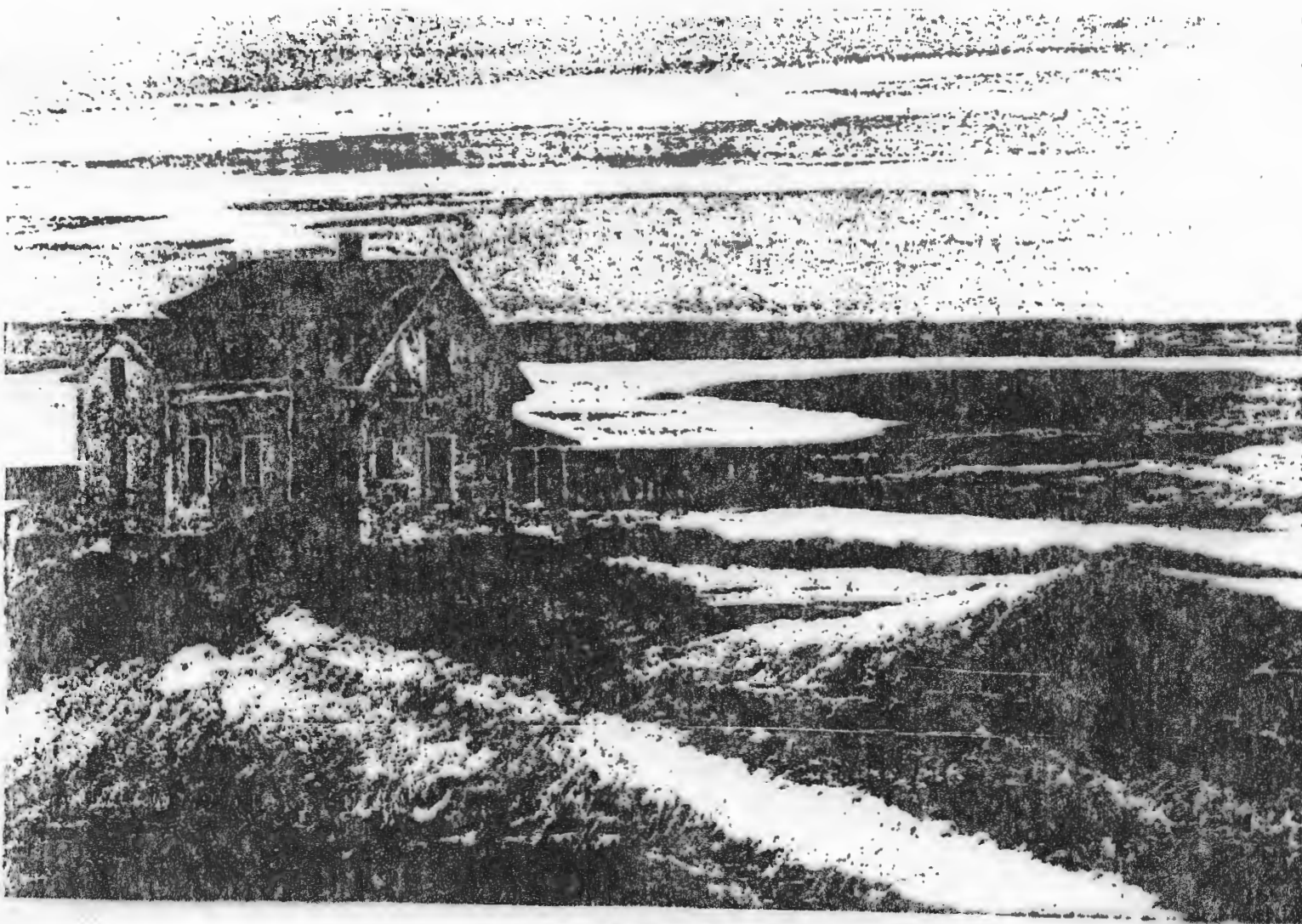


Pamet River Greenway Management Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



1987

TRURO

CONSERVATION

TRUST

PAMET RIVER GREENWAY MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1987
Truro Conservation Trust

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For additional explanation and justification of the points in this summary, please refer to the respective chapters in the full plan.

