



TOWN OF WELLFLEET

300 MAIN STREET WELLFLEET MASSACHUSETTS 02667

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To: The Wellfleet Selectboard
Brian Carlstrom, Superintendent, Cape Cod National Seashore

October 10, 2019

Cc: Congressman William Keating
Senator Julian Cyr
Senator Elizabeth Warren
Senator Edward Markey
Representative Sarah Peake
Friends of Herring River

From: The Wellfleet Shellfish Advisory Board

Dear Superintendent Carlstrom, and members of the Wellfleet Selectboard:

The Wellfleet shellfish Advisory Board at its October 9, 2019 meeting voted unanimously to convey our continued support for the Herring River restoration project as originally conveyed in a letter dated June 19, 2017. Since that time, the makeup of our board has undergone some changes, and we felt it was time to restate our strong support for the project. All in all, there have been over 100 meetings regarding this project including public meetings, and one-on-one individual meetings with private landowners, as well as in other public venues in Wellfleet and Truro. We still believe that restoring controlled tidal flow in line with current science, and closer to a flow rate that existed before installation of the Chequessett Neck Road tide gate will benefit those in the shellfishing community, the residents of Wellfleet, and those species of anadromous fish that use the Herring River estuary to spawn each year. Ever since the original structure was installed over 100 years ago, shellfishing has suffered in the area adjacent to the tide gate due to high levels of fecal coliform present resulting from restricted tidal flushing. Improving the amount of water flowing upstream and downstream of the new dike will surely be of great service towards improving water quality to provide for the needs of the shellfish, anadromous fish and wildlife native to the area.

In an era when going GREEN has become all the rage, and climate change is an increasingly apparent threat, it is of particular concern to our board - for the obvious reasons associated with changes in sea level, ocean temperature and acidification, to do anything that would help slow the effects of a changing climate to maintain our robust shellfishing resource. One of the ancillary benefits of salt marsh restoration is in reducing methane emissions (a major contributor in climate change) as outlined in a University of Chicago [Marine Biological Laboratory](#) report. In it is a detailed [scientific report](#) which considers "The benefits of Restoring tides to reduce methane emissions in impounded wetlands: A new and potent Blue Carbon climate change intervention". That report could have been written with the Herring River in mind. The Herring River estuary could indeed become a shining example of a successful salt marsh restoration by reversing the negative consequences of blocking tidal flow all those years ago.

Please move forward as previously requested in obtaining the necessary permits for the timely construction of a new dike at Chequessett Neck Road. Our board looks forward to seeing a new and improved structure completed within the next 5 years.

Sincerely,



John Duane - on behalf of:

The Wellfleet Shellfish Advisory Board

Dave Seitler - Chair, Chip Benton, Zack Dixon, John Duane
Jacob Puffer, Tom Siggia, Rebecca Taylor