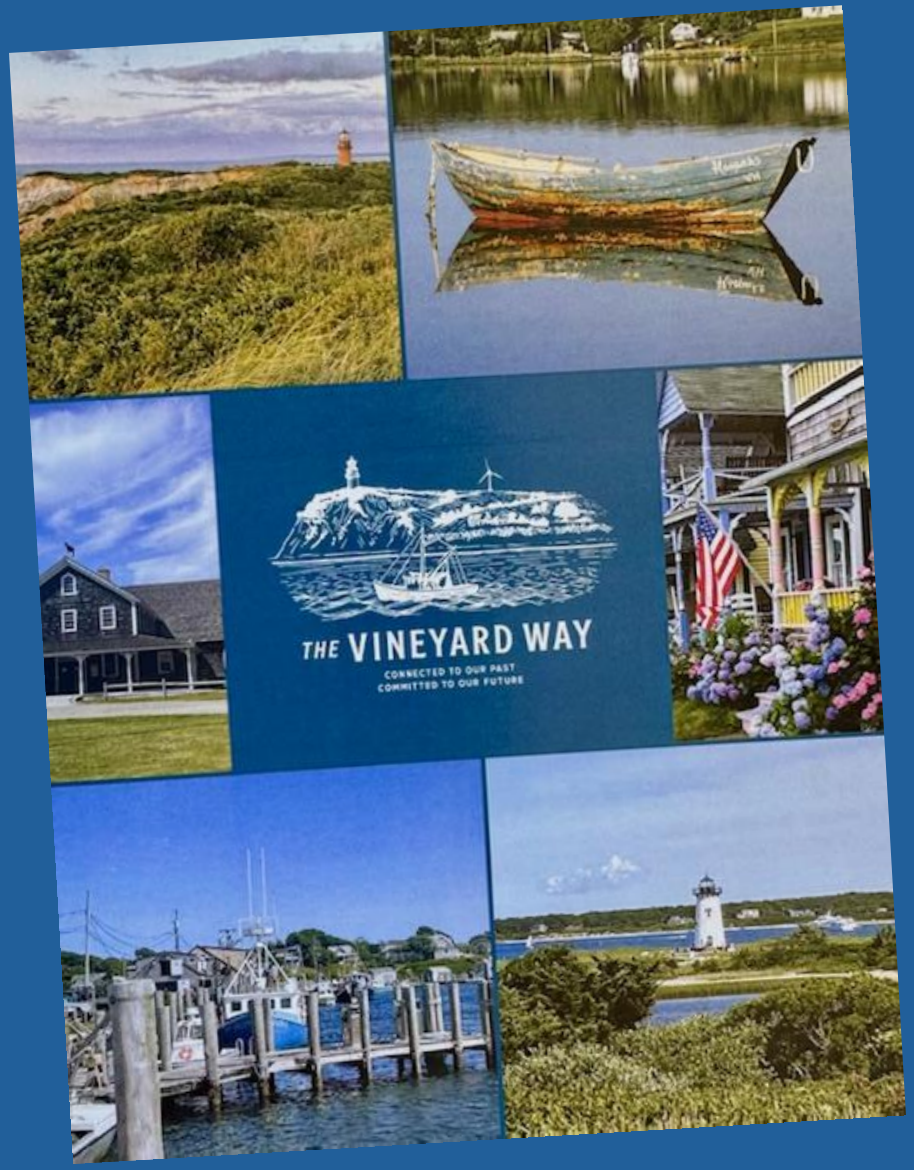
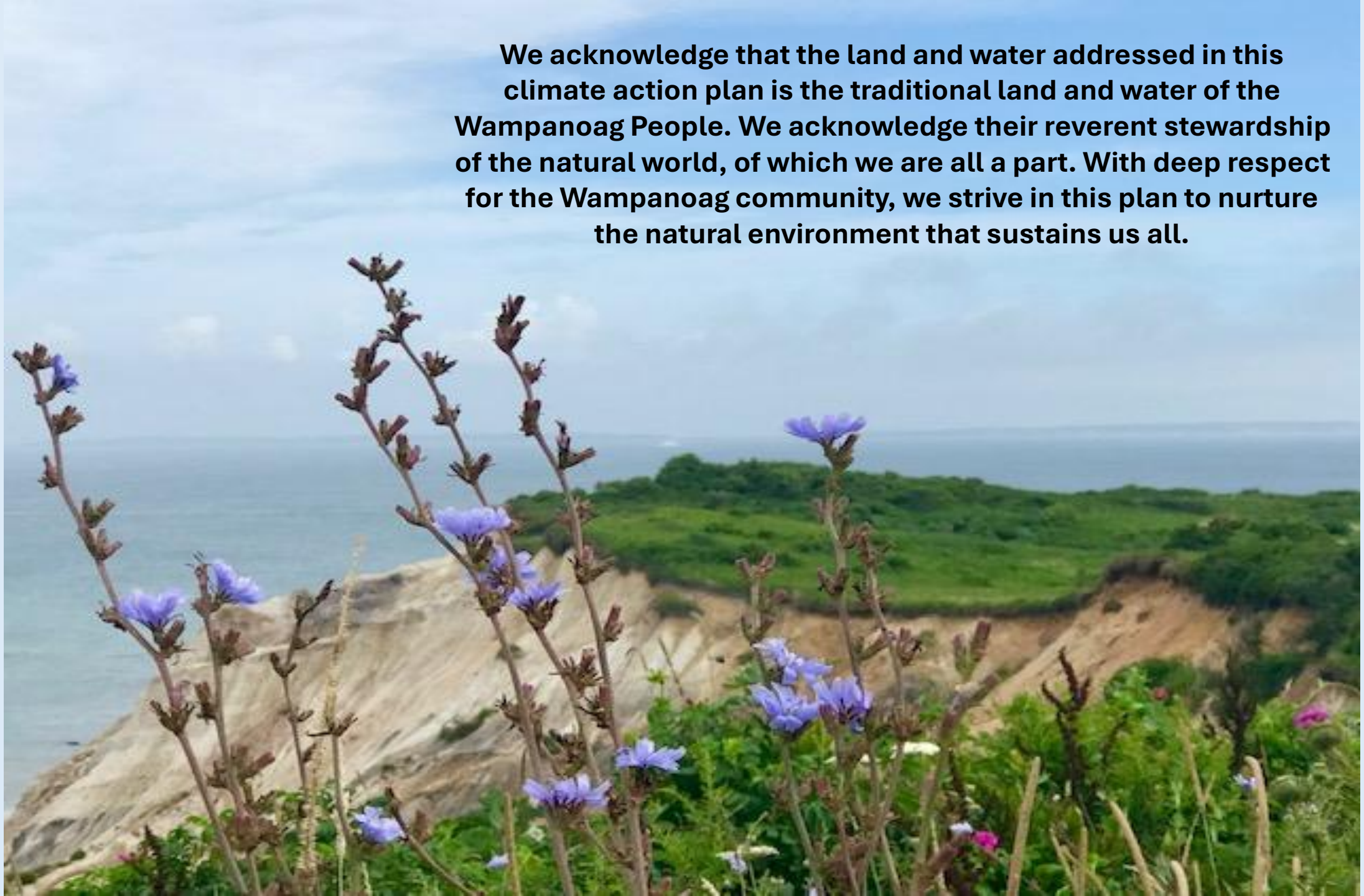


