

Dear Wianno Yacht Club Members,

Wianno Yacht Club members are encouraged to voice support for the maintenance dredge project proposed for the Cotuit Entrance Channel put forward by Massachusetts Audubon and Three Bays Preservation.

Action Needed:

- 1) Attend the Conservation Commission Meeting - March 19th, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall
- 2) E-mail a letter of support to: rob.gatewood@town.barnstable.ma.us
- 3) Send a letter of support to: Mr. Dennis Houle, Chairman, Barnstable Conservation Commission, 200 Main St., Hyannis, MA 02601

This action is requested for all with an interest in maintenance of navigational channels used to transit from Nantucket Sound to West Bay and Cotuit Bay.

A pattern of severe winter storms and 45 years of deferred channel maintenance has made this project vital to mariners.

History:

The West Bay Cut (1900) and Cotuit Bay Channel (1934) are man-made. They were created to support marine interests by providing a means of passage from Nantucket Sound to safe harbors.

Dredging of the Cotuit Bay Channel was performed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1934 (6' depth; 1500' width), 1947 (6' depth; 1350' width), and 1967 (8' depth; 600' width).

Westerly Sand Migration:

The Cotuit Bay Channel has closed up 1000' since 1934, creating a dangerous choke point for competing marine interests.



Dangerous Currents:

The Three Bays are hydraulically linked, any obstruction to flow at the Cotuit entrance results in increased tidal flow at the West Bay entrance. Dramatic reduction in cross sectional area has resulted in significantly increased peak tide velocities at the Cotuit Entrance Channel and the West Bay Cut.

Restricted Navigation:

Accessing Nantucket Sound has become treacherous for local fleets on weekends, when boat traffic is at its peak and tides are running strong.

Learn to sail programs and junior racers headed for Nantucket Sound face more tidal flow and, in the case of Cotuit, room to navigate is substantially decreased.

Competing Interests:

More boats, less area to navigate safely; sail boats, power boats, paddle boats, bathers, swimmers to/from Sampson's Island and the Cotuit Shore have created an unsustainable density of users.

Summary:

The Barnstable Conservation Commission needs to hear from those of us with marine interests.

All sailors needs sea-room to tack and manageable currents so that steerage and way can be maintained when passing through both the Cotuit Entrance Channel and West Bay Cut.

Increasing the distance from shore to island will discourage swimmers from the dangerous cross-channel passage and the resulting risk of being run-down and/or drowning.

Routine channel maintenance must be restored to a reasonable period based upon monitored sand migration.

Please take an minute and voice your support for this project.

(For more information please visit: www.3bays.org)