

MEMORANDUM

TO: Matt Sturgis, Town Manager
FROM: Maureen O'Meara, Town Planner
DATE: January 28, 2022
SUBJECT: Spurwink Avenue culvert Feasibility Study funding

Introduction

The Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve (NWERR) is offering to include the Spurwink Avenue culvert in a funding request to be submitted to the Maine Coastal Program. (See attached)

Background

The Town of Cape Elizabeth has been partnering with Jake Aman, Stewardship Director at WNERR, since 2018 to obtain funding for the study and replacement of tidally influenced culverts.

With funding assistance from NWERR, the Town completed the [Cape Elizabeth Culvert and Habitat Assessment Study](#) in 2019. This study evaluated the 16 most critical culverts, which included field assessments of each culvert and recording of conditions in a standardized format, and prioritization of culvert replacement and estimated costs.

NWERR was instrumental in leveraging funds to study the [Sawyer Road culvert](#).

NWERR is also part of the team that obtained funding from the Maine Natural Resource Conservation Program (MNRCP) to replace the [Willow Brook culvert](#) (\$343,000).

WNERR is now assembling a funding application to the Maine Coastal Program under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and would like to include a feasibility study for replacement of the Spurwink Avenue culvert. With the imminent replacement of the Willow Brook culvert (upstream of the Spurwink Avenue culvert) and imminent discussion of next steps regarding the Sawyer Road culvert (downstream of the Spurwink Avenue culvert), the Spurwink Avenue culvert is a logical candidate in the [Scarborough Marsh](#) system. The Spurwink Avenue culvert is currently restricting tidal flows and is a critical north/south road network connector.

Motion for consideration

The Cape Elizabeth Town Council endorses the inclusion of the Spurwink Ave culvert on the list of priority projects submitted to the Maine Coastal Program for the southern Maine region.