

TOWN OF SANDWICH

THE OLDEST TOWN ON CAPE COD

130 MAIN STREET
SANDWICH, MA 02563

TEL: 508-888-4910 AND 508-888-5144
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EMAIL: selectmen@townofsandwich.net
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BOARD OF
SELECTMEN

TOWN
MANAGER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 11, 2013

CONTACT: George H. Dunham
Town Manager
(508) 888-5144 or 4910

TOWN TO MAKE EMERGENCY REPAIRS TO TOWN NECK BEACH DUNES

SANDWICH, MA – The Town of Sandwich has responded swiftly to the recent storm damage and erosion at Town Neck Beach. Town officials – including the Town Manager, Building Inspector, Director of Public Health, Director and Assistant Director of Natural Resources, the Board of Selectmen, and the Town’s coastal engineering consultant (the Woods Hole Group) – all contacted the relevant state departments to request emergency authorization to fill gaps and “blow-outs” in our protective barrier beach dunes at Town Neck Beach. In addition, the Town’s state and federal representatives assisted the Town in requesting this authorization.

Late on Friday March 8, 2013, the Town was notified in writing by the Commonwealth’s Division of Fisheries and Wildlife’s Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program that it has received a conditional approval for a “partial restoration of breached dunes on Town Neck Beach.”

“The Town is very grateful for the Commonwealth’s approval of our request, and we are especially appreciative of all the efforts by Congressman Keating, Senate President Murray, and Representative Hunt for their assistance in this critical effort,” said Board of Selectmen Chairman John G. Kennan, Jr.

The Town will quickly act on this emergency approval, taking care to meet all of the conditions outlined in the Commonwealth’s emergency approval.

While this will not be a permanent solution, it is an important stopgap measure to protect the community’s vital historic and natural resources in downtown Sandwich.

In addition, due to the recent storm damage, the Sandwich Boardwalk and all stairways going over the dunes onto Town Neck Beach will remain closed until a structural engineer hired by the Town completes a report outlining exactly what repairs and reconstruction needs to occur in order to make the structures safe again for the public.

The Town would like to remind citizens to refrain from walking over any portion of the dunes until the walkways are repaired.



MassWildlife

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

Wayne F. MacCallum, *Director*

MA ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT AUTHORIZATION FOR EMERGENCY ACTION PURSUANT TO 321 CMR 10.15

March 8, 2013

George H. Dunham
Town Manager
16 Jan Sebastian Drive
Sandwich, MA 02563

RE: Applicant: Town of Sandwich
 Project Description: Emergency removal sand from Mill Creek to fill overwash areas on Town Neck Beach
 Project Location: Town Neck Beach & Mill Creek
 NHESP File No.: 13-31961
 Filing: Request for MESA Emergency Authorization (321 CMR 10.15)

Mr. Dunham:

The MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) received requests from the Town of Sandwich and Woods Hole Group (via email on 3/07/13) to allow mechanical removal of sand from Mill Creek onto Town Neck Beach to fill overwash areas. The request was submitted to the NHESP in compliance with the MA Endangered Species Act (M.G.L. c. 131A) and its implementing regulations (321 CMR 10.00), specifically for compliance with 321 CMR 10.15.

WORK PERMITTED WITH THIS AUTHORIZATION: Partial restoration of breached dunes on Town Neck Beach via the removal sand from overwash fans in and adjacent to Mill Creek to fill 2 cuts within the dunes on Town Neck Beach.

