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INFORMATION FROM THE
CAPE COD WATER PROTECTION COLLABORATIVE
CAPE COD COMMISSION
BARNSTABLE COUNTY



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\$3.35M for Cape Cod Wastewater Plan Approved by State Trust

BARNSTABLE COUNTY, MA -- The Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust voted late today to appropriate \$3.35 million for the development of a comprehensive water quality management plan for Cape Cod. The plan will address the need to reduce nutrient pollution of Cape Cod waterways to meet state and federal water quality standards. With these funds, the Cape Cod Commission will prepare the plan under the supervision of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP).

“These resources give us the opportunity to aggregate the important local wastewater planning efforts into an efficient and effective solution to Cape Cod’s greatest environmental problem,” said Cape Cod Commission Executive Director Paul Niedzwiecki.

Cape Cod Water Protection Collaborative Director Andrew Gottlieb has worked closely with his board, the Cape Cod Commission, and the Barnstable County Commissioners to push intensively for action on the wastewater management challenge during the past several years.

“The combined efforts of many individuals set the stage for this significant award,” noted Gottlieb. “We appreciate the substantial efforts of Larry Ballantine as Chairman of the Water Protection Collaborative’s Governing Board, and Wendy Northcross as CEO of the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, and we will rely heavily on their continued support as we proceed with development of the plan.”

State legislators, including Cape and Islands Senator Dan Wolf (D-Harwich) and Senate President Therese Murray (D-Plymouth) have been influential in elevating the discussion about the need for a significant increase in attention to water quality management on Cape Cod. Elected officials, local municipal officials, community leaders, and state department personnel worked diligently to raise awareness of the issue throughout the Administration.

“The Cape Cod Chamber applauds the leadership of Senator Dan Wolf in securing much needed funds for Cape Cod’s wastewater infrastructure planning and design,” said Chamber CEO Wendy Northcross. “The Senator has been extremely responsive to our calls for action on the wastewater issue, and has become a strong advocate on Beacon Hill for the Cape’s water quality.”

“This is a major step forward for one of my top priorities, to make Cape Cod’s bays, ponds, and estuaries pristine once again, restored to health by planning regionally, collaborating and acting locally, leaving a profound legacy for future generations,” said Senator Dan Wolf. “We applaud Governor Patrick and Secretary Sullivan for their vision and crucial support, while we celebrate all the people in our communities who have worked long and hard to remove this environmental threat.”

In 1978, the former Cape Cod Planning and Economic Development Commission (the regional planning agency that preceded the Cape Cod Commission) prepared a regional water quality management plan for Cape Cod under the federal Clean Water Act. Out of the new award, \$3 million will support a comprehensive update of the plan to achieve the following:

- Prioritize water resources, identifying the most impaired or endangered, and the actions selected locally to achieve water quality goals as quickly as possible;
- Limit the amount of infrastructure needed to improve or restore water quality by prioritizing those areas requiring “shared” systems;
- Provide an opportunity to evaluate decentralized and innovative approaches more fully, as well as evaluate the continued use of conventional septic systems where appropriate;
- Identify preferred solutions for nutrient management in nitrogen-sensitive watersheds;
- Achieve greatest economies of scale, and identify methods to share costs equitably among all parties benefitting from the improvements;

- Feature a robust public-participation process, including a facilitated outreach effort, watershed-level advisory committees, and extensive opportunities for public input to allow planners and participants to consider all views and input fully, and to build consensus for identified solutions; and
- Identify funding and implementation options.

The Cape Cod Commission will institute meetings with town leaders to pursue a locally based watershed-by-watershed plan, which will lay out the best approaches for solving the region's water quality problems from a locally focused perspective.

The remaining \$350,000 will be used to add features to the Watershed MVP, a web-based planning application. The tool will link land use data with newly developed scientific and financial planning data to help Cape communities identify environmentally appropriate and affordable wastewater infrastructure solutions to be incorporated into the regional management plan.

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