

National Park Service
2006 Environmental Achievement Awards

Winner

Dr. John Portnoy, Ecologist
Cape Cod National Seashore
“Herring River Salt Marsh Restoration Project”

Dr. John Portnoy, Ecologist at Cape Cod National Seashore (CACO), has been a vocal and determined advocate for restoration of the Herring River. Since jurisdiction over the Herring River Salt Marsh is shared by CACO and the town of Wellfleet, MA, there have been many obstacles to overcome in terms of stakeholder perception of the proposed restoration project. Indeed, the first feasibility studies for the restoration project were begun over 20 years ago, and since then, there has been significant local and regional resistance to restoration.

To make the case for the restoration project, Dr. Portnoy conducted meticulous and varied research in an attempt to answer all stakeholder questions about the past, present, and future of the salt marsh system. In laying a foundation of scientific support, Dr. Portnoy has educated the public and changed attitudes through meetings with countless town boards and committees, and through meetings with state and other Federal agencies.

In 2005, Dr. Portnoy developed and presented a careful stepwise restoration plan which led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Wellfleet and CACO. This MOU establishes CACO's and Wellfleet's intent to restore the Herring River. The MOU set in motion the detailed planning that will lead to the restoration of 1000 acres of impaired wetland. In addition, Dr. Portnoy was the driving force behind securing approximately \$1.5 million in grants for funding the restoration project, in partnership with non-governmental organizations and state, local, and other Federal agencies.

Dr. Portnoy's determination to make the Herring River Salt Marsh restoration project a reality makes him a deserving recipient of the 2006 NPS Environmental Achievement Award in the category of environmental stewardship.