

Martha Shaw  
11 Harthaven Road, Box 62  
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557  
(617)921-9552

January 24, 2014

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of The Friends of Farm Pond, a group of homeowners who have properties around the periphery of this valuable intertidal watershed, I write this letter in support of enlarging the opening of Farm Pond to the sea, to which it once flowed freely.

The constriction of the opening to the sea through a small culvert under the road is not only a storm hazard, but poses a health hazard and an environmental hazard.

During recent flooding, the existing culvert could not drain the Pond quickly enough and homes were flooded. The concentration of nitrogen, and of geese feces, has turned this very important watershed into a health hazard and deterioration of the Pond has been increasing steadily since the entrance was restricted. Many people have lived around the Pond for nearly a century and have watched it decline. These residents once sailed through the Pond to the sea. Farm Pond is a critical corridor for biodiversity of birds and other species that make it their home and layover grounds during migration.

The Martha's Vineyard community, with the support of the Friends of Farm Pond, has been working to get a bigger opening for a decade. The recent Hurricane Sandy brought the need for balance to a near emergency as flooding occurred and drainage was blocked.

Please accept our request for a Hurricane Sandy coastal resiliency competitive grant.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

*Martha J. Shaw*

Martha Shaw  
Coastal Geologist  
Founder, Friends of Farm Pond  
[www.FriendsofFarmPond.net](http://www.FriendsofFarmPond.net)