



Town of Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts  
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March 2014 Report

First off, I want to acknowledge that Jason did a great job while I was away for an extended vacation last month. He also ordered most of the materials needed to build a small tidal upweller including the trays that will be needed to grow out the small seed oysters for the Community Preservation Act funded project.

There are still a few scallopers going most every day. Possibly because we have had to declare 30 freeze days since January first. That equates to six weeks of lost fishing days; though some were made up when a Saturday make up day was allowed.

I am attending the Annual Eelgrass Summit meeting in Boston on March 18<sup>th</sup>. I am a co-author of a poster presentation for this meeting. The poster was on the diversity and distribution of invasive sea squirts along the northeast coast. In working with Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute and the Environmental Protection Agency, we asked other researchers to send us their observations of these species from New Jersey to Newfoundland. This is important as several species are colonizing on the eelgrass. This causes further stress on the plant, slows the growth, reduces the number of new shoots per plant, and may hasten the loss of the eelgrass meadows. There is a potential that we may be able to discover a method/strategy to reduce their detrimental impacts.

At the end of this month I will be attending the National Shellfisheries Association annual conference. I am a co-author of a presentation to be given on April first. The title is "*Using a system level approach to bay scallop enhancement and management*". This is based primarily on how we are trying to manage our bay scallop fishery in Lagoon Pond. This includes the work the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) did in Lagoon Pond to create a computer model of Lagoon Pond. This modeling has modified where and when to seed out the scallop seed each year. The abstract of this talk will be published in a future issue of the Journal of Shellfish Research.

While at the conference I will be meeting with folks from the EPA Atlantic Ecology Division about a potential salt marsh restoration project. Areas in Sengekontacket Pond suffered erosion of salt marshes from severe nor'easters of the past couple of years. The restoration will improve the resiliency of the leading marsh edges and increase natural attenuation of nitrogen. Recent reports have shown that the ribbed mussel (important part of saltmarsh restoration) filters the water as it feeds and is efficient in clearing suspended solids from the water and improving the clarity thus allowing more sunlight penetration through the water.

I have mailed out quote requests for the annual quahog relay. I want to purchase a minimum of 500 bushels again this year. All the bushels will go into Sengekontacket Pond. I need to state which fisherman will be supplying the quahogs in the permit application. As soon as we get all the quotes in I'll apply for the permit.

We have received a 100 hp outboard that was declared surplus by the Fire Department's dive team. We are putting this motor onto the scallop boat to replace the current undersized outboard currently on the boat.

The Board of Selectmen held a hearing for the aquaculture permit applied for by Dan and Greg Martino. After some discussion and taking public comment the hearing was closed and the vote was unanimous. This vote only allows the Martinos to move ahead and apply for additional state and federal permits. If these permits are obtained, the selectmen will need to take a second vote to actually issue the permit.

The MVSG Spring Fund Raiser has been scheduled for April 12<sup>th</sup> from 5 to 10 at the Chilmark Community Center. This year there will be a chowder contest and a silent auction. As you are aware that the Town's supply most of the operating funding we need to raise several thousand additional dollars to balance the budget.

The latest edition of the prestigious WHOI "Oceanus" magazine has an article about the invasive jellyfish known as the clinging jellyfish that we found in Farm Pond this past fall.

Respectfully submitted,