The Vineyard Way:
Connected to Our Past, Committed to Our Future

Implementing the Vineyard Climate Action Plan

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

MARTHA'S VINEYARD COMMISSION



We acknowledge that the land and water addressed in this climate action plan is the traditional land and water of the Wampanoag People. We acknowledge their reverent stewardship of the natural world, of which we are all a part. With deep respect for the Wampanoag community, we strive in this plan to nurture the natural environment that sustains us all.

Climate Action Plan (CAP) Recap

- 20-year regional plan
- Over 100 residents participated in plan development
- Local consultant, locally driven
- Six Thematic Planning Areas
- Over 200 actions
- Each action has a lead organization responsible for implementation
- Climate Action Week
- Steering Committee (now CAP Community Coordinating Committee that meets monthly for updates and collaboration)

Land Use, Natural Resources, and Biodiversity

Transportation, Infrastructure, and Waste

Public Health and Safety

Economic Resilience

Food Security

Energy Transformation

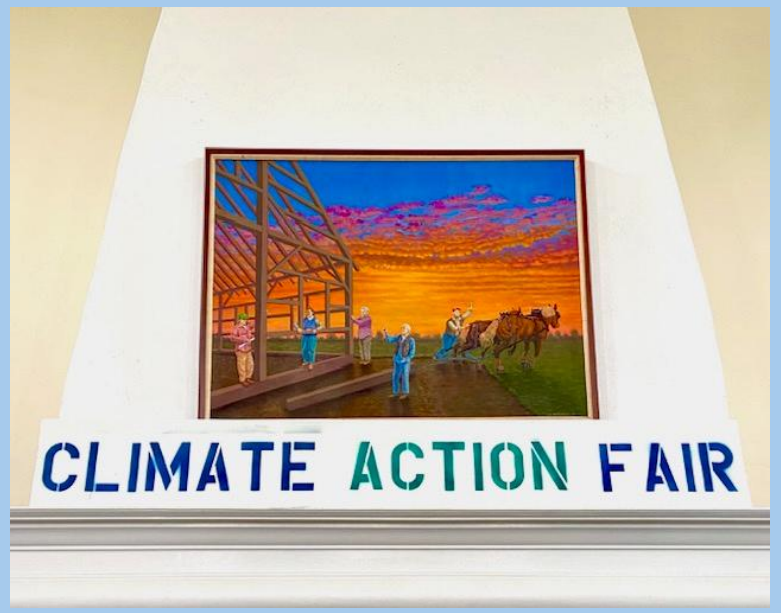
Six Thematic Planning Areas

Land Use, Natural Resources and Biodiversity

Fostering Ecosystem Resilience

Eel Grass Mapping
Updated Vegetation Maps
Plant Local MV
Conservation Summit
Climate Action Fair 2024

