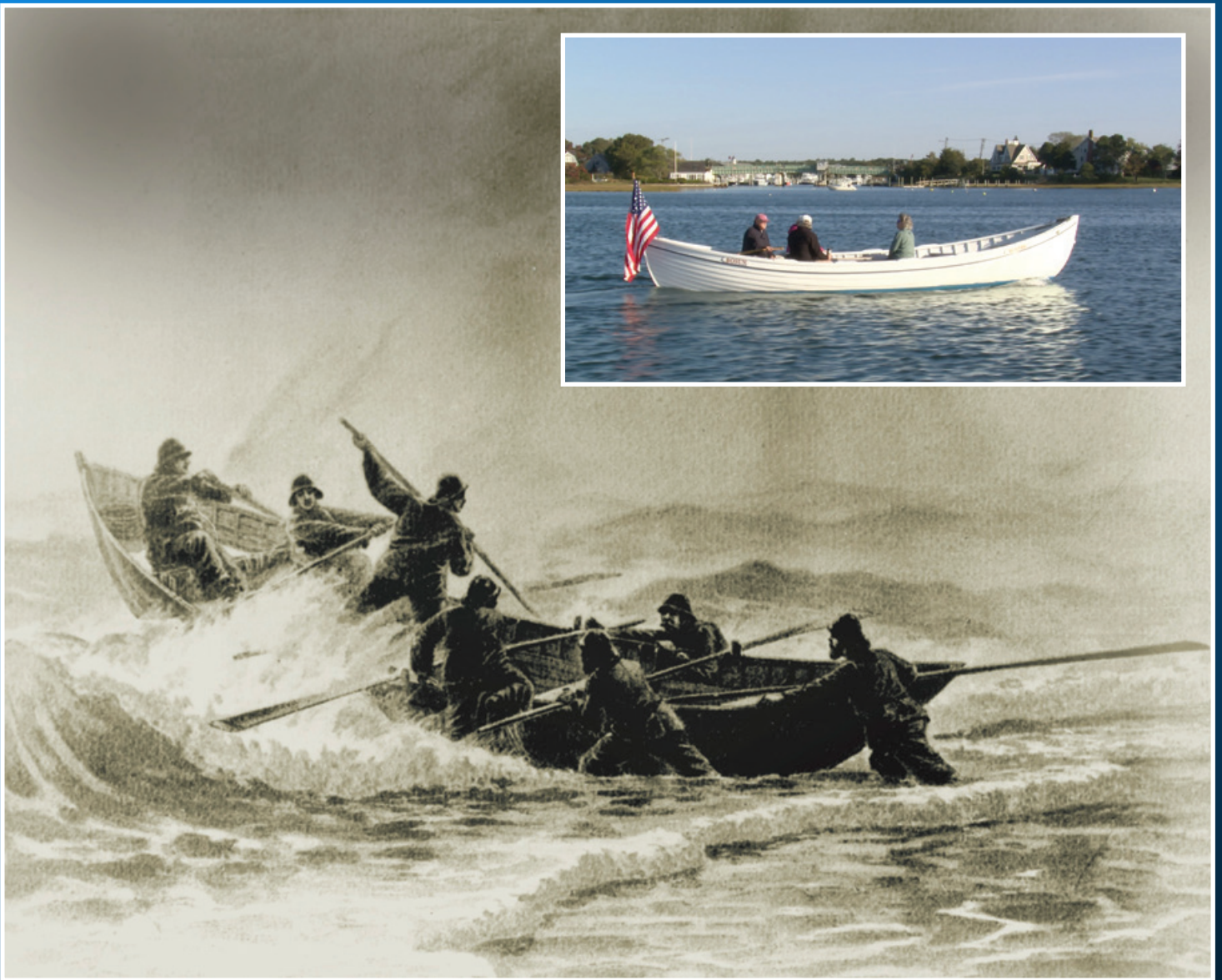




# COALITION Quarterly

## The Rescue Mission Continues



**BCleanWater.org**

# A Note from The Helm

In 2017, I took on the leadership position with Three Bays Preservation. We changed our message and focused on a new mission, which led us to change our name to Barnstable Clean Water Coalition (BCWC). Five years on, our recently completed dredging project has helped water quality in some locations, but our Three Bays estuary and most of the Cape's waters continue to deteriorate. Now West Bay, which was once one of the "healthiest" of the Three Bays, is also in decline.

