



Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 26 2022

# Truro Conservation Trust

P. O. Box 327  
North Truro, MA 02652

[www.truroconservationtrust.org](http://www.truroconservationtrust.org)

April 25, 2022

Truro Conservation Commission  
P.O. Box 2030  
Truro, Massachusetts, 02666-2030

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Re: Comments for the Public Hearing on the Herring River  
Restoration Project – Phase 1

The Truro Conservation Trust (TCT) has been, and continues to be, an active member of the Stakeholders' Group of the Herring River Restoration Project.

This letter is to express the unanimous support of our Board of Trustees for this project and to encourage the Commission's approval, including any appropriate Conditions, of the Project's Phase 1 construction, currently before you for consideration.

As a non-profit conservation organization, the TCT's mission is to acquire, preserve, protect, and maintain open space within the Town of Truro in order to sustain its rural character and ecosystem. However, we also have a responsibility to support projects within Truro and across Cape Cod that will have a positive impact on our shared Cape-wide environment. The Herring River Restoration Project is just such a project.

Of the many positive attributes of this project, those that we deem most significant include:

- Improvement of the water quality within the estuary and its surrounds.
- Protection and expansion of the fish and shellfish habitat.
- Expansion of species known for their greenhouse gas absorption and sequestration in our effort to assist in mitigating the adverse impacts of climate change.
- Restoration of a healthy salt marsh with its inherent qualities, including an increase in the quantity of indigenous species and an improvement in the health and welfare of its wildlife.

As with all projects of this scope, there are unknowns that will occur during its implementation timeline. During our tenure on the Stakeholders Group, we have been privy to the research, planning, and administration of this Project and are confident that any issues that might arise during its progress will be properly address by its developers and managers to ensure the best possible outcome for the estuary, its environs, its abutters, its wildlife, and the Outer Cape.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fred Gaechter". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Fred Gaechter  
Chairman, Truro Conservation Trust  
On the behalf of its Board of Trustees.

**Nina Richey**

---

**From:** Emily Beebe  
**Sent:** Friday, April 15, 2022 3:35 PM  
**To:** Nina Richey  
**Subject:** FW: Herring River Restoration Project

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 15 2022

-----Original Message-----

**From:** JONATHAN HIRSCH <juanhirsch3@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 15, 2022 10:13 AM  
**To:** Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov  
**Cc:** Emily Beebe <EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov>  
**Subject:** Herring River Restoration Project

To the Wellfleet Conservation Commission and the Truro Conservation Commission:

We are sending you this email to express our support for the Herring River Restoration Project and it's goal of restoring the Herring River. We are the owners of 25 Way 672 in Wellfleet and are directly affected by Phase I of the Project. The project management has been sensitive to our concerns and easy to communicate with. We wish them the best of luck moving forward with the project.

Sincerely, Jon Hirsch and Robert Meek

Sent from my iPhone

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APR 14 2022



# Friends of Herring River

## Wellfleet and Truro, Massachusetts

April 13, 2022

(via email)

Wellfleet Conservation Commission  
Leon Shreves, Chair  
220 W. Main Street  
Wellfleet, MA 02667  
Email: [Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov](mailto:Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov)

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O. Box 2030  
Truro, MA 02666  
Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

Dear Commission Members:

Friends of Herring River (FHR) is a strong supporter of the Herring River Restoration Project in Wellfleet and Truro, Massachusetts and urge you to approve this most important project, as it conforms with all pertinent standards of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

Friends of Herring was founded in 2009 by a group of citizens from Wellfleet who understood the need to restore this once productive estuary and who also saw the need to help this restoration take place. Friends of Herring River has worked with the Town of Wellfleet, Cape Cod National Seashore, the Herring River Technical Team, and other project partners and residents of Wellfleet and Truro to assure that this restoration project is based on sound science and that the benefits to the Town of Wellfleet will far outweigh any perceived threats.

Encompassing nearly 1,000 acres and more than six miles of waterways, the Herring River is one of the largest tidally-restricted estuaries in the northeastern United States. However, over a century of tidal restriction has resulted in severe degradation of water quality and loss of productive salt marsh. Fisheries have been depleted and shellfish beds have been contaminated, all due to problems created by the lack of tidal exchange. The restoration of tidal water will begin to remedy these problems.

The Herring River Restoration Project is the result of more than 30 years of scientific study, extensive stakeholder involvement and public discussions with local leadership. We respectfully request the Commissions' approval of this Project under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

Thank you for consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

Martha Craig  
Executive Director



Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO  
APR 14 2022

**Town of Truro Conservation Commission  
Support for the Herring River Restoration Notice of Intent**

This collaborative, restoration effort began with the initial establishment of an inter-Governmental, committee of Federal, State, County and Local Governmental Officials and Stakeholders. The Committee (HRTC) was created with a Memorandum of Understanding between various entities and tasked with reviewing all existing scientific studies and developing a conceptual restoration plan. The Committee further designated 11 subcommittees to research various issues requiring additional information. At this time, the Herring River had been held hostage by a man-made dike for 100 years.

I was the elected Chair of this Committee. We discovered a river that was so acidic, it dissolved shellfish and so devoid of oxygen that it was killing fish. Bacteria, the wrong kind, existed in such density that local shellfish areas had to be closed following rainfall events. We subsequently listened to everyone's voices, of all opinions and continued our studies.

After about a year and a half, our consensus became focused on these points:

1. Some Restoration effort should be done to address existing conditions
2. Any Restoration effort would be an improvement
3. Restoration efforts should be done slowly
4. Restoration efforts should be carefully and thoroughly monitored
5. The Restoration efforts should be managed

These and other details were incorporated into the requested Conceptual Management Plan. The CMP was presented to the various entities and approved. This ended the function of HRTC and a new MOU created a new Committee to move the Restoration effort forward.

The support and widespread education efforts for the Restoration needed to bridge to a new generation, unfamiliar with Restoration efforts and River conditions. These things take time.

Salt Marsh and River Restoration proposals hit almost all of the Public requiring protection under The Act: Habitat; Flood Control; Storm Damage Prevention; Shell Fisheries; Fin Fisheries. The proposed, slow pace of change and detailed monitoring and management plans will protect the ecological, financial and social values of our Coastal Communities.

Thank you, Gordon Peabody, Past Chair, Herring River Technical Committee, April 14, 2022  
70 Shore Road, North Truro, Massachusetts [gordonpeabody@gmail.com](mailto:gordonpeabody@gmail.com)



THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 14 2022

April 14, 2022

Wellfleet Conservation Commission  
Leon Shreves, Chair  
220 W. Main Street  
Wellfleet, MA 02667  
Email: [Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov](mailto:Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov)

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O. Box 2030  
Truro, MA 02666  
Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

**RE: Herring River Restoration Project**

Dear Commissioners,

We write to express our strong support for the Herring River Restoration Project in Wellfleet and Truro as you open the public hearing for the Notices of Intent.

This project represents a significant opportunity to restore an extensive salt marsh ecosystem and reclaim important ecological and economic benefits for our region. The applications before you will restore tidal flow to 570 acres of native tidal wetlands using a rigorous adaptive management approach. Restoration of tidal flow to the estuary will advance the interests of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and improve the natural capacity of wetlands that have been degraded due to more than a century of tidal restriction.

