Welcome to Pleasant Bay

This estuary is a stunning recreational resource that is available to everyone. We hope you use it wisely and learn to love and protect it. The only cost for its use is an obligation to treat it well.

The Friends of Pleasant Bay (FOPB) was organized in 1985 with the mission to "preserve and enhance the natural, visual, and historic resources of Pleasant Bay." The organization focuses on both the Bay, Cape Cod's largest estuary, and its entire watershed.

In 1987, the Friends successfully achieved designation of the Bay as a Massachusetts Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Funding by the Friends supported preparation of the Bay's first Resource Management Plan in 1998.

Regular updates to the Resource Management Plan are now coordinated by the Pleasant Bay Resource Management Alliance. This intergovernmental organization allows the Towns of Brewster, Chatham, Harwich, and Orleans to focus on Bay issues together. The Alliance's activities encompass policy development, public information, and scientific research.

Supported by memberships and donations, the Friends provides financial support to many projects and local groups. Educational Grants allow students to explore Pleasant Bay through experiential science, art, and humanities projects. Scientific Grants support research on wildlife and coastal processes. Other Grants provide financial support to local Land Trusts for their Land Preservation Acquisitions and near the Bay.

Recent major efforts include a solar-powered vessel that will serve as a floating classroom/research platform; and leadership of the campaign to preserve Spion Island, creating public access to the island for the first time in 300 years.

In 2017, FOPB received the Outstanding Organization Award from the American Fisheries Society (organized in 1870) and its Southern New England Chapter for "work dedicated to the preservation of one of Cape Cod's most stunning recreational resources."

Marine Contact Information
US Coast Guard - Emergency: 508-965-0164
US Coast Guard - Business: 508-965-3830
Emergency Hailing: VHF Channel 16 or 156.8 MHz or CALL 911

Harbormasters
Chatham: 508-945-5185
Harwich: 508-430-7532
Orleans: 508-240-3755

Lessons, Rentals, Tours
Pleasant Bay Community Boating: pbcb.cc
Ames' Pond Sailing School: amespondsailing.com
Down Cape Charters & Boat Rentals: downcapeboating.com
Adventue Chatham: 800-809-1750
Nauset Marine: nausetmarine.com
Goose Hummock Shop Rentals: goose.com
Beachcomber Tours: beachcombertours.com
Blue Claw Tours: blueclawtours.com
Mass Audubon Society Tours: massaudubon.org

Sailing Organizations
Chatham Yacht Club: chathamyachtclub.org
Namequein Sailing Association: namequein.org
Pleasant Bay Community Boating: pbcb.cc

Pumpout Services
Harwich: Pumpout Boat at Round Cove On call 8 AM - 10PM Channel 64 508-430-7532
Orleans: Pumpout Cart Nauset Marine East 7:30AM - 6:30PM Channel 6, 9, or 16 508-255-3045

Oil Discharge Prohibited
The Federal Water Pollution Control Act prohibits the discharge of oil or oily waste into open or navigable waters of the United States. Violators are subject to a penalty of $5,000.

Local Land Trusts
chathamconservationfoundation.org
brewerconservationtrust.org
harwichconservationtrust.org
orleansconservationtrust.org
spionislandtrust.org
friendsofpleasantbay.org
Local Knowledge for Mariners

- Mariners of all kinds navigate Pleasant Bay, from commercial and recreational fisherman to sailors, kayakers, stand up paddle boarders, and rowers. Please be respectful of your fellow boaters.

- There are marked No Wake Zones in ponds, coves, channels and rivers. Compliance is enforced. There is also a 150 foot State Regulated No Wake Zone along the entire shoreline of the bayestuary and around mooring fields and swimming areas. Power boats should use extreme caution close to shore and in mooring areas. Always watch for swimmers.

- Muddy Creek is open to paddling, but tidal currents are strong at the Rte 28 bridge. Power boats are prohibited in Muddy Creek.

- Personal Water Craft (PWC) are prohibited in any part of Pleasant Bay by both Federal, Law and State approved Local Laws.

- It is illegal to discharge untreated or treated vessel sewage from Type I or II Marine Sanitation Devices in the Federal Pleasant Bay/Chatham Harbor No Discharge Area (NDA). Use Pumpout Services.

- The channel from Chatham Light to Meeting House Pond is marked with buoys numbered south to north. It is important to always follow buoy locations, as these channels are subject to change.

- Nauset Beach is always shifting, with constant changes to ocean entrances. Boaters should always be aware of changing channels and conditions.

- Surf conditions at the ocean entrances can be severe. All vessels should heed the Rough Bar Warning at the Chatham Coast Guard Station, a quick flashing yellow light which indicates surf of two feet or more. A red light at the Harbormaster’s office at the Chatham Fish Pier also indicates High Surf.

- Tides in Pleasant Bay do not follow a typical six hour cycle. Mariners should special care to calculate the tides before venturing out. Areas may become dry before "dead low."

- Shellfishing requires a licence. Contact town Harbormasters for regulations. Do not disturb marked private shellfish grants.

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Safety on Land & Water

- Always wear a life jacket when boating.
- Canoes and kayakers are required to wear life jackets between September 15th and May 15th by Massachusetts State Law.
- Keep off the fragile ecosystems of salt marshes, sand dunes and coastal bluff.
- Keep clean of areas restricted for nesting birds.
- Keep clear of seals on land or water.
- Before shellfishing, obtain a permit and always check for possible contamination and area closings.
- Avoid Poison Ivy and always check for Ticks.