

Overview

The Barnstable County, Massachusetts, coastal area, also known as Cape Cod, is pressured by urban development and is a popular recreation area with a high influx of tourists during the summer. Water quality is a major concern on Cape Cod, particularly as it affects the ground water aquifer, salt marshes, shellfish beds, and herring runs.

Shellfish beds are often closed for extensive periods during the year because of poor water quality. Stormwater runoff is a significant source of pollutants. Barriers that interfere with the migration of fish are also a concern.



The **Cape Cod Water Resources Restoration Project** will address these issues through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's Small Watershed Program. The program, which targets watersheds less than 250,000 acres, presents a unique and flexible

approach to area-wide water resource planning and management.

The Small Watershed Program uses conservation land treatment measures to impact water quality downstream in the watershed. Interdisciplinary teams are used to emphasize comprehensive watershed planning.

A partnership comprised of the Cape Cod Conservation District, Barnstable County Commissioners, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and other federal, state and local agencies, as well as all Barnstable County towns is collaborating on this project.

The watershed plan will be physically, environmentally, socially and economically sound and will include conservation improvements that are scheduled for implementation over a period of years. NRCS will be the lead technical assistance agency to help implement the plan.

Contact Information

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The Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act, Public Law 83-566, authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to provide technical and financial assistance to local communities for planning, directing and implementing the small watershed projects. As a result, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is given authority and leadership for carrying out the small watershed program, in partnership with the Cape Cod Conservation District and Barnstable County Commissioners.

For more information on other partnerships contact the Cape Cod Conservation District or visit the NRCS Massachusetts website at www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov.

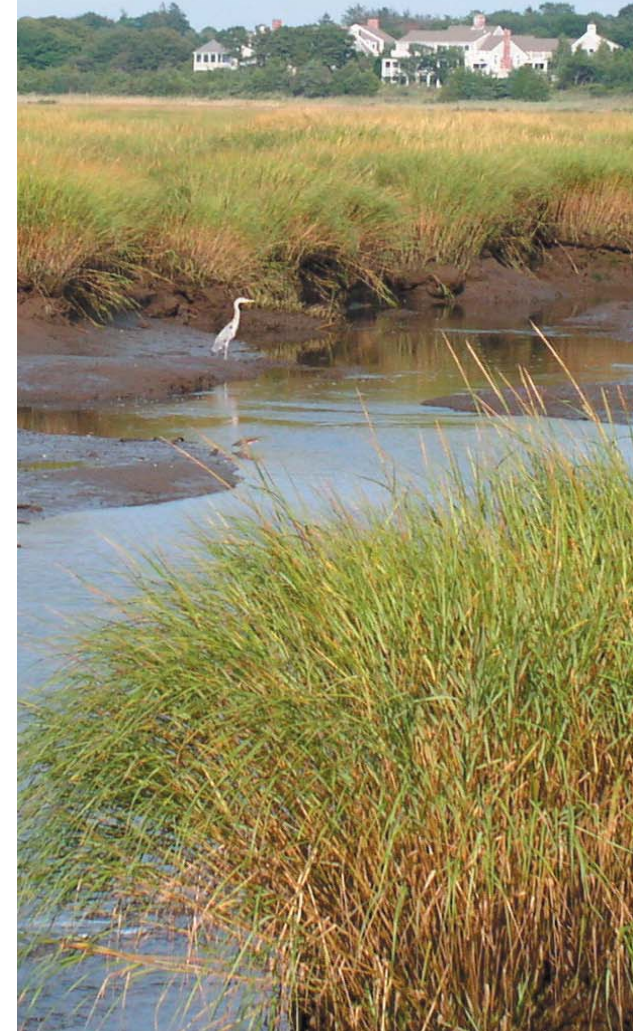
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United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Cape Cod Water Resources Restoration Project



Project Goals

The Cape Cod Water Resources Restoration Project is designed to achieve the following goals:

1. Restore salt marshes to benefit fish and wildlife and measures to restore fish passage on existing anadromous fish runs. Examples of structural measures include, but are not limited to:

- Water control structures, fish ladders and fish passages.
- Culvert enlargement or replacement for tidally restricted salt marshes.

2. Restore and protect shellfish beds by treating stormwater runoff. Examples of improvements include:

- Constructed wetlands, infiltration basins or trenches
- Dry wells and sand filters
- Vegetative filter



Federal funding from the NRCS Small Watershed Program may be used to cost-share the construction cost. The federal cost share rate varies from practice to practice, but will remain competitive with the cost share rates of similar NRCS programs.

The Planning Process

The planning process involves working with federal, state and local partners to identify problems and formulate solutions. Alternatives will be explored and the most promising ones will be selected for further study until conflicts are resolved and plan selection occurs.

All practices will be evaluated to determine whether they will function as planned and produce the effects intended. The costs and benefits of various alternatives will be evaluated and displayed in the plan.

Watershed Plan

The watershed plan is the basic document in which the sponsors' decisions are recorded. It provides the basis for project authorization and guides the implementation phase.

The watershed plan describes the work to be installed, the responsibilities of each participant, cost sharing, arrangements for financing and provision for operation and maintenance. It shows the relationship between beneficial effects and adverse effects of the proposed project.

Implementation

Installation begins after the watershed plan has been approved and federal assistance has been authorized. The installation phase continues until all construction has been completed.

The partnerships will jointly enter into installation agreements. Each agreement will detail the working arrangements, funding and responsibilities of each party for carrying out specified elements of work.

Contracting for the construction of measures is normally performed by the sponsor, but may be performed by the NRCS.

Operation and maintenance of installed measures is the responsibility of the sponsor.



Partners

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Cape Cod Conservation District
- Cape Cod Commission
- Barnstable County Commissioners
- Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
- Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
- Massachusetts Division of Coastal Zone Management
- Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game
- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
- Massachusetts Highway Department
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Buzzards Bay Project - National Estuary Program
- Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
- Barnstable County Coastal Resources Committee
- Town boards of health, natural resource departments, conservation commissions, shellfish wardens, and harbor masters.

