



FRIENDS OF ELLISVILLE MARSH: PROGRESS ON MULTIPLE FRONTS NOVEMBER, 2014

This newsletter is produced on a periodic basis to keep members of the Friends of Ellisville Marsh, Inc. apprised of developments and opportunities to become involved.

Statehouse Meeting Produces Breakthrough

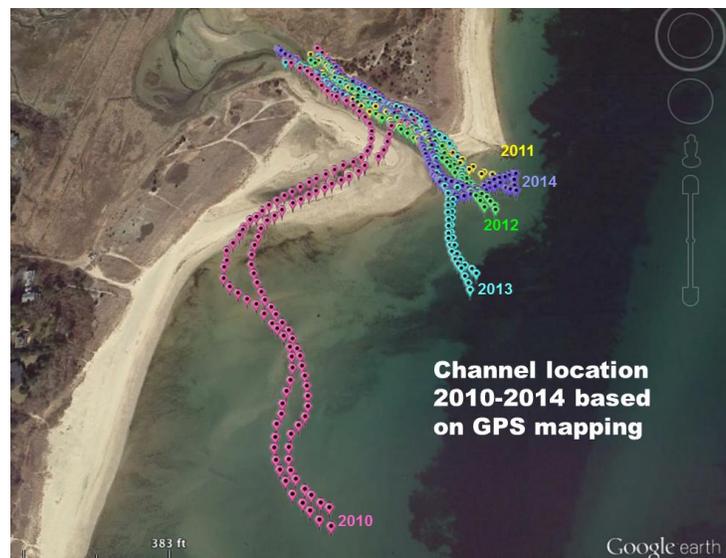
In our last newsletter, we reported on our meeting with executives of state agencies involved in permitting of our project to restore Ellisville Marsh, as well as representatives of Senate President Murray's office who set up the meeting. We are pleased to report that subsequent to the meeting, the MassDEP issued a permit amendment that significantly reduces our monitoring expense and workload going forward. Friends' President Jack Scambos sees the change as recognition that we are past the "proof-of-concept" stage in our long-term plan to restore and protect the Ellisville Marsh ecosystems. According to Scambos, *"We are very pleased by the way the Commonwealth has responded to our request to reconsider the onerous level of monitoring we had been subject to over the past five years."* In his email response to the Mass DEP, he commented, *"Moving forward, we are preparing to move the dialogue to a discussion beyond the monthly/yearly administration of permits, monitoring criteria, and data synthesis. The longer term solution is a sustainable, permanent method of maintaining the inlet, funded by the Commonwealth as stated by Secretary Bowles in his September 5, 2008 MEPA letter in our case. Such a solution will maintain the connection to the ocean for Ellisville Marsh and avoid the lack of continuity annual maintenance operations can cause. We feel strongly that this is the true spirit of the language in the Consent Order that created The Friends of Ellisville Marsh."*

Thank You, Therese Murray!

We will be sorry to see Senate President Therese Murray leave office early next year. She and her staff, especially Monica Mullen, have been steadfast supporters of the project to restore Ellisville Marsh since our earliest days. The Friends wish you the best in your future endeavors!

Ellisville Inlet Stays Put... at Least for Now

Last winter was kind to the southeastern Massachusetts coastline. Thanks to the lack of a major nor'easter, the Ellisville inlet did not become diverted and the Friends avoided having to perform costly maintenance for the first time since January 2011. In fact, 2014 data show the inlet actually moved closer to the rock jetty at the state park – adding insight to our understanding of this dynamic system.

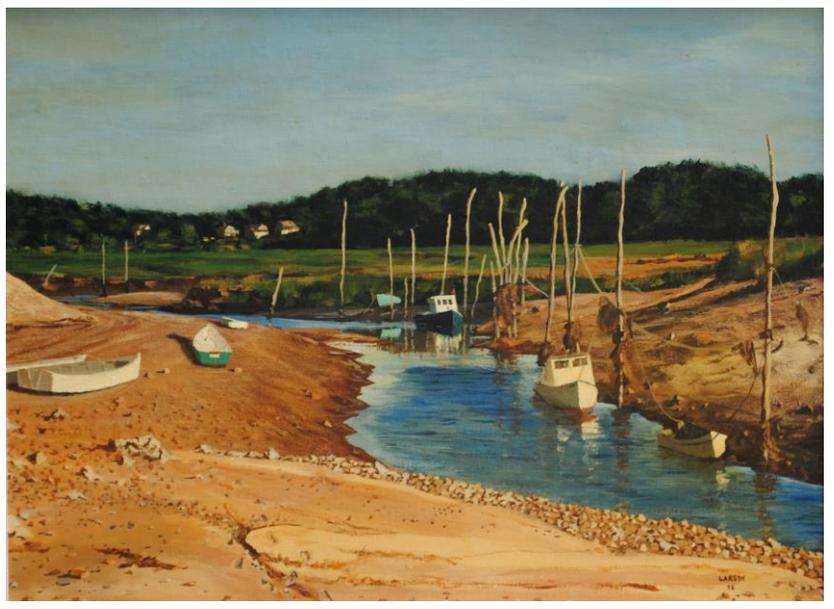


Renewal Reminder!

