



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

STATE HOUSE • BOSTON 02133

(617) 725-4000

MITT ROMNEY
GOVERNOR

KERRY HEALEY
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

May 13, 2005

Carol Peterson
Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Room 7136E
1301 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Ms. Peterson:

The application prepared by the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program will help improve our knowledge of ecological impacts of development. The ambitious proposal leverages a number of critical partnerships across the watershed to develop a community water budget and a water use management plan, reduce public water use, and promote innovative Low Impact Development techniques.

Massachusetts is dedicated to improving the health of our watersheds and through this application hopes to dedicate attention to our estuaries. Both the state and its federal partners, such as the United States Geological Survey, have made efforts to understand the relationship between water withdrawals and stream flow, and the nexus between aquifer yields and their impact on habitat. Quantifying such relationships for a specific community in this watershed remains an important challenge. The proposed water budget study, along with other water use reduction and pollutant reduction actions, are worthy of strong consideration.

Thank you for your time weighing this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mitt Romney".

Mitt Romney



Buzzards Bay Project
National Estuary Program

Carol Peterson
Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds
U.S. EPA, Room 7136
1301 Constitution Avenue, NW.
Washington, DC 20004

May 18, 2005

Re: Targeted Watershed Action Plan for the Mattapoisett River
Submitted electronically to: initiative.watershed@epa.gov

On behalf of the Buzzards Bay Project National Estuary Program, the Buzzards Bay Action Committee, The Coalition for Buzzards Bay, the Mattapoisett River Valley Advisory Committee, the US Geological Survey, and Alewives Anonymous, it is my pleasure to provide you with this application to the US Environmental Protection Agency's Targeted Watersheds grant program.

Our proposal, titled "A Comprehensive Program to Manage Pollutant Discharges and Water Withdrawals in the Mattapoisett River, MA Watershed to Protect and Restore Water Quality and Living Resources," is supported by key Buzzards Bay environmental organizations and targets a crucial subwatershed within the state that is the sole water supply for several communities. There is evidence that this river is already experiencing low flow impacts associated with diverse water withdrawal pressures in the watershed.

We believe our request of \$987,920 for a two-year comprehensive watershed management program clearly meets the goals of the US EPA's Targeted Watersheds program, as well as the watershed protection goals of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

If you need additional information about this application, or if I can be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Executive Director

body copied to: initiative.watershed@epa.gov
cc: Marilyn Smith-Church, U.S. EPA Region 1, 1 Congress Street, Suite 1100, Mail Code CWN, Boston, MA 02114-2023



MA – Mattapoisett River

A Comprehensive Program to Manage Pollutant Discharges and Water Withdrawals in the Mattapoisett River, MA Watershed to Protect and Restore Water Quality and Living Resources

HUC Information: Watershed Name: Cape Cod, USGS Cataloging Unit: 01090002
Listed Impaired Waters: Mattapoisett Harbor, Mattapoisett River, Snipatuit Pond

Submitted to the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
for consideration as a submission by the Governor to the
US Environmental Protection Agency's Targeted Watershed grant program

Submitted by:

**Buzzards Bay Project National Estuary Program and
The Coalition for Buzzards Bay**

**with support and endorsements from the
Mattapoisett River Valley Water Supply Protection Advisory Committee,
the Buzzards Bay Action Committee,
the US Geologic Survey,
and
Alewives Anonymous**

May 18, 2005

Principal Lead: Dr. Joseph E. Costa PhD, Exec. Director
Buzzards Bay Project National Estuary Program
2870 Cranberry Highway
East Wareham, MA 02538
Joe.Costa@state.ma.us website: www.buzzardsbay.org

Abstract

The Mattapoisett River has the second largest watershed in Buzzards Bay and an important anadromous herring run. It contains thousands of acres of valuable wetlands, and the receiving waters- Mattapoisett Harbor- contains valuable shellfish beds and swimming areas. This river basin has eight public water supply wells and countless private wells serving the needs of four municipalities. Future uncontrolled water withdrawals are likely to alter river flow during dry periods. Most of these waters are listed as impaired.

To protect and restore water quality and habitat, the partnership will undertake an ambitious program to develop a water budget, reduce public water use, develop and implement a water use management plan for the watershed, increase stormwater recharge to groundwater, and promote Low Impact Development strategies. The program will also include remediation of several stormwater discharges, and include the retrofit of a municipal facility to demonstrate LID techniques as a demonstration site for the watershed.

Introduction

The Mattapoissett River watershed and Harbor, located in southeastern Massachusetts along the shores of Buzzards Bay, covers 18,000 acres, or more than 28 square miles. The river stretches approximately 10 miles from its headwaters at the 710-acre Snipatuit Pond to Mattapoissett Harbor, its receiving waters (see Maps 1 and 2). The watershed includes large portions of the Towns of Mattapoissett, Acushnet, Fairhaven, and Rochester, and its groundwater aquifer provides drinking water for tens of thousands of residents through public and private wells, including many residents outside the watershed, including the Town of Marion and Fairhaven.

This watershed includes environmentally valuable forested wetland and uplands, and is habitat to numerous species including some that are rare or endangered. The majority of the watershed and parts of the river have been identified by the state as containing core habitats, defined as the most viable habitat for rare plant and animal species and natural communities (see attached Map 3). Mattapoissett Harbor has productive shellfish beds and popular swimming beaches. The river has one of the most important herring runs in the region. Snipatuit Pond is the principal habitat for juvenile herring, and these herring are an important food source for many species in the coastal waters of Buzzards Bay, including roseate terns, a US endangered species with 50% of the North American breeding population nesting within a few miles of Mattapoissett Harbor.

Despite the ecological and economic importance of these natural resources, waters and habitat in this watershed are degraded. Snipatuit Pond is a 303(d) listed impaired water for metals. Mattapoissett Harbor is a 303(d) listed water, impaired by pathogens causing shellfish bed closures. The Mattapoissett River is listed as Category 3-not yet been classified-, but the lowest reaches of the river are pathogen impaired, and elevated pathogen levels are contributing to shellfish bed closures in Mattapoissett Harbor. These elevated pathogen concentrations result

largely because of untreated stormwater discharges conveying pathogens from many sources. One large stormwater discharge near a swimming beach is a special concern.