Healthy salt marshes and other forms of estuarine wetlands provide critical habitat for a wide variety of birds and wildlife; and serve as nurseries for fish and shellfish. Estuarine habitats are more resilient to coastal flooding, and help to filter nutrients and other pollutants from run-off and rainfall before they enter the estuary.

Healthy tidal marshes also play a key role in combating climate change. Preliminary estimates based on current science indicate that restoration of salt marsh in the Herring River would result a substantial reduction in the net volume of greenhouse gases released to the atmosphere. This includes the avoidance of methane emissions, which is more potent than carbon dioxide as a heat-trapping gas in the atmosphere.

A collaboration of local state and federal partners has been central to the project's success. This partnership has enabled the project to benefit from vast technical knowledge and experience while ensuring that decisions about project design and implementation remain local and responsive to community needs.

The Herring River Restoration embodies the goals of resiliency, stewardship and partnership that are vital to our region's--and the Commonwealth's future. We look forward to working with the

Town of Wellfleet, Cape Cod National Seashore and other project partners to ensure the success of the Project.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



**Sarah K. Peake**  
State Representative  
*4<sup>th</sup> Barnstable District*



**Julian Cyr**  
State Senator  
*Cape & Islands District*



April 11, 2022

84 Gross Hill Road  
Wellfleet, MA 02667

Wellfleet Conservation Commission  
Leon Shreves, Chair  
220 W. Main Street  
Wellfleet, MA 02667  
Email: [Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov](mailto:Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov)

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O. Box 2030 Truro, MA 02666  
Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

APR 13 2022  
TOWN OF TRURO  
Conservation Commission

**RE: *Notices of Intent filed in the Town of Wellfleet and the Town of Truro by the Town of Wellfleet and the Cape Cod National Seashore for an Ecological Restoration Limited Project to restore native tidal wetland habitat to large portions of the Herring River.***

Dear Wellfleet Commission Members and Truro Commission Members

We are writing to express our strong support for the Herring River Restoration Project ("Project") and to urge the Commissioners to issue the Ecological Restoration Limited Project Permit as soon as practicable.

We are residents of Wellfleet and have a long-standing appreciation of the natural features and resources of the Town of Wellfleet and of the Cape Cod National Seashore. We both are land conservation professionals, having worked for land trusts and The Nature Conservancy for many years. Philip, a lawyer for TNC, serves on the Board of the Friends of Herring River and has served on the Boards of other conservation organizations. Helen is a writer who has spent many years working in the conservation and historic preservation fields.

We actively support the Herring River Restoration Project because it will remove impediments to migration and spawning for River Herring; improve water quality and enhance harvestable shellfish resources in the Herring River estuary. This effort to protect and restore a significant natural feature in the Town will provide enormous benefit to current and future residents and visitors for years to come.

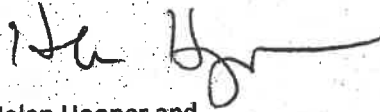
The Project is based on more than a decade of scientific analysis and has been conservatively designed to minimize any potential impacts to wetland resources. Extensive alternatives assessments were conducted to avoid or minimize impacts to wetland resources in the design of project elements.



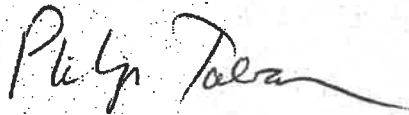
We urge the Conservation Commissions of the Towns of Wellfleet and Truro to support the Herring River Restoration Project and to approve the permit for an Ecological Restoration Limited Project to restore native tidal wetland habitat to large portions of the Herring River.

Thank you, Members of the Conservation Commissions, for the opportunity to express our strong support for this critical project.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Helen Hooper', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Helen Hooper and

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Philip Tabas', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Philip Tabas



Eliza Cox  
Direct Line: 508-790-5431  
Fax: 617-310-9191  
E-mail: [ecox@nutter.com](mailto:ecox@nutter.com)

April 12, 2022  
0117088-00004

Via e-mail

Wellfleet Conservation Commission  
Leon Shreves, Chair  
220 Main Street  
Wellfleet, MA 02667  
c/o Hillary Greenberg-Lemos, Agent: [Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov](mailto:Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov)

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
PO Box 2030  
Truro, MA 02666  
c/o Emily Beebe, Agent: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 13 2022

Re: Herring River Restoration Project

Dear Commissioners:

This firm represents the Chequessett Yacht & Country Club, Inc. (hereafter, the "CYCC"), and, on its behalf, respectfully submits these written comments in support of the Notice of Intent (NOI) application submitted by the Town of Wellfleet and the U.S. National Park Service Cape Cod National Seashore for the Herring River Restoration Project (the "Project"). CYCC owns and operates a yacht and country club on approximately 100 acres of land located in Wellfleet immediately adjacent to the Project area, and therefore is uniquely affected by the Project.

CYCC recognizes the many benefits of this Ecological Restoration Limited Project, which are described in detail in the NOI, and has been engaged for years with the Town and Project representatives to develop plans and agreements that enable the restoration, while also ensuring that the CYCC property is protected from adverse impact. These protection measures will involve work on the CYCC property, including elevating the low-lying golf holes. This important mitigation work enables the CYCC to continue to operate while at the same time allowing for improved tidal flow into the Herring River estuary, including the Mill Creek subbasin.

April 12, 2022

Page 2

Accordingly, the CYCC submits this letter in support of the Project.

Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eliza Cox". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eliza" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Cox".

Eliza Cox

EZC:

cc: Chequessett Yacht and Country Club, Inc.  
Town of Wellfleet

5518722.1

**Nina Richey**

---

**From:** Emily Beebe  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 13, 2022 12:01 PM  
**To:** Nina Richey  
**Subject:** FW: Please support the Herring River Restoration Project.

**From:** David Mangs <davemangs@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 13, 2022 8:25 AM  
**To:** Emily Beebe <EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov>  
**Cc:** David Mangs <davemangs@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Please support the Herring River Restoration Project.

The Honorable Members of the Wellfleet and Truro Conservation Commissions:

As a 25 year resident in Wellfleet, a concerned citizen, a fisherman, and as a Rotarian with a deep concern about the environment, I am writing this email in strong support of the Herring River Restoration Project. Before the installation of the Herring River dam, the Herring River Estuary supported the fisheries in Cape Cod Bay, the Stellwagen Bank, Georges Bank and the coast of Maine. The Herring and Alewife that reproduced in the Herring River Estuary were so prolific that the Cape Cod Railroad was also able to fill tanker cars with these fish for shipment to Boston.

The Herring River Restoration Project has very completely considered the steps that must be considered as we proceed with the most important salt marsh restoration on the Eastern Seaboard.

Please do not delay this environmentally critical project and vote to approve the Herring River Restoration project.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

David A. Mangs Ph.D.  
45 Old Gull Pond Road  
Wellfleet, MA

David A. Mangs Ph.D.

