



A Message from President & CEO, Audra Parker

2021 Year in Review



Happy Holidays, and warm wishes to you and your family! As the end of the year approaches, we are grateful for the generosity of the Cape and Islands community that has allowed us to successfully safeguard Nantucket Sound for nearly 20 years. Millions of people each year visit this special place to take in its tremendous beauty, abundant wildlife, and rich history. Nantucket Sound is the economic engine for the region and a maker of lasting family memories across generations.

But Nantucket Sound and its unique qualities remain vulnerable to environmental threats, such as algae blooms, diminished water quality, and coastal erosion, as well as to industrial development in its central federal waters. It is critical that we act now to safeguard this national treasure.

We have made great strides towards achieving permanent protection and preservation for Nantucket Sound. This year we have:

- » Written and refined federal legislation – the Nantucket Sound National Historic Landmark Act (NSNHCLA) - to provide significant environmental, historic, and tribal protections and prevent inappropriate development.
- » Expanded our team and presence in Washington, D.C. to support the process of introducing and enacting federal legislation through Congress.
- » Broadened our coalition of support at the local, state, and national level to nearly 100 stakeholder groups representing tens of thousands of individuals, including municipalities, tribal governments, environmental organizations, historic preservation groups, commercial fishermen, renewable energy developers, chambers of commerce, and key elected officials.
- » Worked closely with local tribal nations to gain support from the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) - the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native governments.
- » Launched a major grassroots initiative including a newly designed website, a multi-media advertising campaign, and direct communication from our coalition partners to their membership to drive nearly 1,000 constituent letters to date to our elected officials.
- » Built a successful educational program to spread awareness in the community regarding Nantucket Sound's unique qualities and the need to protect this special place.

Thanks to the continued support of our donors and our partners, we have made extraordinary progress towards our goal. But today, we need your help more than ever to encourage Congress, the Administration, and local officials to recognize the special nature of Nantucket Sound and the urgency to protect it. Please make a year-end tax-deductible gift to help us succeed in ensuring a healthy future for Nantucket Sound.

Your help today will protect Nantucket Sound's tomorrow. Thank you for your support!

Warm regards,

The Nantucket Sound National Historic Landmark Act (NSNHCLA)

The NSNHCLA is federal legislation that would permanently protect and preserve Nantucket Sound. It would:

- » Designate Nantucket Sound as a National Historic Landmark to recognize its historic, environmental, tribal, and economic values.
- » Provide significant environmental protections to address diminished water quality, habitat degradation, coastal erosion, and other climate change effects.
- » Prohibit the federal government from authorizing industrial projects and any activities in the Sound that are inconsistent with protections that exist under state law.

Stakeholder Support

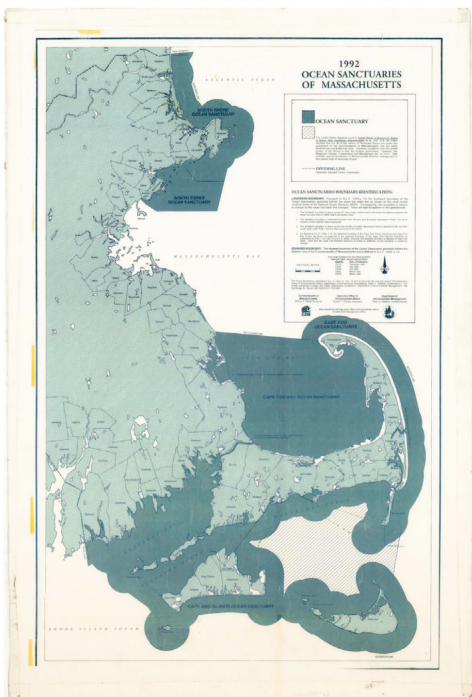
The Alliance has united a group of nearly 100 stakeholder organizations to support, refine, and strengthen this comprehensive legislation. These organizations represent tens of thousands of individuals and include environmental groups, tribal entities, renewable energy developers, commercial fishermen, municipalities, historic preservation groups, elected officials, and many others.



National Historic Landmark

A National Historic Landmark (NHL) is a historic property that represents an outstanding aspect of American history and culture. While there are numerous types of marine protection available, the Alliance intentionally chose the National Historic Landmark designation to protect and preserve the Sound to ensure that fishing and recreation would not be affected.

Massachusetts Ocean Sanctuaries Act (MOSA)



Nantucket Sound lacks the type of meaningful protections that apply to other ecologically significant bodies of water in the region and throughout the country. This lack of protection is especially problematic because of the unique geographic configuration of the Sound with federal waters in the center that are almost entirely enclosed by state waters. The state waters are protected by the Commonwealth under MOSA, but the federal waters within Nantucket Sound are not protected.