Stormwater discharges are becoming increasingly problematic as more impervious surface is created as the watershed is developed. New stormwater discharges are also flooding properties in the lower watershed because the natural flood storage capacity of the river is being lost. The loss in wetland storage capacity and direct stormwater discharges to the river helps rob the river of its summertime base flow, and reduces recharge of the groundwater aquifer. Because the watershed still has considerable growth potential, and because only 15% of the watershed is within a municipal Phase II MS4 permit area, a comprehensive stormwater management strategy is needed for the watershed.

The river's herring run was one of the largest in Buzzards Bay until recently. Installation of two new herring ladders 1990s, helped restore the herring abundance somewhat, but herring populations are again declining (Figure 1), the cause of which is unclear. Today, herring abundance has declined 75% in recent years and is less than 10% of historic levels. Last year the count was only 5,300, an apparent 95% reduction over historic levels.

Sub-areas of the watershed, such as the salt-water embayment Eel Pond, are also impaired by excessive nitrogen inputs, which are contributing to declining water quality and habitat loss. Eel Pond is one of the few areas in the region listed as meeting only the state's "SB" water quality classification. The Coalitions' Buzzards Bay Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Program has found that Eel Pond water quality is third worst of 30 embayments in Buzzards Bay, with a Eutrophication Index 5-year average of only 20.2 on a scale of 100. It is universally agreed that nitrogen management is needed for this subwatershed, which includes a golf course and numerous residences on septic systems.

Another concern in this watershed is that unmanaged future water withdrawals on the Mattapoissett River and from Snipatuit Pond (for agricultural withdrawals) could threaten stream

flow and wetland habitat during dry summer periods. The most significant of these withdrawals are municipal public wells along the river serving the towns of Mattapoissett, Fairhaven, and Marion. The Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game Riverways Program's Low Flow Inventory" website¹ notes that the Mattapoissett River has already experienced low flow problems. They wrote "In September of 1999, a freshwater mussel surveyor ... found a series of deep pools with little flow between them on the Mattapoissett River at the Route 6 crossing in Mattapoissett. Further upstream just north of Route 195 in Mattapoissett [in the vicinity of public wells], the river was "bone dry" and local kids were riding their ATV's up and down the stream banks." This report further notes that groundwater withdrawals may be the source of low flow based on a US Geological Survey study of stream flow and groundwater², which found that groundwater withdrawals on the Mattapoissett Rivers depleted stream flows as compared to upstream sections or other similar nearby streams. An earlier study by the Department of Environmental Management's Office of Water Resources also found that water withdrawals from the Mattapoissett River in 1980-1981 equaled 87% of estimated base flow³. A USGS study concluded that an estimated 78% percent of the Mattapoissett River basin well water is discharged outside of the river sub-basin where it serves populations in Marion and Fairhaven. A second 1984 USGS study⁴ predicted that the river could run dry during drought conditions if peak month water withdrawals exceeded 4 million gallons per day.

The causes of the increased water demands within the watershed are clear. The population served by these municipal wells has grown dramatically, and is now approximately 29,000 during the summer. Between 1996 and 2003, average water use increased roughly 1.5% annually

¹ http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/river/rivlow_flow_inventory/home.html

² [Bent, Gardner C. 1995. Streamflow, Ground-Water Recharge and Discharge, and Characteristics of Surficial Deposits in Buzzards Bay Basin, Southeastern Massachusetts. USGS Water-Resources Investigations Report 95-4234.](#)

³ Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Department of Environmental Management, Office of Water Resources. September 1995. Water Resources of the Buzzard's Bay Watershed: Water Use, Hydrology, and Natural Resources.

⁴ Olimpio, J.C. and V. De Lima, 1984. Groundwater Resources of the Mattapoissett River Valley, Plymouth County, Massachusetts. 88 p.

(Figure 2). Even withdrawals from private wells in the watershed have increased, with the population in the Mattapoissett River watershed growing 10.8% in the past decade. Potential increased water use by cranberry bogs could also be contributing to this demand. In the mid 1980s, there were 275 acres of cranberry bogs in the watershed, mostly around Snipatuit Pond. Fifteen years later, at least 100 acres were added, also mostly around Snipatuit Pond.

The need to manage water withdrawals in the Mattapoissett River watershed was acknowledged in 1983 when the state legislature created the Mattapoissett River Valley Water Supply Protection Advisory Committee. In 1997, the Mattapoissett River Valley Committee was authorized to levy an additional fee on water usage to protect the water supply, and now collects roughly \$40,000 in fees annually from its water customers. In 2004, the legislature then formed the Mattapoissett River Valley District, with commission members charged to “provide for the supply, treatment and distribution of water to the member towns.”

Proposed Work

This proposal attempts to implement a comprehensive watershed management plan to achieve four goals for the Mattapoissett River watershed: 1) establish a water budget for the river, 2) reduce groundwater withdrawals, 3) promote low impact development (LID), and 4) reduce stormwater discharges degrading water quality in the watershed and increase stormwater discharges to groundwater to help river recharge and reduce flooding. These goals can be achieved through assessment, education and outreach, regulatory change, changes in water use fees, and the technical assistance programs identified in the tasks below.

Task 1. Develop a hydrological budget for the Mattapoissett River to understand conflicting demands. (Goal: *Complete a detailed hydrologic study of the watershed and river flow with respect to proximity of the municipal wells, and agricultural withdrawals.*) This model is required to understand how water withdrawals will affect stream flow along the river. A similar, but less comprehensive study was done in 1984 by the USGS as cited above, but many

changes and increases in water use have occurred since that study was done, and new information and computer models are available to assess the water budget for the watershed. This information will be used by MA Department of Environmental Protection to identify the appropriate “maximum safe yield” for the watershed. Completion of the hydrological budget is important to several other tasks contained in this proposal. The Buzzards Bay Project will enter into an agreement with the US Geological Survey to undertake this task. The two-year study will include the installation of 2 USGS automated stream gauges with real time data available on the Internet. This information will be supplemented by additional stream gauges installed by the Coalition for Buzzards Bay to be monitored and maintained by volunteers. The USGS will coordinate the placement of all these stream gauges.

