



THE BUZZARDS BAY PROJECT

US Environmental Protection Agency
WQE
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
Boston, MA 02203

Massachusetts Executive Office of
Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02202

AGENDA

State of The Bay Conference November 6, 1987

- 8:30 a.m. Registration
- 9:00 a.m. Welcome - Wendy Wiltse, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, & Bruce Tripp, Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.
- 9:15 a.m. Morning Panels - Shellfish Bed Closures: What Can We Do?, & Toxic Contaminants: Is Coastal Seafood Safe to Eat?.
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Afternoon Panels - Shellfish Bed Closures: What Can We Do?, & Eutrophication: Is Your Bay Getting Greener & Slimier?.
- 4:00 p.m. Tour of Massachusetts Maritime Academy's Ship, Patriot State
- 5:00 p.m. Cocktail Hour, Library, Massachusetts Maritime Academy
- 7:00 p.m. Annual Meeting, The Coalition for Buzzards Bay



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MEMORANDUM

TO: PANELISTS, STATE OF THE BAY CONFERENCE

FROM: BRUCE TRIPP, MASS EOEA *BT*
AND
WENDY WILTSE, U.S. EPA

DATE: NOVEMBER 16, 1987

SUBJECT: THANK YOU

Thank you very much for helping to make the recent workshop a success. Although we were almost overwhelmed with a large number of last minute registrants, the day went very well and we have received a consistently favorable review from those who attended. We feel that both the high interest level as shown by numbers of participants and the flurry of post-meeting compliments are largely due to your efforts.

We appreciate your willingness to help us begin the translation of good science into good policy.

Attachment: Distribution list

cc: J. Hoyte, EOE
M. Deland, EPA

BT/ay

Panelists
State of The Bay Conference
November 6, 1987

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State of the Bay Conference set for Nov.; public welcome

BUZZARDS BAY—A State of the Bay Conference, dealing with pollution and other problems in Buzzards Bay, will be held Nov. 6 and 7.

Sponsored by the Coalition for Buzzards Bay, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies, the conference will be held at Mass. Maritime Academy and the Inn at Buttermilk Bay.

The newly-formed coalition held its first board meeting Sept. 16, when incorporators Thomas Fantozzi of Bourne, George Hampson of Falmouth, and Dr. Alan L. Hankin, executive director of the Lloyd Center, named 24 board members.

They also announced the award of a \$20,000 grant from the EPA which will serve as seed money for the coalition to fund public participation activities in conjunction with the EPA-sponsored Buzzards Bay Project.

"The State of the Bay Conference will, in many ways, represent a turning point for Buzzards Bay," said Fantozzi, the coalition's

"The State of the Bay Conference will, in many ways, represent a turning point for Buzzards Bay," said Fantozzi, the coalition's president.

president.

"First, in Friday's session, sponsored by the EPA and the Lloyd Center, scientists from the Buzzards Bay Project will tell us what they have learned about the bay over two years of research," he said. "Second, on Friday evening, our annual meeting and banquet will be both a celebration of the initiation of the coalition and a call to action."

"Finally, during Saturday's sessions, sponsored by the coalition, participants will be presented with an overview of the State of the Bay and will be asked to join in a dialogue concerning how the coalition can be effective in working for a cleaner bay. The entire conference is, of course, open to the public and we encourage interested persons to call the coalition (759-5761, ext. 334) or

the Lloyd Center (990-0505) for more information," he added.

The Friday sessions will be held at the Inn at Buttermilk Bay, the Friday evening banquet in the Mass. Maritime Academy dining hall, and the Saturday sessions at MMA.

All participants must register in advance. The fee for the conference is \$35, which includes registration, two lunches and the banquet.

Among the board of directors of the coalition is Dwight Peavey, executive director of the Cape Cod Cranberry Growers Association in East Wareham. He holds a PhD in plant physiology and biochemistry and was a post doctoral investigator at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute.

The Providence Journal

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1987 M A-3

The Second Front Page

Buzzards Bay may get help for pollution that endangers its life

By ANN MACARI HEALEY
Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer

BOURNE, Mass. — Buzzards Bay, a 30-mile-long estuary seriously threatened by pollution, is getting an organization to fight for its survival.

The Coalition for Buzzards Bay was born July 28 with a \$20,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency, which has been studying the effects of pollution on the bay since 1985.

An outgrowth of the EPA study's Citizens Advisory Committee, the coalition — still in its formative stages — is housed at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy here.

Coalition members said their organization was long overdue for the bay, which contains 13,713 acres of contaminated shellfish beds and the nation's only underwater Superfund site.

Buzzards Bay stretches from the Cape Cod Canal to the Rhode Island border, its 10-mile width bordered by the Elizabeth Islands and a ribbon of mainland towns. It has 210 miles of shoreline.

It also has New Bedford Harbor, so polluted with heavy metals and chemicals — including a high concentration of cancer-causing agents — that it made the country's list of Superfund sites, which qualify for federal money for cleanup programs.

Sewage, agricultural chemical runoff and other pollutants also are contaminating the bay and closing more shellfish beds each year.

Though the area has a number of advocacy groups dealing with particular environmental issues, it has never had a regional organization with a unified approach, partly due to the bay's diverse makeup, the coalition said.

"Buzzards Bay as a region does not have a strong geographic identity," said member Peter Lavigne, executive director of the Westport River Watershed Alliance. "There has always been this split between the islands and the landward side of the bay and the Cape Cod Canal."

That the money to start the coalition came from the EPA "is quite unusual," said Wendy Wiltse, the Buzzards Bay project manager. But

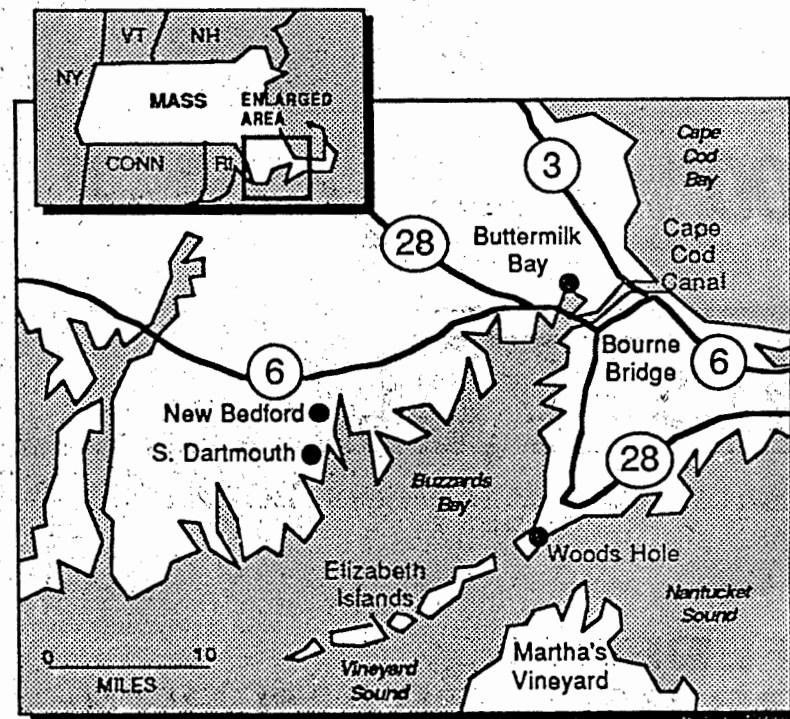
"we recognized a need to pull together ... the geographic region of Buzzards Bay."

The coalition was founded by the Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies in South Dartmouth, the Westport River Watershed Alliance and The Sounds Conservancy in Groton, Conn. Its 24-member board is composed of private citizens, municipal officials and non-profit organizations.

