



MARTHA'S VINEYARD SHELLFISH GROUP

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Replacement of seawater lines at the John T. Hughes Hatchery

2021 Special Town Meeting Warrant Article

Town of Chilmark

Amount requested: \$36,000

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$36,000 for the replacement of seawater lines at the John T. Hughes Hatchery at 57 Shirley Avenue, Oak Bluffs.

This property is the site of the former State Lobster Hatchery which is now named the John T. Hughes Hatchery and Research Station. The proposed project is to replace the pipes that deliver seawater from Lagoon Pond to the facility. In 2011, the MA Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) invested over \$320,000 into two new pumps, a new greenhouse, and several other major maintenance projects. At that time, the Martha's Vineyard Shellfish Group (MVSG) entered into a lease with DMF for specific spaces in the large building. The 300+ foot, 6" PVC pipes that draw seawater from Lagoon Pond were not replaced at that time, although they were deemed to be edging towards dilapidation and failure. Preliminary engineer plans and estimates were initially gathered, however DMF has not been able to allocate the funds for the project. MVSG is preparing to make good use of the entire building and all available water seawater flow, while maintaining a lease with the MA DMF.

Since 2012, the Hughes Hatchery has become an irreplaceable cog in the shellfish seed production of the MVSG, of which all 6 island towns are equal recipients. The Hughes Hatchery is used to grow almost half of the shellfish larvae required to distribute 10-15 million quahog seed, 20-25 million scallop seed and 10 million oyster seed to all the towns, combined. All of this seed is planted into the coastal ponds for public resource enhancement. These shellfish are important to sustain commercial and recreational shellfish harvest as well as ecological functioning of our estuaries.

The proposed project is to replace the pipes that deliver seawater from Lagoon Pond to the facility. First, the repetitive, parallel pipes will be removed to where they are joined with newer pipes around the low tide line. New pipes will be installed at a depth that is equal to roughly 10 feet below mean low water. The pipes will remain underground until the water is 10 feet deep so that they do not pose a threat to navigation. The total length of the existing pipes is about 385 feet, and we propose staying within that footprint. All six Island towns are being asked to contribute to this project which has a total estimated cost of \$271,000. The MV Shellfish Group will fund 20% or \$54,000.