



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FRIENDS OF ELLISVILLE MARSH FOR 2009-2010

ON COURSE TO RESTORE ELLISVILLE MARSH

PERMITTING MILESTONES ACHIEVED

Adding to MEPA certification and an Order of Conditions from the Plymouth Conservation Commission that were obtained prior to last year's annual meeting, the Friends recently received two of the remaining permits needed to reopen the blocked tidal inlet to Ellisville:

- MA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Section 401 Water Quality Certification, and
- MA DEP Chapter 91 Waterways License.

These two state permits required more than a year of informational filings and detailed negotiations with various state agencies over environmental monitoring protocols. State agencies participating in this process included the Office of Coastal Zone Management, Division of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Marine Fisheries and the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program.

With these two critical state permits in hand, the project requires only one more step, a discharge permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers. Our permit application will be filed imminently.

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING PLAN

The DEP permits come with strings attached. The Friends have agreed to undertake nine environmental monitoring programs for the 3 to 5-year duration of the permits to collect data documenting changes in marsh vegetation, fin fish, shellfish, threatened bird species, offshore eel grass, marsh hydrology, beach topography, harbor shoaling, and water quality. A number of these programs have already begun, some as early as four years ago.

MEMBERSHIP & FINANCIAL UPDATE

We finish the year again having spent only what we brought in. More than 120 families and individuals have contributed since 2007 and membership renewal has been consistently high. Fully 92% of the money the Friends have raised since 2007 has gone directly to restoration-related work – this overhead ratio is considered highly effective in nonprofit circles. Special thanks to the late Grace Pleadwell's family and friends for their generous gifts in her memory.



Ellisville Marsh Resident

(Photo by Friends
Director Henry Riter)

Additional funds will be needed to dredge the inlet as soon as this fall.

**Please renew for 2010-11 now!
You can download the mail-in renewal form on our web site at www.EllisvilleMarsh.org**

FIRST ELLISVILLE BIRD WALK A HIT

Sunday, May 2nd, was a glorious day at Ellisville marsh and beach for the more than fifty people who turned out for the Friends' first-ever Ellisville Bird Walk. Groups led by Mass Audubon's Becky Harris (Director of the Coastal Waterbird Program) and Wayne Petersen (Director of the Important Bird Areas Program) saw a wide variety of birds, both migrants and residents, in marsh, beach, meadow and woodlands habitats. The first Piping Plover nest of the season was discovered during the walk and the marsh's newly resident Osprey pair put on a show. Participants quickly appreciated why Ellisville Marsh is designated a Massachusetts Important Bird Area, among its many claims as a special place.

CHANGES IN THE BOARD 2010-2011

We are pleased to welcome three new members to the Friends' board of directors: Frank Doyle, Diane Fletcher, and Kim Michaelis. Frank has also been elected Treasurer. Ellen Russell, founding director and Treasurer since our incorporation in 2007, is retiring from the board to focus her energy on scientific research at Ellisville Marsh as her doctoral project. Ellen has made invaluable contributions to the restoration effort. We are thrilled she will still be working with us.