CHAPTER I.A. - PURPOSE

I.A.1 Goals (p. 2)

- 1) To protect the water quality, including adjacent ground water, of the Pamet River system
- 2) To preserve scenic views and the integrity of the Pamet Valley as an historic coastal village
- 3) To enhance appropriate recreational opportunities in the area, and
- 4) To maintain primary regulatory control over the river at the municipal level, while protecting qualities of the river that led to its Scenic Rivers classification by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

I.A.2 Objectives (p.2)

- a) To develop a comprehensive management plan for the river, likely to be supported by the community, and to recommend strategies to protect identified values
- b) To conduct related studies of the river to acquire baseline data, historical context and detailed examination of specific river problems
- c) To manage the river as an interconnected ecological system in order to ensure that solutions to one problem will not exacerbate any other problem or create new ones
- d) To coordinate existing research and management efforts
- e) To provide community officials with appropriate land management tools to protect the Pamet
- f) To conduct a public educational program to emphasize the importance of the Pamet and the need to protect its resources.

II.A - PAMET RIVER GREENWAY MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS (p. 38)

- 1) Formation of the Pamet River Greenway Committee
- 2) Meetings with town boards and the National Park Service
- 3) Coordination of water studies (IEP, MRI, DEQE, County)
- 4) New studies (Center for Coastal Studies, Barnstable County Health Department, Woods Hole Sea Grant Program)
- 5) Public Education ("Celebrate the Pamet" summer program, "Our Pamet" art show, opinion survey, news articles)
- 6) Development of Pamet River Greenway Management Plan

II.B - RIVER MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

II.B.1 - Land Ownership (p. 45)

- 1) The town should acquire significant "owners unknown" wetlands in the Pamet through tax title foreclosures, as provided in MGL c. 60. These wetlands should be managed by the

Conservation Commission.

2) All town-owned lands not used for active recreation or other non-conservation uses should be transferred to the control of the Conservation Commission.

3) The National Park Service should give priority to the purchase of two undeveloped parcels of land in the Pamet within its jurisdiction under the NPS "Land Protection Plan", 1985.

4) Title research should be conducted to determine the true ownership of alleged public landings on the Pamet:

- a) Old County Road over Wilders Dike
- b) Snows Landing (south end of Meetinghouse Road)
- c) Bridge Road (north and south ends)

5) Town officials and others should determine if additional lands should be acquired publicly to further the goals of the Plan.

II.B.2 - Land Use (p. 56)

1) The General Business District at Pamet River should be re-zoned to Special Business to allow village shops and services, not manufacturing.

2) The laundromat should be licensed under the Massachusetts Ground Water Discharge Permit Program, if allowed to re-open.

3) A minimum lot size of 60,000 square feet for residential construction within the Pamet Valley should be adopted to protect water quality.

4) The town should oppose any future widening of Route 6 by the state in the Pamet Valley based on water quality and scenic issues.

5) A Pamet River Review Board should be established to administer a proposed Pamet River Protective Bylaw and implement recommendations of the Greenway Plan.

6) A Pamet River Protective Bylaw should be adopted to protect the water quality and natural features of the River. Most structures should be set back at least 100 feet from the River and its wetlands.

7) The town should pursue designation of the Pamet system as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern under state law.

8) The town should adopt a local wetlands protection bylaw.

II.B.3 - Water Quality (p. 58)

II.B.3.b - Monitoring Studies (p. 61)

1) The Truro Water Quality Advisory Committee should attempt to coordinate the monitoring studies and arrange an exchange of information.

2) DEQE should initiate an intensive shellfish resurvey as soon as possible to identify sources of contamination. Truro town officials and Pamet residents should cooperate fully with DEQE in the resurvey.

3) DEQE should provide the Truro Board of Health with results of its regular monitoring program.

4) The Barnstable County Health Department should computerize all existing water quality data on the Pamet. Future monitoring should use previously established sampling

locations.

5) The Division of Water Pollution Control should initiate more regular sampling of the the Pamet.

6) Water samples should be tested from Little Pamet River and Eagles Neck Creek in future studies.

II.B.3.c - Septic Systems (p. 63)

1) The Truro Board of Health should investigate why 14 septic systems identified in this plan are pumped out with unusual frequency. Failing systems should be upgraded immediately. (Board began this investigation in 1986 as a result of this plan.)

2) The Board of Health should review its septage coupon log annually to discover other septic pump-out anomalies.

3) Town building regulations should require septic system upgrading when new additions are proposed on existing structures. (Adopted by the Board of Health in April 1986 as a result of this plan.)

4) The Board of Health and Water Quality Advisory Committee should enhance public education on proper septic system maintenance. Systems with potential for failure should be pumped annually.

5) Setbacks for septic leaching facilities should be increased from 50 to 100 feet from wetlands and from 100 to 200 feet from wells in the upgradient direction.

