



Friends of Ellisville Marsh

Annual Report 2020-21

Brighter Days Ahead

Shorebird Nesting Off to Strong Start / Moving Forward on Multiple Fronts / Living Shoreline Initiative / Our New Summer Intern

2021 Annual Meeting – Mark Your Calendar!

The Friends' 2021 Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 6th from 6-7 pm via Zoom videoconferencing. We are hopeful that this will be our LAST virtual event! Join us for a recounting of the past year's successes and a presentation on a new, environmentally friendly initiative. Your inputs, ideas, and feedback will again be welcomed. Details to follow.

Threatened Shorebird Nesting Off to a Strong Start

Two pairs of Piping Plovers have taken up residence at Shifting Lots Preserve, producing a total of eight eggs so far.

Unfortunately, the full moon tide around midnight on May 27th

washed away the first nest, just a few days shy of hatching. But it may not be too late for this pair to start over—piping plovers are resilient and they still have time to produce a successful brood. Least Terns too are scouting the beach area in possible preparation for a nesting colony as we saw last year.



As if these threatened shorebirds didn't have enough to reckon with between super-tides and predators, they face an especially frustrating human assailant this year. A night-time vandal has repeatedly slashed the fencing around the nests, as well as the dune fencing, since the end of March. The Wildlands Trust has deployed "digital surveillance" of the property. However, efforts to identify this miscreant have thus far come up short.

Multi-pronged Pursuit of Long-term Solution to the Problem of Inlet Blockage

2008→ Conduct periodic inlet maintenance	2017→ Investigate coastal engineering alternatives for stabilizing the inlet	2021→ Undertake Living Shoreline Initiative
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain all necessary regulatory permits.• Conduct maintenance when inlet becomes blocked (six times so far).• All permits have been reauthorized – good until 2024.• Friends lead director: Eric Cody.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phase 1 of project launched 2016, completed 2017 (funded by Commonwealth of MA, Town of Plymouth, and Friends).• Phase 2 of project launched in late 2019, not completed, status currently unknown (funded and managed by Commonwealth of MA).• Friends lead director: Jack Scambos.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact experts in the field.• Explore partnerships with local agencies.• Prepare plan of action for Living Shoreline at Ellisville Marsh.• Seek grants for pilot project and pursue regulatory approvals.• Implement project(s).• Friends lead director: Ellen Russell.

Friends Adopt a Multi-pronged Approach to Finding a Sustainable Solution

Restriction of tidal flows into and out of Ellisville Marsh has a negative impact on the salt marsh ecosystem and the wildlife that depend on it. What is the most sustainable solution to the recurring blockage of Ellisville Marsh's inlet – periodic inlet maintenance?... the reconstruction of the dilapidated state park rock jetty?... or, is there a softer "living shorelines" solution? Because one single strategy may be insufficient to the task, the Friends are pursuing all three concurrently. Our work, as shown in the graphic, includes:

- Permitting to allow continued inlet maintenance on an as-needed basis. No new permitting work is needed until 2024.
- Urging the Commonwealth to complete the inlet stabilization project which began in 2017 and has now languished.
- Exploring innovative "Living Shoreline" strategies for protection of the coastline and Ellisville Marsh itself –NEW! Read on...

Living Shoreline Initiative

Thanks to our first, multi-year respite from regulatory permitting work, we have launched a new initiative called "Living Shoreline." Living shoreline refers to a range of "soft armoring" techniques used to stabilize shorelines and protect or enhance natural features. These techniques seek to control erosion and flooding by recreating or enhancing natural shorelines using vegetation and other natural or

organic materials (Source: Massachusetts Wildlife Climate Action Tool - <https://tinyurl.com/82sxyyrt>)

Current activities include contacting experts in the field, attending conferences, researching current Living Shoreline applications in New England (ongoing since 2018), and consulting with the Town of Plymouth to explore interest.

Join us at this year's Annual Meeting to hear from Friends director and science advisor Dr. Ellen Russell about her consultations thus far with experts in this field and her exploration of ongoing Living Shoreline applications in New England.

Our membership year begins July 1st. [Click here to renew!](#)

Our New Summer Monitoring Assistant

We are pleased to announce that Anna Bishop is our 2021 summer environmental monitoring assistant. Anna lives on Lookout Point and is currently enrolled at University of Maine Orono majoring in zoology. We look forward to working with Anna this summer!

Visit us at: www.EllisvilleMarsh.org

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