How do we know this? BCWC has seen this decline in water quality from our weekly streamflow sampling, as well as in the decades of data from our estuary sampling program. Fortunately, we have help and evidence from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA has conducted monitoring and sampling work as shown in their recent bulletin (see attached insert). The EPA's work looks at many metrics: from dissolved oxygen levels to what creatures live on the bay's bottom.

How do we tell the story of collapsing water quality when it isn't obvious? Many summer visitors comment how the water "looks okay to me!" For most people, water clarity is the main thing they consider. When I was growing up around our bays more than 50 years ago, conditions were still quite healthy. Eel grass was pervasive. Now, it is all gone. Scallops scooted along the sandy shoreline, and I could see 12 to 15 feet into the water off our dock and watch the scup fight for the fresh clam bait on my fishhook!

Like the allegory of a frog being gradually boiled in water and not reacting, most of us think the ever-worsening conditions are actually just fine. They are not! We are witnessing these changes in many places, including the current manatee situation in Florida. Manatees are dying in record numbers from starvation brought about by the loss of sea grass beds from pollutants and toxic algae blooms.

Which brings me to our newly refurbished rescue boat and mascot, *Bosun*. On a ship, a bosun is the person who takes care of the equipment and crew. During *Bosun's* life as a vessel she has been a rescue boat, a family cruiser, a gentleman's launch and now, again, a vessel with a "rescue mission".



You will see her plying our Three Bays operated by a crew, whose job it is to tell the story of our waters, conduct science, and educate the public while helping to raise funds to continue our mission.

You can't miss *Bosun*! Perhaps the most beautiful vessel in the harbor, now powered with an environmentally friendly electric engine. Our team will stop and talk to you on the water, and they will also take our supporters out with experts to view, and better understand, our waters.

Our waters are not dead, but they are under attack. The groundwater in our sandy soils is loaded with nitrogen (among other things) from our septic systems. These contaminants are entering our bays, gradually creating "eutrophic" conditions. These conditions lead to increased algae growth resulting in lower oxygen levels that can kill fish and other aquatic organisms.

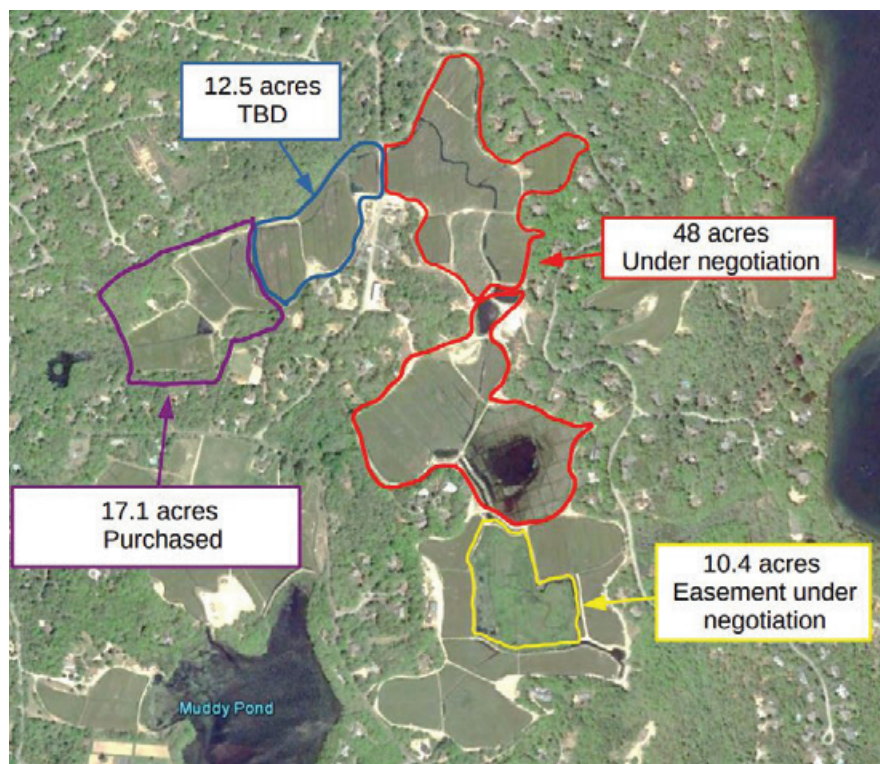
I hope you will think about our rescue mission and clean water every time you see *Bosun*. Please take some time to learn more about our waters. Please give generously and support our work!



