

# The Town of Hull

## Beach Management Committee

would like to answer some of your most frequently asked questions about North Nantasket Beach (Phipps St. to Pt. Allerton).

Below, please find our answers to these questions.

### What governs the way the beach is managed?

The beach is managed according to the North Nantasket Beach Management Plan (BMP), a plan that was developed by the Beach Management Committee and approved by the Board of Selectmen. The plan attempts to balance access and protection and must comply with the regulations of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

### Where can I see the Beach Management Plan?

The Beach Management Plan is available on the Town of Hull website:

[www.town.hull.ma.us/Public\\_Documents/HullMA\\_conservation/BeachManagementPlan.pdf](http://www.town.hull.ma.us/Public_Documents/HullMA_conservation/BeachManagementPlan.pdf)

### Who is responsible for cleaning the beach?

The Department of Public Works (DPW) cleans the beach following the guidance of the BMP. The Conservation Administrator and/or the Beach Management Committee (BMC) provide an annual training for DPW staff.

### When is the beach cleaned?

The first beach cleaning is scheduled to be done before Memorial Day. This cleaning generally involves the removal of trash and debris, as well as large items deposited on the beach by winter storms. Regular beach cleaning involves the removal of trash and debris left by visitors or washed in by the tides. From Memorial Day to June 30th trash and debris are to be removed 3-7 days a week; July 1 to Labor Day, trash and debris should be removed 5-7 days a week; Labor Day to September 30th the town is to attempt to clean the beach 3-7 days a week.

### May the dunes be cleaned?

Yes, DPW staff may walk into the dune to remove trash. This must be done by hand and carefully, so as not to destroy the fragile beachgrass.

### Without barrels on the beach, what should be done with trash?

The policy is carry in/carry out. Whatever you bring to the beach should leave with you.

### When are the volunteer beach cleanings and how can I find out about them?

The volunteer beach cleaning days are the first Saturday of June, July and August. Information on the clean-ups will be listed on the cable channel, in the Hull Times, and on our Facebook page

<http://www.facebook.com/HullBeachCommittee>

### What is the policy regarding seaweed management?

Seaweed is an important part of the beach ecosystem. It provides nutrients and seeds for vegetation, foraging habitat for shorebirds and, helps to accumulate sand on the beach. However, removal of excess seaweed may occur in some circumstances depending on amounts, odor, and infestations. If the Health Department investigates and declares that seaweed accumulation constitutes a threat to public health or safety, the town must work to remove the seaweed that has created the emergency.



### How is the seaweed removed from the beach?

Seaweed is removed only from the area between mean high water and ten feet seaward of the dune. Seaweed may be removed with hand rakes or, if the accumulation is large enough, with machinery. In addition, the BMP now allows the DPW to push seaweed into the water on an outgoing tide. This option was added because the Town has very little remaining space in the landfill and, removal of seaweed from the beach tends to remove significant quantities of sand despite best efforts to separate sand from seaweed. The BMC has investigated alternative options for excess seaweed but, to date, no viable alternative has been found.

### Why is it so important to protect the dune?

Flood damage from coastal storms is a primary concern for our town. Since 1978, nearly \$14 million in flood insurance claims have been paid to property owners; a significant portion of these claims is from properties protected by the dunes and Nantasket Beach. By preventing floodwaters from enveloping our homes and streets, the dune plays a critical role in preventing storm damage. Due to the dune system, in recent years Hull has been able to avoid significant property damage that have impacted other coastal communities.

## Why plant beachgrass?

Beachgrass traps the sand, which helps to maintain and strengthen a healthy dune system. Dunes are designed to be sacrificial so that they may be destroyed during coastal storms instead of our homes. Most of the time grass planting is done to restore areas of the dune that have been washed away during storm events.

## How can we protect the dune?

- 1) Use only town pathways at street endings to visit the beach. Walking on the dune destroys beachgrass and leaves the dune much more vulnerable to damage and blowouts during coastal storms. The town pathways have been carefully designed to provide access and still maintain maximum protection against storms.
- 2) Join the volunteers who plant beachgrass every year in March. Beachgrass (and other dune vegetation) helps to stabilize and build the dune. It traps sand that would otherwise blow off the beach. Our dune is referred to as a sacrificial dune. This means that during storm events, the dune may be sacrificed to protect us. Annual beachgrass planting helps to restore the dune.
- 3) Become a dune watchdog - ask people to please protect the dune by not playing in it or walking on it

## Why can't rocks be removed from the beach?

Just as the dune protects against flooding, the beach serves as the front line of protection. Rocks and sand are all part of the beach system that, by reducing wave energy, provides critical storm damage protection for the town.

The natural profile of the beach, created by waves, tides and currents, maximizes wave dissipation. For this reason, it is not generally permitted to move, or remove, rocks and sand from the beach. The BMC has supported alternatives to moving and removing rocks. For example, the town now has a permit to place sand over the rocks at town pathways in order to provide more comfortable access to the beach.

## What role does the Conservation Commission play in beach management?

The Conservation Commission is a seven-member board appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The Commission reviews all requests for permits under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (WPA). The WPA jurisdiction includes beaches and dunes, so most activities in these areas will require permits from the Commission. The Beach Management Plan includes the Conservation Commission and the Conservation Administrator in many aspects of oversight and compliance with the plan. The Chair of the Commission and the Conservation Administrator coordinated the 2007 and 2012 updates to the Beach Management Plan.



## What does the Beach Management Committee do?

The Beach Management Committee is an advisory committee to the Board of Selectmen. The goal of the BMC is to balance storm protection with access and enjoyment of North Nantasket Beach. To do this, the BMC works with the Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Coastal Zone Management, and the Massachusetts Department of Environment Protection to accomplish goals related to the beach and beach management practices such as designing and implementing dune openings at street endings to allow access all year round, while still providing protection. The BMC coordinates the annual beachgrass planting and monthly beach cleanups. The BMC also studies and reviews various issues relating to the beach. For example, after much study, the BMC determined that the seawall at the DCR beach was too far seaward and causing massive erosion, and devised how to best deal with the situation. The BMC drafted the Beach Management Plan for the cleaning and care of the beach.

## How can I join the Beach Management Committee?

The Board of Selectmen appoints members of the Beach Management Committee. Anyone wishing to become a member should write to the Town Clerk and request an interview with the Board of Selectmen. However, one need not be a member to come to the meetings and participate in all discussions. The Beach Management Committee meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall. All meetings are open to the public and we welcome public input and involvement.

**Town of Hull Beach Management Committee  
is on Facebook**  
<http://www.facebook.com/HullBeachCommittee>