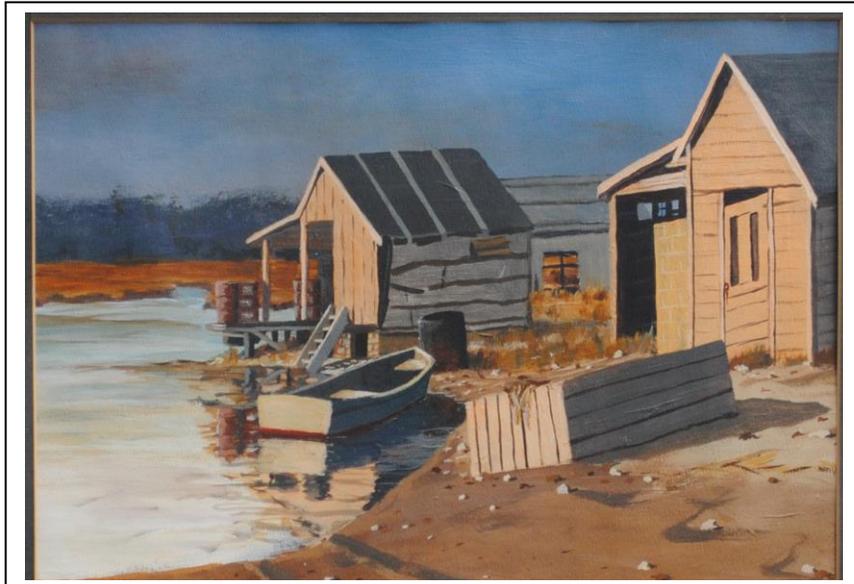
Don't forget the Friends of Ellisville Marsh membership year runs from July 1st - June 30th, so we all need to renew ASAP to remain current members for 2014-15. Please renew online with Paypal at <http://tinyurl.com/ellisvillemembership> (or go to www.ellisvillemarsh.org and download a hard copy renewal form under "donate"). Mail checks to: Friends of Ellisville Marsh, Inc., PO Box 1728, Sagamore Beach, MA 02562. Membership levels start as low as \$15, but donate what you can - the organization's continued success depends on your support!

Ellisville Harbor as It Was, through an Artist's Eyes

A casual conversation with a neighbor sometimes produces a pleasant surprise. Such was the case one day when Friends' director and past president Eric Cody caught up with his neighbor across Lookout Point, Cindy Aborn. Turns out that not only has the Aborn family been in Ellisville for decades, but also that Cindy's uncle, Paul Larson, is a gifted artist who loved to paint Ellisville Harbor scenes in the sixties and seventies. Images of two of his works are shown here. They are a wonderful reminder of how vibrant a place this used to be, and also shed some light on how the channel looked back then.



Ellisville Harbor Scene (1974) by Paul Larson. Image ©Paul Larson-All Rights Reserved. Shown here with the artist's permission.



Ellisville Bait Shacks (ca. 1965) by Paul Larson. Image ©Paul Larson-All Rights Reserved. Shown here with the artist's permission.

Real Progress Protecting the Ellisville Watershed

The Friends' board of directors has determined that our mission in restoring and preserving the Ellisville Marsh ecosystem cannot be achieved by maintaining tidal flows alone. The Ellisville estuary, the freshwater side of the system, is also an essential focus. Accordingly, we have taken a stand to address water quality issues at Savery Pond since 2012 (see, for example, our Savery Pond water quality monitoring update in the October 2012 newsletter http://ellisvillemarsh.org/FEMcontent/Friends%20Newsletter%20Oct_2012.pdf). One key part of this strategy fell into place at October Town Meeting where, on a resounding 115-1 vote, the Town approved the acquisition of 27 acres of land on Lake Road close to Savery Pond. \$450,000.00 was allocated from the Community Preservation Open Space Reserve Fund for the purchase. Bill Keohan, chairman of the Town's Community Preservation Committee, championed the purchase. Bill spoke passionately about this at our Annual Meeting in July. Kudos to Bill for his leadership in protecting what needs to be protected in the Town of Plymouth so that future generations will be able to appreciate what we have today. *Savery Pond had a particularly bad year with toxic algal blooms from June to September 2014. The Friends are redoubling our efforts toward solving water quality problems in the pond and its outflow to the Ellisville estuary. Stay tuned for more information.*

Already Time for Permit Renewals

It may be hard to believe but five years have passed since the Friends obtained the local, state and federal permits that allow routine maintenance of the Ellisville inlet. The purpose of this work is to insure that tidal flows are adequate to support a healthy ecosystem, especially the *Spartina alterniflora* (smooth marsh cordgrass), a perennial deciduous grass found in intertidal wetlands. Prior to reopening of the blocked inlet, Ellisville Marsh had lost as much as ten acres of *Spartina alt.* The Friends' General Permit, issued by the US Army Corps of Engineers, is set to expire January 15th, and our MassDEP water quality permit will expire on July 20th, 2015. We have already contacted both agencies to determine the most economical way to obtain renewal permits in a timely manner so inlet maintenance work can continue on an uninterrupted basis. The good news: our two other permits have already been extended by several years.



A mink peaks out from among the rocks at the back of Ellisville Marsh, near the Harlow farmhouse in July. A pair of minks was also seen running atop the bluff along Lookout Point.

Photo courtesy of Linda Fuller.
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To Contact the Board or Share Your Ideas:

Please email us at Board@EllisvilleMarsh.org . We welcome your ideas and inputs.

And thanks for your continuing support!