Rotary District 7890-Governor 2017-2018

work: 860-677-7720

cell: 860-992-2610

home: 860-561-3134

[DaveMangs@gmail.com](mailto:DaveMangs@gmail.com)

[www.rotarydistrict7890.org](http://www.rotarydistrict7890.org)

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 13 2022

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April 12, 2022

Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
Truro Conservation Commission  
24 Town Hall Road  
Truro, MA 02666

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 13 2022

Via Email: EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov

**Re: Herring River Restoration, Notice of Intent (NOI)**

Dear Ms. Girard-Irwin and Commissioners:

We strongly encourage the Truro Conservation Commission to vote favorably and approve the final permitting requirement for the restoration of the Herring River. Mass Audubon has supported this important restoration project since it was first conceptualized over 20 years ago. This is the largest salt marsh restoration project in Massachusetts and it will positively address the human-induced degradation of existing and historical wetlands due to tidal restrictions.

Only 10 acres of the original 1,100 acres of salt marsh remain, replaced by upland forest, woody shrubs, and invasive species. The lack of tidal flushing has also contributed to poor water quality, including acidic conditions leading to fish kills, as well as a 2-3-foot subsidence of the Herring River's wetlands. Restoration will result in significant improvements in water quality, reduce mosquito breeding, and provide habitat for shellfish, migratory fish, and rare species such as diamondback terrapins and Saltmarsh Sparrow.

The urgency of this project is elevated by climate change which threatens the integrity of marshes throughout the region. Salt marshes buffer storm surges and coastal flooding associated with climate change and sea level rise. Healthy marshes are also important carbon sinks, absorbing more carbon per acre compared than forests. In contrast, the Herring River in its degraded state has released an estimated 730,000 metric tons of CO<sup>2</sup> equivalents since the dike was first constructed, according to the research by the USGS. Restoring 570 acres to healthy marshland will provide climate resiliency.

Over a decade of rigorous scientific analysis and engineering studies have been conducted along with a participatory community planning process. Mass Audubon strongly supports the approval of this project so it can move from final permitting to construction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "E. Heidi Ricci".

E. Heidi Ricci  
Director of Policy and Advocacy

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Melissa Lowe".

Melissa Lowe  
Regional Director, Cape Cod



## Nina Richey

---

**From:** Emily Beebe  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 13, 2022 12:02 PM  
**To:** Nina Richey  
**Subject:** FW: Letter to Truro Conservation Commission Members

**From:** Beth Chapman <bchapman@herringriver.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 12, 2022 3:35 PM  
**To:** Emily Beebe <EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov>  
**Subject:** Letter to Truro Conservation Commission Members

Dear Truro Conservation Commission Members:

I grew up on the Bound Brook Lower Sub-basin in South Truro beginning in 1949 when my parents began building our cottage. I've seen the marsh plants become invaded by trees, woody shrubs and bushes. It means a great deal to me that the Herring River restoration will return the tide, restore the marsh, and improve water quality. A healthy river is so important to the ecology of the entire estuary and benefits the Town of Wellfleet immensely. Please approve this final permitting of this project that has been in the works for more than 20 years.

Lisbeth Wiley Chapman, one of the original Board Members of Friends of Herring River beginning in 2008, former Board Chair, and now Ex Officio.

--  
Lisbeth Wiley Chapman, Board of Directors  
Friends of Herring River  
PO Box 565  
South Wellfleet, MA 02663  
Cell: 508-479-1033

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Conservation Commissio  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 13 2022



**Nina Richey**

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**From:** Emily Beebe  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 13, 2022 12:00 PM  
**To:** Nina Richey  
**Subject:** FW: Herring River Restoration Project

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 13 2022

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**From:** E Breivogel <ebrvgl@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 13, 2022 9:36 AM  
**To:** Hillary Lemos <hillary.lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov>  
**Cc:** Emily Beebe <EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov>  
**Subject:** Herring River Restoration Project

Wellfleet Conservation Commission.  
Leon Shreves, Chair

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair

Dear Commissioners,

Your approval of the Herring River Restoration Project is urgently needed for improving our important aquatic, fish, and shellfishing habitats.

As a life-long Cape Codder, growing up and living in Falmouth and moving to Wellfleet full-time fifteen years ago, I have spent most of my 73 years on, in, and around the water, both salt and fresh. My barefoot Falmouth summers and booted winters were spent chasing and catching seemingly endless supplies of fish and shellfish. This restoration project provides an opportunity to actually provide significant improvement to the health of our fisheries and likely help those "supplies" of fish and shellfish. This is a rare opportunity to fix a 100+ year old tidal restriction problem!

My first in-depth experience with the Wellfleet Herring River was in the late 1990's as a supervisor with the Cape Cod Conservation District. I met with Richard Dickey (Wellfleet herring) and Donald Liptack (NRCS). Don and I met with Richard to get a better understanding of fish passage issues. Even though there wasn't a fit for fishway/ladder repair that met criteria at that time, I was inspired to volunteer my time to assist Richard in maintaining herring passage to and from the ponds. I spent many enjoyable hours with Richard in his truck and canoe discussing and working on the river, from the sluiceway to the dike. A few years later, I became the Herring Warden with Ethan Estey as my assistant. Shortly after being named Herring Warden, the Herring River Technical Committee was formed. While as a member of the Committee, I listened carefully, and felt listened to. Even though I had much experience with the complexities of many other herring runs, I initially had mixed feelings about the Restoration Project. Over time as I acquired more information and my concerns were addressed, I came to see the very real overall benefits of this Restoration Project. My experience as Herring Warden on the Technical Committee has provided me with the info and background to strongly endorse this project.

Some of my practical background on the water has been: physically working on many herring runs; starting the first herring count on the Falmouth Coonamessett River; working on restoration of the Coonamessett River; Director of Falmouth Oyster Pond Environmental Trust, focusing to preserve its Trunk River herring; as well as other herring projects throughout Cape Cod. Also, I was a Charter Member of the first Falmouth Shellfish Advisory Committee, and Falmouth Representative for shellfishing, fishing and hunting during the drafting of the initial Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Management Plan. I was also commercial shellfishing in Waquoit Bay at that time. During the time I was a Director of Cape and Islands Farm Bureau, Wellfleet aquaculture was gaining traction. I remember the encouragement of shellfishing "farming" as not only aquaculture but also "farming" shellfish. In addition to commercial shellfishing (especially bay scallops) I have been licensed to recreational shellfish in Falmouth, Mashpee, Chatham, Eastham, Wellfleet (20 years), Truro, and Provincetown. As a result of my experiences, I have a keen interest in good water quality for both farmed and wild shellfish. This project is a big step in the right direction to promote and improve shellfishing.

Experiencing the general degradation of our Cape Cod fisheries over the years, has been tough to witness. However, the Herring River Estuarine Restoration Project gives me a sense of optimism. This is the largest and most important estuarine restoration project I have seen on Cape Cod in my lifetime. Use this opportunity to help our fisheries by approving this project.