MOSA protects state ocean sanctuaries from any "exploitation, development or activity that would seriously alter or otherwise endanger the ecology or the appearance of the ocean, the seabed or subsoil thereof." Unlike Nantucket Sound, all of Buzzards Bay and Cape Cod Bay are part of the state ocean sanctuary system and enjoy protections under MOSA.

National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Resolution

NCAI passed a resolution on October 21, 'the Protection and Preservation of Nantucket Sound as a Site of Historical and Cultural Significance to Tribal Nations,' supporting the permanent protection and preservation of Nantucket Sound as a sacred site. NCAI is the oldest tribal organization, representing tribal nations across the United States, including the present-day sacred ancestral lands of the Mashpee Wampanoag and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah). The resolution reads in part:

- » **WHEREAS**, Nantucket Sound is the only ocean-based traditional cultural property recognized by the Department of the Interior's Keeper of the National Register as a historic and archaeological property that is a source of crucial information relating to Indian exploration and settlements as well as being inseparably associated with the cultural beliefs, identity, and spirituality of Tribal Nations since time immemorial; and
- » **WHEREAS**, if left unprotected, Nantucket Sound and its waters would continue to be vulnerable to industrial development as well as environmental and climate change impacts that lead to habitat degradation, coastal erosion, diminished water quality, and depletion of fish stocks causing irreversible damage to this place of cultural, natural, and historical significance of the Tribal Nations.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians of the United States supports all legislative and administrative efforts by the United States to protect Nantucket Sound in perpetuity.



Threats to Nantucket Sound

- » **Diminished Water Quality:** Indications of pollution in the Sound - algae blooms and depletions in fish stocks - are increasing and threaten its ecosystem. Dead and decaying algae has stretched for miles along the coastline of Nantucket Sound, releasing noxious gas noticeable along the coastline of the Sound and posing a health threat to the community.
- » **Habitat Degradation:** There has been a decrease in natural systems like salt marshes which help filter nutrients and run off. Run off and nutrients enter the Sound causing more prominent algae blooms, acidic conditions, and a detrimental effect on fish and depleted eelgrass and other aquatic vegetation.
- » **Coastal Erosion:** Our coastline is facing an unprecedented threat from sea level rise, storm surge, and erosion. Coastal erosion can cause lasting damage to the environment and natural habitat.
- » **Inappropriate Industrial Development:** Nantucket Sound's unique configuration means that while state waters are protected, the federal government can lease grid blocks in the center of the Sound to private developers. Inappropriate development within these waters would disrupt fish migration, threaten habitat, endanger navigational safety, and disturb indigenous history.

Save Our Sound on TV

This fall we produced five tv ads as part of our multi-pronged strategy to drive people to our new website to sign a letter supporting federal legislation to permanently protect Nantucket Sound. These letters go directly to our state and federal legislators urging the enactment of the NSNHCLA.



Scan to watch



Wendy Northcross, Executive Director of the JFK Museum

'There is only one Nantucket Sound...It is incumbent on our generation to make sure it is here for future generations.'



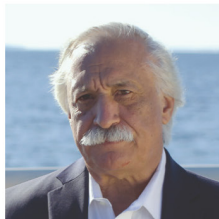
C. Randall Sherman, Cape Cod Salties

'If you continually degrade the water quality, you are not going to have the resources...for our children and grand-children and beyond.'



George "Chuckie" Green, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe

'The Sound has been a vital resource for the tribe...our ancestors are buried out here...I need to teach my kids about who they are and where they came from and how they existed with the resources that are still available.'



Dr. Brian Howes, UMASS School of Marine Science and Technology

'We are starting to see algae on the beaches...tourism will start going. Anything that impairs the health of Nantucket Sound will affect the fisheries...it's time to get started now...before it gets much worse.'

Educational Initiatives

The Alliance's new educational program spreads awareness of the importance of Nantucket Sound and the need to protect it. In 2021, we hosted eight virtual webinars in a new series - "A Celebration of Nantucket Sound" or ACONS. Webinar topics included shipwrecks, lighthouses, fishing, and the blue economy. Local organizations helped promote ACONS, resulting in over 1,200 people attending this year. If you missed this series, the webinars are

available on our website! The Alliance also launched the Nantucket Sound Ambassador program to promote awareness and environmental stewardship of the Sound among high school students in Cape and Islands communities. Nantucket Sound Ambassadors encourage permanent environmental preservation of Nantucket Sound through grassroots advocacy, beach clean ups, and social media.