"We are really trying to work very closely with the municipalities," said Kim Allsup, the coalition's acting executive director, because "the power to change the pollution problem is really in their hands."

Immediate goals will be to recruit membership and provide input to the development of the EPA's comprehensive bay management plan, said Thomas Fantozzi, Bourne's health agent, who is leaving to become a state technical consultant on the Buzzards Bay project.

The EPA and the state have tentatively agreed on early 1990 as the plan's completion date, Wiltse said. It will not be too soon.



—Journal-Bulletin Graphic by TOM MURPHY

"Buzzards Bay ... is in the process of dying," Lavigne said. But "it's still in good enough shape that

we could stop and reverse the process with better management of our resources."

Advocates laud grant for Buttermilk Bay

It will begin cleanup of Buzzards Bay area next year

By ANN MACARI HEALEY
Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer

BOURNE — The health of Buzzards Bay, a 30-mile-long estuary seriously threatened by pollution, was the center of attention yesterday as a small group of legislators and researchers lauded the award of a grant to start the first cleanup of the bay early next year.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency has allocated \$300,000 to clean up Buttermilk Bay, which has been periodically closed to shellfishing since 1982 because of contaminants.

"It's a significant step in the right direction" toward finding solutions to coastal pollution, an emerging national issue, said Rep. Gerry Studds, D-Mass., who toured the inner bay with the press and researchers from Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the press.

The Coalition for Buzzards Bay, a fledgling advocacy group, sponsored the tour.

The grant is also the first awarded among the nation's estuary programs, which include studies not only of Buzzards Bay, but also of Long Island Sound, Puget Sound and Narragansett Bay.

A recently completed Barnstable County study of Buttermilk Bay found storm water drainage to be the major pollutant.

Storm water "is considered one of the major problems that we have with shellfish closures in almost every harbor," said George Hampson, a research biologist at Woods Hole who is studying bottom life as part of the Buzzards Bay project.

The bulk of the grant will go to build two barriers to interrupt water runoff and allow it to filter into the ground before it gets to the beach and allow it to filter into the ground, said Wendy Wiltse, the EPA Buzzards Bay project manager.

The rest of the grant will go to educate the public about ways to reduce pollution of the bay and organize neighborhood volunteer groups to clean up seaweed and other materials that harbor animal feces and other contaminants, Wiltse said.

The EPA will also work with towns and cities to improve and tighten regulations on septic system drainage and storm water runoff, she said.

In an effort to address the storm water problem, a bill is in the state legislature to allocate money to reconstruct faulty drainage systems in coastal areas, said Rep. Thomas Cahir, D-Bourne.

And, Studds said, congressional hearings on coastal pollution will begin this fall and continue through the spring.

The Second Front Page

Cape & Islands

 Cape Cod Times



STAFF PHOTO BY SHERWOOD LANDERS

U.S. Rep. Gerry Studds, left, listens as biologist George Hampson explains sediment sample from Buzzards Bay.

EPA funds \$300G Buzzards Bay cleanup

By KAREN O'LEARY
SPECIAL WRITER

BUZZARDS BAY — After George Hampson filtered a sample of sediment from the bottom of Buzzards Bay's Red Brook Harbor, he was left with a small array of sea detritus — some seaweed, a few broken shells, but unfortunately, not many living animals.

"I would have liked to see a lot more life," said the research biologist as he fingered a few tiny bivalves. "There's just an absence."

Because one sample can tell little about the state of the bay, Hampson said his was a largely symbolic gesture. But, he was quick to add, the problems it indicated are very real.

And it was a solution to those problems — in the form of a \$300,000 cleanup grant from the federal Environmental Protection Agency — that had drawn U.S. Rep. Gerry Studds, D-Mass., to join Hampson, other marine biologists and a host of reporters and photographers on the deck of the research vessel *Aquaria I* for a midday cruise on the bay.