A MA Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program grant

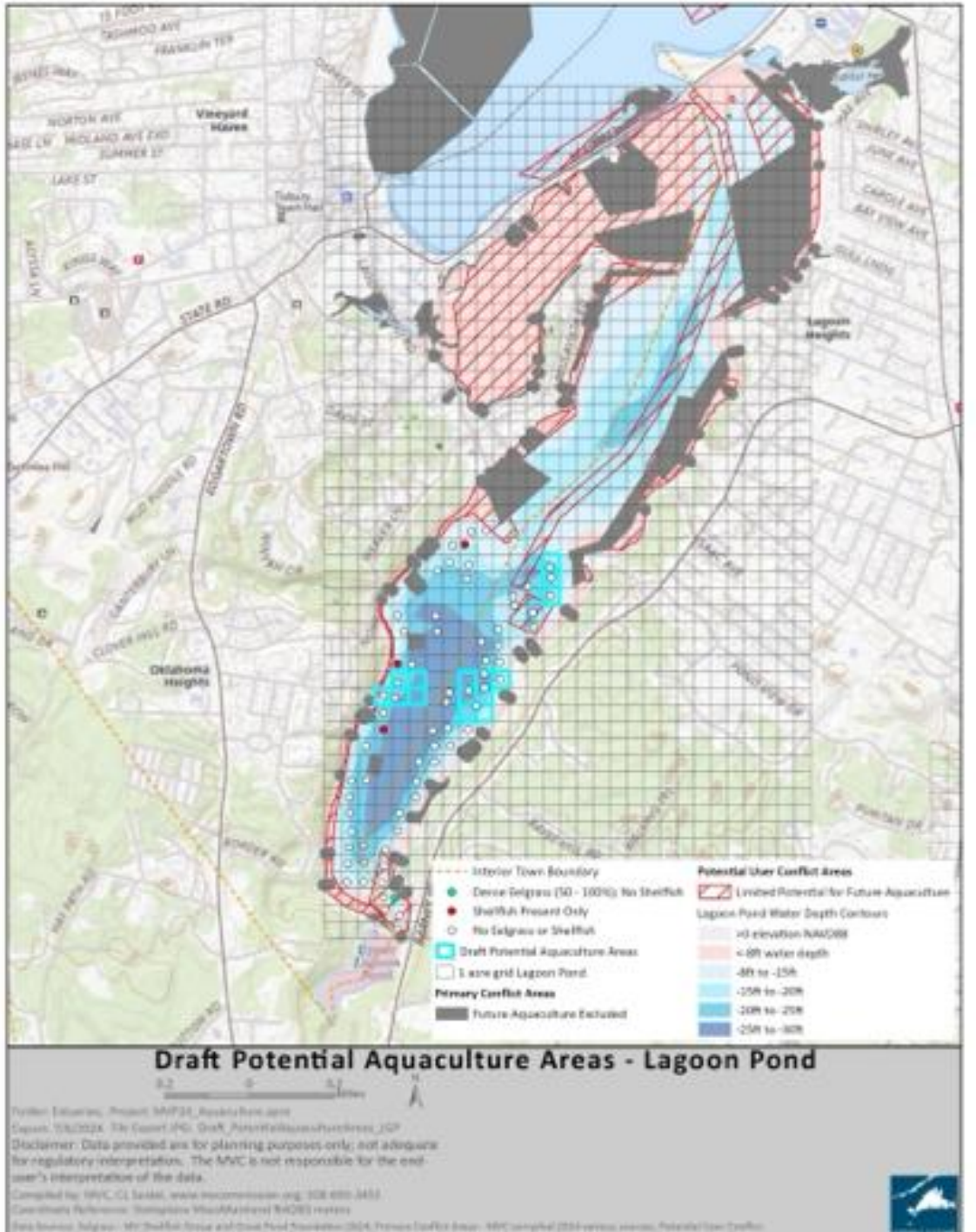


Eel Grass Mapping

To identify potential aquaculture sites

- Lagoon Pond
- Sengekontacket Pond
- Lake Tashmoo

To help guide towns and potential aquaculturists



Aquaculture:

Traditional local food source

Shellfish filter pond water

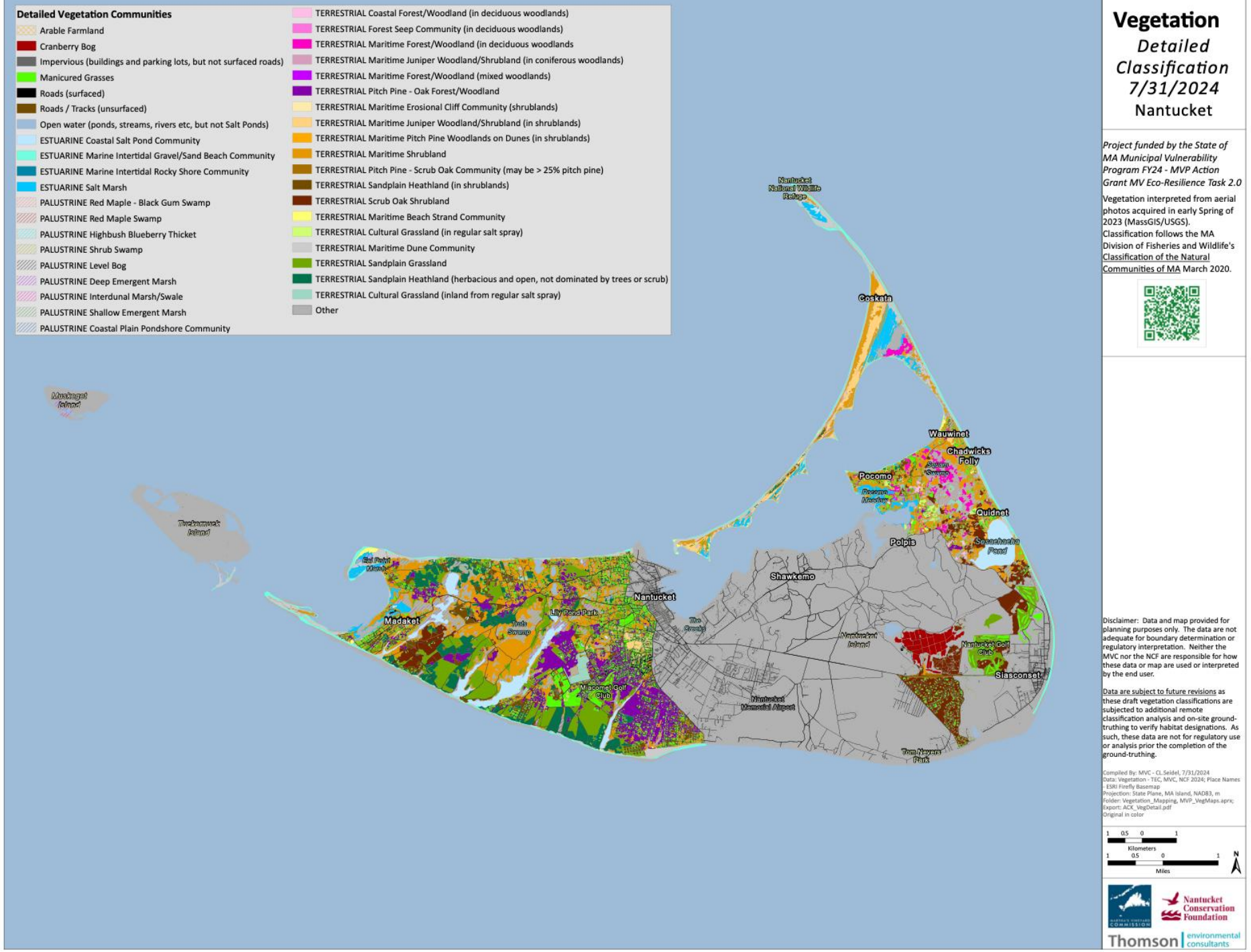
Local jobs

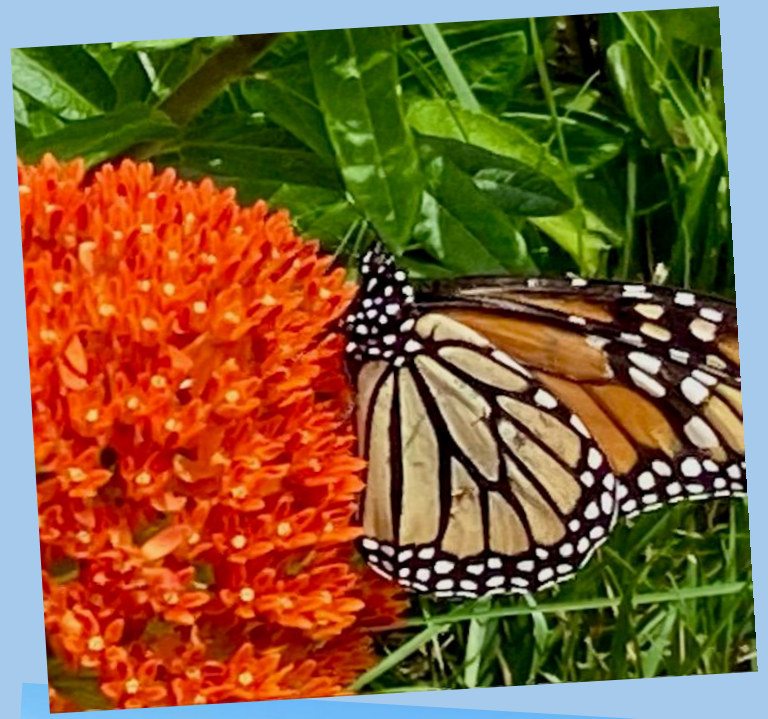
Food Security
Goal #1, Objective #4

Updated Nantucket and Vineyard vegetation maps

Nantucket Conservation Foundation
Linda Loring Nature Foundation
Nantucket Islands Land Bank
Nantucket Land and Water Council
The Trustees

LUNRBIO
Goal #1, Action 1.2





Plant Local MV

Focus Groups

What are the barriers to using native plants and decreasing lawn size?

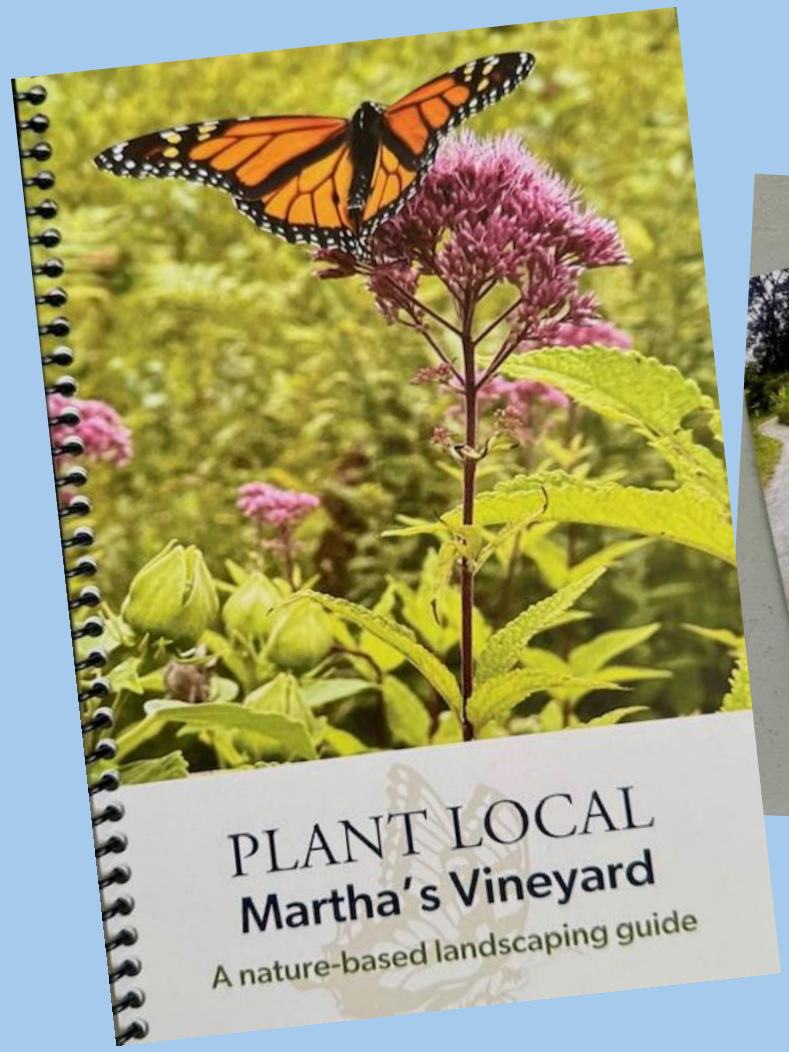
Focus Groups: landscape companies, homeowners, nurseries, Wampanoag tribal members

- Homeowners like neat, orderly landscapes
- Landscape designers don’t use native plants
- It’s difficult to educate clients
- Not enough sources of native plants
- Green lawn aesthetic
- Unaware of native plant beauty
- Not enough information about values of native plants

LUNRBIO
Goal #1, Action 2.1

Plant Local MV

Education Campaign



www.thevineyardway.org

Plant Local MV Booklet
Brochures
Nursery pop-ups

Collaboration:
Biodiversity Works
Vineyard Conservation Society
Polly Hill Arboretum
MV Commission

LUNRBIO
Goal #1, Action 2.1

Top 20 Native Plants

The following pages introduce you to our top 20 local native plants for Martha's Vineyard. These plants were chosen for their ecological benefits, growth characteristics, ease of care, beauty, and availability at local nurseries. Sample planting guides using these top 20 native plants are provided in the pages that follow the plant descriptions.

