



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
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PUBLIC MEETING – September 21, 2006
Massachusetts Estuaries Project

**Pleasant Bay Coastal Embayments, Towns of Brewster, Chatham, Harwich, and Orleans
Draft Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) For Total Nitrogen
Cape Cod Watershed**

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and the Pleasant Bay Resource Management Alliance (Alliance) announce the availability, for public comment, of the Draft Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) for Total Nitrogen in sixteen coastal water bodies in Pleasant Bay with watersheds in Brewster, Chatham, Harwich, and Orleans. The embayments are: Meetinghouse Pond, the River, Lonnie's Pond, Areys Pond, Namequoit Pond, Paw Wah Pond, Quanset Pond, Round Cove, Muddy Creek, Ryders Cove, Crows Pond, Bassing Harbor, Frost Fish Creek, Pochet Neck, Little Pleasant Bay, and Chatham Harbor. This Draft TMDL Report, number MA 96-TMDL-12, is required by the EPA Federal Clean Water Act section 303d. This TMDL and the Technical Report on which it is based have been prepared as part of the Massachusetts Estuaries Project, a collaborative effort of the MassDEP, the University of Massachusetts School of Marine Science and Technology, the Cape Cod Commission, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, as well as municipalities and watershed associations in southeastern Massachusetts, to identify and address nitrogen pollution in 89 estuaries in southeastern Massachusetts.

A TMDL establishes a maximum amount of pollution that a water body can accept and still meet water quality standards. The TMDL serves as the regulatory and technical basis for developing integrated water resource management plans designed to restore the health of an impaired water body. Four of these Pleasant Bay embayments are listed on the 2004 Massachusetts Integrated List of Waters (Category 5) as impaired primarily for nutrients and/or pathogens.

MassDEP has prepared the Draft TMDL report for controlling excess nutrients (nitrogen), the primary cause of eutrophication that chokes waterbodies with harmful algae, depletes oxygen for fish and shellfish populations, and destroys eelgrass beds that are critical in estuarine ecosystems. The primary "locally controllable" source of nitrogen in these Pleasant Bay embayments is sanitary wastewater from septic systems. Stormwater runoff, leaching lawn fertilizers, discharges from agricultural land uses, and atmospheric deposition, also contribute varying quantities of nitrogen to Pleasant Bay's coastal rivers, ponds, and harbors. The goal is to achieve state water quality standards for Class SA and SB waters as defined in Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards, 314 CMR 4.00. The water quality standards of particular interest are for dissolved oxygen, nutrients, aesthetics, excess plant biomass, and nuisance

This information is available in alternate format. Call Donald M. Gomes, ADA Coordinator at 617-556-1057.

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vegetation. Standards for Class SA and SB waters provide numerical and narrative criteria to meet designated uses, including the support of habitat for fish and other aquatic wildlife.

A copy of this Draft TMDL, the Massachusetts Estuaries Project Draft Final Technical Report for the Pleasant Bay TMDL, and a further explanation of the TMDL Program are available on MassDEP's website at: <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/resources/esttmdls.htm>. The reports are also available on the Alliance's website, www.pleasantbay.org.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) will hold a public meeting on Thursday, September 21, 2006 from 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm at the Nauset Regional Middle School, 70 Route 28, Orleans, MA to discuss and respond to any public comments on the report.

MassDEP will consider all comments and the Draft TMDL Report will be revised as appropriate prior to submittal to EPA Region 1 for approval. All public comments, which should refer to report number MA 96-TMDL-12, must be received in writing or in electronic format by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 20, 2006 and addressed to:

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