Before embarking, the small crowd stood on a pier at Massachusetts Maritime Academy and heard Studds hail the grant "as a cause for celebration for us all." And Hampson, a member of the Coalition for Buzzards Bay — an advocacy group formed to call attention to the problems in the bay — called the award "a turning point" in the campaign to save the bay because the funds are the first in the nation to be awarded for cleanup.

"The (symbolism) of today is that for the first time the federal government committed funds to ameliorate and not just study the problem," Studds said.

The funds, which will be administered through the EPA, will be used to divert and treat stormwater runoff from a portion of Buttermilk Bay, an inlet in northern Buzzards Bay and one of Bourne's most valuable sources of shellfish.

Hampson, who has collected a series of "benthic" or bottom samples from the bay's floor stretching from Quick's Hole near Nashawena Island to New Bedford Harbor, said preventing runoff, which carries pollutants such as lawn fertilizer and animal feces with it, is one of the stiffest challenges facing those interested in cleaning up the bay.

"We need to divert any kind of direct drainage (from) our shellfish beds," he said. "That's our greatest problem."

Yesterday's announcement, attended by local, state and federal officials was an indicator of the kind of widespread interest Buzzards Bay and Buttermilk Bay have

Studds' committee plans hearings on increased coastal pollution threat

By PAMELA GLASS
OTTAWAY NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON — With recent approval of legislation to control the deep water dumping of plastics that foul the ocean, a House subcommittee is turning its attention the equally serious problem of pollution along the nation's coastline.

Rep. Gerry Studds, D-Mass., chairman of the House subcommittee on fisheries and wildlife conservation, is planning a series of hearings on what has been identified by government and private scientists as an increasing threat to the nation's coast: the discharge of toxics, sludge and other wastes from land into the sea.

As illustrated by congressional debate last week over Studds' plastic pollution bill and on other legislation involving clean air and water, public attention has focused mostly on the dumping of sewage sludge, industrial wastes and dredged material that's transported by ship or barge and dumped into the ocean.

Less political and public attention has been given to other marine disposal methods, such as discharge of industrial and municipal waste from pipelines or to agricultural runoff of pesticides and other toxics, according to William Stelle, a Studds aide.

Ocean dumping is easy to understand and conceptualize, Stelle said. "You can visualize loading a barge and sending it out to sea. But with agricultural runoff it's different. It's difficult to see."

Because locating the exact source of such coastal pollution is more complex, he said, investigating the problem and developing national solutions will be much more difficult.

But that will be the task of Studds' subcommittee, and the Massachusetts Democrat will draw on three examples from his home state to drive home the need for a comprehensive federal program to address the problem.

Pollution in New Bedford harbor, Buzzards Bay and Boston Harbor are all stinging examples of how the dumping of land-based pollutants have fouled once pristine and environmentally rich estuaries and harbors.

Studds intends to use Buzzards Bay has one of four case studies in the first hearing, scheduled for Nov. 17. It will illustrate how sewage and industrial wastes have upset the ecosystem there.

Future hearings, which will carry over into 1988, will focus on the inadequacy of existing federal laws, sources of pollution, the influence of population growth on coastal pollution, and the state of current research into the problem.

Part of this was passage last week of the plastics pollution legislation. Another aspect is recognition by the Environmental Protection Agency that the quality of coastal waters has greatly degraded despite federal and state protections.

received in the last few years.

The EPA first got involved in the efforts to stem pollution in the bay in 1984, when it named Buzzards Bay as one of four marine estuaries that would take part in a federally funded water-quality study.

Part of the EPA study concentrated on finding the source of coliform bacteria in Buttermilk Bay, where the heavy closure of its shellfish beds in 1985 focused local and state attention on problems in the bay.

Two years later, it was that interest in Buttermilk Bay that led to EPA's decision to target it for its first cleanup effort, said Wendy Wiltse, the manager of the EPA's Project Buzzards Bay. "We selected Buttermilk Bay as a case study area," she said, and the results of the studies of the

bay "led to the action plan we're going to implement with these funds."