Perennials:

Blue flag iris	*Iris versicolor*
Cardinal flower	*Lobelia cardinalis*
Joe-Pye weed	*Eutrochium dubium*
New England aster	*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*
Orange butterfly weed	*Asclepias tuberosa*
Red columbine	*Aquilegia canadensis*
Seaside goldenrod	*Solidago sempervirens*
Swamp milkweed	*Asclepias incarnata*
Swamp rose-mallow	*Hibiscus moscheutos*

Grasses:

Little bluestem	*Schizachyrium scoparium*
Pennsylvania sedge	*Carex pensylvanica*
Switchgrass	*Panicum virgatum*

New England Aster

Symphyotrichum novae-angliae

Description:

Height: 1 - 4 feet
Spread: 2 - 3 feet
Light: Part shade
Soils: Moist
Blooms: August - November

Benefits

- Native wildflower species
- Great plant for rain gardens
- Great for pocket meadows
- Host plant for Pearl Crescent

Nectar Source | Host Plant | Seed Source | Pocket Meadow | Drought Tolerant

Plant This, Not That:

Arrowwood | Burning bush

Arrowood (*Viburnum dentatum*) adds plenty of seasonal interest to any landscape. Creamy white flowers appear in late spring, bundled into lovely flat-topp
Blue-black berry-like drupes follow the flow
summertime, ripening completely in early
marches on, the lustrous dark green leave
fall shades of yellow, glossy red, or reddis
looking for a larger statement piece in you
arrowwood viburnum should be on the li

Burning bush or Winged euonymus (*Eu*
(banned shrub) This shrub can form dens
prevent native species from growing. It p
enormous amount of seed annually, whi
and spread widely, making its spread un
While birds eat the fruit, it is not as nutrit
native plants.

Bayberry | Privet

Bayberry (*Morella pensylvanica*) is a s
shrub that will retain some leaves duri
winters. The berries are used in baybe
remain on the plant through winter, a
they are an important reserve food so
red-bellied woodpeckers, bluebirds,
warblers as other berries run out ove
Bayberry branches loaded with fruit
as a fragrant indoor decoration.

Privets (*Ligustrum sp.*) easily escap
adjacent areas, where they can form
that shade out and take the place o
herbaceous plants. The shady thick
that are unsuitable for native seedli
the leaves protect plants from leaf-
include native herbivorous specie

Problem Plants (Avoid or Remove)

When you remove or avoid purchasing these invasive plants, you are protecting the local flora and interdependent fauna that define the Island's unique character.

Bamboo

Bamboo spreads invasively and is very difficult to control. It crowds out native species and becomes a monoculture. Please enjoy your bamboo in pots indoors.

Japanese silvergrass

(*Miscanthus sinensis*) (banned plant)
Planted widely for its toughness and durability, this popular ornamental grass has escaped cultivation and threatens our globally rare sandplain grasslands. Spread by seeds, as well as by birds using it for nesting material, this popular grass has become a problem in numerous states over the last 20 years.

Common and Japanese barberry

(*Berberis vulgaris, B. thungbergii*) (banned shrub) Shrubs that grow in full sun to full shade. Birds relish the red fruits, which help them to spread along roadsides and disturbed woodlands. These two species will hybridize with the same results: abundant fruits that help it spread through native habitats. This plant promotes tick abundance.

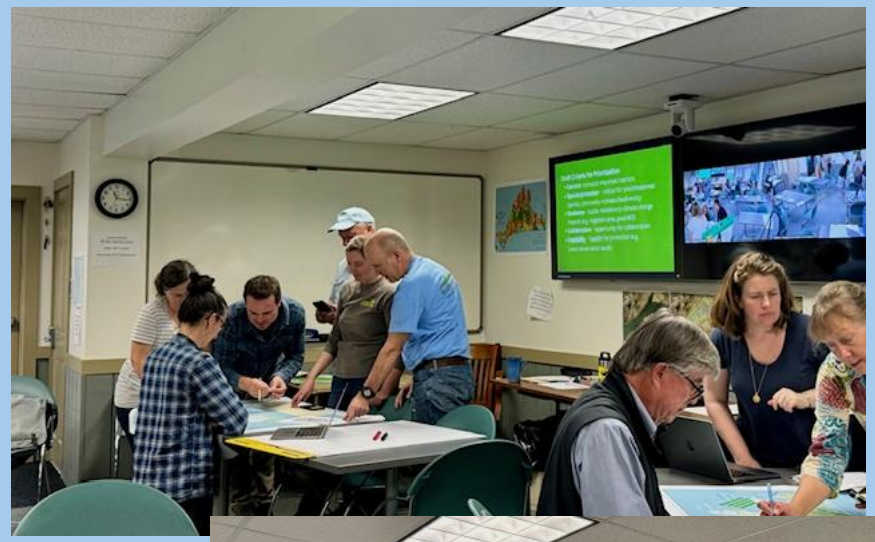
Creeping myrtle, a.k.a periwinkle

(*Vinca minor*) is often used as an ornamental plant for its evergreen foliage and blue, purple, or white flowers. However, it can spread quickly by sending out trailing branches that root in moist soil, crowding out and smothering other plants. Creeping myrtle can also limit the growth of new saplings and inhibit the natural succession process in forests.