USGS will incorporate this data, together with soils information, private and agricultural water withdrawals, land use, and septic system density to simulate ground-water levels, ground-water flow directions and velocities, and interactions between ground water and surface-water flow in the river. The USGS model incorporates all inflows and outflows of water to the aquifer and out of the watershed. The Massachusetts DEP will review this information.

Task 2. Water use reduction education and outreach campaign. (*Goals: Reduce average per capita water use in the tri-town district by 7% over two years, as opposed to the expected 3% increase. Develop and implement a simple school curriculum on how water use reduction and LID can protect the environment, and conduct that program at every school in the communities in the watershed*). To achieve this goal, Buzzards Bay Project will meet with municipal water departments, the River Committee and Commission, to discuss and coordinate various outreach campaigns, and direct mailings, and inserts for water bills. The Coalition for Buzzards Bay will undertake a coordinated public outreach and education program to achieve this water use reduction goal in the district. They will construct a fiberglass and Plexiglas cross sectional model of the watershed that will use dyes, soils, and syringes to demonstrate water flow

and pathways. Federal funds will be used to hire the public outreach coordinator at the Coalition for Buzzards Bay and the Regional Planner at the Buzzards Bay Project to undertake these tasks. Grant funds will be used to print flyers to be mailed to every resident in the watershed, plus Marion and Fairhaven. Outreach materials will include lawn flags for homeowners to proudly display their participation in water use reduction or xeriscape strategies.

Three audiences targeted in this outreach effort will be commercial and industrial property owners, homeowners, and school age children. A fourth category, the farming community (particularly cranberry bog operators on the Mattapoissett River), will be addressed in a separate technical assistance task below. Commercial and industrial property owners are significant water users in the town centers, especially in Fairhaven, where there are many shopping complexes. Homeowners are important, not only because of household use, but because lawn irrigation is the greatest use during the summer when river water levels are lowest. Outreach to school age children is important because this is a proven effective technique to bring home a message to reduce homeowner water use. Water use will be evaluated by examining wellhead pumping volumes and water bill records.

Much of the water reduction outreach efforts will focus on lawn care and outdoor watering to reduce water use. In many communities, water demand often increases by 75 to 100% as summer arrives, largely because of lawn and garden watering. In the Tri-town water district, this peak usage typically occurs in July and August when rainfall is least. During periods of drought, all three communities impose water bans on town-fed irrigation systems during extreme conditions, or limit water irrigation due to even/odd days depending upon the location. A large part of the effort to educate residents on how to reduce lawn irrigation use will focus on planting drought tolerant grasses, ensuring adequate depth of loam, the proper times of year to fertilize, the minimum amount of water needed to maintain a lawn during drought conditions. The program will also describe how automated sprinkler systems can lead to increased water use.

To implement the outreach program, the River Valley Committee will endorse, and water departments will distribute, basic how-to water conservation tips on water management developed by the Buzzards Bay Project Planner. The Coalition for Buzzards Bay will focus on a broader public outreach campaign of posters, including those targeting school age children, flyers, a public service announcement for cable access channels. The Buzzards Bay Action Committee will award \$500 for a photo-graphics art contest for high school students in the watershed. The award winning posters will actually be used in the water reduction and stormwater management campaigns. This campaign will facilitate “bringing home” the message of water reduction needs throughout the watershed. Additionally, newspaper stories about the students and winning posters will help further convey the messages of the outreach campaign.

The Coalition’s outreach coordinator will develop a school program or curriculum to communicate these issues to schoolchildren. The BBP will develop a packet for science teachers and science fair organizers that will include a list of realistic science fair projects for different grade levels that will promote thinking about how water use reduction, stormwater management, and low impact development can protect or restore the environment. While the principal focus of this school program will be children in the three towns in the watershed and Marion, the Buzzards Bay Project will distribute the school program information and lessons learned to all municipalities in the Buzzard Bay watershed. The Buzzards Bay Project National Estuary Program will display the poster contest informational materials on our website www.buzzardsbay.org. The Coalition for Buzzards Bay will also include public outreach materials on their website.

The principal measures of success of the school educational program tasks will be the development and implementation of the educational curriculum, meetings held, and the documented per capita reductions in water usage in participating communities based on town pumping records and homeowner water bill statistics.

Task 3. Water quality protection and LID stormwater demonstration project. (*Construct one Low Impact Development demonstration project at a public facility. Acquire or protect land for water quality protection.*) Two sites under consideration for an LID demonstration site include the River Valley Commission's planned 10,000 square foot water treatment facility along the Mattapoissett River, and the Mattapoissett Police Station facility and parking area. Both sites will be investigated to demonstrate LID techniques to reduce surface water discharges contributing pollutants to the Mattapoissett River or Harbor. LID training sessions will be held to include tours of these sites. To protect the river recharge area from future development impacts, The Coalition for Buzzards Bay and the River Committee have targeted \$200,000 for land acquisition and water quality protection.

Task 4. Outreach: Water use demand reduction outside the Mattapoissett River valley, importance of infiltration. (*Installation of xeriscape landscapes, private irrigation wells, or other use reductions to achieve a 5% reduction of demand from Marion and Fairhaven. Implement a homeowner education LID campaign about opportunities to infiltrate roof runoff.*). Up to 78% of the water withdrawn by the municipal wells along the river leaves the Mattapoissett River basin. Consequently, water use reductions outside of the watershed, especially through the installation of private wells to irrigate lawns and landscapes of businesses and larger private landowners, is a viable strategy to protect river flow and wetland habitat in the Mattapoissett River Valley. Private well installation is already occurring at some large institutions outside the river valley, such as Tabor Academy, and golf courses. These private wells reduce water demand from municipal wells, and reduce the large inter-basin transfers of water now occurring.