Studds said that although the EPA has chosen this small inlet of Buzzards Bay for its first cleanup funds, the issue of coastal pollution is not confined to the bay's 30-mile shore.

"We are not alone," he said, adding that the committee he heads — the subcommittee on Fish and the Environment — will be holding a series of hearings next month "on the broad question — all aspects — of coastal pollution." Five case studies will be presented during those hearings, including one on the problems in Buzzards Bay.

"It's a national problem," he said. "The bad news is we've been hit. The good news is we're on our way."

The Standard-Times

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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1987

New Bedford, MA

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\$300,000 grant starts cleanup of Buzzards Bay

By Arthur Hirsch

Standard-Times staff writer

BOURNE — For three years, the Buzzards Bay Project has been studying pollution in Buzzards Bay. Now the federal government will spend \$300,000 to do something about it.

A grant from the Environmental Protection Agency will be used to construct demonstration stormwater treatment stations on the beaches of Bourne and Wareham, with the aim of cleaning up Buttermilk Bay, a heavily polluted inlet off Buzzards Bay.

George Hampson, acting president of the Coalition for Buzzards Bay, called the EPA grant a "turning point" in the three-year life of the Buzzards Bay Project.

U.S. Rep. Gerry Studds, D-Mass.,

agreed. "This is the first funding going to actually dealing with and ameliorating the problem, instead of just studying it," he said.

Both men made their remarks on a pier at Massachusetts Maritime Academy Monday, as a group of reporters and federal officials prepared to embark on a one-hour boat ride across Buzzards Bay.

The boat ride was organized by the coalition, a new nonprofit corporation formed to focus public attention and enlist public support for the effort to clean up Buzzard's Bay.

The actual work will be done by the Buzzards Bay Project, a coalition of government agencies, universities and private environmental groups.

The bay was identified by Congress in 1984 as one of four bodies of water in the country facing

(See BAY, Page 16)

■ Bay

(Continued from Page 1)
a serious pollution threat. The others were Puget Sound in Washington State, Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island and Long Island Sound.

The EPA's Dr. Wendy Wiltse said it is not clear yet how the grant money will be administered or when the work will start.

When the Buzzards Bay Project started in 1985, Buttermilk Bay — where nearly 11,000 acres of shellfish beds have been closed recently because of bacterial pollution — was chosen as a model of the entire bay's problems.

Two studies were conducted to assess the nature and the source of Buttermilk Bay pollution. The studies looked at groundwater, home septic systems, motorboats, water birds, domestic animals and stormwater runoff.

Stormwater washed into the bay was identified as "the most important factor causing the periodic reclassification of the area as unsuitable for shellfish harvesting," said a research paper prepared by George Heufelder of the Barnstable County Health and Environmental Department.

The problem isn't the rainwater itself, but what it picks up en route to the bay. By the time rainwater washes into a body of water, it may be contaminated with bacteria from animal feces, hydrocarbons from motor oil and chemicals from lawn herbicides and pesticides.

Under the pilot project, Dr. Wiltse said, treatment stations that filter stormwater through the ground will be constructed. The technical work will be accompanied by a public information campaign explaining what residents can do to fight bay pollution — maintaining septic systems, cleaning up after their pets.

"We'll be monitoring the effects of these actions on Buttermilk Bay," said Dr. Wiltse. "The idea is that this

will be a model for actions that will be taken elsewhere in Buzzards Bay."

The Buzzards Bay Project has received about \$1.3 million since 1985 from the EPA, Dr. Wiltse said. Since the start, the project has included both a research and public participation/information branch.

Along with the two Buttermilk Bay studies, the project has included:

- Inventories of Buzzards Bay's finfish and shellfish resources.
- Assessment of local water quality regulations.
- Study of PCB contamination in winter flounder and lobster.