Sincerely,  
Carl Breivogel  
Wellfleet

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**Nina Richey**

---

**From:** Emily Beebe  
**Sent:** Monday, April 11, 2022 10:53 AM  
**To:** Nina Richey  
**Subject:** FW: Herring River Restoration Project, letter of support from FCCNS

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 11 2022

-----Original Message-----

From: pweisenbarth@gmail.com <pweisenbarth@gmail.com>  
Sent: Monday, April 11, 2022 10:48 AM  
To: Emily Beebe <EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov>  
Cc: Warren Mumford <warmar100@hotmail.com>; mcraig@herringriver.org  
Subject: Herring River Restoration Project, letter of support from FCCNS

April 11, 2022

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Gerard-Irwin, Chair

Dear Ms Girard-Irwin,

As President of the Friends of the Cape Cod National Seashore, I am writing to express our organization's opinion that the Herring River Restoration Project is one of the most important efforts currently under way to ensure the future of a healthy natural environment on Cape Cod. This restoration project has our full support.

This project will help reverse the negative effects of restricting the natural tidal flow to the Herring River Estuary, done in 1909. The list of those negative effects is long, but they can be summarized as the destruction of the fragile salt marsh that once existed there.

As you know, salt marshes are key to the health of not only the Cape Cod ecosystem but that of the entire planet. They are a natural repository of carbon, thanks to the healthy peat in a healthy marsh. But the HR estuary no longer functions that way and, in fact, is now the source of methane, a greenhouse gas. Restoring the tidal flow to the estuary will restore the health of the peat which will ultimately have a positive effect on the global effort to combat climate change.

This restoration will also help the shellfish population, other species of marine life that rely on a healthy salt marsh for breeding and nurturing young, many species of birds and a host of plant life species that will come back as the marsh conditions return to a natural balance.

It's important to remember that the Herring River is on the list of "impaired waterways" based on the Federal Clean Water Act guidelines. This is a situation that is an embarrassment under any circumstance but more so in a location bordered by the environmentally-conscious communities of Wellfleet and Truro. It also is the mission of the Cape Cod National Seashore to "preserve and protect" all the property inside its borders, which includes the Herring River estuary. The completion of this restoration project would lead to the healing of the Herring River and it's ultimate removal from that "impaired" list.

Much more could be said but I think you get the idea that, as I stated above, the Friends of The Cape Cod National Seashore give their wholehearted support of this very important restoration project. We hope you will as well.

Thank you for the opportunity for us to weigh in on this important issue.

Sincerely,  
Peter Eisenbarth, President  
Friends of the Cape Cod National Seashore [Pweisenbarth@gmail.com](mailto:Pweisenbarth@gmail.com)  
(973)768-1814

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April 11, 2022

Wellfleet Conservation Commission

Leon Shreves, Chair

220 W. Main Street

Wellfleet, MA 02667

Email: [Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov](mailto:Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov)

Truro Conservation Commission

Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair

24 Town Hall Road

P.O. Box 2030 Truro, MA 02666

Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 11 2022

**RE: Notices of Intent filed in the Town of Wellfleet and the Town of Truro by the Town of Wellfleet and the Cape Cod National Seashore for an Ecological Restoration Limited Project to restore native tidal wetland habitat to large portions of the Herring River.**

Dear Wellfleet Commission Members and Truro Commission Members:

I am writing to express The Nature Conservancy's strong support for the Herring River Restoration Project. My name is Alison Bowden. I am the Director of Science and Strategy for The Nature Conservancy in Massachusetts. I have over 20 years' experience in aquatic habitat restoration including salt marsh, seagrass, shellfish, river, and diadromous fish restoration.

The Nature Conservancy is a global non-profit conservation organization whose mission is to "conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends." In Massachusetts, the Conservancy has protected some 23,000 acres of crucial natural resources, and TNC leads many science-based projects to keep nature healthy throughout the state. TNC proudly represents the ideals of 28,000 members in Massachusetts and more than one million members globally. We work using the best available science and in collaboration with individuals, local communities, businesses, public agencies, and other nonprofit groups. The Nature Conservancy works in all 50 states and 72 countries to address the most pressing challenges facing people and nature.

Herring River today is in poor health due to more than a century of tidal restriction caused by the construction of the Chequessett Neck Road dike. Tidal restriction has resulted in poor water quality, loss of salt marsh, degradation of habitat, and contamination of shellfish beds downstream of the dike in Wellfleet Harbor. These conditions will continue if the existing Chequessett Neck Road dike remains in place. Fortunately, the Executive Committee of the Herring River Restoration Project have had the foresight to develop a restoration plan to reverse these degraded conditions. The Herring River Restoration Project will result in significant improvements in water quality, fisheries and wildlife habitat, and the overwhelming benefits these resources provide to the community and the region. These benefits for nature and people include:

- Roughly 1,000 acres of salt marsh and other estuarine wetlands—and the habitat and food sources they provide—will be restored.

- Expanded habitat for many species of birds, mammals, and reptiles—including rare species—that thrive in salt/brackish marsh.
- 11+ river miles for fish passage will be restored, along with access to 160 acres of ponds for spawning.
- Water quality will improve in the Herring River and in Wellfleet Harbor, to the benefit of residents, shell-fishermen, and visitors.
- Restored salt marsh will enhance coastal storm resiliency and the ability to adapt to sea level rise.
- Recreational access to 6 miles of waterways will be restored; and,
- Restoration of healthy salt marsh will capture carbon and reduce methane, resulting in a substantial reduction of the net volume of greenhouse gases released to the atmosphere.

The Herring River Restoration Project is the result of rigorous scientific study and extensive community discussions. Changes in tide levels will be made incrementally, while careful modeling and monitoring of system responses will allow the project's managers to adjust the rate of change and take other management actions to achieve the benefits of restoration while avoiding or minimizing unintended outcomes.

The Herring River Restoration Project will restore the health of a unique and environmentally significant resource for the benefit of the community today and for years to come.

The Nature conservancy urges the Conservation Commissions of the Towns of Wellfleet and Truro to support the Herring River Restoration Project and to approve the permit for an Ecological Restoration Limited Project to restore native tidal wetland habitat to large portions of the Herring River.

Thank you, Members of the Conservation Commissions, for the opportunity to express the Conservancy's strong support for this critical project.

Please contact me with any questions at 617-532-8360 or [abowden@tnc.org](mailto:abowden@tnc.org).

Sincerely,



Alison A. Bowden  
Director of Science and Strategy

**Nina Richey**

---

**From:** Emily Beebe  
**Sent:** Monday, April 11, 2022 10:41 AM  
**To:** Nina Richey  
**Subject:** FW: Herring River Restoration Project

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 11 2022

**From:** K.S. O'Brien <ksmytheobrien@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 11, 2022 8:00 AM  
**To:** Emily Beebe <EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov>; hillary.lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov  
**Subject:** Herring River Restoration Project

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair

Wellfleet Conservation Commission  
Leon Shreves, Chair

Good Morning,

As year-round Truro residents, we are writing to relay our strong support for the Herring River Restoration project.

This critical endeavor will significantly improve the health of the extensive salt marsh ecosystem which has been so damaged and degraded by the Chequessett Neck dike that was constructed in the early 1900's. The many years and person-hours of careful and scientific planning will result in an effective and safe regeneration of this key estuary. It will benefit not only the present generation but will help to mitigate the effects of climate change for future generations/years to come.

