July 5, 2022

**To:** Mr. John Judge, CEO, The Trustee’s of Reservations (TTOR)

**Subject:** Beach Management Plan (BMP) for Norton Point and Chappaquiddick Beaches, Edgartown

Dear Mr. Judge,

I am a permanent resident (***of/visitor to Martha’s Vineyard***.) I am also a (***beach goer/recreational surf angler/shell fisherman)***. In addition, I am a frequent user of TTOR owned or managed properties on Chappaquiddick/ Norton Point. I travel to the areas by use of an Over Sand Vehicle (OSV) and have been visiting these areas for more than *(****??****)* years.

TTOR’s years of managing these properties for public use and enjoyment should be considered with Charles Eliot’s goals when he created the organization so many years ago. Your draft BMP in so many ways ignores the public’s best interests. The following are major aspects that should be carefully re-examined.

**Surfishing-** Surfishing is an important part of the maritime culture and heritage on Martha’s Vineyard. It is a long standing activity practiced by hundreds of residents and visitors to the island. Much of it takes place on Norton Point and Chappaquiddick beaches. Many of those areas are accessible only by OSV’s which allow anglers the freedom to move and access historically good fishing areas which for the most part, are inaccessible by foot. Wasque Point (BMP Zone 3) is one of those places and arguably one of the best surfishing places on the entire east coast. In the spring and early summer, it is perhaps the top bluefishing spot in the entire country. OSV access to that area from Norton Point as well as Leland’s Beach is critical.

The Elbow on Cape Poge, inside Pocha Pond, and the Cape Poge Gut (Zones 10 &11) are also extremely productive surfishing spots and accessible only by OSV’s.

These areas are particularly important during the annual five week Marta’s Vineyard Striped Bass and Bluefish Derby. The loss of OSV access to these places would be devastating to both resident and visiting surf anglers. It would have an adverse affect on the entire Derby.

**Katama Bay –** (Zone 2 ) During the summer months prevailing southerly winds often create high surf and rip currents along south facing beaches on Norton Point. Unsafe conditions for families with younger children. In addition, unsupervised children are subject to crowded conditions and an unregulated and unsafe OSV corridor. Katama Bay provides the ideal refuge from those conditions. While the BMP makes provisions for limited OSV access to the Bay, it needs to be expanded to accommodate more families and vehicles.

**Shellfishing –** Recreationalshellfishing is also a very important part of the maritime culture on Martha’s Vineyard. In 2021 more than 900 recreational shellfishing permits were sold in Edgartown. Annually the Town of Edgartown Shellfish Department seeds millions of bay scallops in Cape Poge Bay and the income derived from the sale of permits, helps to offset the cost of the program. Almost all of the recreational Bay Scalloping takes place in Zones 7-11 of the BMP. Without bayside OSV access to those areas, recreational fishing for bay scallops in Edgartown will virtually cease to exist.

Any comprehensive plan is likely to have areas in it that should be addressed after additional public input. TTOR’s proposed BMP fails to demonstrate enough consideration for the people who love the beach and nature versus the birds who inhabit it seasonally. I have chosen just a few issues for a revised people friendly plan in the spirit of Charles Eliot’s vision. There are more!

John/Joan Doe

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