CONDITIONS:

- 1) In each dune breach location, recovered sand shall be placed so that the crest, toe and heel of the restored area(s) are in line (alongshore) with the crest, toe and heel of the existing dunes on either side of the breach. The elevation at the crest of each restored area shall be no greater than 6 feet above the present maximum elevation of each dune breach location, *i.e.*, shall not exceed 11 feet NGVD. Sand fill should have slopes no steeper than 10:1 horizontal:vertical (from toe and heel toward the center). If even flatter slopes can be constructed, this is preferable. For stability purposes, a constant elevation will be maintained along the crest for at least 10 ft.
- 2) No vegetation shall be planted in the restored areas.
- 3) No sand fencing shall be placed on or along the seaward (north) edges of restored areas.

www.masswildlife.org

Division of Fisheries and Wildlife

Temporary Correspondence: 100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230, West Boylston, MA 01583

Permanent: Field Headquarters, North Drive, Westborough, MA 01581 (508) 389-6300 Fax (508) 389-7890

An Agency of the Department of Fish and Game

WORK DURATION: This work must be completed no later than April 1, 2013.

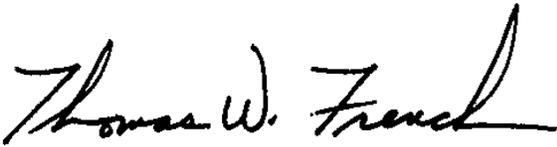
REPORTING REQUIREMENT: Within 30 days of the completion of Work, the applicant shall file a written report detailing the Work that was done under this emergency authorization including the date(s) of activities and a locus map showing the actual locations for all work conducted under this Authorization.

We recognize conditions at Town Neck Beach may change as a result of the current storm (3/6 - 3/8/2013). NHESP is willing to work with the Town if they seek to undertake additional work or if the above conditions need to be modified as a result of the storm.

The NHESP authorization for work does not relieve the applicant from compliance with all relevant additional permitting and licensing requirements including, but not limited to, the MA Department of Environmental Protection, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and the 401 Water Quality Certificate Program.

Please contact Scott Melvin, Senior Zoologist, at (508) 389-6345 (scott.melvin@state.ma.us) or Amy Coman-Hoenig, Endangered Species Review Biologist, at (508) 389-6364 (amy.coman@state.ma.us) with any questions about this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas W. French". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

Thomas D. French, Ph. D.
Assistant Director

cc: Jason Zimmer, MA DFW Southeast District (*via email*)
Sandwich Conservation Commission (*via email*)
David DeConto, Town of Sandwich (*via email*)
Kirk Bosma, Woods Hole Group (*via email*)
Susi vonOttingen, USFWS (*via email*)
Philip Weinberg, MA DEP (*via email*)
Tena Davies, MA DEP (*via email*)



March 6, 2013

Amy Coman-Hoenig
Endangered Species Review Assistant
Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program
MA Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230
West Boylston, MA 01583

RE: Recent Storm Impacts on Town Neck Beach

Dear Ms. Coman-Hoenig,

Recent storms, specifically Hurricane Sandy and the February 2013 Nor'easter (Nemo), have resulted in significant erosion on Town Neck Beach in Sandwich, Massachusetts. The impact of these storms has been severe. Both the engineered and natural dune system along Town Beach system experienced landward erosion of over 20 feet in areas, as well as created and/or expanded dune breaches in multiple locations. The storms extracted a significant volume of sediment from the dune system and considerably diminished the protective ability of the dune to subsequent storm events. In places, the dune elevation has been reduced to a level that allows the higher of the daily high tides to flow directly over the barrier beach. In addition, the storms overwashed a portion of the sediment into the Mill Creek branch of the marsh system, obstructing tidal flow into this portion of the system and creating potential water quality and ecological concerns due to reduced tidal flux.