# Update on Marstons Mills Cranberry Bog Restoration Project



In December 2021, the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game's Division of Ecological Restoration (DER) named BCWC's Marstons Mills Cranberry Bog Restoration Project a Priority Project. With this designation, BCWC is eligible for DER technical services, including assistance with project management, permitting, and fundraising. DER has a long track record of successful restoration projects throughout Massachusetts. We're excited to add DER to the project team and tap into their invaluable expertise.



*(Above): With our purchase in purple, BCWC has made its first land acquisition for the Marstons Mills River Cranberry Bog Restoration Project! We are in negotiations to purchase the acreage in red and to obtain a conservation easement on the acreage in yellow. Stay tuned for news on those negotiations!*



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**KARYN E. POLITO**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**Marstons Mills Cranberry Bog**  
Barnstable Clean Water Coalition  
ATTN: Casey Chatelain  
864 Main Street  
Osterville, MA 02655  
914-400-3183  
[cchatelain@bcleanwater.org](mailto:cchatelain@bcleanwater.org)

Dear Casey,

Thank you for your recent submission to the River and Wetland Restoration Priority Projects RFR # DER 2021-02. We are pleased to inform you that the Marstons Mills Cranberry Bog Restoration Project has been selected for Provisional acceptance to the Division of Ecological Restoration's Priority Projects Program.

# The History of *Bosun*

*Bosun* is a Monomoy life-saving surf boat. These double-ended boats were patterned after surf boats used in the rough seas off Monomoy Island in Chatham. Typically 26-feet long with four benches and weighing about a ton, the Monomoy was designed to endure the worst conditions the ocean could offer and required highly skilled mariners to successfully complete rescue missions. Known as a pulling-style boat because they were hauled by horses or on trailers to the shorelines, the Monomoy's were designed and built for the U.S. Life-Saving Service (USLSS). Founded in 1848, the USLSS is the precursor to the U.S. Coast Guard, which was established in 1915.

Though we don't know the exact year it was put into service, *Bosun* was utilized by the U.S. Coast Guard. We can just imagine *Bosun's* crew of eight rowing out in a storm to a shipwreck off the shores of Cape Cod and saving lives. *Bosun* now has a new rescue mission, one that will help those that visit and live on Cape Cod understand the sense of urgency needed to save our local waters.



Circa  
1930



**"You have to go out, but you don't have to come back!"**

From the Regulations of the U.S. Life-Saving Service of 1899  
and the unofficial motto of the U.S. Coast Guard



1940 to  
1960

Chester (Chet) Crosby acquires *Bosun* from the Coast Guard and The Chester A. Crosby boatyard is its home for about 10 years. While being repaired, *Bosun* inherits the engine from *Crusoe*, a cutter sailboat which is owned by one of Chet's clients, Paul and Bunny Mellon of Osterville.



