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Report of the CCF Salt Marsh Task Force for May 2020

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Report of the CCF Salt Marsh Task Force for May 2020

By Gerry Stahl, Chair

We applied to the Chatham Community Preservation Committee (CPC) in January for \$75,000 to conduct two studies of Frost Fish Creek under scenarios of restoring tidal flow. The application was approved by the CCF Board with a \$5,000 match. It included letters of support from the Town, Pleasant Bay and APCC. Our application was approved by the CPC and recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee. It is currently slated to come to Town Meeting in mid-September.

We are now working on an application to Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration (Mass DER) to have our work in Frost Fish Creek designated a "priority project" in cranberry bog wetland restoration. Jane is exploring potential partnership in this with the Town (Dr. Bob), Pleasant Bay (Carole Ridley) and APCC (April Wobst). This designation would connect our restoration efforts with the most relevant state resources and expertise. This would provide technical support from state experts and their consultants. It would also include access to Mass DOT (for culvert replacement under highways) and other potential funding sources when we are ready for implementation. For instance, this designation was critical in the Muddy Creek restoration. I will be seeking Executive Committee approval for the application on May 26 and Board approval on June 2.

Over the winter, we hired APCC to develop a Geographic Information System (GIS) system to help us study our salt-marsh-related properties and to provide some initial analysis based on APCC's background knowledge. The attached document illustrates some views from the GIS mapping system as well as the initial overview of 14 salt marsh areas where CCF owns substantial parcels.

Matthew Hamilton, a new summer intern at CCF, will be reimplementing the GIS system with our current parcel boundary information and interesting GIS data sets. This will allow us to interactively explore the effects of sea-level rise, storm surge, marsh migration, potential land acquisition, etc. It should help us to prioritize our efforts at salt marsh preservation and restoration, as well as develop management plans for the 14 areas. These areas cover more than half of our parcels and more than half of our acreage. They are key to our mission and to the future of our community.

 **CCF Salt Marsh Planning Areas.pdf**
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