

CHILMARK POND COMMISSIONERS' REPORT 2021-2022

Pond Openings 2021/2022

October 6 – 20, 2021

January 22 – 29, 2022

March 29 – April 1, 2022

We are pleased to report that there was a fall opening in 2021. The cut stayed open for 24 days, resulting in a very successful flushing of the pond.

The winter opening lasted for 7 days, which we consider to be a successful flushing of the pond. On behalf of the Chilmark Pond Foundation, Emily Reddington, Executive Director of the Great Pond Foundation & her group are in the process of determining how long it takes to exchange the fresh water for salt water, in order to improve the health of the pond. The length of the opening is one of the factors involved, along with the strength of the flow. This water testing will allow us to know how long of an opening with sufficient flow is optimal.

Unfortunately, the spring opening closed on the third day. This was due to the arrival of a blizzard, with the resultant high surf pushing sand into the cut, and causing it to close.

Since then, in April & May, the island received approximately half of its normal rainfall. Because it has been a very dry spring, the pond height has risen at a very slow rate. The “recharge,” or increase in amount of water in the pond is much slower in the spring than during the winter. This is due to the uptake of rain by the growing vegetation in the spring. We decided not to open the pond again, as we weren't sure that there was enough height to ensure sufficient hydrostatic head to achieve a good flush. This was coupled with the fact that if the pond did not recharge sufficiently, it would result in a shallow level over the summer. A low level in the pond would result in higher temperatures of the water, which depletes the oxygen levels. This is bad for the life in the pond, and is conducive to algae blooms. Of course, we will continue to monitor the height of the pond, and do what we believe is in the best interest of the health of the pond & surrounding marshes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha Cottle

Stephen Lewenberg

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