■ Bay mapping, including preparation of new maps and cataloging existing information.

■ Compilation of historic information on lobster landings, water quality and toxic contamination of organisms and sediments.

Monday's boat ride was part of the project's continuing efforts to inform the public about the bay and its problems.

Mr. Hampson, a biologist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, pointed out houses grouped along the shore, many with lush lawns. He said much of the bay's trouble is caused by conversion of summer retreats to year-round homes, straining septic

systems. Also, as shorefront homeowners pay more attention to landscaping, they use more fertilizer and chemicals, which are washed by rain into the bay.

At Red Brook Harbor, Mr. Hampson took a sediment sample from the bottom, screened it and identified a few sea worms and other creatures in the wet mud. He said no sweeping conclusions can be made from one scoop, but there would have been more tiny sea animals in a healthy bay sample.

"It's quite obvious the bay is quite stressed already," he said. "I would have liked to see more life in this sample."



Staff photo by Mike Valeri

Checking itinerary

George Hampson, acting president of the Coalition for Buzzards Bay, shows Rep. Gerry Studds, D-Mass., the route they will take on a boat ride to view the ecology of the bay.

Rep. Studds Tours Buzzards Bay; Observes Little Life

Research biologists who took Congressman Studds on a tour of Red Brook Harbor this week invited him there to see first-hand evidence of a Buzzards Bay that is depressingly bare of life.

The pickings were slim as Woods Hole biologist George R. Hampson sifted through a tray of 'benthic' samples from the bay's floor while the congressman looked on: some seaweed intermingled with crushed shells and a few shrunken bivalves in the heavy sediment, but little else.

The steady pressure of storm-drain runoff, heavy development, waterfowl feces and wastewater discharge from boats is threatening Buzzards Bay's position as a nursery for shellfish and other life, scientists on the tour said.

More than 13,000 acres of shellfish beds on the bay were closed this year, and evidence is pointing to an increased risk to swimmers and marine life from a variety of pollution sources.

The congressman's visit Monday to the harbor on the research vessel Aquaria I was as much an occasion for hope as it was a time to take stock of the discouraging prognosis for the bay.

Almost a month ago the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency allocated \$300,000 to begin cleaning up Buttermilk Bay, an inlet in northern Buzzards Bay and one of Bourne's few remaining rich sources of shellfish.

In a brief ceremony on a pier at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy before embarking on the vessel, Congressman Studds called the cleanup grant a cause for celebration for us all.

A Turning Point

Dr. Hampson, a founding member of the Coalition for Buzzards Bay, which organized Monday's tour, hailed the gift as a turning point in efforts to re-

vive the bay. It is the first EPA grant in the country earmarked for cleanup, not research.

The grant will be used to control and treat stormwater runoff from a portion of Buttermilk Bay, acting executive director of the coalition, Kimberly M. Allsup, said yesterday.

Runoff control is the most important thing we can do for Buttermilk Bay, she said, because recent studies have singled out stormwater discharge as the biggest contributor to shellfish contamination in the area.

In many parts of Buzzards Bay stormwater runoff carries a host of toxic substances, such as oil, tire particles, lawn fertilizer and animal feces, directly into the water through discharge pipes.

The EPA chose Buttermilk Bay this year as the site of its first cleanup effort after scientists included it in a larger study of Buzzards Bay beginning in 1984.

Public and scientific interest in Buttermilk Bay grew when it suffered heavy shellfish bed closures a year later, said Wendy Wiltse, manager of the EPA's Project Buzzards Bay.

Coastal Pollution Hearings

Adding to the excitement surrounding the grant, Congressman Studds announced that the Subcommittee on Fish and the Environment, of which he is chairman, will hold a series of hearings starting next month on the broad question of coastal pollution in the United States.

The first hearing will focus on Buzzards Bay and will illustrate how sewage and industrial wastes have disrupted the ecology there. The hearing will be held in the House of Representatives, and is tentatively scheduled for Nov. 18.