We understand that the Town of Sandwich is considering emergency actions to restore a portion of the sediment to one or two of the breach locations in the dune system. It is expected that this sediment replacement would consist of a low elevation veneer that would re-establish some protective ability of the dune. The proposed project represents a modest change to the existing breach locations. We also understand that these emergency actions would need to abide by the requirements stated in 321 CMR 10.15 as related to emergencies:

“Any person requesting permission to do an emergency Project or Activity shall specify to the Director why the Project or Activity is necessary for the protection of the health or safety of the citizens of Massachusetts and what agency of the Federal Government, the Commonwealth or political subdivision thereof is to perform the project or activity, or has ordered the Project or Activity to be performed. If the Project or Activity is approved by the Director as an emergency, the approval shall include a description of work which is to be allowed and the

duration of the work, and shall not include work beyond that necessary to abate the emergency. Upon completion of an emergency Project or Activity, the authorized person shall file a written report with the Director detailing the work that was done under this emergency authorization and a description of any restoration that may be necessary to restore the site of the Project or Activity. In emergencies that require immediate response in order to protect the health or safety of the public and the responding person is unable to contact the Division prior to responding to the emergency, the Division shall be notified as soon as possible and any additional work shall require approval of the Director. Any Person that initiates an emergency response without prior approval shall file a written report within 30 days with the Director detailing the work that was performed and a description of any restoration that may be necessary to restore the site of the Project or Activity.”

Due to the updrift anthropogenic influence of the Cape Cod Canal and its associated structures, the natural beach at Sandwich Town Beach is already significantly sediment starved. The lack of natural sediment supply, coupled with the reduction in the protective capacity of the dunes has increased the vulnerability and risk for the Town of Sandwich. Specifically, subsequent storm events would result in significant flooding and upland inundation concerns relative to the lack of protection of the dilapidated condition of the dunes. The volume of water entering into the marsh and upland areas would increase substantially, and impact upland infrastructure surrounding the marsh. This would affect not only existing homes surrounding the floodplain, but also inundate the Sandwich Police and Fire Departments, which are sited directly adjacent to the marsh landward of Town Neck Beach. Subsequently, impact to these required emergency services has a direct impact on the health and safety of the citizens of the Town of Sandwich, especially considering that these services are most needed during storm events when the flooding would also be expected to occur.

In our professional opinion, given the current condition of the dunes at Town Neck Beach, critical Town services are directly susceptible to flooding under storm events and result in a direct risk to the health and safety of Sandwich residents. As such, we believe the requested emergency actions are warranted under 321 CMR 10.15.

Sincerely,
The Woods Hole Group



Kirk Bosma, M.C.E., P.E.
Team Leader / Coastal Engineer



March 7, 2013

Ms. Amy Coman-Hoenig
Endangered Species Review Assistant
Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program
MA Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230
West Boylston, MA 01583

RE: Recent Storm Impacts on Town Neck Beach

Dear Ms. Coman-Hoenig,

Recent Storms, specifically Hurricane Sandy and the February 2013 Nor'easter (Nemo), have resulted in significant erosion on Town Neck Beach in Sandwich, Massachusetts. The impact of these storms has been severe. The storms extracted a significant volume of sediment from the dune system and considerably diminished the protective ability of the dune to subsequent storm events. In places, the dune elevation has been reduced to a level that allows the higher of the daily tides to flow directly over the barrier beach.

The Town of Sandwich has been informed that subsequent storm events would result in significant flooding and upland inundation concerns relative to the lack of protection of the dilapidated condition of the dunes. This would result in numerous septic systems being inundated thus creating an environmental and public health hazard. Additionally, the inundation of the Sandwich Police and Fire Department would render those facilities uninhabitable due to the inundation of the septic systems servicing those locations.

Given the current condition of the dunes at Town Neck Beach, critical Town services are susceptible to flooding under storm events and result in a direct risk to the health and safety of Sandwich residents and safety personnel. As such, the Sandwich Health Department believes the requested emergency actions are warranted under 321 CMR 10.15 and is supportive of actions to address this issue.

Sincerely,

David B. Mason, RS, CHO
Director of Public Health
Town of Sandwich



March 7, 2013

Ms. Amy Coman-Hoenig, Assistant
Endangered Species Review
Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program
MA Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230
West Boylston, MA 01583

RE: Town of Sandwich Beach Erosion

Dear Ms. Coman-Hoenig:

As you may know, the Town of Sandwich has experienced severe beach erosion over the past month due to the February Blizzard and the current Northeasterly Storm with its associated high tides and storm surge. With the breaches that occurred during the Blizzard, thousands of yards of sand were displaced compromising the protection that these dunes/barriers afford.

