



Spring 2023

FISH News

Fenwick Island

Society of Homeowners

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Rolling into Summer . . .

Pelicans have taken up surfing above the break of the wave, following the crest up toward the beach. You think they will get caught, but they don't. Flocks of terns are eating something close to shore. Ospreys are fishing. Winter is over.

To everyone's relief, the beach replenishment is happening in May not July. The beach took several hits last fall, and high tide waves roll up near dunes.

The beach crossings have lacked the Mobi mats, and this has hampered some FISH members. The photo shows mats getting pounded last October. It seems that re-installation is awaiting repairs.

We Hope to See you for FISH Annual Potluck Dinner on June 3 at Town Hall

The Annual Potluck Dinner is coming up soon on Saturday June 3. Doors open at 5:30 pm. We will be back at Town Hall. We are very excited about our speaker. See details on the back of this newsletter.

Cool Street Signs Offer Images for Kids

How many times do we see kids on the beach, needing help to get back to their families but not remembering the block they came from?

New Idea – make signs for kids who don't read or pay attention to signs! Use pictures that are engaging for kids and easy to remember.

This was the brainchild of FISH's own Board Member and beach maven Anne Hodges, who pitched it to the Beach committee and worked with a manufacturer to create the signs. Keep an eye out!



FISH Board member Anne Hodges shows the signs to be placed at beach crossings for kids.

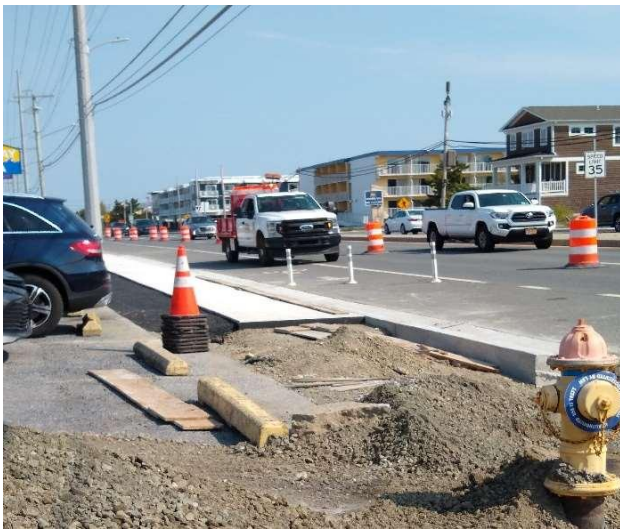
Hot Topics

It Is Coming – New bridge over ditch

We had heard that plans were afoot to replace the bridge over the Ditch for Rt 54 Lighthouse Road. This has been confirmed and will start this year. DelDOT says they are not planning to close the bridge during the summers. The plan has three lanes across the bridge; the center can be used for emergencies when traffic is stuck. They are also building sidewalks and pedestrian features on the bridge and for a block on each side of the crossing. The rest of Rt 54 to Coastal Highway seems to be in a black hole of inattention.

At last - sidewalks installed on SR-1

After very much ado, five blocks of sidewalk are now in place on the west side of SR-1. Former Council member Vicki Carmean raised funds for this work during her decades of effort. We look forward to a State capital project to do the rest.



Right whales at risk: few babies

The population of Right whales off the Atlantic coast is falling. A few hundred remain, but not many are being born, possibly because of diminished food sources. Many whales are injured by vessels.

These whales are going to new areas looking for more of the tiny plankton they consume in mass quantities. New studies will look at possible impacts on plankton by offshore wind farms on the sea floor.

FISH will feature a talk about marine mammals at our annual potluck. Details are on the back.

Mandate for more parking at businesses

After almost a year, the Town Council approved new rules for increased parking spaces for businesses. The details are complicated, but this is intended to get new businesses to provide a greater share of the parking for their customers and employees in the commercial zone. Many residents do not want to see business customers parking in the residential district.

Maryland, others expand offshore wind

The State of Maryland has increased its commitment to power from offshore wind production, taking actions expected to lead to more intensive offshore wind development at existing leasing areas off Fenwick and Ocean City.

The federal BOEM, in charge of leasing and development, had a review last summer to identify issues for the environmental impact analysis for the US Wind lease but no word on next steps.

Other areas along the east are being leased, and reviews are proceeding. Later developments are mostly further offshore and less impactful on coastal communities. This turns out to be one of those cases where it is not beneficial to be first. A recent wrinkle are concerns raised by the Department of Defense about some areas.