Through the program, the Buzzards Bay Project and Coalition will promote xeriscape landscapes. One town in the Buzzards Bay watershed already requires xeriscape practices for new development, unless they install a private irrigation well. The BBP planner will accomplish this task principally through meetings with town personnel, commercial developers, and town

boards, and by the Coalition in their outreach to the public, homeowners and schools. The Coalition will also implement a program of educating homeowners, businesses, and school children of adopting LID techniques like infiltrating roof runoff using drywells. In many areas of the Mattapoissett Harbor and River drainage basin, downspouts are connected to small pipes, which are directed to the river. The Buzzards Bay Project planner will work with town officials to GIS map all these discharges and help the town develop a program with homeowner incentives to eliminate these pipes and install various roof and impervious runoff infiltration options. Residents will be informed how these activities will also reduce flooding of their properties.

Task 5. Mattapoissett River herring migration assessment and restoration. (*Goal: Restore annual herring migration to 35,000 fish annually in 4 years.*) A detailed evaluation of the fish habitat in the river will be completed in partnership with the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, including evaluations of stream obstructions, and a determination as to whether low flow stranding of juvenile herring during their fall migration is contributing to the decline. Part of this work may be contracted out to an environmental consulting group to evaluate the effects of river flow on habitat types. The evaluation will include an evaluation of herring habitat loss in Snipatuit Pond, as well as pollutant related problems. Alewives Anonymous volunteers will spend an estimated 1,450 volunteer hours on debris and obstruction removal on the river over two years. The estimated value of this contribution is \$21,750.

Task 6. Eel Pond nitrogen restoration strategy implementation. (*Goal: Improve water quality in Eel Pond as measured by the Coalition's Eutrophication Index. Elevate from the current 20 pt score to a score of 35 points in 3 years.*) By July 1, 2005 the town of Mattapoissett will have completed the development of engineering designs and permit applications to restore tidal flushing to the east entrance of Eel Pond through dredging and installation of new larger tidal culverts under an abandoned rail-bed and current road. The cost of this construction is estimated to be \$200,000. To match this federal grant, the Town of Mattapoissett will work with state agen-

cies and the legislature to provide the necessary funds to undertake this work, and these funds will be used to match activities under this grant

Task 7. Cranberry Bog Water Flow Management to protect juvenile herring. (*Goal: Identify any impediments or threats to Fall juvenile herring migration associated with cranberry bog withdrawals and bog flooding practices.*) In this task, the Rochester and Mattapoisett Herring officers, volunteer monitors, and the citizens group Alewives Anonymous, will identify potential water use and diversion impacts. If conflicts are identified, we would request the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service to provide technical assistance to cranberry growers on a volunteer basis to provide planning and technical assistance to reduce any conflicts. Eligible growers could apply for cost-share funding for water reduction BMPs through NRCS programs such as the EQIP and WHIP.

Task 8. Performance tracking, data management, Storet submission, technology transfer. (*Goals: Comply with all grant reporting, tracking, and participation requirements, create accessible web-based databases with information and data generated by this grant.*) The Buzzards Bay Project will comply with this task by providing guidance and program management for activities and reporting under this task. This work will be fulfilled by the BBP regional planner. Funds under this task will be used to sponsor a Mattapoisett River Valley Committee member, the Buzzards Bay Project Planner, the Coalition for Buzzards Bay outreach coordinator, and the required attendance at the annual three-day National Targeted Watersheds Conference during each year of the grant. The conference will help participating staff with the necessary training and support to better implement the Mattapoisett River Watershed protection program, and to share our successful approaches with others around the country. The Buzzards Bay Project has extensive experience in providing web-based information portals on diverse types of projects.

Maps and figures cited

Figures Cited

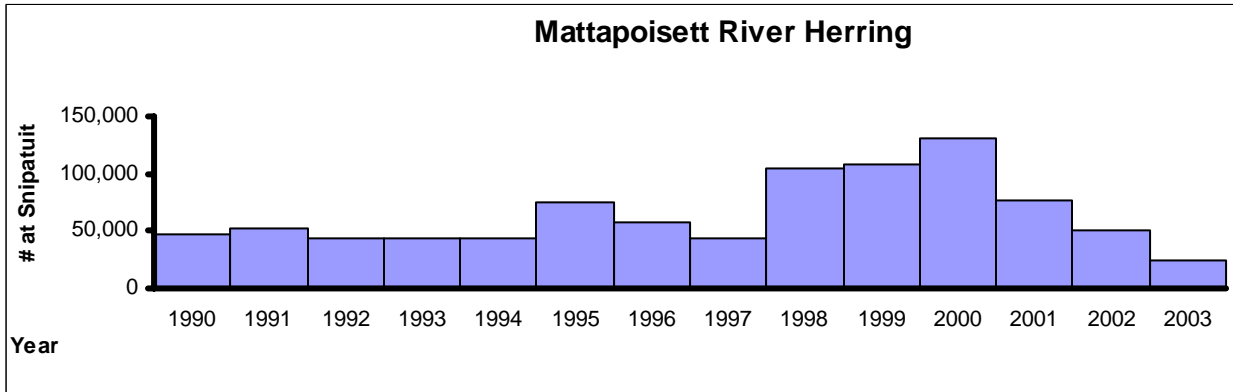


Figure 1. Herring counts at Snipatuit pond. Data from Alewives Anonymous.

