



# In Pursuit of Sustainability

Fall 2025 Update

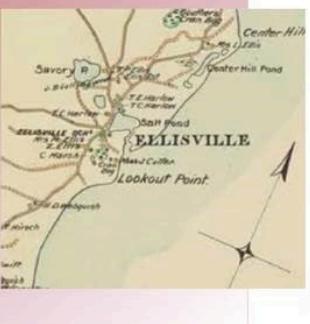
## Friends Win Another Grant

We are pleased to announce that the Friends of Ellisville Marsh have just been awarded a \$2,000 grant to lay the groundwork for a “living shoreline” pilot project that we hope will ultimately make it easier to maintain the Ellisville inlet on an ongoing basis, and with less reliance on heavy equipment. The grant comes from the NH-based McGonagle Foundation, a charitable giving organization that exists to support educational and mentoring opportunities for children and young adults, veterans, conservation, and other activities that contribute to a healthy community in the greater New England area. A big thank you goes to longtime Friends’ supporter Ralph Casale for nominating the Friends for this award. We hope this grant will be a catalyst for upending the status quo of frequent inlet maintenance.

## Harlow Farmhouse Restoration Gains Steam

**HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE**

- Last built reminder of 4 centuries of agricultural occupancy
- Built in 1939, replacing a much older building on the site
- DCR acquires the property in the 1980s/90s



Images courtesy of Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

The MA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has made impressive strides toward the full restoration and adaptive reuse of the historic Harlow Farmhouse, which overlooks Ellisville Marsh from its site at the marsh's western end. During a well-attended, virtual meeting on September 11, DCR staff provided an update on improvements that have been made to the building structure and shared plans for its future. Following the meeting, the Friends of Ellisville Marsh once again expressed interest in participating in planned partnership meetings and offered volunteer support. We also encouraged DCR to consider a possible role for the Herring Pond Wampanoag people in the building's future since it sits in the midst of the tribe's ancestral lands.

To access DCR's videorecording of the Harlow farmhouse meeting:

[Harlow House Public Meeting 9.11.25 - YouTube](#)

**Volunteer Day at Ellisville Harbor State Park**  
**MA Department of Conservation and Recreation**

Saturday, October 11, 2025, 9 AM - 1 PM

**Come volunteer to help at Ellisville Harbor State Park!**

Meet at the old Harlow Farmhouse, 1861 State Road, Plymouth, MA

DCR asks that volunteers bring their own gloves if they have them. A limited supply will be available to those who don't. Please also bring a filled water bottle.

***HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!***



Consultant Trey Ruthven and Contractor Jason Richmond dig sediment samples at the Ellisville inlet.

## Re-permitting Plods Along, But End May be in Sight

It may seem counterintuitive to bring an excavator in to dig sand when your declared intention is to pursue “sustainable” options for maintaining the Ellisville Marsh inlet. But that’s the way it works. Why was there an excavator at the inlet in mid-September? What was it doing? Digging sand. One permitting requirement of the MassDEP and US Army Corps of Engineers is to demonstrate that the material to be excavated when the inlet becomes blocked is compatible with the material where you’re going to place it. This makes sense if you’re bringing sand in from off-site. In our case however, the excavated sand is moved about 100 yards and carefully graded to create a hospitable landscape for nesting shorebirds, namely Piping Plovers and Least Terns. Mother Nature herself moves sand around at this location massively during storms and requires no permits. The Friends have requested a waiver of the requirement in the past, but the waiver has been denied. The good news? Unless the federal government shutdown goes on for an extended period, we hope to have the new permits sometime in early 2026. Keep your fingers crossed.

The Friends’ new membership year began July 1. Have you renewed yet?

[Renew Your Membership for 2025-26 Here](#)



Sea moss in its natural state and after preparation as a food.

### Sea Moss: Miracle Food or Toxic Substance?

The history of sea moss, also known as Irish moss, dates back nearly a century at Ellisville Marsh. Some well-aged Friends' members still remember working as teenagers in the sixties and seventies, harvesting the plant off Ellisville beach in the summers. Recent studies suggest that sea moss is the latest social-media superfood, chock full of nutrients and promising beneficial health effects. But is it all good? Some recent studies indicate that sea moss can accumulate heavy metals like arsenic, lead and mercury. Buyer beware! For more information: <https://tinyurl.com/sea-moss-article>

### Sand Mining Backlash Sparks Action: New Town Committee Being Formed to Reform Zoning Bylaw

The Friends have taken a consistent, public stand against commercial-scale sand mining in Plymouth ever since a developer proposed to remove 500,000 cubic yards of sand from a property that abuts the Ellisville herring run in 2014. That project hasn't gone away - legal appeals of the decade-old Zoning Board decision to deny the application continue in Massachusetts Land Court. This year, several Friends' members have played active roles in trying to stop this destructive practice throughout the town. A warrant article was filed by the Plymouth Stewardship Alliance (PSA) for Fall Town Meeting that would have imposed a nearly year-long moratorium on sand mining. However, it has been agreed no action will be taken on this measure as the town has committed to work with the PSA to create a committee to revisit the Earth Removal Bylaw and clamp down on sand mining. Special thanks to Friends' member Nancy Mukundan, who played a leadership role in helping to achieve this result.

The Friends of Ellisville Marsh welcome your feedback, questions, and comments.

[Email the Friends' board](#)

[View email in browser](#)

Friends of Ellisville Marsh, Inc. · PO Box 1728 · Sagamore Beach, MA 02562-1728 · USA  
[update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#)