War time tower 3 open

After many years of work, the war time tower 3 is now open to the public south of Dewey. Word is that there is an amazing view of the ocean and Bays from the top.



Now we say “Cannabis”

The Delaware Legislature legalized sale of small quantities of marijuana for personal use. The Governor is letting the bill go into effect. The industry will be regulated, and outlets will need licenses before opening. The state expects to approve about 30 licenses by Nov 2024. Municipalities can ban such “cannabis” outlets within their borders.

Navigating swirling bay waters: resiliency and pollution

Resiliency. Resiliency. Resiliency

Everybody's talking about "resiliency," which is responding or adapting to flooding, impacts of sea level rise, and climate change.

Resiliency initiatives are emerging in Delaware, spurred in part by federal dollars. They are not limited to flooding, but it is a key topic, especially for Fenwick.

There are lots of studies.

The Town of Fenwick Island released its study, prepared by the consulting firm AECOM. The State DelDOT has a resiliency study for SR-1 through Sussex County. The US Army Corps of Engineers started a study of hydrological and other traits of the Inland Bays. See links in the Resources.

We already know that flooding is increasing along the bay side of Fenwick and due to a combination of sea level rise, increased intensity of rainfall (more rain in shorter time), and decreased capacity to absorb precipitation due to more land coverage by pavement, loss of wetlands, and hardened shorelines.

Fenwick faces the immediate flooding from precipitation that accumulates on the highway and shopping centers. There are also increases in the height and frequency of tidal flooding on the Bay side. Bay flooding may also be increased by upstream precipitation. These may or may not occur at the same time. Solutions may differ.

The Fenwick resiliency study, released in March, reported expected future flooding levels that seem to be pretty much the same as prior studies. The Town is considering markers to help people envision what these numbers mean.

The consultant recommended higher bulkheads to exclude tidal water in most parts of the bayside, possibly with berms in some places. For this to work, everyone with property bordering the bays or canals would have to participate. The needed height of the bulkheads remains in discussion. Funding is an issue.

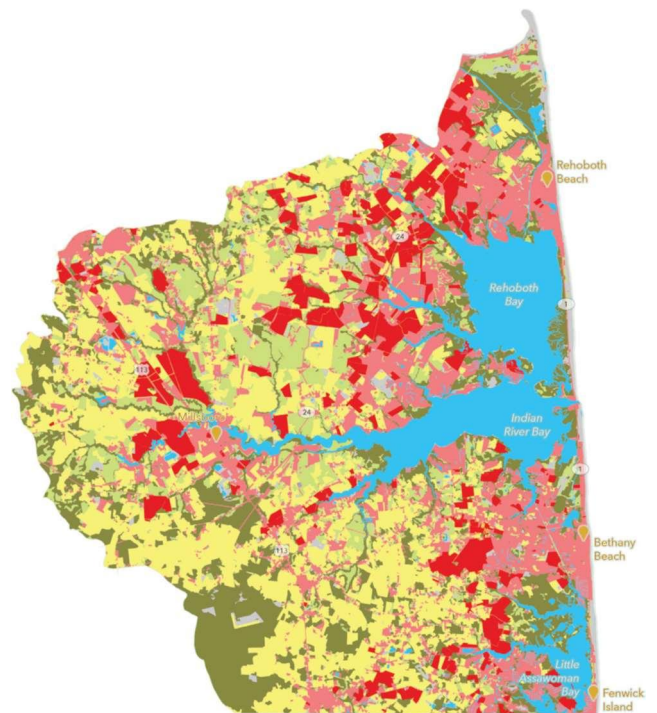
The overall approach to resiliency is far from settled. Nobody controls the entire solution. This seems to be one of those cases where you do not necessarily want to be first, as solutions become clearer over time.

Environment Better in Little Assawoman

The Center for Inland Bays released its long-delayed report card for the Inland Bays in March. Overall, it assigned a D grade for Rehoboth, Indian River, and Little Assawoman Bay and their tributaries. See the news clips cited in the resources.

What news outlets did not cover are better results for Little Assawoman Bay. We have better metrics for water quality for nutrient pollution (nitrogen and phosphorous), clarity of water, and harmful microbes. Little Assawoman Bay is the only area where bay grasses are still found.