Many thanks.

Kate O'Brien (former Finance Committee Member of Friends of the Herring River)  
Dennis O'Brien  
24 Bayberry Road  
Truro MA

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Wellfleet Conservation Commission  
Leon Shreves, Chair  
220 W. Main Street  
Wellfleet, MA 02667  
Email: [Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov](mailto:Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov)

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O. Box 2030  
Truro, MA 02666  
Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO  
APR 11 2022

Dear Commissioners:

I write this letter to urge you to approve the application for the Herring River estuarine restoration project as a concerned citizen, abutter to the project, and as a member of the Herring River Stakeholders Group. Seldom have many people been given the opportunity to act in such a beneficial way and make so many far-reaching positive impacts. Collectively, we have that opportunity with the Herring River Restoration Project.

Despite the fact that I have only lived along the shores of the Herring River for eight years, my life has allowed me to sail well over 400,000 miles in every ocean of the world and found and run five companies when ashore. I have personally witnessed pods of dolphin in the 70's that numbered in the many hundreds plummet to a few handfuls today. Fish stocks everywhere have dropped precipitately including in the Gulf of Maine. One of the companies I formed – a weather consulting firm that guided mariners around the world – has only confirmed what the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has suggested: the world needs help, and humanity needs to improve upon what we have done. The Herring River Restoration Project provides a multi-faceted opportunity to make significant change for the better.

Whether one is concerned about cleaner water, healthier fish stocks, methane reduction, rising sea levels or carbon sequestration, the Herring River Restoration ticks many of the boxes that will make not only the National Seashore, Wellfleet and Truro better places to visit and live but also improve the surrounding waters, atmosphere and ecosystem. Deterioration of the salt marsh peat has caused acid water to leach into surrounding waters, resulting in fish kills, closure of downstream shellfish beds, and subsidence of the marsh surface. The natural regrowth of the tidal marsh means a healthier aquatic environment, generating far reaching positive results in surrounding waters, as well as enhancing our communities' resilience to the effects of climate change. Reestablishing the Herring River estuary as a healthy marine nursery will help restore the natural coastal food web while also mitigating the effects of rising sea levels and increased storm activity. The system worked for tens of thousands of years. It can and will work again if given a chance.

Certainly, there will be problems that arise or decisions that need to be made throughout the construction phase. The first company I started at age 23 was as a concrete and general contractor, eventually working on over 1,000 houses and small commercial projects, and there are always decisions that need to be made. But given the fact that this restoration project has been well studied by experienced, knowledgeable experts for over ten years and the adaptive

management process is to be employed, I feel confident that whatever arises, the results will be overwhelmingly positive for all concerned and well justify the efforts. The time is now to do the right thing for many people, future generations, the Cape Cod ecosystem and the larger planet. Please endorse and support the Herring River Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Bill Biewenga  
160 Highmeadow Road  
Wellfleet, MA 02667

April 7, 2022

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O. Box 2030  
Truro, MA 02666  
Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

Dear Chair Girard-Irwin and other Commission Members,

We live at 810 Chequessett Neck Road in Wellfleet, which abuts the Herring River Restoration Project. We are enthusiastic supporters of the Project and want to encourage each of you to fully support it.

The Project represents a unique opportunity to restore an extensive salt marsh ecosystem to reclaim important ecological and economic benefits. Project benefits include the restoration of 570 acres of degraded salt marsh and tidal wetlands at the end of Phase 1, and significant improvements in water quality, rare species habitat, fisheries, and climate resilience throughout the Herring River floodplain.

We deeply appreciate that the leaders of the Project have designed a plan that will re-establish tidal flow to the estuary incrementally using a carefully calibrated adaptive management approach that will balance ecological goals with water level control measures to allow the highest tide range practicable while protecting potentially vulnerable structures on public and private properties, including roads and homes.

The Project meets the definition of an Ecological Restoration Limited Project. Its primary purpose is to restore or otherwise improve the natural capacity of wetland resources in the Herring River Estuary that have been degraded, in order to protect and sustain the wetland resources interests identified in the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

The Project addresses severe degradation of existing and historical wetland resources due to man-made tidal restrictions. The tidal ecosystem was dramatically altered in 1909 with the construction of a dike across the mouth of Herring River. Due to the resulting lack of tidal flow, 90% of the original salt marsh has been displaced by upland forest, shrublands, and non-native invasive species. Deterioration of the salt marsh peat has caused acid water to leach into surrounding waters, resulting in fish kills, closure of downstream shellfish beds, and subsidence of the marsh surface. The elimination of tidal wetlands also resulted in the loss of important migratory bird habitat, loss of function as a nursery for a regionally important commercial and recreational fishery and shellfishery.

Currently, ponded fresh wetlands throughout the floodplain emit methane, a potent heat-trapping gas. The restoration of a healthy, functioning tidal marsh will displace methane emissions with the carbon storage potential of tidal marsh peat, thereby increasing the sequestration of greenhouse gases. The natural regrowth of tidal marsh will also enhance our community's resilience to the effects of climate change.

The Project will substantially improve the capacity of wetland resources in the estuary to protect the interests identified in the Wetlands Protection Act. Benefits of tidal restoration include:

- Improved water quality, removal of the Herring River from the list of impaired waters under Federal Clean Water Act standards, and elimination of a major source of bacterial contamination to downstream shellfish resources.
- Protection and enhancement of harvestable shellfish resources both within the estuary and in receiving waters of Wellfleet Harbor.
- Reconnection of the Herring River estuary to the Gulf of Maine to restore the natural coastal food web and recover the estuary's function as a marine nursery.
- Enhanced habitat and removal of impediments to migration and spawning for River Herring, American Eel, Striped Bass, Winter Flounder, and other species.
- Combating climate change by 1) re-establishing natural wetland carbon storage and 2) reducing methane emissions from deteriorated salt marsh.
- Restored natural sediment deposition to allow the marsh to gain elevation and mitigate impacts of sea level rise.
- Re-establish the estuarine gradient of native salt, brackish, and freshwater marsh habitats
- Establish or enhance naturally vegetated buffers.

The Project is based on more than a decade of scientific analysis and has been conservatively designed to minimize any potential impacts to wetland resources. Extensive alternatives assessments were conducted to avoid or minimize impacts to wetland resources in the design of project elements. Any unavoidable construction-related impacts to wetland resources are the minimum necessary to achieve the restoration goals of the Project, including the restoration of 570 acres of native tidal wetlands at the end of Phase 1. The project complies with requirements for time of year restrictions and protection of rare species.

We are thrilled that this project might finally be moving forward and thank you in advance for your support of it.