II.B.3.d - Underground Fuel Tanks (p. 68)

1) The Board of Health should ask the Barnstable County Health Department to computerize the town's underground fuel tank records to facilitate monitoring and removal.

2) Testing on 24 residential underground tanks within the vicinity should be initiated with priority given to older tanks in close proximity to the Pamet.

3) Tanks with discontinued use should be removed, as currently enforced by the Board of Health.

4) No new commercial underground fuel tanks should be installed within the river recharge area except to replace old tanks. (In July 1986 the Board of Health adopted a health regulation to prohibit the installation of underground home heating oil tanks throughout the town.)

5) Hydrocarbon testing of the soil and water near Wilders Dike should continue to determine the extent of oil contamination there.

II.B.3.e - Stormwater Runoff (p. 72)

1) Drainage from Route 6 should not be discharged directly into the river as at present. Leaching catch basins and overland surface flow should be encouraged as an alternative.

2) The stormwater outfall pipe at the Meetinghouse Road landing should be removed and redesigned. Drainage at the Pamet Harbor parking lot should be improved during the upgrading of the boat ramp to prevent runoff from entering the harbor directly.

3) Oil traps and a maintenance program should be installed in existing catch basins.

4) Outfall pipes should be tested by county or state agencies to determine their pollutant load.

5) Catch basins should be cleaned annually.

6) Proper land management, discouraging the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers should be employed on hill sides sloping into the river.

II.B.3.f - Ground Water Quality (p. 74)

1) Road salting should be reduced to a 4:1 mix of sand to salt and to 150 pounds per lane-mile.

2) The Board of Health should investigate causes of elevated sodium and nitrates in identified wells. The Water Quality Advisory Committee should coordinate a well testing program with Barnstable County.

3) Land use recommendations in this plan should be adopted to protect existing private water supplies.

II.B.3.g - Eutrophication (p. 76)

1) The results of the upper Pamet eutrophication study should be examined by the National Park Service and Truro Conservation Commission. Reducing existing nutrient inputs should be considered.

2) A analysis of the effects of removing various dikes and other obstructions to tidal flow in the Pamet should include a study of the potential benefit such a move might have on eutrophication.

II.B.3.h - Landfill (p. 78)

1) The National Park Service should be encouraged to cooperate in the proposed town study of the landfill leachate.

2) The Town should continue to support SEMASS, the waste-to-energy plant proposed for Rochester, Mass. (The Town Meeting voted in 1985 to participate in this project.)

3) The septage lagoons should be fenced or otherwise secured at the landfill.

4) The lagoons should be upgraded to accept the increased volume of septic system pumping recommended in this plan. The town should continue to participate in the design of a regional treatment plant with Wellfleet and Provincetown.

II.B.3.i - Agriculture (p. 79)

1) The Town should acknowledge the beneficial role played by agriculture in preserving the rural character of the town. Innovative zoning and tax assessing practices should be instituted to encourage the continued existence of farms in Truro.

2) The operators of existing or potential farms should investigate the benefits of the Agriculture Preservation Restriction Program. The Truro Conservation Trust could provide technical assistance about the program.

3) Proper waste management plans should be developed for

farms near the Pamet with the assistance of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service.

II.B.3.j - Erosion and Sedimentation (p. 80)

1) A five-mile per hour speed limit should be enforced throughout the river.

2) A study should be performed to investigate the feasibility and advisability of re-introducing tidal flow to certain sections of the freshwater Pamet as a means of increasing water flow and reducing sedimentation.

3) Drywells should be installed on homes near the river to prevent erosion of steep slopes.

4) Unvegetated hillsides should be stabilized with plantings of indigenous species with the assistance of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service.

5) Bulkhead and seawalls should be discouraged for erosion control when they interrupt wetland transition zones and act as visual intrusions. The bulkhead at the Truro Post Office, however, should be repaired due to its proximity to the stream.

6) A 100-foot construction setback from wetlands, including coastal banks, should be established to prevent erosion.

7) See also the recommendations in the "Pamet Harbor" section.

II.B.3.k - Acidification (p. 83)

1) The Town and the National Park Service should continue to monitor acid levels in the Pamet to uncover any trends in increasing acidity.

II.B.4 - Ditching and Diking (p. 85)

1) The town, the National Park Service and the Truro Conservation Trust should be encouraged to conduct studies on the effects of re-introducing tidal flow to certain segments of the Pamet. (In 1986 the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the Trust Conservation Trust initiated a hydraulic modelling study of the Pamet as the first step to predict physical changes.)