A Bonus - MVC Native Plant Pollinator Garden

- Practicing what we preach
- Site located on a main road
- Biodiversity Works Natural Neighbors Program design
- Signage

LUNRBIO
Goal #2



Conservation Summit

- Review vegetation maps
- ID priority wildlife corridors to protect biodiversity and resilience to climate change
- ID areas for collaboration
- ID priority sites for protection

21 conservation practitioners

LUNRBIO
Goal #2, Action 1.2

Maximum Disturbance

By 2025, a maximum % disturbance per acre is established for all new development over one acre, except for the purpose of restoring native habitat

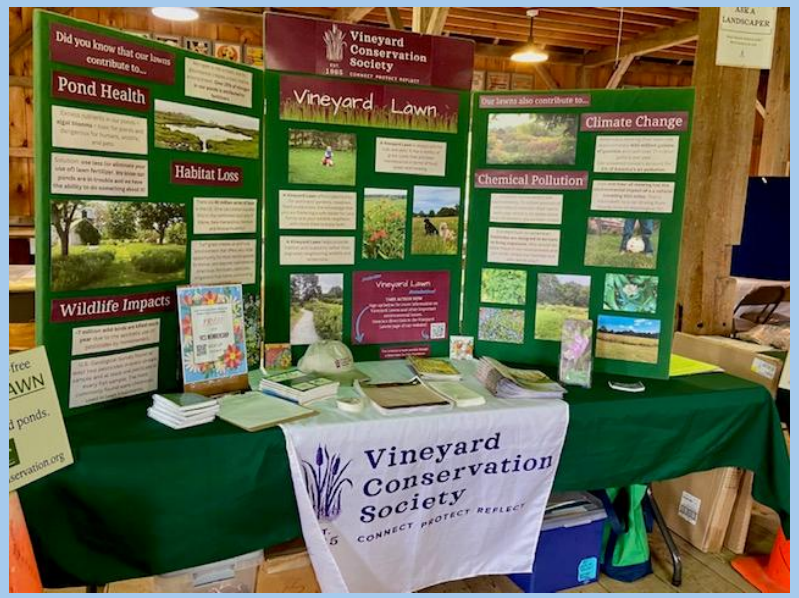
Each town adopts regulations for maximum disturbance

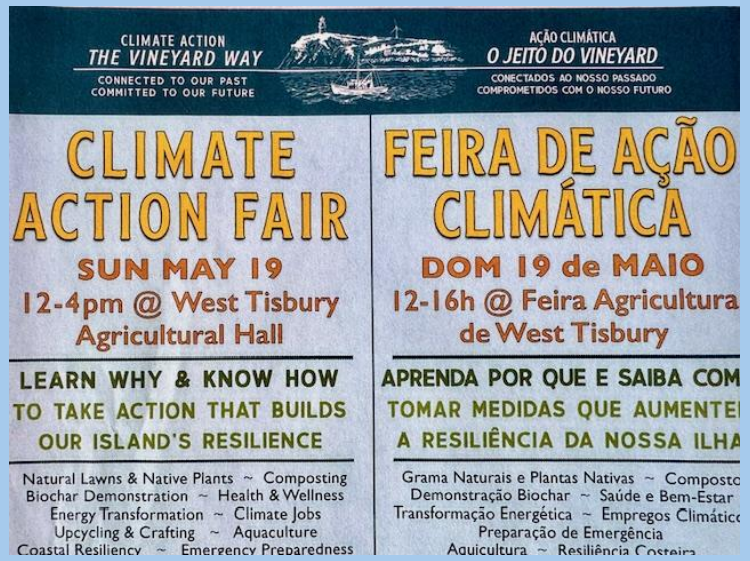
CAP Community Coordinating Committee subcommittee is developing regulations

LUNRBIO
Goal #2 Actions 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

2024
Climate Action Fair

- Over 40 booths
- Portuguese translators
- Biochar demonstration
- Plant Local MV panel discussions
- Wildfire panel discussion





Land Use, Natural Resources and Biodiversity

Priority Action

Salt marsh health assessment and migration mapping

Salt marshes have superpowers!

LUNRBIO
Goal #1, Action 2.4

Transportation, Infrastructure and Waste

Floodplain Protection

Updating Bylaws

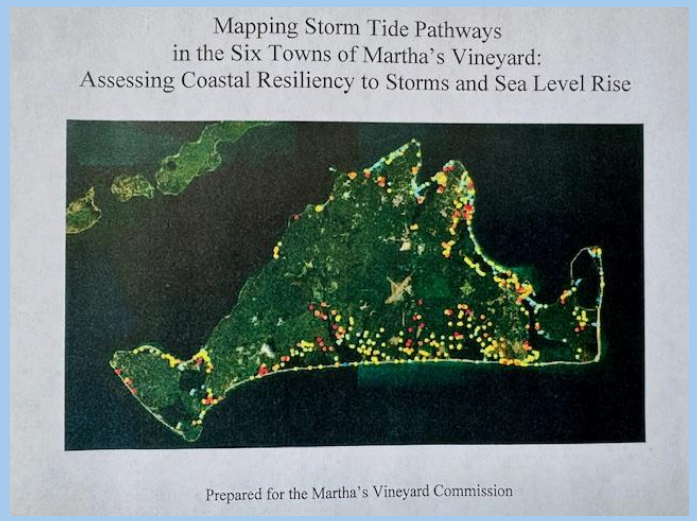
- Working with town Planning Boards, Conservation Commissions and Climate Committees to update Floodplain Overlay District Bylaws and Wetlands Protection Bylaw

- Working with Shannon Hulst and Cape Cod Commission to help towns use model bylaws to guide updates

Goal:
Updated FPOD and Wetlands Bylaws at 2026 Annual Town Meetings

LUNRBIO/TI&W
Goal #1 Actions 2.7, 3.2

StormTide Pathways maps for guidance



716 Vineyard pathways, where water will begin (or has begun) to flow inland for a given elevation

Transportation, Infrastructure and Waste

Priority Action

What to do about flooding of coastal roads?