To allow the current state of these dunes to exist without any sort of mitigation would subject any properties beyond these dunes to significant flooding and probable damage to many structures that were not built to sustain such inundation. Obviously, the protection of the health or safety of Sandwich citizens would be severely compromised. Some of these properties include the headquarters of the major elements of the Town of Sandwich Public Safety facilities.

As described above, it is this department's opinion that an emergency condition exists and an order for restorative relief is paramount. Neglecting this situation would severely put the residents of this area in significant danger of losing their property and endanger their safety.

Respectfully,

Paul D. Spiro, CBO
Inspector of Buildings

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March 1, 2013

Amy Coman-Hoenig
Endangered Species Review Assistant
Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program
MA Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230
West Boylston, MA 01583

Re: Emergency Assistance for Town Neck Beach – Sandwich, MA

Dear Ms. Coman-Hoenig:

On behalf of the Town of Sandwich, I wanted to follow up on your February 28, 2013 e-mail to the Department of Natural Resources related to an emergency declaration for the Town to perform specific recovery measures on Town Neck Beach following Hurricane Sandy and the recent Nemo storm. Substantial erosion and new cut throughs occurred at Town Neck Beach after Sandy in the Fall of 2012 and the Nemo storm greatly exacerbated these problems. In addition to significantly more erosion, several new breaches and widened blow outs have materialized on Town Neck Beach, jeopardizing the entire dune system.

We have been working with the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to seek emergency permission to take protective actions to address the most immediate problems. These specific actions have been detailed in several contacts with Natural Heritage both through our Natural Resources Department and Kirk Bosma of the Woods Hole Group, our longstanding consultant on erosion and beach management issues. We would like Natural Heritage's and DEP's permission to perform these emergency recovery activities in accordance with the parameters that State and Town officials would mutually agree.

I understand that a declared emergency has to meet the requirements of 321 CMR 10.15: Emergencies. The issues the Town is facing following the storms of the last six months definitely meet the criteria for such an emergency designation. We need to address the breakthroughs at Town Neck Beach in order to protect the health and safety of the citizens of Sandwich. These are dozens of homes and businesses that are in jeopardy if the Town Neck dune and beach system is further compromised. The impacted buildings would have structural and septage issues if the dune system was fully breached.

Perhaps most importantly, the Sandwich Police Department and Sandwich Fire Department headquarters are located immediately adjacent to the marsh behind Town Neck Beach, 2 feet above sea level. If the dune system deteriorated further or even went away, this would undoubtedly compromise the delivery of public safety services to the entire Town of Sandwich. Because there would no longer be any protection between Cape Cod Bay and the

marsh system behind the Town Neck dunes, we would have to relocate our public safety stations to temporary locations until a longer term solution could be found.

If you believe a site visit would help clarify the problems we are facing and the emergency nature of our request, the appropriate Town staff would be glad to meet any interested Natural Heritage and DEP representatives to show you first-hand what we are facing. Any assistance you could provide to help us would be greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions about this request, please do not hesitate to contact me at 508-888-5144.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "George H. Dunham".

George H. Dunham
Town Manager

cc: Board of Selectmen
Department of Natural Resources
Kirk Bosma, Woods Hole Group

Storm of 3/07/13

*The canal entrance and Old Harbor
Boardwalk and new cut in dunes*



BEACHGOERS:
HELP US PROTECT
OUR FRAGILE BEACH

PLEASE:

- Use designated access trails to the beach.
- Stay out of the dunes and vegetation, walking on the plants and dunes kills the plants and erodes the dunes.

These signs:
The Town of Sandwich
Department of Natural Resources
Coastal and Dunes
Beach Committee



