-through with the dredging and tug companies and affected growers at the site of the incident. We also decided with the Dredging Task Force that a site visit will always be conducted with the dredge and tug companies on a negative tide prior to work commencing so we can demonstrate the work's proximity to shellfish resources and the tight quarters within which they will be operating in Wellfleet Harbor given those resources.
- We met with the dredging company for a site visit regarding the next stage of dredging around the boat ramp and inside the L-Pier to demonstrate where shellfish resources were. Dredging began in that area on Dec. 14.
- Shellfish Constable Nancy Civetta attended a Selectboard meeting to request the use of town-owned property for the Shellfishermen's Farmers Market, a COVID EMT meeting, a Shellfish Advisory Board meeting, a Conservation Commission meeting about revetment and beach renourishment projects near shellfish resources, a Mass. Shellfish Initiative Task Force webinar and had multiple communications with the Wastewater Committee chair and consultant.
- Deputy Constable Chris Manulla assisted with a stranded minke whale at Indian Neck.
- We brought our area biologist around the harbor for water quality sampling.
- Civetta worked on the department budget proposal for FY22 and presented it to the Town Administrator.

Propagation

- Assistant Constable John Mankevetch led our efforts to relay more than 45,000 oysters from the oyster buyback program (38 farmers participated) and donations (from four farmers) to the Indian Neck Recreational area.
- Mankevetch is continuing the process of breaking down the propagation bed for winter and relaying seed oysters to the wild.

Education and Public Relations

- We held first-time, commercial permit holders' orientations to go over town, state and federal regulations involved in the oversight of commercial shellfishing.
- Three commercial Town Shellfish Criers and one recreational Crier were sent out with current shellfish information and updates about buying 2021 permits.
- *Cape Cod and The Islands Magazine* ran a story in its December issue that quotes Civetta from an interview this summer. Read about the Wellfleet women harvesting shellfish in the wild: "[Wild Wellfleet.](#)"
- Civetta spoke with the *Cape Cod Times* about the shellfishermen's farmers market for a story that ran in the paper on December 8, "[Weekend farmers market aims to help local shellfishermen.](#)"
- Civetta was interviewed by an AmeriCorps member for her "Dame Talk" podcast.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Civetta, Shellfish Constable