

# The Barnstable Patriot

## Three Bays Preservation: Coloring in between the lines of a blue economy

February 22, 2017

By: Michael J. Egan

The blue water economy aptly describes how Cape Codders support themselves through tourism and sustainable year-round occupations. Cape Cod's blue water economy and unique ecosystem have been around for hundreds of years. It's just that people have now formally bestowed a cool catchphrase to time-honored Yankee ingenuity.

Why have so many people decided to live here and create the demand for goods and services, which in turn creates the wealth and income necessary for the quality of life and high standard of living we enjoy on Cape Cod?

Simply because this iconic pile of glacial till is beautiful.

In our Blue Water economy, we don't pump oil or mine coal. We don't smelt steel. We don't write software, manufacture drugs or computers. On the Cape, we mine the ocean, the beach, the ponds and sunshine. We harvest wild fish from the ocean and clean air from the sea breeze. We make memories and create experiences with our friends and families. These resources are renewable provided we stop polluting them.

Name me one single job that is not in some way related to the quality of our environment. Obviously, anything to do with fishing, sailing or boating is easy to understand. But even careers of teachers, doctors, nurses, first responders, electricians, carpenters, builders, retail, restaurants and many others can all be traced to providing a service to others who are in turn here because of our beautiful environment.

Tourism is the engine of our economy and our environment is the fuel.

Three Bays Preservation Inc. is an organization dedicated to making a higher standard of living for the citizens of Barnstable and Cape Cod. By mitigating wastewater pollution and safeguarding groundwater, we are trying to increase the wealth, job opportunities and quality of life for people who live and visit here. We can't flush where we drink, swim and fish in the way we presently do and expect our quality of life to increase. We cannot continue to contaminate the fuel that powers our economy.

Cape Cod is an island of 15 towns. In its most ecological sense, geology has woven 53 watersheds throughout, and each of these nature-crafted environments is unique, compromised and vulnerable. The problem is that we have not installed the necessary infrastructure in wastewater management to keep ourselves from polluting these watersheds that for hundreds of years have attracted people here.

Three Bays Preservation Inc. knows that our global economy on the Cape is fueled by the quality of our local environment. We understand how the dots are connected. There is a direct cause-and-effect relationship between the health of our economy and the quality of our water.

Help us save and create a healthy economy. Help us improve your quality of life and that of your

neighbors.

Help us to help you increase the value of your home. Help us help you maintain the demand for your skills, labor or knowledge of your job.

The single most important thing Barnstable must do is upgrade its wastewater management so as to reduce or eliminate organic nitrogen leaching from our septic systems and polluting our water table. Techniques exist that are affordable, effective and doable.

Please contact your town councilor and express your interest and support of the improved wastewater management plan, also called the 208 Plan, to be published this summer.

\*\*

Michael J. Egan is president of the board of directors of Three Bays Preservation Inc., an organization established in 1996 to advocate for the restoration and protection of West, North and Cotuit Bays, and the coves, ponds, rivers and streams that form our watershed and estuary. Learn more at [www.3bays.org](http://www.3bays.org).

##