



FRIENDS NEWSLETTER: ELLISVILLE MARSH RESTORATION PROJECT AUGUST 11TH, 2007

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.

1. The Friends of Ellisville Marsh is Now Incorporated!

On July 16, 2007, the Friends of Ellisville Marsh, Inc. filed its Articles of Organization and was officially approved by the Secretary of the Commonwealth as a non-profit entity under MA Chapter 180. Bylaws have been adopted by the board and a conflict of interest policy is pending, as required by the IRS for our planned tax-exemption. Our founding board is made up of Eric Cody, Bob Goldthwaite, Peter Hruby, Ellen Russell, and Jack Scambos, who together have been guiding the Friends' informal operations for the last several years. The Friends plans to pursue tax-exempt status under IRS 501(c)(3) in the next few months. The board plans to govern the Friends' activities in ways that assure full transparency for members. Copies of the Articles of Organization and/or Bylaws are available to members on request.

2. Membership Recruitment is Underway

The Friends is actively recruiting members and is especially interested in retaining all of our past supporters. 2007-08 basic membership dues have been set at \$15 and a special designation of "Founding Member" is available for a contribution of \$100. Membership information and an application form can be obtained by sending an email to info@EllisvilleMarsh.org or visiting our web site at www.EllisvilleMarsh.org. Early results are encouraging as the Friends has gained some Founding Members who had not been previously involved as a result of recent press coverage. Supporters are encouraged to make their friends, families and co-workers aware of this opportunity to make a difference in the life and future of Ellisville Marsh. *Please take the time to complete your 2007-08 membership application and send it in with your dues to Bob Goldthwaite at the address shown on the form.*

3. Media Coverage

The first in a series of articles on Ellisville Marsh and the Friends appeared in the Old Colony Memorial newspaper on Saturday, August 4th, capably written by Emily Wilcox. Press announcements were also sent to the Boston Globe, Cape Cod Times, and Patriot Ledger. The producer of a half-hour PACTV local interest program has invited the Friends to appear on a program to air sometime in September.

4. Contacts with Public Agencies

The Friends has been contacted by members of several Town of Plymouth boards and committees and has offered to provide briefings on our activities and plans to the Open Space Committee and Conservation Commission. We are also reaching out to others.

5. Application for Permits to Reopen the Tidal Inlet Channel

The board is considering the steps that need to be taken to apply for long-term permits to reopen and maintain the inlet channel that flushes Ellisville Marsh. Vlad Hruby and Eric Cody recently met with John Ramsey of Applied Coastal Engineering to better understand what will be required and how to minimize the costs associated with the regulatory review process.

6. Summer Piping Plover Monitoring Program Successfully Completed

In order to gain support for future channel maintenance permitting, volunteers representing the

**Sincere appreciation to Adela Hruby for her design of the new Friends' logo shown on this status report.*

Friends (Bobbi Martino, Paula Marcoux, and Eric Cody) staffed a daily plover monitoring program on Ellisville Beach beginning in late April. We tracked five pairs of plovers over several months and located eight nests on the beach. We watched as two chicks from the single, surviving nest learned to fly. Thanks to Peter and Vlad Hruby and Eric Cody, a sign was built and erected on the beach to educate beachgoers about the endangered birds and provide maps showing nest locations. Our assistance was recognized by MA Audubon and US Fish & Wildlife. Perhaps most importantly, we gained an understanding of where the plover pairs tend to nest on the beach, which is essential to our plans for channel restoration and re-use of displaced sand for beach nourishment, e.g., to enhance nesting habitat. We have received a letter that is supportive of the Friends' plan to reopen the inlet channel from the Director of MA Audubon's Coastal Waterbirds Program.

7. Web Site Development

Peter Hruby has taken the lead in reserving our domain name ("www.EllisvilleMarsh.org") and setting up our web site and email addresses. The Friends intends to conduct itself in a highly efficient manner, leveraging the Internet and email wherever possible to reduce printing and administrative costs.

8. Volunteer Opportunities

The Friends will be creating several working committees on which members will be needed. To be made aware of volunteer opportunities, please send an email to: info@EllisvilleMarsh.org.

9. Condition of the Marsh and Channel

Vegetation in the back marsh continues to deteriorate, although the causes are not fully understood. Restricted tidal flows are believed to be contributing to the problem if not causing it. The so-called "channel plug," the sand and pebble berm with jersey barriers underneath that runs along the southern side of the inlet channel, was badly damaged by the April nor'easter and is in danger of being breached by the next major storm, which would likely accelerate the channel migration and further restrict the flow of water from fully draining from the marsh. Given the DEP enforcement action that ensued from the last repair of this plug in early 2006, the board will carefully weigh available options.

10. Environmental Monitoring

Several Friends' volunteers are again participating in water quality sampling in support of the UMass-Dartmouth SMAST estuaries study this summer. Ellen Russell is coordinating the SMAST sampling events. Ellen Russell and Eric Cody also recently met with Jason Burtner and Tim Smith of MA Coastal Zone Management at the marsh to discuss an environmental monitoring program which the Friends would undertake to establish baseline conditions against which future changes could be measured.



*For further information on any of the activities mentioned
in this report, or to join, please send an email to:
info@EllisvilleMarsh.org.*