Sincerely,



Chris Durbin  
810 Chequessett Neck Rd  
Wellfleet, MA 02667



Portia Durbin

**Nina Richey**

---

**From:** Emily Beebe  
**Sent:** Friday, April 08, 2022 9:56 AM  
**To:** Nina Richey  
**Subject:** FW: Restoration of the Herring River estuary

APR 08 2022  
TOWN OF TRURO  
Conservation Commission

**From:** Dave Koonce <hismiata@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 7, 2022 2:05 PM  
**To:** Hillary Lemos <Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov>; Emily Beebe <EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov>  
**Cc:** Dave Koonce <hismiata@comcast.net>  
**Subject:** Restoration of the Herring River estuary

Wellfleet Conservation Commission  
Commission

Leon Shreves, Chair

220 W. Main Street

Wellfleet, MA 02667

Email: [Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov](mailto:Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov)

Truro Conservation

Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair

24 Town Hall Road

P.O. Box 2030

Truro, MA 02666

Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

Dear Leon Shreves and Carol Girard-Irwin et al:

As a long time resident of the part of Wellfleet known as Great Pastures [which is more or less surrounded by the estuary] I have been long interested in this project!

It isn't often that a community has an opportunity to decide on something as worthwhile as this effort not only for the current community but for future residents and visitors alike!

I know you are being inundated with the science behind this project but let me just add my personal perspective. Both Wellfleet and Truro depend on two main industries namely Shellfishing and Tourism. Restoration of the Herring River

estuary will bring back the beauty of the area adding additional recreational activities while at the same time providing supplemental locations for commercial Shellfishing!

I respectfully ask your organization(s) to support this worthwhile project!

Thanking you in advance.

S. David Koonce Jr.  
30 Highmeadow Rd.  
Wellfleet, Ma. 02667

Board member Friends of Herring River  
Trustee Wellfleet Conservation Trust

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**Nina Richey**

---

**From:** Emily Beebe  
**Sent:** Friday, April 08, 2022 9:55 AM  
**To:** Nina Richey  
**Subject:** FW: Restoration of the Herring River estuary

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 08 2022

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**Subject:** Restoration of the Herring River estuary

Wellfleet Conservation Commission  
Commission

Leon Shreves, Chair  
220 W. Main Street  
Wellfleet, MA 02667

Email: [Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov](mailto:Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov)

Truro Conservation

Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O. Box 2030

Truro, MA 02666

Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

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Wellfleet, Ma. 02667

Board member Friends of Herring River  
Trustee Wellfleet Conservation Trust

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Alan Shapiro and Emily Greenspan, MD  
15 Quail Run  
Wellfleet, MA 02667

April 7, 2022

Wellfleet Conservation Commission  
Leon Shreves, Chair  
220 W. Main Street  
Wellfleet, MA 02667  
By Email: [Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov](mailto:Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov)

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O. Box 2030  
Truro, MA 02666  
By Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

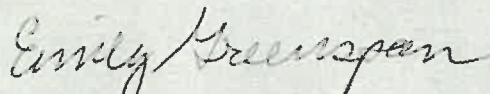
Dear Conservation Commissioners:

We, as Wellfleet residents near the proposed work on High Toss, strongly support the Herring River restoration project. We concur with the extensive scientific research that demonstrates the lasting benefits to the ecosystem and to climate resilience, as well as to recreational opportunities in our town.

We look forward to the Commissions' approval of the Project.

Yours very truly,

  
Alan Shapiro

  
Emily Greenspan, MD

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 08 2022

April 7, 2022

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O. Box 2030  
Truro, MA 02666  
Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO  
APR 08 2022

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The Project represents a unique opportunity to restore an extensive salt marsh ecosystem to reclaim important ecological and economic benefits. Project benefits include the restoration of 570 acres of degraded salt marsh and tidal wetlands at the end of Phase 1, and significant improvements in water quality, rare species habitat, fisheries, and climate resilience throughout the Herring River floodplain.

We deeply appreciate that the leaders of the Project have designed a plan that will re-establish tidal flow to the estuary incrementally using a carefully calibrated adaptive management approach that will balance ecological goals with water level control measures to allow the highest tide range practicable while protecting potentially vulnerable structures on public and private properties, including roads and homes.

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- Re-establish the estuarine gradient of native salt, brackish, and freshwater marsh habitats
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We are thrilled that this project might finally be moving forward and thank you in advance for your support of it.

Sincerely,



Chris Durbin  
810 Chequessett Neck Rd  
Wellfleet, MA 02667



Portia Durbin

Mary E. Fox  
P. O. Box 3117  
65 Daniels Drive  
Wellfleet MA 02667

April 7, 2022

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O.Box 2030  
Truro, MA02999

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO  
APR 08 2022

Dear Ms. Girard-Irwin:

My family summered in Wellfleet for thirty-two years before moving here full time twenty years ago. As a long time resident of Wellfleet who cares deeply about this community and the environment my enthusiastic support is behind The Herring River Restoration Project.

When I first learned of the project I wondered why it was necessary to reverse the result of something we have been living with for one hundred years. I started attending the many presentations by the Friends of the Herring River and others involved in the Project. Over many years the extraordinary effort to educate the community about the Project with extensive scientific study has impressed me. The strong local, state and federal partnership is also impressive. With increased knowledge I gradually gained trust and went from skeptic to strong supporter.

The fact that the existing dike is failing is sometimes forgotten in the discussions about the Project. I find it exciting that we have an opportunity to correct a past error in such a comprehensive way. Restoration of the salt marsh is a top priority in Wellfleet's coastal resilience plan to prepare for climate change and sea level rise. The restored salt marsh will act as a buffer against storm surges and coastal flooding. It will also restore spawning and nursery areas for fish and shellfish and habitat for birds and other wildlife species.

As we all know shell fishing is a most important part of the Wellfleet economy. One of the many benefits of the Restoration to fisheries will be protecting and enhancing harvestable shellfish resources both within the estuary and Wellfleet Harbor. Re-opening and expanding shellfish beds will benefit the local economy.

The Herring River Restoration Project has been moving along for many years with careful scientific study, strong local, state and federal partnerships and a commitment to transparency and public engagement. I am most grateful for all the dedication and hard work involved.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Fox



APR 07 2022

 DUCKS UNLIMITED 159 Dwight Park Circle, Suite 205, Syracuse NY 13209 [www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org)

Wellfleet Conservation Commission  
Leon Shreves, Chair  
220 W. Main Street  
Wellfleet, MA 02667

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O. Box 2030  
Truro, MA 02666

April 7, 2022

RE: Herring River Restoration Project Advances with conservation Commission Filings

Dear Wellfleet and Truro Conservation Commissions,

Please accept this letter as Ducks Unlimited, Inc (DU) support of the Herring River restoration project. DU is a not-for-profit conservation organization, and our mission is to *"conserve, restore, and manage wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people."* DU has over 5,000 members in the Commonwealth State of Massachusetts, and working closely with local conservation partners, we have conserved over 2,000-acres.