2) Similar tidal flow studies on the Herring River in Wellfleet should be consulted.

3) The Conservation Commission, Cape Cod Mosquito Control Project and the National Park Service should develop an integrated pest management plan for the Pamet to reduce Mosquito Control's reliance on ditching.

4) A full Environmental Impact Report should be prepared in the event that the state decides to widen Route 6 through the Pamet Valley. The Report should analyze options to increase water flow under the highway either by construction of a bridge or larger culvert.

II.B.5 - Pamet Harbor (p. 94)

1) A dredging/beach nourishment project should be conducted on an experimental basis to determine the feasibility of a regular dredging program in the Harbor. Priority should be

given to maintaining the existing licensed channel from the boat ramp to the Bay and depositing the dredge spoils on the eroded foreshore of Gull Island north of the jetties. A channel depth of four feet at low water would be consistent with the goal of the Pamet serving as a small-boat, recreational harbor. The best available measures to protect shellfish should be incorporated in any dredging proposal.

2) The Board of Selectmen should request an amended order from the Wetlands Restriction Program to permit dredging of the previously-licensed channel. (In 1986 the Selectmen made this request.)

3) The existing dredged mooring basin should not be enlarged. Innovative mooring practices should instead be encouraged.

4) Dredging outside of the licensed channel should not be permitted. Boating should be regarded as tidal-dependent outside the channel limits.

5) The Town should attempt to participate in a coordinated, regional dredging project to derive cost savings, if dredging is proposed.

6) The Pamet Harbor Committee should be expanded to include representation of other public interests to address their concerns in establishing a long-term harbor management plan. The Harbor Committee should recognize the effects of upriver activities on harbor management.

7) If channel maintenance proceeds, mooring fees should be increased to at least \$50 per year to offset town investments in the harbor.

8) The boat ramp should be upgraded and widened to alleviate traffic congestion at the parking lot. Traffic studies should be conducted to determine the capacity and safety of Depot Road for boat-trailerage.

9) A considerable percentage of local harbor fees should be reserved annually in a harbor maintenance fund by town meeting to fund dredging and related studies and improvements.

10) The Conservation Commission and Harbormaster should cooperate in identifying private docks, floats, walkways and other structures in or near the river that are suspected of not being licensed under state waterways and wetlands regulations. Compliance should be sought or removal ordered.

II.B.6 - Shellfish Management (p. 106)

1) Protection of water quality should be considered the top shellfish management priority. See "Water Quality" section of this plan.

2) A shellfish management plan should be developed.

3) A Shellfish Advisory Committee should be established to prepare the shellfish management plan.

4) The present ban on commercial shellfishing and summer shellfishing should remain in effect to conserve the stock.

5) Non-resident permit fees should be increased to \$25 per year.

6) The town should enhance its propagation efforts.

7) Catch limits for oysters and mussels should be considered as a conservation measure.

8) Annual catch report data should be refined.

9) Enforcement should be visible and information signs should be kept up to date.

10) The shellfish management plan should consider the feasibility and advisability of a private aquaculture program to enhance seed production.

11) Any harbor dredging should include best available measures to prevent shellfish disturbance.

II.B.7 - Scenic Values (p. 120)

1) The Truro Historical Commission should investigate the need for several limited local historic districts in the Pamet Valley.

2) Construction setbacks from roads and sidelines should be explored to reduce intrusion on public scenic values.

II.B.8 - Recreation (p. 129)

1) The old railroad dike from Corn Hill parking lot south to the harbor, now owned by the town, should be developed with limited improvements for use as a nature observation path to encourage walkers. (In 1986 the Truro Boy Scout Troop began work on this project with Conservation Commission and Selectmen approval.)

2) The Conservation Commission and the Massachusetts Audubon Society should be encouraged to protect tern nesting areas on the foreshores of the barrier beaches at the mouth of the Pamet.

3) Until the town can provide better beach patrol, off-road vehicles (ORV) should not be permitted north of Fisher Beach and south of Corn Hill between Memorial Day and Labor Day. ORVs should be completely prohibited from operating along the marsh edges throughout the Pamet.

4) The National Park Service should be encouraged to revitalize the Pamet Cranberry Bog educational exhibit on North Pamet Road. The Cape Cod Cranberry Growers Association should be asked to help in this regard.

5) The Selectmen and Town Counsel should investigate the legal responsibilities concerning the continued use of the Depot Road Beach (Grandmothers Beach) in close proximity to the boat anchorage.

6) A boardwalk should be installed from the parking lot to Corn Hill Beach for improved access by the disabled.