

## **Beaches**

### **Eastham's Most Valuable Natural Resource**

The Eastham Forum has identified the protection of the quality of our Beaches, particularly those on Cape Cod Bay, as our most valuable Natural Resource. The beaches of the Bay are what attracted all of us to this community. It is also what drives the economy of the community. The beaches are a major part of the quality of life in Eastham, as well as the singular driving force in our economy. Without quality beaches there will be a lessening in the demand for tourists who rent the cottages, stay at our motels, purchase goods and services, and contribute to the demand of purchasing real estate. Should a downturn in our local economy occur due to a diminished quality of our beaches, our tax base will suffer, our service and trades people, who live and work in our Town will suffer, and we will slowly develop a economy that is similar to a "mill town" when the mill closes down.

Over the past few decades, we have seen the quality of the beaches slowly deteriorate. This has occurred due to natural processes, as well as man-made efforts to protect private property. What we have been experiencing is the loss of high tide beaches and loss of parking at our Town Beaches. We have also see loss of natural salt marshes that help protect the stability of the beaches, and several coastal protection structures constructed.

The situation will only get worse if nothing is done and protection efforts continue. The Forum does not profess that private property owners not be allowed to afford protection to their valuable properties, however, countermeasures must be considered and taken to mitigate for the loss of sediment fronting those properties, as well as the properties downdrift of the sediment transport system.

This problem is not unique to Eastham, however it is vital for the Town of Eastham to take appropriate action. The main concern that the we have is that no steps have been taken to evaluate the condition and determine measures that can and should be taken to remedy the situation.

The Eastham Forum fully supports this issue as a "Critical Need" in our Community. It takes years for a successful action plan to be implemented. However, first the action plan must be identified, evaluated and approved before steps can be taken to resolve the problem.

Therefore we urge all members of our Community to recognize the importance of this "need" and support the appropriate measures to address and improve the condition of our valuable beaches.