TI&W
Goal #1, Action 2.4
Overarching Goal #1

Priority Action

Overarching Goal #1

Objective: By 2025, a collaborative framework for land use decision-making is developed that builds environmental and socioeconomic resilience.

Framework planning to include assessments of the environment, transportation, and economy

Seeking funding for framework and use of framework to plan for three vulnerable sites

Transportation, Infrastructure and Waste

Solid Waste Report and Task Force

In 2023, an estimated 2,110 trucks went off-Island with waste and recyclables, or the equivalent of about 260 freight boats.

How do we reduce waste?
How can we reduce costs?

TI&W
Goal #2, Goal #3, Action 3.1

Public Health and Safety

Public Health

- Surveyed health care professionals on climate/health knowledge
- Climate/health education at MV Hospital grand rounds
- Webinars: Air pollution, PFAS
- Tick educational materials in English and Portuguese
- Island CERT training (Community Emergency Response Team)

PH&S
Goal #2, Objectives 2 & 3, and Actions 1.3, 1.4

Public Safety

Priority Actions

Full-time regional emergency manager

Island-wide Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery Plan

PH&S
Goal #1, Objectives 2 and 3

Food Security

MV Public Food Forests

Goal: Public perennial food forests in each Island town

- Create design for Aquinnah food forest (site already determined)
- Identify potential sites for food forests in the other towns
- Develop a public toolkit to support food forest establishment

A MA Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program grant

Food Security
Goal #1 Action 3.4

Food Security

MV Agricultural Society - Island-wide standards for climate-friendly farming, **Goal#1, Actions 2.1., 2.2**

SNAP/HIP and Fresh Connect accepted at Farmer's Market, **Goal #1, Actions 3.1, 3.2**

MV Fishermen's Preservation Trust seafood cookbook for local seafood marketing; grant to donate over 5,000 pounds of fish to Island Food Pantry
Goal#1, Objectives 5 and 6

MV Tick Program – venison donation program, **Goal #2**

MV Shellfish Group – partnering with The Nature Conservancy on an oyster aquaculture and restoration project, **Goal #1, Action 4.3**

Economic Resilience

Priority Action

Report on Economic Impacts of Climate Change on Martha's Vineyard

Economic Impacts Report:

- Climate change impacts to Island economy
- Cost of doing nothing
- Financial incentive for leaders to act
- Data tool for grant applications

Economic Resilience
Goal #1

ACE MV – local employer needs assessment survey and Planning and Capacity Building grant for on-Island clean energy job training (MA Clean Energy Center)

Economic Resilience
Goal #1, Actions 3.1, 3.2,3.3

Overarching Goal #2: Reliable and Sustainable Sources of Funding

Climate Adaptation Fee Committee

Overarching Goal #3: A Team of Climate Change Professionals (Island-wide)

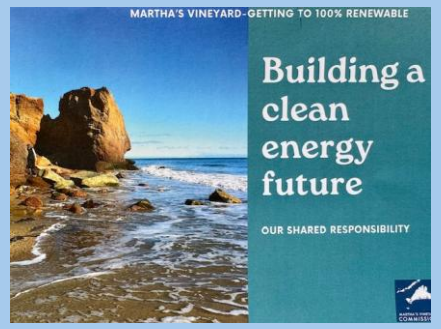
MV Vision Fellowship

MVC Fellows

Biochar

Develop a demonstration project to evaluate the potential value of biochar in sequestering carbon and benefitting soil restoration, biodiversity, wildfire management, and water quality

LUNRBIO
Goal#1 Action 2.6



Energy Planner

Implement CAP Energy Transformation actions

CAP Thematic Area
Energy Transformation

Climate Communications Specialist

Hire a Climate Communications Specialist to conduct strategic communications that support CAP goals and objectives

Overarching Goal #3
Action 1.2

Equity (A CAP Guiding Value)

MVP 2.0

- MVC received a grant to guide the MVP 2.0 process for the six towns
- Keeps towns eligible for MVP action grants
- Review climate resilience priorities form original MVP project
- Focus on equity, vulnerable populations
- $50,000 in seed money for each town to help implement and equity-based priority project

Low income
Non-English speaking
People with existing health conditions
Older adults
People who work outdoors
First responders
People living in areas of high climate-related events (floods, wildfire)

Climate Action Plan Lessons

Challenges

Every action has a lead but:

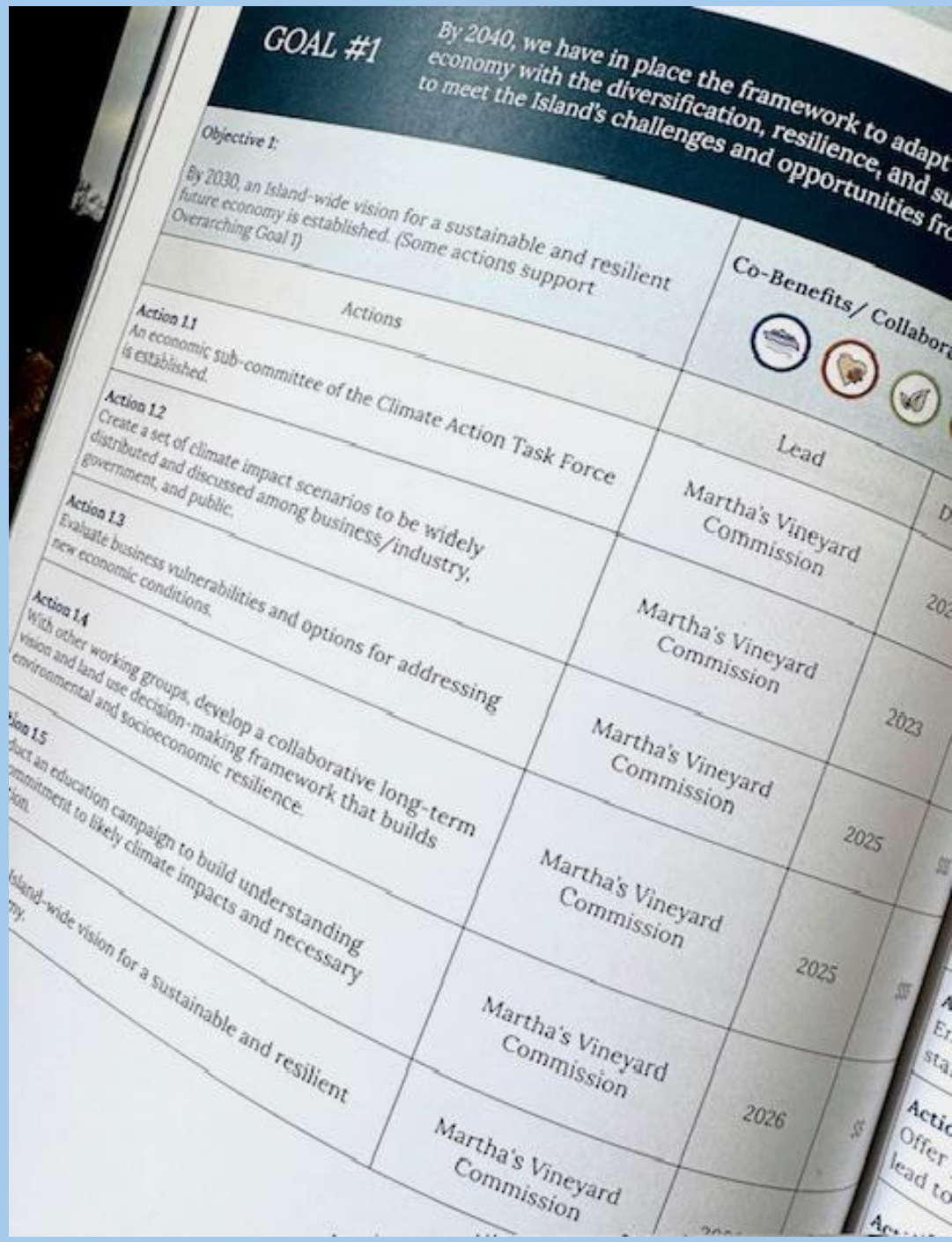
- MVC is lead for too many
- Leads move on

- Coordinating with six towns

- Emergency Management planning

- Funding

- Capacity (staffing - all organizations, towns)



Climate Action Plan Lessons

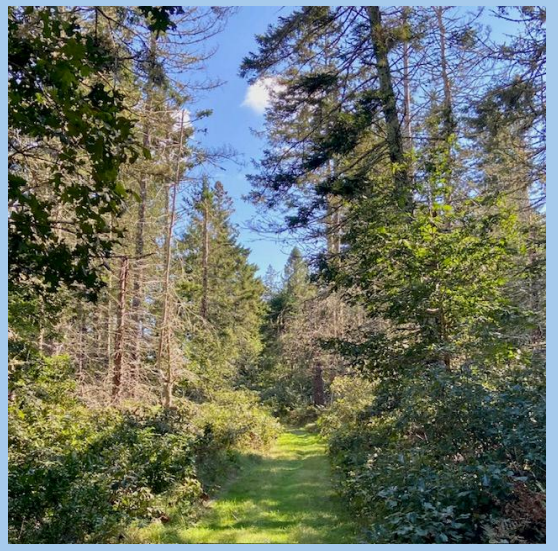
Rewards

- Collaboration with Island non-profits
- A strong working relation with the MVP program
- Successful community engagement: Climate Action Fair, Climate Communications Specialist
- Building relationships with local and regional organizations
- CAP CCC Committee – towns, Tribe, NAACP, County, MVC, staying connected, collaborating

It’s Not Just the Climate Action Plan

Island-wide Climate Action

- Leaf blower regulations (Vineyard Conservation Society)
- MV State Forest Task Force (MVC)
- Emergency access to MV Hospital study (Oak Bluffs/MCZM grant)
- Updated Edgartown Harbor Plan (Edgartown/MVC/MCZM)
- Oak Bluffs Climate Adaptation Study (Oak Bluffs)
- Raise Menemsha docks (Chilmark)
- Up-Island Watershed Management Plan (MVC)
- The Great Ponds Series, 3 documentaries (Circuit Films and VCS)
- Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) Climate Adaptation Plan
- Oak Bluffs Tree Stewards – planting trees in recreational green space



Wampanoag Voices:
Enriching the Climate Conversation

Panel Discussion
Nature Pause
Q & A
Intentions

Stillpoint
3 – 5 pm
Sunday, June 22, 2025
20 Stillpoint Meadows Road
West Tisbury

Space is limited – please preregister at durkee@mvcommission.org

AQUINNAH WAMPANOAG NATURAL RESOURCES

CLIMATE RESILIENCE
MARTHA'S VINEYARD COMMISSION

“Stop burning fossil fuels and move to higher ground.”

Jeff Goodell, author
The Water Will Come

Liz Durkee
Martha’s Vineyard Commission
Climate Change Coordinator
durkee@mvcommission.org

CLIMATE RESILIENCE
MARTHA’S VINEYARD COMMISSION

Vineyard Climate Action Plan
www.thevineyardway.org