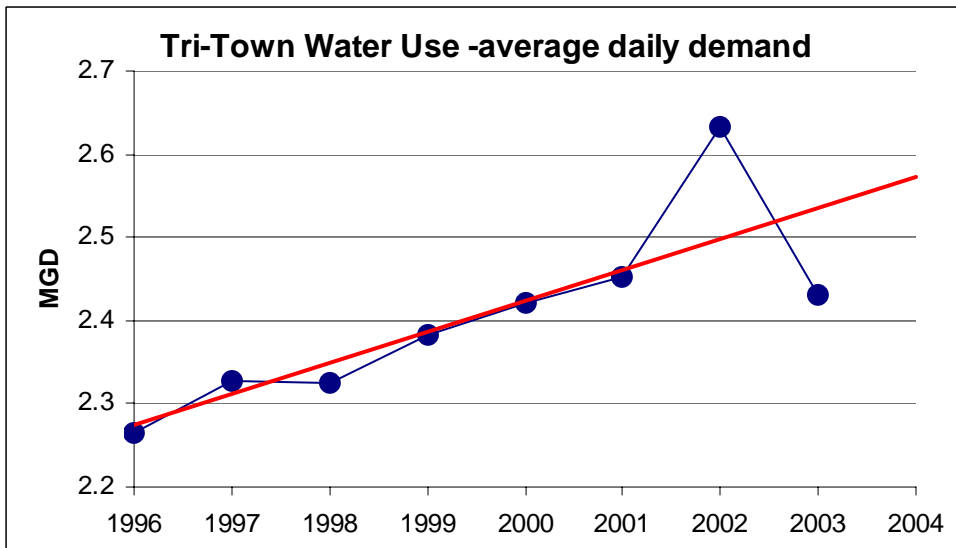
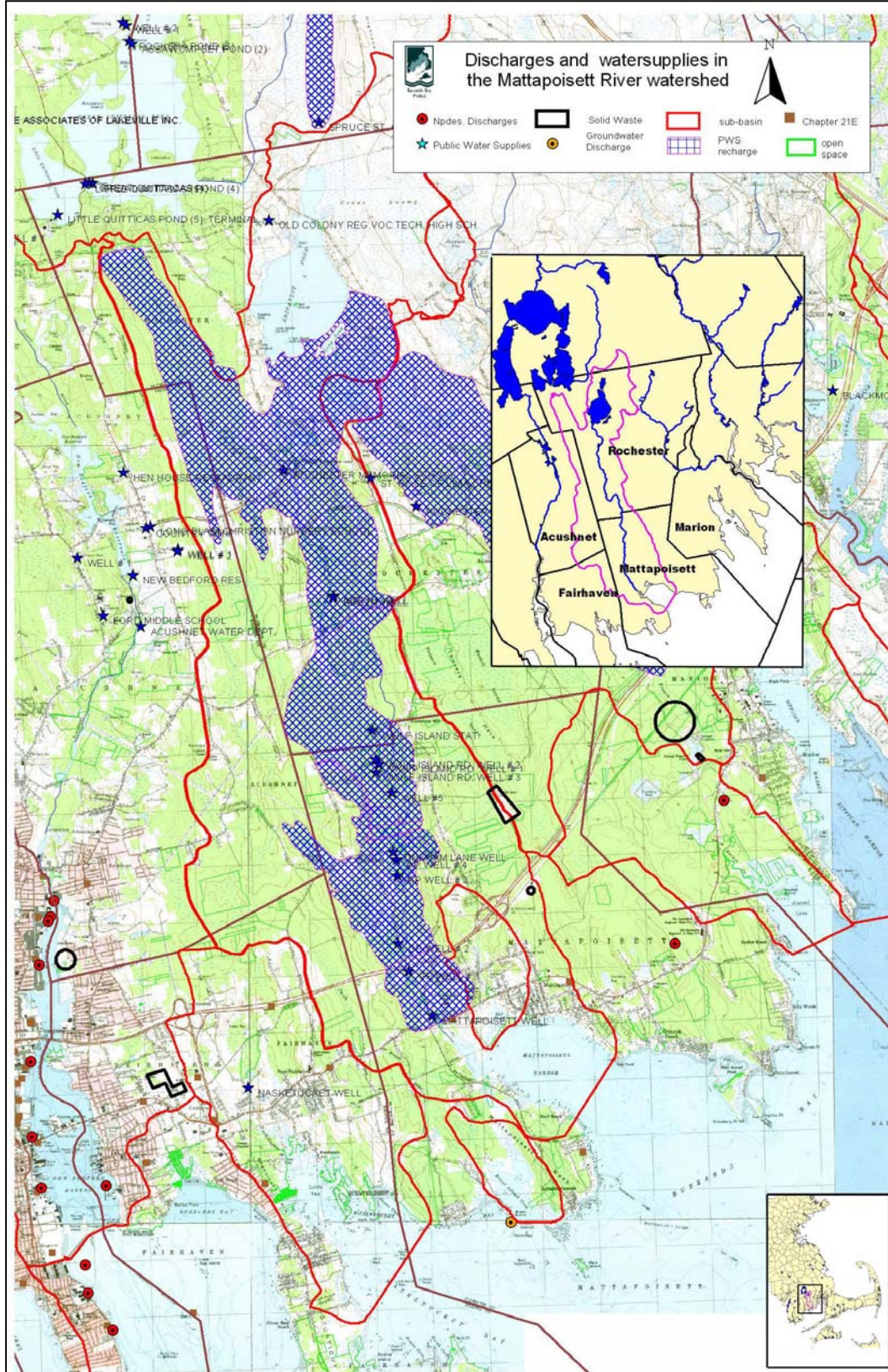
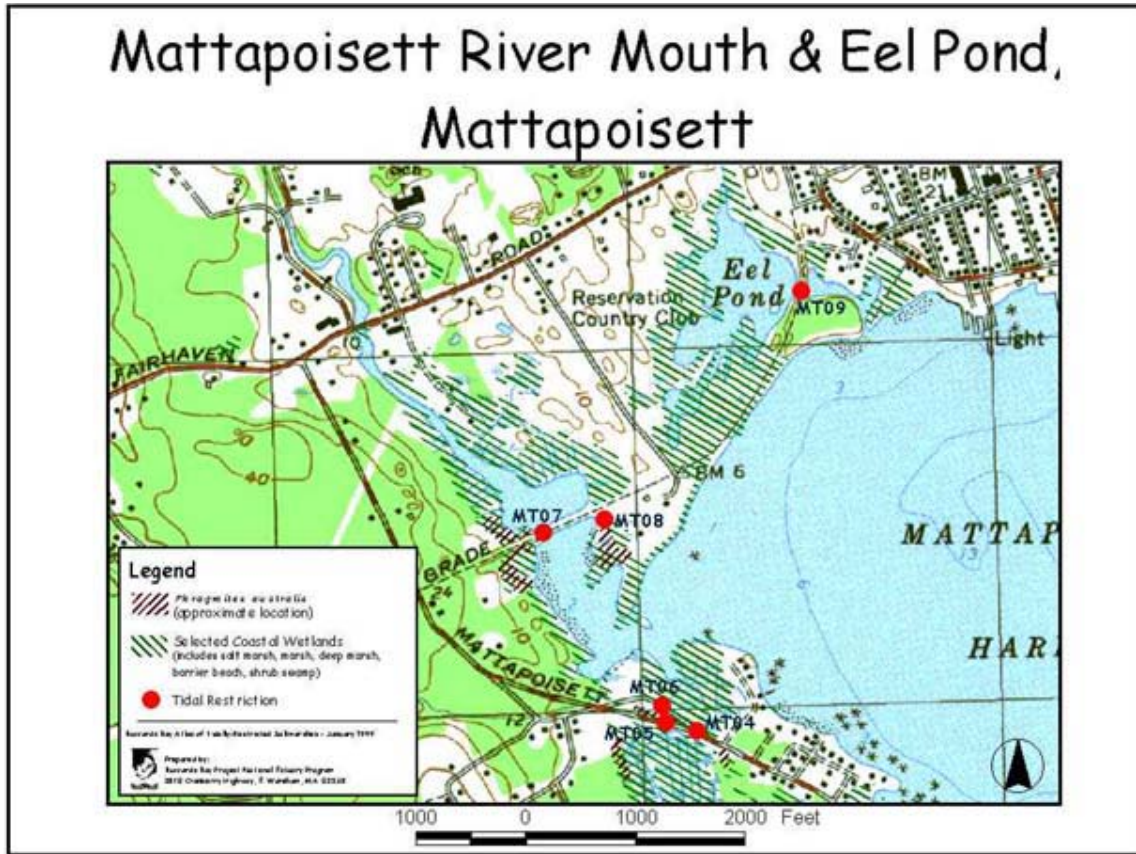


