



June 6, 2017

Board of Selectmen
Town of Wellfleet
300 Main Street
Wellfleet, MA 02667
Michaela.Miteva@wellfleet-ma.gov

Board of Selectmen
Town of Truro
4 Town Hall Road, PO Box 2030
Truro, MA 02666
ntudor@truro-ma.gov

Kathy Tevyaw
Acting Superintendent
Cape Cod National Seashore
99 Marconi Site Road
Wellfleet, MA 02667
kathy_tevyaw@nps.gov

RE: Support for Herring River Restoration Project
Towns of Wellfleet and Truro, Massachusetts
Cape Cod National Seashore

Dear Boards of Selectmen for the Towns of Wellfleet and Truro and Acting Superintendent Kathy Tevyaw for the Cape Cod National Seashore,

The Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS) is an international scientific society, representing approximately 3,000 members from 58 countries, whose mission is to promote understanding, conservation, protection, restoration, science-based management, and sustainability of wetlands. SWS members work in the private sector, academia, and various tribal, state, federal, and international agencies. The New England Chapter of the SWS is dedicated to fostering conservation, restoration and understanding of wetland issues in the six New England states.

SWS supports the Herring River Restoration because of the regional, national and international significance of the project, which will provide extensive benefits to estuarine wetlands as well as contributing to the advancement of the science of wetland restoration (as outlined in the attached information and in this letter). SWS wishes to endorse ongoing support for the project as it moves forward with the implementation phase.

Incorporating an extensive stakeholder process, this project has been developed over the past decade (design began in 2007, implementation phase began in 2016), under the auspices of the Towns of Wellfleet and Truro and the Cape Cod National Seashore (CCNS), which share ownership of this resource area. In addition to the Towns and CCNS, partners and supporters of the project include the US Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration.

The Herring River system is one of the largest tidally-restricted estuaries in the northeastern United States. The restoration of tidal flow in the Herring River system has the potential to restore 1,000 acres of estuarine wetlands, which will provide habitat for fish, shellfish, shorebirds and terrestrial wildlife. Healthy coastal wetlands also make shorelines more resilient by buffering the effects of storm surge and sea level rise. Restoration of tidal flow will allow the Herring River system to once again play an important role in the aquatic food chain of the Gulf of Maine, thereby having an impact on a coastal system that both New

England and southeastern Canada depend upon.

SWS also supports the project because of its use of advanced wetlands science, including innovative modeling and adaptive management techniques. The project design was developed through an assessment of restoration alternatives and their associated environmental impacts guided by national experts in estuarine science, civil engineering and environmental resource management. The application of leading edge wetlands science will contribute to our understanding and use of these tools and techniques in other settings. This project proposes exploring potential Blue Carbon benefits (the carbon sequestered and stored long-term in coastal wetlands) of large scale salt marsh restoration. Once the project stabilizes the establishment of salt marsh, researchers expect to see a reduction in methane emissions as well as the potential storage of hundreds of tons of carbon within the floodplain soils of the Herring River. This project will add significantly to our understanding of the potential for salt marshes to address climate change, both in terms of carbon mitigation and climate resiliency. This project is one of the first of its kind nationally and internationally, particularly given its large scale, making it a model for many more potential projects around the world.

For these reasons, SWS considers the Herring River Restoration to be a project of national and international significance and one that deserves our strong support.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Karberg, Ph.D.
President, New England Chapter
Society of Wetland Scientists



Gillian Davies, M.E.S., P.W.S.
President
Society of Wetland Scientists

cc: Senator Elizabeth Warren
Senator Edward Markey
Congressman William Keating
Senator Julian Cyr
Representative Sarah Peake
Friends of Herring River
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Pat Montanio, Director, NOAA Fisheries, Office of Habitat Conservation
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Tim Purinton, Director, Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration
Hunt Durey, Deputy Director, Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration