



Falmouth Water Stewards Newsletter Fall 2026

Highlights of our water protection activities:

There are 21 water refill stations throughout Falmouth located at parks, sports fields, beaches, and other recreational areas. Our interactive Google Map can be accessed using this QR Code:



Cyanobacteria monitoring in Falmouth ponds continues in collaboration with APCC from the end of May to early November.

Cape Cod Commission
Water Quality Data Portal
[https://
www.capecodcommission.org/
our-work/cape-cod-water-
quality-data-portal/](https://www.capecodcommission.org/our-work/cape-cod-water-quality-data-portal/)

New Website and Email Address

We have updated our website and email address for easy access to our program information and resources. The website can be found at:

<https://www.falmouthwaterstewards.org> and our new email is falmouthwaterstewards@gmail.com

Revision of FWS Bylaws

Falmouth Water Stewards (originally known as FACES) was renamed in 1994, incorporated in 1995, and granted unconditional tax exempt status by the IRS in March 1995. FACES was a membership organization of associations focused on estuaries and salt ponds, but FWS expanded its mission to protect, preserve, and restore Falmouth's bays, estuaries, salt ponds, and fresh waters through education, advocacy, and citizen science. Over time, most of those associations became self-sufficient and our work evolved to focus on water protection strategies and projects. FWS no longer functions as a true membership corporation, and we believe it is prudent to change to a standard non-profit corporation. We will continue to host meetings, events, and foster engagement of our "stewards", but leave management of FWS to its Board of Directors. We will continue to notify our mailing list of FWS programs and activities and have an annual in-person event with a speaker, panel, or other event. We are planning a panel discussion on Falmouth's water supply including concerns, solutions and management at the Falmouth Public Library, Hermann Room, on Wednesday, October 28th at 7 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend.

FWS Awards \$500 Scholarships to High School Science Fair Students

At Falmouth Academy the FWS award was presented to Siana Solarazza for research on the effects of anatoxin on zebrafish; and at Falmouth High School's STEAM Fair, the FWS award was given to Kunio Saito & Jack Beardsley on the effect of mercury on aquatic ecosystems. Congratulations, Siana, Kunio, and Jack!

OLAUG receives recognition from the Woods Hole Film Festival

The documentary film "Old Ladies Against Underwater Garbage" by Liz McGregor received the runner-up prize for Best Documentary Short in the Woods Hole Film Festival. The Friends of Chatham Waterways are hosting a screening of the film and panel discussion at the Orpheum Theater in Chatham on Saturday, September 12, from 10 am to noon.

OLAUG Highlighted in the *New York Times*

In the July 17, 2026, issue of the *New York Times*, the Old Ladies Against Underwater Garbage were celebrated and recognized for their amazing accomplishments in cleaning up ponds, not only on Cape Cod, but also spreading their message around the world. OLAUG was started in 2018 by Susan Baur, a member of the FWS Board, author, and a retired psychologist. The mission of OLAUG is to clean up ponds and salvage all the debris that ends up in local ponds - boat anchors, fishing gear, parts of docks, and occasionally a car or a toilet! Equally important to the clean-up mission is the camaraderie among women who have defined a purpose and commitment to their mission. All members are women, at least 64 years of age, able to swim half a mile in under 30 minutes, and free dive to a depth of 8 feet. There are ~30 members with a wait-list. To date, OLAUG has hauled over 6,000 pounds of trash from Cape Cod ponds.

Clean-up at Jenkins Pond



Water Conservation and Drought Conditions



Mares Pond, Summer 2026



Deep Pond, Summer 2026

Cape Cod is currently in a Level 2 “Significant Drought”, according to the Massachusetts Drought Task Force and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. This classification means that all the towns on Cape Cod are experiencing above-average water shortages and are under active restrictions to protect water supplies.

Current restrictions in the Town of Falmouth include:

(1) nonessential outdoor water use is banned, including most lawn watering, car washing, and other non-essential irrigation; (2) permitted uses include watering ornamental plants and flower gardens using drip irrigation, hand-held hoses, or watering cans. The ban is enforced by the Falmouth Water Department, which will issue **pink door hangers** to property owners using irrigation during the restriction. Continued violations can result in fines.

Falmouth Water Superintendent Matthew P. Lanen submitted a letter to the Planning Board on July 28th expressing his concerns that water usage was so high on July 4th weekend that the town’s elevated storage tanks could not refill overnight. On the afternoon of August 12th, the Falmouth Water Department issued an alert that Falmouth remains in a Level 2 Significant Drought, and all customers who utilize potable town water for irrigation should immediately turn off irrigation systems until further notice. Another concern mentioned by Lanen included that Long Pond is not recharging to its historical total volume and has experienced a continued decline in water levels. This could impact not only peak seasonal demand on water use, but also adequate fire suppression capacity.

Given these important concerns, FWS is organizing a panel discussion on Falmouth’s water supply, including immediate concerns, solutions, and better management of Falmouth’s water supply. Plans are to hold this panel discussion on Wednesday, October 28th, at 7 pm at the Falmouth Public Library, Hermann Room.



Falmouth Water Stewards

P.O. Box 156

Falmouth, MA 02541

Find a Water Refill Station Near You!

Shining Sea Bikeway & County Road
Shining Sea Bikeway & Old Dock Road
Falmouth High School Softball Field
Coonamesett River Restoration
Goodwill Park
Highfield Hall & Gardens
Shining Sea Bikeway & Depot Avenue
Falmouth Town Hall (indoor)
Falmouth Chamber of Commerce (indoor)
Peg Noonan Park
Falmouth Main Library (indoor)
Gus Cauty Community Center (indoor)
Falmouth Harbor
Falmouth Heights Beach
Falmouth Heights Fields
Bristol Beach
Menauhant Beach
Chapoquoit Beach
Megansett Beach
Old Silver Beach (2)
Wood Neck Beach
Surf Drive Beach – Town of Falmouth Beach Dept.

