

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Herring River Executive Council (HREC)**  
**Thursday, September 15, 2022, 3:00 pm**

**Virtual meeting via Zoom**

HREC members present: Geoff Sanders, Debbie Freeman, Helen Miranda Wilson, Janet Reinhart, Brian Carlstrom; Coordinator: Carole Ridley; Others present: Christine Odiaga, Martha Craig, David Koonce, Philip Tabas, Tim Smith, Eric Derleth, Bill Biewenga, Dale Rheault, Beth Chapman, Paul Faxon, Laura Runkel, Georgeann Keer.

**Minutes**

Following the meeting welcome and introductions, the minutes of June 16, 2022 were approved by consensus.

**Herring River Restoration Project Update**

Carole Ridley provided the following project updates.

**Permitting Update:**

- Orders of Condition for the project as an Ecological Restoration Limited Project were issued by the Wellfleet and Truro Conservation Commissions, respectively. Following the closure of the appeal period, the Orders were recorded at the Registry of Deeds.
- A MGL Ch. 91 Waterways License was issued for the Chequessett Neck Road bridge. Following the closure of the appeal period, the license was recorded at the Registry of Deeds.
- The project team is proceeding with pre-construction permit compliance activities.

**Fundraising Update:**

- The Town of Wellfleet executed grant agreements in the amount of \$49,870,000:
  - \$27,200,000 from the USDA/Natural Resource Conservation Service
  - \$22,670,000 from Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration
- The Town submitted an application to NOAA for \$14,690,000 for a Transformational Habitat Restoration Grant
- In addition, the project has obtained funding for vegetation management in the form of a \$2,000,000 grant from the US Fish & Wildlife Service to Ducks Unlimited, and additional funding from the National Park Foundation.

Brian Carlstrom noted that the National Park Service is contributing \$500,000 to complete final design for the Mill Creek Water Control Structure to prepare it for funding. Geoff Sanders reported that the National Park Foundation contributed \$230,000 from a corporate grant from Coca Cola to be used for vegetation. Management.

**Construction Update:**

- This past summer the construction bid for the Chequessett Neck Road Bridge and Water Access Facility was advertised and the bid opening is scheduled for 9/22/2022. A contractor could be selected and a contract issued this October or November. Site mobilization and vegetation management work could begin late 2022 and early 2023.
- The Town is in the process of hiring an Owner's Project Representative to provide onsite construction oversight of the bridge construction and report to Wellfleet Department of Public Works. This will be funded by project construction grants obtained by the Town.
- Final design is underway for the following project elements: Mill Creek Water Control Structure; Low road elevation culverts, and Property Impact Prevention. Construction bids could be advertised mid

2023 for these elements.

- The construction sequence for the Chequessett Neck Road bridge is as follows:
  - Fall 2022 – Summer 2023 - Construct Temporary Bypass Bridge
  - Summer 2023 – Winter 2023 - Construct Southern Bridge Pier and Abutment Area
  - Winter 2023 – Summer 2024 - Construct Northern Bridge Pier and Abutment Area
  - Summer 2024 – Spring 2025 - Construct Bridge Superstructure, Roadway and Duck Harbor Road Water Access Facility

Brian Carlstrom noted that the removal of the Feil and Rosenberg properties on Way 672 also will occur in early 2023.

Other preparations for construction include:

- The Order of Taking for temporary and permanent easements in Wellfleet is completed and recorded.
- The Order of Taking for temporary and permanent easements in Truro is underway. Once that is completed, discussions on an intermunicipal agreement between Truro and Wellfleet will resume.
- The Town-Seashore land transfer is under discussion

It was also noted that the state will host a celebration event to mark the state funding award. This will take place at Chequessett Neck Road bridge on September 19<sup>th</sup> at noon. The project has also recently been visited by Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Congressman William Keating, Sen. Julian Cyr and Rep. Sarah Peake.

Vegetation and Marsh Management Presentation by Tim Smith

Tim Smith provided a PowerPoint presentation showing plans for vegetation and marsh management.

Vegetation management will begin with clearing of approximately 120 acres near Duck Harbor in winter 2022/2023. Clearing of approximately 62 acres of trees, shrubs and vines in area flooded within year 1 of tidal restoration will occur in Winter 2023/2024. Mowing of approximately 45 acres of Phragmites is planned for Fall-winter 2024/2025, and will be timed with restoration of tidal flow in these areas to prevent re-growth. This work is funded by the National Park Foundation and US Fish and Wildlife Service.

A demonstration project to remove spoil berms and restore the natural channel pattern is being planned. The area being evaluated is approximately 10 acres and would involve movement of approximately 9,000 cubic yards of material from berms. Work could begin in 2024. This work is funded by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Helen Miranda Wilson asked whether additional permits are required. Brian Carlstrom responded that the vegetation work is permitted under the National Park Service Fire Management Plan for the Park. Tim Smith noted that some additional permitting would be needed for the marsh sediment work.

Ms Wilson also asked why the project would not just remove the berms and let the channels re-establish themselves naturally. Mr. Smith responded that to some extent that would happen, but concerted efforts to re-establish the natural channel will enhance the benefits of tidal restoration.

Paul Faxon noted that some of the areas for tree and shrub removal are adjacent to residential areas and suggested that residents be advised and consulted with vegetation clearing is going to be undertaken in these areas. In response it was noted that the Project has an established outreach program and would seek to notify and communicate with property owners.

**HREC Member Announcements:**

There were no member announcements.

**Public Comment**

Martha Craig announced that she would soon be leaving her position as Executive Director of Friends of Herring River and thanked the Executive Council for their hard work in service of the project. Brian Carlstrom thanked Ms. Craig for her contributions to the project over many years.

**Next Meeting Dates**

Thursday, December 15, 2022, 3:00 pm

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 pm.