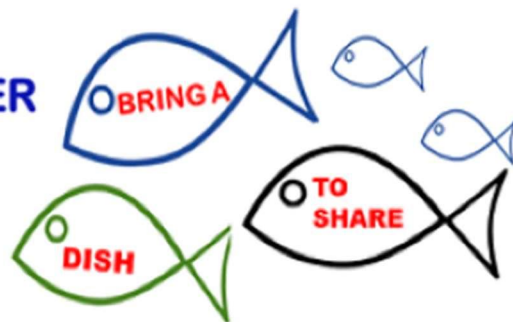
Conversion from septic tanks to sewer systems was successful and reduced pollution. Some agricultural practices have reduced nutrient inputs.



Development lacking adequate buffers from shorelines is the greatest source of environmental degradation for Little Assawoman Bay. Map Credit: Center for Inland Bays

However, on-going runoff is a major concern from agricultural, residential, commercial uses. **Larger buffers with trees** are needed between development and shorelines. Though Sussex County adopted a rule for buffers last year, it was not strong enough to control releases. They will only increase as more land is developed. Actions are needed.

Please Join FISH for our
ANNUAL POTLUCK DINNER
SATURDAY JUNE 3
5:30 to 7:30 pm
Fenwick Island Town Hall



Special Guest Speaker

Suzanne Thurmann of MERR - marine mammal rescue center for S DE
Marine Mammals and Turtles of Coastal Delaware

Please bring:

- a dish with serving utensils to share
- **BYOB** Bring your own beverages and cups

We provide: place settings, eating utensils, napkins, ice

Doors open at 530; dinner at 600; talk at 630
Reserve your spots by May 26:

- Email to fenwickneighbors@gmail.com or
- Phone to Lynn Andrews 302-581-0264

Calendar

June 3. 530 PM. **FISH Annual Potluck Dinner.** Town Hall. Speaker Suzanne Thurman from MERR on Marine Mammals and Turtles of the Delaware Coast.

July 8 or 15. 9 am. **FISH Annual Meeting and Candidates Forum (if needed).**

August 5. 1 to 5 pm **Election Day for Town.** Vote at Town Hall or submit absentee ballot

About FISH

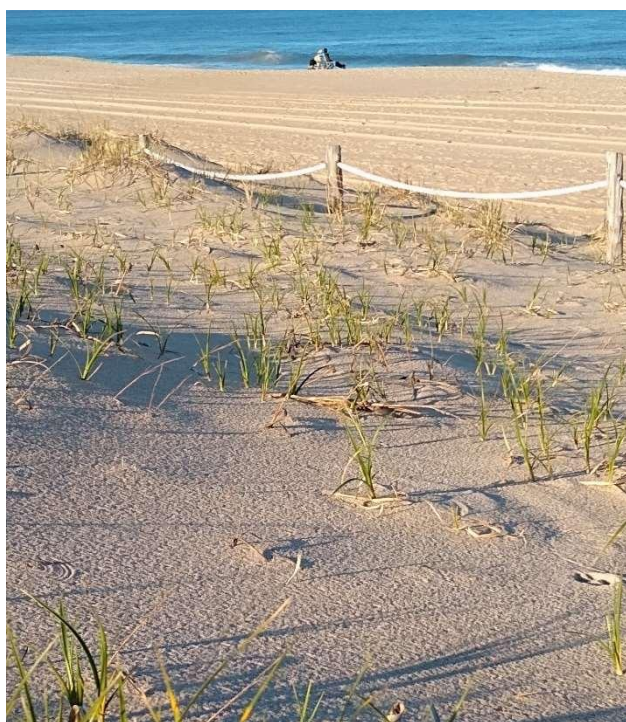
FISH is a volunteer, membership organization. Our purpose is to maintain the community and family-oriented environment and special beauty of Fenwick and to build connections among members. We depend on your support.

For our members, we produce **two newsletters** per year, plus 4 to 6 **FISH-Net email updates** as warranted. We host an **Annual Dinner** in the spring and a **Forum for Candidates** for Town Council in July

To join or renew:

If you are not a member, we hope you will take a moment to renew your membership or join for 2023. Dues are \$20. Please fill out the 2023 FISH Membership form and mail it back to us with your check to PO Box 641, Bethany Beach DE 19930.

The form is included with the newsletter or email us.



Green sprouts of dune grass foretell summer

Board for 2022 - 2023

Amy D Kyle, President and Newsletter Editor
Anne Hodges, Treasurer
Lynn Andrews, Janet Hess, Barbara McCoy

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