Figure 2. Combined public water use in the towns of Marion, Mattapoissett, and Fairhaven. Source: data from W. Nicholson.

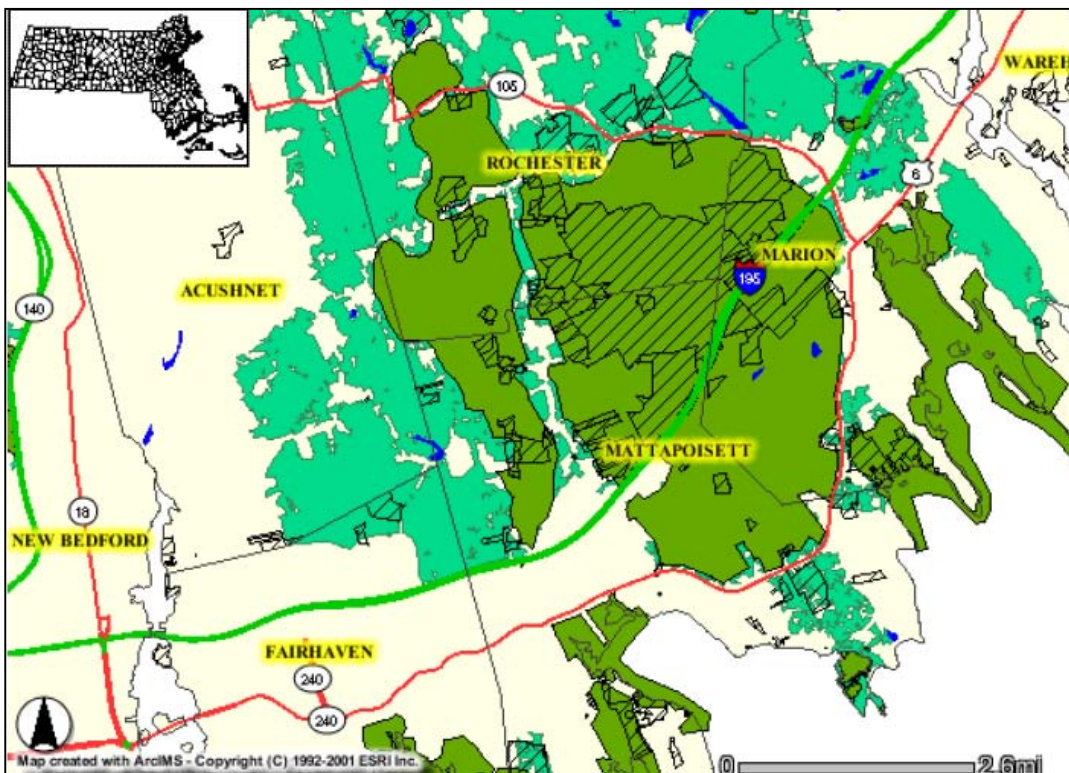
Map 1. Topographic map of the Mattapoissett River – Mattapoissett Harbor watershed and location of water supply wells. Also shown is the Eel Pond coastal subwatershed within the larger Mattapoissett Harbor-Mattapoissett River watershed.



Map 2. Detail of Eel Pond and Mattapoissett River mouth.



Map 3. Biomap core habitat (dark green) and supporting habitat (light green) in the Mattapoissett River watershed (from BioMap and Living Waters document).



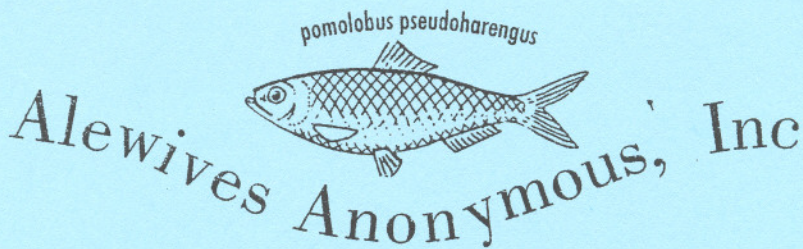
Grant Management Experience

The Buzzards Bay Project National Estuary Program is a planning and technical assistance unit of the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management, within the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. For more than fifteen years, the Buzzards Bay Project National Estuary Program has provided funds and technical assistance to Buzzards Bay watershed municipalities to implement the goals in the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) for Buzzards Bay. This CCMP was the Commonwealth's first comprehensive watershed management plan, which was adopted by US Environmental Protection Agency and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Through these undertakings, and through other competitive grants, both the Buzzards Bay Project and EOEA has had extensive experience in managing and fulfilling the terms of US EPA Cooperative Agreements.