The Herring River restoration project may be the largest and most significant tidal restoration project on the East Coast. The project area is hydrologically connected to Wellfleet Bay, Cape Cod, in the Town of Wellfleet, MA. The goal of the restoration project is to restore the biological function and integrity of the tidal marsh estuary. Constructed in 1909, the Chequessett Neck Road Dike at the mouth of the river has been the primary stressor to the watershed/estuary which has resulted in severe habitat degradation and nearly complete loss of native tidal wetland habitat. Herring River is listed as an "Impaired Water" under the Clean Water Act. The Project will re-establish tidal flow to the estuary incrementally using an adaptive management approach that will balance ecological goals with water level control measures to allow the highest tide range practicable while protecting potentially vulnerable structures on public and private properties. Currently, most of the original salt marsh has been converted to forest, shrublands and non-native invasive vegetation. Along with tidal wetlands, the estuary has lost important migratory bird habitat, and no longer functions as a nursery for marine fisheries. The restoration will result in significant improvements in water quality, wetlands habitat, rare species habitat, fisheries, and recreational opportunities throughout the Herring River floodplain while improving its resiliency and ability to adapt to the effects of climate change. Restored tidal wetlands will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reclaiming lost carbon storage and reducing methane emissions.

The new bridge will allow the return of natural tidal flow to the estuary, reverse the severe damage that has occurred over the past 100 years, and bring back the critical ecological, economic and social benefits that a healthy and productive tidal estuary provides. The community commitment and broad-based support of the project stem from the extensive ecological and community benefits that the return of tidal flow to the Herring River system will generate. Re-establishment of the estuarine gradient to native salt, brackish, and freshwater marsh habitats will significantly increase the resiliency of this site in the face of future sea level rise while also improving habitat for numerous migratory shorebirds and waterbirds as well as at-risk wildlife species, including alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) and saltmarsh sparrow (*Ammospiza caudacuta*).



DUCKS UNLIMITED 159 Dwight Park Circle, Suite 205, Syracuse NY 13209 [www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org)

The Herring River Restoration will bring significant benefits that align with the mission and priorities of DU and our conservation partner. The **USFWS' Strategic Plan for Responding to Climate Change** identifies one of their primary goals "*to deliver landscape conservation actions that support climate change adaptation for fish and wildlife of ecological significance.*" DU is offering our support towards the restoration of this important coastal tidal marsh system. Encompassing over 1,000 acres, the Herring River will help to continue to advance conservation efforts that protect and enhance critical coastal habitat.

Please feel free to contact me at 585-683-6764, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fleming  
Director of Conservation Programs.



## **Nina Richey**

---

**From:** Emily Beebe  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 06, 2022 2:18 PM  
**To:** Nina Richey  
**Subject:** FW: Restoration of our Marsh

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO

APR 07 2022

Herring River

**From:** Myra <mdorrel@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 6, 2022 11:38 AM  
**To:** Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov; Emily Beebe <EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov>  
**Subject:** Restoration of our Marsh

To the Wellfleet and Truro Conservation Commissions  
Re: Public Hearing of April 14<sup>th</sup> 2022

Hello all,

We want to add our voices in support of the restoration of our Herring River marsh and tidal estuary. We hope the upcoming joint meeting of the Wellfleet and Truro Commissions will help progress the exhaustive science-based effort to restore over 500 acres of tidal marsh to its pre-1900 status. There's no question of the benefits to doing so, from climate resiliency to more productive natural resources. A healthy river will benefit all of us living here, humans, plants and animals.

While we are not scientists, we are long-time year-round citizens engaged in art and humanities. We have learned so much in following all these developments, we are grateful to the many committees and volunteers that have worked hard to enlighten all of us. We are impressed by the ways in which this Project has paid attention to the multiple effects it will have, not only on our natural resources but on local people and property. For us, the Herring River has already been an inspiration for artwork and writing—what more it could mean, if we knew it was not dying but thriving, and we too, along with it!

We look forward to seeing it successfully completed!

Myra and Walter Dorrell  
30 Somerset Ave, Wellfleet

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windo

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APR 07 2022

Jacquelyn A. Fouse  
960 Chequessett Neck Road  
Wellfleet, MA 02667

April 6, 2022

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O. Box 2030  
Truro, MA 02666  
Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

Dear Chairperson Girard-Irwin,

I hope you are well. I am writing with respect to the Herring River restoration project that will come before the Wellfleet Conservation Commission on April 14, 2022. I am a full-time resident of Wellfleet, a property owner and abutter to the river estuary, a member of the board of directors of the Friends of Herring River and I participated as a volunteer with the project team as part of the scientific research done to clearly establish the environmental benefits of this restoration effort.

### **Project overview**

The project is currently the largest tidal restoration project in the northeastern United States. It represents a unique opportunity to restore an extensive salt marsh ecosystem to reclaim important ecosystem services. Project benefits include restoration of 570 acres of degraded salt marsh and tidal wetlands by the end of Phase 1 (and more with Phase 2), significant improvements in river water quality, rejuvenation of rare species habitat, restoration of fisheries, and resumption of climate resilience throughout the Herring River's 1,100-acre floodplain.

Tidal flow will be restored to the Herring River estuary through: (1) removal of man-made tidal obstructions and installation of a resilient, adjustable tidal control infrastructure; (2) vegetation and marsh management; and (3) installation of measures to protect public and private structures.

The project will progressively re-establish tidal flow to the estuary using a carefully calibrated, best-practice adaptive management approach that will balance ecological goals with water level control measures to allow the highest tidal range practicable while

protecting potentially vulnerable structures on public and private properties, including roads and homes.

### **Points of interest for Conservation Commissions**

The project meets the definition of an Ecological Restoration Limited Project. Its primary purpose is to restore or otherwise improve the natural capacity of wetland resources in the Herring River Estuary that have degraded. This serves to protect and sustain the wetland resources interests identified in the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

**The project addresses severe degradation of existing and historic wetland resources due to man-made tidal restrictions.** The tidal ecosystem was dramatically altered in 1909 with construction of a dike across the mouth of the Herring River. Due to the resulting lack of tidal flow, 90% of the original salt marsh has been displaced by upland forest, shrublands, and invasive species that are native to the broader geographic area but not to the river floodplain in its natural state. Deterioration of salt marsh peat has caused acid water to leach into surrounding waters, resulting in fish kills, closure of downstream shellfish beds, and subsidence of the marsh surface. The elimination of tidal wetlands has also resulted in the loss of important migratory bird habitat, as well as loss of function as a nursery habitat for a regionally important commercial and recreational fishery and shellfishery.

Currently, ponded fresh wetlands throughout the floodplain emit methane, a potent heat-trapping gas. The restoration of healthy, functioning tidal marsh will displace methane emissions with the carbon storage potential of tidal marsh peat, thereby increasing the sequestration of greenhouse gases. The natural regrowth of tidal marsh will also enhance our community's resilience to the effects of climate change by reversing subsidence and promoting future salt marsh accretion.

**The project will substantially improve the capacity of wetland resources in the estuary to protect the interests identified in the Wetlands Protection Act.** Benefits of tidal restoration include:

- Improved water quality, removal of the Herring River from the list of impaired waters under Federal Clean Water Act standards, and elimination of a major source of bacterial contamination, including to downstream shellfish resources.
- Protect and enhance harvestable shellfish resources both within the estuary and in receiving waters of Wellfleet Harbor.
- Reconnection of the Herring River estuary to the Gulf of Maine to restore the natural coastal food web and recover the estuary's function as a marine nursery.