Eddie Crosby, Chet's son, on *Bosun*



Chet Crosby finds a new home for *Bosun* and sells it to George Richmond Walker, where it is enjoyed for almost 10 years by three generations

Chet acquires *Bosun* from the Walker family.

Shortly after taking possession of *Bosun*, Chet sells it to the Mellons. The Mellons use the boat for almost 30 years — transforming the Coast Guard workhorse into a pleasure yacht.

1960 to  
1970



Scan the QR code to learn more about the history and restoration of *Bosun*.



1980 to  
2000

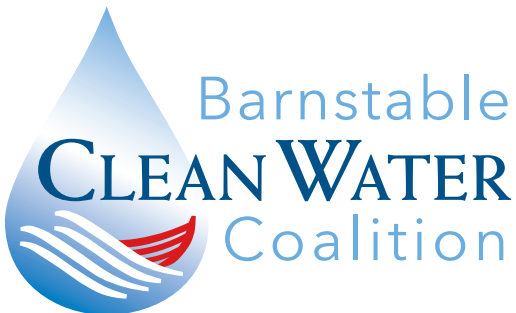


Ned Crosby sailing *Bosun*

At the age of 13, Ned Crosby (Chet's grandson) becomes Paul Mellon's first mate, sailing *Bosun* in the Three Bays.

After her husband's death in 1999, Bunny Mellon gives *Bosun* to Ned.

Ned sells *Bosun* to Hugh and Connie Tompkins.



2017

Three Bays Preservation changes name, mission, and logo. BCWC introduces its new logo, which includes a red bow from a rescue boat like *Bosun*.

2019 to  
2020



The Tompkins family donates *Bosun* to BCWC.

BCWC hires Ned Crosby and his E.M. Crosby Boatworks team to restore *Bosun*.

# WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

Scan the QR code to view  
our short video and learn  
more about Twin Brooks.



Last November, a public forum sponsored by the “Save Twin Brooks” advocacy group was held with more than 130 people in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to address the benefits of preserving nearly 40 acres of open space in Hyannis — currently a public golf course called Twin Brooks — and the short and long-term risks of constructing a massive, market-rate, gated apartment complex on the fragile Stewart’s Creek estuary.

Like any other project that has competing viewpoints, the Twin Brooks project raises one very compelling, yet simple, question.

*If we knew what the future looked like,  
would we make better decisions today?*

In essence, that is the question that is at the heart of the matter regarding Twin Brooks. The quick answer might be, “Yes, we need housing on the Cape, so this is good!” But is it?

At BCWC, we have tried to study the past to learn about the future. One lesson has been our lack of foresight to deal with, and plan for, the dire wastewater crisis we face today. Decades ago, we turned down federal help to pay for sewer expansion, and today that bill is coming due.

In 2018, as part of our efforts to address water-related issues in Barnstable, we published a book titled *At The Water’s Edge: Landscape-Based Adaptations for Sea-level Rise in Barnstable*. Students from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst tackled the issue and concluded that we must plan for a “retreat” from housing along the coast, while planning for resilient landscape



To read *At The Water’s Edge*, visit [BCleanWater.org/news](https://BCleanWater.org/news)



approaches to deal with our future. The message was clear: the rate of anticipated sea level rise left our community with only 12 years to plan for the inevitable.

*Eight years are left. When will we start planning?*

*We ignored the wastewater pundits in the 1970’s,  
will we make the same mistake with sea level rise?*

Twin Brooks might be one of the last open spaces facing Nantucket Sound on the Cape. With increasingly severe storms like the recent January blizzard and extreme king tides happening more often, it is likely that both Craigville Beach and Keyes Beach will be under water. By then, we will be forced to move large numbers of residences even further away from the shore.

*In 2100, will Twin Brooks be the jewel of the  
waterfront in Hyannis or a parking lot?*

It is up to all of us to make decisions together today to help with the future!