Commitment Letters

Attached are letters of support and commitment from The Coalition for Buzzards Bay, Mattapoissett River Valley Water Supply Protection Advisory Committee, Buzzards Bay Action Committee, Alewives Anonymous, and the US Geologic Survey.

We have not yet received a commitment from the Mattapoissett River Valley Water District Commission to this project. The Water District Commission has a different legislative authority the Advisory Committee. The Water District's responsibility is to provide for the supply, treatment, and distribution of water to its member towns. Commission members have raised concerns about the implications of the hydraulic budget to be completed in this study, and how it may affect Massachusetts DEP's classification of the watershed under newly adopted policies and regulations under the Water Management Act, particularly how it may affect DEP's establishment of a "Safe Yield" limit for water withdrawals in the watershed. Neither the Buzzards Bay Project, nor USGS will recommend a Safe Yield recommendation for the Mattapoissett River watershed. A safe yield determination will be made by DEP at a later date based on a variety of considerations that will include the results of this study, and according to their regulatory schedules. The Buzzards Bay Project will work with the Water District Commission members to resolve these issues to focus on the many beneficial aspects of this project.



P.O. Box 42 · Rochester, MA 02770

The Herring Helpers

May 5, 2005

Grants Administrator
Targeted Watershed grant program
US Environmental Protection Agency

Gentlemen,

On behalf of Alewives Anonymous, Inc., I would like to offer full support to the Buzzards Bay Project National Estuary Program and the Mattapoissett River Valley Water Supply Protection Advisory Committee's grant application for a Comprehensive Program to Manage Water Withdrawals and Pollutant Discharges in the Mattapoissett River, MA Watershed to Protect and Restore Water Quality and Living Resources.

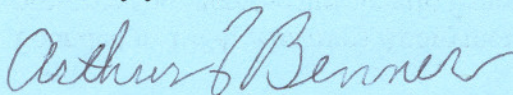
Founded in 1984, Alewives Anonymous, Inc., seeks to encourage, promote, and support efforts to preserve and increase the alewife fishery resources in the towns of Marion, Mattapoissett, and Rochester Massachusetts.

According to historical data from Town Reports, the quantity of fish harvested from the Mattapoissett River has been steadily declining since the early part of the twentieth century (400,000 harvested) to a current day of 5,300 total herring population as recorded by electronic counting equipment. Alewives Anonymous, Inc. has been actively working to restore fish populations by maintaining open river access, installing fish counters, and supporting the installation of new culverts and fish ladders.

In 2005 and 2006, Alewives Anonymous will work with the Buzzards Bay Project and the Mattapoissett River Valley Commission to evaluate obstacles to herring migration in the river, and to organize volunteers to participate in river cleanups to remove debris and obstructions. Over the two years we estimate that a total of 25 volunteers will participate in these efforts for a minimum total of 1,450 hours of service.

We offer our complete support to all of the Tasks described in this initiative and encourage the US Environmental Protection Agency to fund these important projects. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (508) 763-2024.

Sincerely yours,



Arthur F. Benner
President

Mattapoissett River Valley Water Supply Protection Advisory Committee

RE: Massachusetts – Mattapoissett River Valley – Letter of Support, Proposal
to the US Environmental Protection Agency’s Targeted Watershed Grant
Program

Dear U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

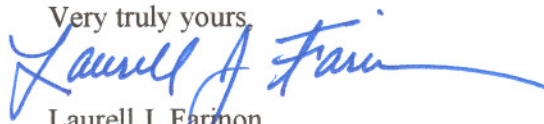
On May 11, 2005, the Mattapoissett River Valley Water Supply Protection Advisory Committee voted to endorse the proposal from the Buzzards Bay Project National Estuary Program titled “*A Comprehensive Program to Manage Pollutant Discharges and Water Withdrawals in the Mattapoissett River, MA Watershed to Protect and Restore Water Quality and Living Resources*.” We believe the tasks contained in the proposal will help our committee fulfill its mission.

Our Advisory Committee was established by the state legislature in 1983 to protect the water supply in the Mattapoissett River Valley and serve the interests of the towns of Fairhaven, Marion, Mattapoissett, Rochester and Acushnet. In 1997, the state legislature authorized the Advisory Committee to levee a fee to “be expended for the purpose of assisting a town within the Mattapoissett river valley to acquire land for protection of the aquifer and for land or easement purchases, engineering or other studies and services, public education relating to water conservation plans and programs and water supply protection.”

The Advisory Committee receives approximately \$40,000 annually from fees. We have planned to target these funds for land acquisitions to protect the water supply. In this task we are working with the towns of Rochester, Mattapoissett, and Fairhaven, and the citizen group, The Coalition for Buzzards Bay, to raise the necessary additional funds to obtain the necessary land purchases or conservation easements necessary to protect water quality and protect habitat in the river valley. As of this date we have allocated over \$190,000 towards that end. We believe these actions will support and match the goals and tasks of this proposal.

We wholeheartedly support this comprehensive proposal and ask that the US Environmental Protection Agency act favorably and commit the requested funding. Please feel free to contact me at (508) 763-3871 extension 13 with any questions or comments.