- Enhanced habitat and removal of impediments to migration and spawning for River Herring, American Eel, Striped Bass, Winter Flounder, and other species.
- Combating climate change by 1) re-establishing natural wetland carbon storage and 2) reducing methane emissions from deteriorated salt marsh.
- Restored natural sediment deposition to allow the marsh to gain elevation and mitigate impacts of sea level rise.
- Re-establish the estuarine gradient of native salt, brackish, and freshwater marsh habitats
- Establish or enhance naturally vegetated buffers.

**The project is based on more than a decade of scientific analysis and has been conservatively designed to minimize any potential impacts to wetland resources.**

Extensive alternatives assessments were conducted to avoid or minimize impacts to wetland resources in the design of project elements. Any unavoidable construction-related impacts to wetland resources are the minimum necessary to achieve the restoration goals of the project, including the restoration of 570 acres of native tidal wetlands at the end of Phase 1. The project complies with requirements for time of year restrictions and protection of rare species.

I strongly encourage the Commission's support for this valuable effort. Many scientists, restoration professionals, volunteers and concerned community members have spent considerable time and effort to develop the data and rationale that demonstrates this is the right thing to do for our local environment and for the global environment. This is a unique opportunity for Wellfleet to contribute to reversing the deleterious effects of wetlands impairment and climate change at multiple levels. We can change the world for the better one ecosystem at a time.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Jackie Fouse



RESTORE  
AMERICA'S  
ESTUARIES

April 5, 2022

Wellfleet Conservation Commission  
Leon Shreves, Chair  
220 W. Main Street  
Wellfleet, MA 02667  
Email: [Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov](mailto:Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov)

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O. Box 2030  
Truro, MA 02666  
Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

Restore America's Estuaries supports the restoration of tidal flow to the Herring River through the removal of obstructions and installation of adjustable tidal control infrastructure. The Project is the largest tidal restoration project in the northeastern United States and represents a unique opportunity to restore an extensive salt marsh ecosystem to reclaim important ecological and economic benefits. Project benefits include restoration of 570 acres of degraded salt marsh and tidal wetlands, as well as significant improvements in water quality, habitat, fisheries, and climate resilience throughout the Herring River floodplain.

The Project addresses severe degradation of existing and historical wetland resources due to man-made tidal restrictions. The tidal ecosystem was dramatically altered in 1909 with construction of a dike across the mouth of Herring River. Due to the resulting lack of tidal flow, 90% of the original salt marsh has been displaced. Deterioration of the salt marsh peat has caused acid water to leach into surrounding waters, resulting in fish kills, closure of downstream shellfish beds, and subsidence of the marsh surface. The elimination of tidal wetlands also resulted in the loss of important migratory bird habitat, loss of function as a nursery for a regionally important commercial and recreational fishery and shellfishery.

Currently, ponded fresh wetlands throughout the floodplain emit methane, a potent heat-trapping gas. The restoration of healthy, functioning tidal marsh will displace methane emissions with the carbon storage potential of tidal marsh peat, thereby increasing the sequestration of greenhouse gases. The natural regrowth of tidal marsh will also enhance the community's resilience to the effects of climate change.

Regards,

Daniel Hayden,  
President and CEO  
Restore America's Estuaries

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*Restore America's Estuaries is dedicated to the protection and restoration of bays  
and estuaries as essential resources for our nation.*

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[www.estuaries.org](http://www.estuaries.org)

Conservation Commission  
TOWN OF TRURO  
APR 07 2022

APR 07 2022



# WELLFLEET CONSERVATION TRUST

P.O. Box 84 Wellfleet MA 02667 [www.wellfleetconservationtrust.org](http://www.wellfleetconservationtrust.org)

April 4, 2022

(via e-mail)

Wellfleet Conservation Commission  
Leon Shreves, Chair  
220 W. Main Street  
Wellfleet, MA 02667  
Email: [Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov](mailto:Hillary.Lemos@wellfleet-ma.gov)

Truro Conservation Commission  
Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair  
24 Town Hall Road  
P.O. Box 2030  
Truro, MA 02666

Email: [EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov](mailto:EBeeBe@truro-ma.gov)

Dear Chairs:

The Board of Trustees of the Wellfleet Conservation Trust (WCT) supports the permit application by the Herring River Restoration Project to restore the Herring River estuary in Wellfleet and Truro that is before you for your April 17 meetings.

This Board has been continuously aware of the progress of the Herring River Restoration Project for more than 15 years. In fact, WCT funded the first widely distributed information sheet during the early evaluation period, before the Friends of Herring River was formed and funded. Also, we own several parcels of land that will be impacted by this proposal.

We have been impressed with the Project's efforts for transparency, for public awareness, and, especially for the degree of scientific research that has gone into the development of restoration plans. Also, we are impressed by the opportunities to improve the environmental conditions and water quality of the estuary and of Wellfleet Harbor. We have great confidence in the leadership structure that has evolved. We believe that the leadership team will continue its practice of understanding all aspects of the project and will do what they, and we, believe is in best interests for the citizens of the Towns of Wellfleet and Truro.

This is a great opportunity to restore many of the natural processes that have been overwhelmed by the blocking of the Herring River more than 100 years ago. We respectfully request the Commissions' approval of the proposed Ecological Restoration Limited Project in the Herring River.

Thank you for consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

R. Dennis O'Connell, President

cc: FHR, The Compact



**The Colony of Wellfleet**  
640 Chequessett Neck Road, Wellfleet, MA 02667  
wellfleetcolony@gmail.com

April 5, 2022

TO:

Leon Shreves, Chair, Conservation Commission

Carol Girard-Irwin, Chair, Conservation Commission

RE: Comments for the 14 April NOI hearing on the Herring River Restoration Project

Dear Chair of the Conservation Commission,

As a Wellfleet business owner and abuttor to the area impacted by Phase One of the Herring River Restoration Project, I enthusiastically support this project. Since 1963, my family has owned and operated a colony of rental cottages situated on the hills along Chequessett Neck Road, with vistas of Wellfleet Harbor, the Chequessett golf course, and the Herring River estuary. My family and our seasonal tenants greatly appreciate the extraordinary breadth of wildlife on our property and around the Outer Cape, the clean water in our ponds and coastal waters, and the high quality of our local fish and shellfish.

The degradation of the Herring River estuary over the nearly six decades that I have lived in Wellfleet negatively impacts the attraction of Cape Cod as a pristine ecosystem. Immediate action to reverse a century of tidal restriction on the Herring River will achieve positive and tangible economic and ecological benefits, beginning with remediating the violation of Clean Water Act standards resulting from bacterial contamination at the Chequessett Neck Road dike. Increased tidal flow will not only enhance the health of the marshes visible from our rental cottages, but more importantly, the restored wildlife habitat will revive an ecosystem that is a jewel of Cape Cod and the backbone of our regional economy.

Restoring the health of the Herring River estuary is a critical element of a good governance strategy for Wellfleet and Truro, that will help ensure the continued vitality and viability of the peninsula for future generations of tourists and residents alike. Therefore, I urge you to act now to advance this project.

Sincerely,

***Jeffrey Stefani***

Proprietor,

The Colony of Wellfleet