For more information, visit  
[SaveTwinBrooks.org](https://SaveTwinBrooks.org)

 **Twin Brooks**  
preserving and conserving for the future

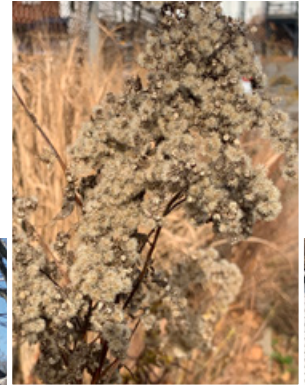


# BCWC's Native New England Garden Works Year Round

Judging from the two photos, you may ask why we didn't cut down all the "brown" plants and grasses in our two ecological demonstration gardens. We intentionally left the plants and grasses standing for several reasons. One is for visual interest, so people would have something to look at, including our two interpretive signs, during the winter rather than bare patches of land. But more importantly, the native New England plants in our gardens also provide food and habitat for wildlife, including birds and insects. The flowers and grasses are covered with seeds throughout the fall and winter and are an important food source for native birds. In addition, the birds also feed on insects found in the winter garden.

Insects, including bees, nest in the hollow stems of plants where they lay their eggs and overwinter. Once the insects emerge from their winter nests in early spring, we will cut down and tidy up the garden for its second full growing season. Check out the list of Native New England plants featured in our garden at [BCleanWater.org/resources/native-new-england-garden/](https://www.barnstablecleanwatercoalition.org/resources/native-new-england-garden/).

*Goldenrod seed heads in our garden supply a winter food source for birds.*



## BCWC Board Member Spotlight

Jack Ahern

*Landscape Architect and  
University of Massachusetts  
Amherst professor emeritus*

A seasonal resident of Osterville who enjoys sailing and kayaking in our local bays, Jack became very concerned about the Cape's water quality after reading about the large algae bloom and fish kill in North Bay several years ago. After attending a stormwater management workshop and learning about BCWC, Jack met BCWC executive director Zee Crocker. After discovering their shared passion for wanting to address water quality issues and educate people about the problems and solutions, Zee invited Jack to join the BCWC Board of Directors in 2018.



While still teaching at UMass Amherst, Jack involved his graduate students with real world, on the ground projects studying the Three Bays and Marstons Mills River watersheds. They looked at what conditions were contributing to water quality issues and started discussions on options and solutions. The students produced publications on the Three Bays Watershed, Mill Pond in Marstons Mills, ecological landscape design for improving water quality, and sea level rise impacts on the town of Barnstable.

In addition, Jack was happy to collaborate with BCWC in 2020 on the design and installation of our demonstration gardens featuring native New England plants and grasses. This project allowed Jack to share his expertise and help BCWC with a water-friendly initiative to improve water quality and to educate others on what they could do in their own backyards.

We are excited to announce that Jack's latest book, *Design with Nature on Cape Cod and the Islands*, is being published by the University of Massachusetts Press and will be available for sale in March.



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### **Mission Statement**

*Barnstable Clean  
Water Coalition  
works to restore and  
preserve clean water  
in Barnstable. BCWC  
utilizes science as its  
foundation to educate,  
monitor, mitigate and  
advocate for clean water.*

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Boatworks and U.S. Life-Saving Service  
Heritage Association*

*Videos Produced by Thomas Milkey,  
Grand Cove Productions*

Printed on 30% recycled paper. 

## **Innovative and Alternative (I/A) Septic System Tours**

In October 2021, we began the installation of the NitROE<sup>®</sup> I/A septic systems as part of the Shubael Pond Project. In late April and early May, we will continue with more installations.

If you want to learn more about this project, the technology or if you are interested in attending a tour during the next phase of installation, email us at [IASeptic@bcleanwater.org](mailto:IASeptic@bcleanwater.org).



**Donate online at:  
[BCleanWater.org](https://bcleanwater.org)**



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BCWC  
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