

**MANCHESTER COASTAL STREAM TEAM**  
**Minutes of March 10, 2025**  
**Virtual, 7:00 pm**

Members present: Jessica Lamothe, Chair; Lynn Atkinson; Francie Caudill; Deb Fraize; Patti Mitchell

Absent: Chris Comb

Also present: Barbara Warren, Salem Sound Coastwatch; Geof Day  
Jessica called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm

**Current Business**

Fish discussion/Gloucester Gas Light Restoration Project

- After discussions with Wayne Castonguay and Geof Day brought up concerns about the overall drop in the level of the aquifer and that impact on the fish in our brooks, Jessica had a meeting with DPW director Chuck Dam and Town Engineer Nate DeRosiers to ask about whether the town was considering joining the MWRA. Jessica learned that any tie-in with the MWRA water system would be at least 10-20 years out and, with a huge price tag, is unlikely. There is also the fact that the town may have to treat water from the Lincoln Street well for PFAS, so if money has been invested there, the likelihood of the town investing in joining the MWRA is further decreased.
  - Jessica also asked Chuck and Nate about the possibility of the wastewater treatment plan being moved to a location where the treated water could be returned to the aquifer. This is a possibility, but the DEP limits the amount that groundwater can be raised, and the town has been told they should not give up the permit to release into the ocean.
  - Finally, Jessica discussed our proposed projects to submit to the Gloucester Gas Light restoration project. Chuck and Nate agreed the town was likely to get to the culverts at some point so submitting the Coach Field parking lot project made sense to them.
- Geof Day believes there are three small separate populations of native brook trout in Sawmill Brook, due to water depletion during dry periods limiting the ability for the fish to move to the upstream areas. He believes babies can be carried downstream with the water flow.
  - He expressed the opinion that there may not be much that can be done on the Essex County Club golf course to maintain or increase stream flow. He felt the only beneficial project would be to create more shade over the brook with trees and plantings and that seems unlikely to happen.
  - He also said that the proposal to use a video/AI system to identify and count fish in Sawmill Brook will not be happening as it is not feasible for the small populations we have.
- Jessica found the project design proposals from Tighe and Bond's 2016 CZM Report see here: <file:///C:/Users/persb/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/ASCPCCYH/Sawmill%20Brook%20Conceptual%20Design%20Summary%20Sheets%20Jan%202016.pdf>
- The consensus of the group is that the project to submit to the Gloucester Gas Light program is the renovation of the Coach Field Parking lot (corner of Brook Street and Norwood Avenue) to pervious paving. This would reduce sediment flowing downhill to the brook which would be better for fish spawning and would decrease the thermal load of the brook. Jessica will contact Brian Kelder at NOAA to discuss this idea.

- Geof's response to a question about genetic testing of the water samples and fish fin clips was that GMGI may do this work, with the support of Cell Signaling Technology.

#### **Updates from other committees Stream Team members sit on**

- Patti reported that parking and signage at Powder House Hill trail heads work is ongoing.

#### **Salem Sound Coastwatch Updates**

- A reminder that the March 19 lecture in SSCW's "Underwater in Salem Sound" series will be on coastal resiliency in the Salem Sound communities, including the Masconomo Park project to create a "floodable park". Register on the Abbott Library website for the Zoom link. For all SSCW events, see [salemsound.org](http://salemsound.org)

The minutes of February 3, 2025 were approved.

**The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 7, 2025 at 7 pm.**

This meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Minutes submitted by Francie Caudill