Very truly yours,



Laurell J. Farion
Vice Chairman

Fairhaven Town Hall, 40 Centre Street, Fairhaven, MA 02719



BUZZARDS BAY ACTION COMMITTEE

400 Slocum Road, Box 9399
Dartmouth, MA 02747
Phone: (508) 636-7429

BBAC

Communities united to preserve and protect Buzzards Bay
Acushnet, Bourne, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Falmouth, Gosnold, Marion, Mattapoisett, New
Bedford, Plymouth, Rochester, Wareham, Westport

Carol Peterson
Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds
U.S. EPA, Room 7136
1301 Constitution Avenue, NW.
Washington, DC 20004

May 18, 2005

The Buzzards Bay Action Committee enthusiastically supports the Buzzards Bay Project National Estuary Program's proposal titled "A Comprehensive Program to Manage Pollutant Discharges and Water Withdrawals in the Mattapoisett River, MA Watershed to Protect and Restore Water Quality and Living Resources," for consideration through the US EPA Targeted Watersheds grant program.

The Buzzards Bay Action Committee is a not-for-profit organization composed of municipal officials concerned with state, local, and federal legislative and regulatory issues. We help guide state and federal agencies to address the needs of Buzzards Bay municipalities in their efforts to better protect the environment. Our goal is to help implement the recommendations contained in the Buzzards Bay Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. We believe funding this proposal will help reduce pollutant discharges, and protect wetlands and habitat in the Mattapoisett River watershed.

To assist in the goals of this 2-year grant, the BBAC will host two meetings for town officials to discuss the progress, findings, and outcomes of the effort. We also will provide \$500 in prize money for a high school graphics art poster contest that most successful convey messages relating to conserving water, manage fertilizer, reducing pollution, and other topics that will be identified in the poster contest rules. This poster contest will also be covered by local newspapers.

The member communities of the BBAC ask your favorable consideration. We are optimistic about the success of this proposed watershed collaborative effort. If you need further information, feel free to contact Leonard Gonsalves, BBAC Executive Director at 508-636-7429 or by email at lgonsal420@aol.com.

Sincerely,

Vincent Furtado
Chairman



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Massachusetts-Rhode Island Water Science Center
10 Bearfoot Road
Northborough, MA 01532
508-490-5000
508-490-5068 (fax)

May 18, 2005

Dr. Joseph E. Costa
Buzzards Bay Project National Estuary Program
2870 Cranberry Highway
East Warcham, MA 02538

To Whom It May Concern:

The Massachusetts-Rhode Island Water Science Center of the U.S. Geological Survey would like to express its support for a proposal to the FY 2005 EPA Targeted Watershed Program recently submitted by the Buzzards Bay Project National Estuary Program and the Buzzards Bay Coalition. The proposal addresses critical issues of water availability for human and ecological needs in a rapidly developing coastal region of southeastern New England.

The U.S. Geological Survey plans to collaborate with the project partners in constructing and calibrating a hydrologic model of the Mattapoissett River basin, and in the installation and operation of new stream-gaging stations. The model will allow accurate simulation of the natural and anthropogenic stresses now affecting streamflow in the basin. It will also allow the testing of a variety of management scenarios to better accommodate the water needs of both humans and aquatic biota. The USGS has developed and applied many hydrologic models in New England over the past 25 years, including a 1984 study of the Mattapoissett watershed.

Subject to the availability of funds, USGS intends to partially match a portion of the non-Federal funding being allocated to the project.

Please feel free to call me at 508-490-5002 if you would like to discuss USGS involvement in the proposed Mattapoissett River project.

Sincerely,

Wayne H. Sonntag
Director, MA-RI Water Science Center

Copies to:
Reading file; S. Garabedian, P. Weiskel, M. Waldron, P. Zariello



THE COALITION FOR BUZZARDS BAY

May 17, 2005

Joseph E. Costa, PhD., Executive Director
Buzzards Bay Project National Estuary Program
2870 Cranberry Highway
East Wareham, Massachusetts 02538

Re: EPA Targeted Watersheds Grant Program: “A Comprehensive Program to Manage Pollutant Discharges and Water Withdrawals in the Mattapoissett River, MA Watershed to Protect and Restore Water Quality and Living Resources”

Dear Dr. Costa:

The Coalition for Buzzards Bay is pleased to offer our support and to join with you and the communities within the Mattapoissett River Watershed to work together to implement “A Comprehensive Program to Manage Pollutant Discharges and Water Withdrawals in the Mattapoissett River, MA Watershed to Protect and Restore Water Quality and Living Resources.”

The Coalition for Buzzards Bay is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the protection, restoration and sustainable use and enjoyment of Buzzards Bay and its watershed of which the Mattapoissett River is an important part. Founded in 1987, we work to improve the health of the Bay for all through education, conservation, research and advocacy and represent more than 4,200 individuals, families, businesses and organizations concerned about the future of the bay watershed.

Under the proposed Targeted Watersheds Grant Program application, The Coalition for Buzzards Bay will focus new energy and resources on conservation, monitoring and public education programs within the Mattapoissett River Watershed. Specifically, if grant funds are approved, we will:

1. Develop and implement a focused Public Outreach Campaign to homeowners, school-children and businesses that live within or have an impact on the water resources of the Mattapoissett River watershed. The Campaign will include information and programs regarding how everyone can get involved in managing stormwater runoff to increase watershed water recharge, eliminate or minimize the use of harmful pesticides and fertilizers, and conserve water everyday.
2. Engage citizens directly in the collection of high-quality and consistent river flow data to assist local, state and federal agencies in the sustainable management of drinking water withdrawals and the Mattapoissett’s herring fishery. Modeled on our

Working to improve the health of Buzzards Bay through education, conservation, research and advocacy.

nationally-recognized Baywatchers Water Quality Monitoring Program, our staff will train and support local volunteers in this effort which we expect to continue beyond the completion of this grant.

In further support of the Targeted Watersheds Grant Program in the Mattapoissett River Watershed, we will also work to focus our land conservation efforts here in the coming two years. Within that time, we and our partners expect to close on the permanent protection of at least 50 acres of critical watershed lands which we believe are valued at more than \$200,000. This land value may be used as non-federal match within the Targeted Watersheds Grant Program application.

We look forward to getting to work to tackle the myriad issues facing the Mattapoissett River Watershed with such a broad partnership. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this project.

Sincerely,



Mark Rasmussen
Executive Director