The Buzzards Bay hearing is

one of seven case studies the subcommittee will present to introduce a formal set of hearings that will carry over into 1988, a spokesman in Congressman Studds's office, Steven C. Schwadron, said.

The case studies will focus on some of the broad pollution problems that will be studied in closer detail throughout the rest of the hearings, Mr. Schwadron added.

In addition to Buzzards Bay, the committee will present case studies on Narragansett Bay, Puget Sound in Washington, Albermarle Sound in North Carolina, the Great Lakes, the Gulf of Mexico and the New

York Bight.

The series will take a broad view of coastal pollution as a national problem, focusing on existing pollution sources, population growth as a factor in coastal pollution, current research on coastal pollution and the adequacy — or inadequacy — of federal coastal pollution laws, Mr. Schwadron said.

Mrs. Allsup said the Coalition for Buzzards Bay, an advocacy group formed this summer to give publicity to the problems of the bay, may send one of its members to the Buzzards Bay hearing, but plans are not definite yet.

Page Ten

Falmouth, Mass., Wednesday, October 21, 1987

The Enterprise

BENTHIC GRAB — Congressman Studds watches George R. Hampson prepare to make what is called a benthic grab to collect and examine marine life in Red Brook Harbor. (Photo by Alan Stewart)



Bourne Courier

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56 Pages in 1 Section

Bourne, Mass. Wednesday, October 21, 1987
759-7315 40 cents

Bay cleanup effort gets big boost from the EPA

By KATHLEEN LIBBY

BOURNE— If 14,000 acres of closed shellfish beds around Buzzards Bay this year aren't enough evidence of pollution in the water stretching from Westport to Fal-

mouth, George Hampson provided additional proof Monday afternoon.

The Woods Hole researcher sifted through a container holding a sample pulled up from the bottom of the bay and found dis-

tressing few signs of animal life, sure signs of pollution.

With U.S. Rep. Gerry Studds, D-Mass., and members of the press on board his research boat, the Aquaria I, Hampson stressed the small finding was an unscientific

sample but that it did demonstrate the decline of life on the bay's bottom.

Also on board the vessel were Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials who announced at the media event that they had

received a \$300,000 federal grant to begin cleanup of Buzzards Bay, with primary focus for now placed on Buttermilk Bay.

Hampson, also the acting president of the newly-formed Coalition, said the grant will help pay for the cleanup. *Please turn to page 13*

★Bay

Continued from front page

tion for Buzzards Bay, explained that nutrient overloading in the sea depletes oxygen levels, thereby suffocating life forms in the water. While this is not a major problem in Buzzards Bay yet, the possibilities are there.

The chief culprit is stormwater runoff, which most of the grant will be geared toward re-routing.

"The greatest amount of shellfish closures are after a rainstorm," Hampson said, describing the affect as a "giant flush."

The EPA plans to catch the stormwater before it makes its way to sea, and then let it infil-

trate back into the ground, said Wendy Wiltse, Buzzards Bay project manager for the agency.

Other funds in the grant will spend on educating the public as to how it can ease the problem in its own backyard, such as ridding of hazardous waste and dog feces-contaminated seaweed.

The Buttermilk Bay project is the first of its kind, and officials at all government levels plan to use it as a role model for cleaning other waterways around the country.

"What we have here in Buzzards Bay is sadly replicated everywhere in the country," Studds said.

Because studies have already been performed in this bay, money can be used for cleanup instead of initial investigation - thus the reason federal officials opted to fund this estuary.

"We've turned the symbolic corner," Studds said, alluding to the fact the money will go toward alleviating the problem.

The bay project is a start but the magnitude of the work faced is humbling, Studds said. Stepping off the boat and ending his hour-long fact-finding mission, the congressman remarked, "It reinforces what anyone who lives here knows - we have a hell of a lot of work to do."