

ECOLOGY - BOSTON HARBOR

Much is being said about the pollution problem in Boston Harbor. Studies are being made as to the sources in the domains of Federal, State and Civic organizations. Governor Sargent in the fall of 1969 focused on the severity of the problem stating that massive federal assistance would be necessary to correct the situation.

The industrial and human wastes certainly fall in the category that, in all probability, will require federal assistance in one way or another and will take some considerable time to totally solve. However, there are hundreds of thousands of people who like to enjoy the water of Boston Harbor for the purpose of swimming, boating, fishing, scuba diving, water skiing, etc. These people cognizant of another aspect of the pollution problem that correction of which could be forthcoming in a reasonably short period of time if recognition was given to the problem and positive action taken by those responsible.

The problem which the report cites herewith is the problem of solid wastes that litter the shore line and islands of the entire harbor area. In short, the word is "trash". It consists of lumber, bottles, cans, tires, trees and trash wood of all description, pieces of rotting piers and pieces of derelict boats, in fact, anything that will float. Except for the public beaches which are kept reasonably clean on a continuous maintenance program by the various cities and towns to whom they belong, the rest of the shore line is an intolerable mess.

Responsibility for cleaning up the shore line has never been fixed.

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What has to be recognized about this problem is in several parts.

1. The tremendous amount of litter mentioned in this report.
2. Because this litter floats, it is constantly migrating with every high tide, change of wind and storm.
3. It is a constant serious threat to boating, swimming and water skiing.

Probably because it is migratory and in such volume, private shoreline owners feel, why bother, it is here to-day, will be gone to-morrow and besides, what's the use, nobody else is cleaning up enough to make any difference? Also, probably because nobody makes an issue of it, the cities and towns take no initiative for correction.

The matter is now at the intolerable state and it can be corrected with recognition and positive action.

The Norfolk County Conservation District, whose real of concern includes the use of our natural resources for recreation and the safe and aesthetic preserving of the same, does hereby focus on this matter which is of so great a need and concern to so many.

A massive publicity campaign would get the show on the road. A coordinating committee in each community along the shore line could be formed to organize interested groups including yacht clubs, marinas, boy scouts, sporting groups (fishermen, skin and scuba divers) property owners, municipalities, and any others interested.

A coordinating head appointed by the Governor could tie the whole project together.

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On one weekend, done in a coordinated planned effort, thousands of tons of derelict trash could be burned and forever removed from the shore of Boston Harbor. This report in specifying burning recognizes this to be the only quick and efficient means of disposal.

As our population grows, so does the need for this area to be safe and clean and also so does the amount of trash escalate. This situation cannot continue to go on unattended. Correction requires serious consideration for action.

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Norfolk Conservation District

460 Main St. • Walpole, Mass. 02081

Friend of Conservation:

The Norfolk County Conservation District has been made aware of the problem of the "Ecology of Boston Harbor" from a number of concerned sources. The Conservation District's realm involves the use of our natural resources for recreation and the safe and aesthetic preserving of the same. Because of the concern shown and the responsibility of the District board to help correct problems of this nature, the attached report and recommendation has been prepared.

This report is being widely circulated throughout the eastern part of the Commonwealth in the hope and anticipation that a response from those people affected by the problem can lead to an effort such as we have recently seen demonstrated on the Charles River.

Circulation of this report includes the Governor, Legislators, Mayors, and Boards of Selectmen along the coastal area together with yacht clubs, marinas, town conservation committees, press, radio and television stations.

Responses to this report sent to the Norfolk Conservation District office at the Norfolk County Agricultural High School, 460 Main Street, Walpole, will be compiled and forwarded to the Governor as evidence of the needs and interest.

Sincerely,

THE NORFOLK CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Richard C. Hill
Richard C. Hill
Secretary

RCH:mfm
5/27/70

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Communication from The Norfolk Conservation
District transmitting report on the problem
of the "Ecology of Boston Harbor"

June 8, 1970

6/8/70

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