



# *THE* VINEYARD WAY

CONNECTED TO OUR PAST  
COMMITTED TO OUR FUTURE

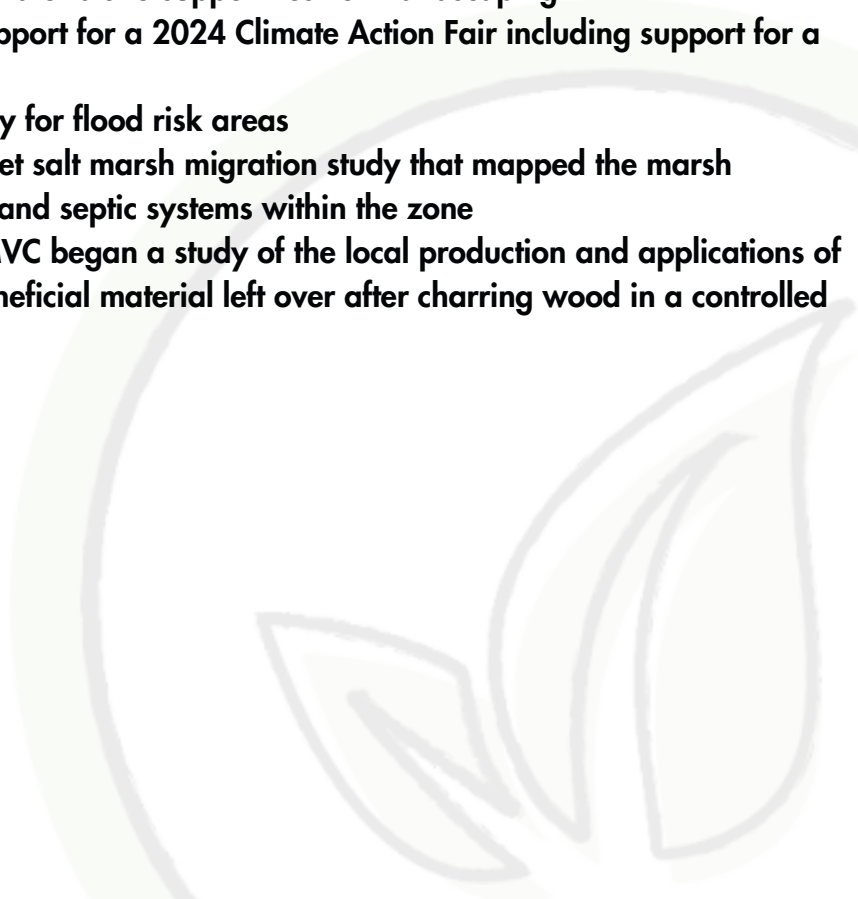
# NOV 2023 PROGRESS REPORT

Prepared by  
**THE MARTHAS VINEYARD  
COMMISSION**






## Land Use, Natural Resources, Biodiversity

- Polly Hill offered several courses on Landscape Design with native plants and is now part of a larger New England Seed network which will eventually allow commercial growers to access commercial size native seed lots.
  - BiodiversityWorks sold 1,579 native plants to 58 residents through their Natural Neighbors Program!
  - The MVC received a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program grant with several local partners to
    - Update vegetation mapping of the Vineyard and Nantucket (Town Conservation Commissions, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation, Polly Hill Arboretum, Vineyard Conservation Society, Martha's Vineyard Shellfish Group, MV Land Bank, Trustees of the Reservations, Biodiversity Works, the Town of Nantucket)
    - Map eelgrass in Lake Tashmoo, Lagoon Pond and Sengekontacket Pond to help identify future aquaculture sites (MV Shellfish Group, Great Pond Foundation)
    - Focus groups with the landscape community to understand the barriers and opportunities for climate resilient and native landscaping (MV Vision Fellowship/Harvard Fellowship, BiodiversityWorks, Polly Hill Arboretum, and Vineyard Conservation Society,)
    - Develop a series of outreach materials to support resilient landscaping
    - Planning and coordination support for a 2024 Climate Action Fair including support for a Brazilian Community Event
  - MVC has drafted a MVC DRI Policy for flood risk areas
  - MVC completed a Sengekontacket salt marsh migration study that mapped the marsh migration zone and all structures and septic systems within the zone
  - Vineyard Vision Fellow and the MVC began a study of the local production and applications of bio-char, the environmentally beneficial material left over after charring wood in a controlled environment.
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## **Transportation, Infrastructure, & Waste**

- **To address long term resilience in fleet operations, the Steamship Authority's Board authorized the purchase of three used offshore supply vessels as replacements for three existing freight vessels at the end of their useful service life. These replacements are expected to begin line service in 2024 with an estimated useful life of 25 years.**
  - **The Steamship Authority completed work in May 2022 to extend the useful life of the OB Pier wooden piles and provide a twenty (20) to twenty-five (25) year extension to the life of the pier.**
  - **MVC Task Force began phase one of a supply chain/carrying capacity study with a focus on water related components through a Planning Assistance for States (PSA) agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers- Engineering and Research Development Center.**
  - **The Construction and Demolition Waste Committee and Vineyard Vision Fellowship implemented a pilot project on a house going through a major renovation to harvest a significant portion of the materials that normally would have gone to the transfer station. This project was documented and will be used in future reclamation projects and training**
  - **An MVC liaison attends monthly Steamship Authority meetings and subcommittee meetings to learn of and update the MVC on SSA climate-related matters**
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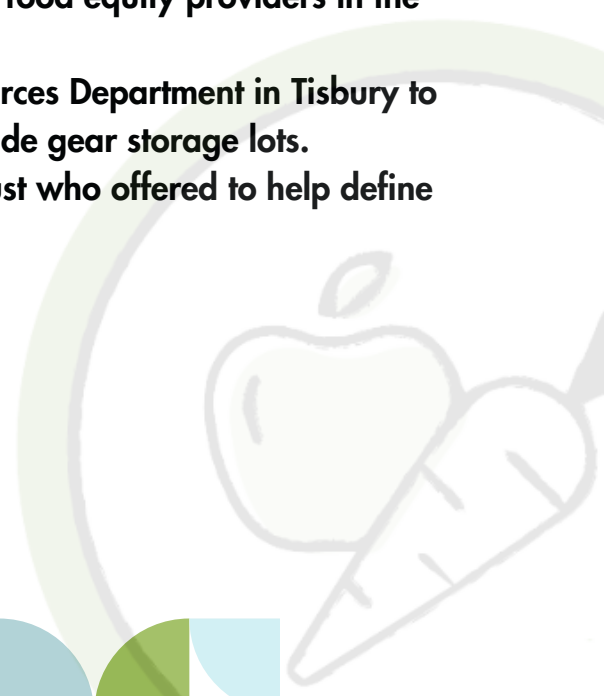

# Energy Transformation



- The town of Aquinnah has adopted the Specialized Code and will also be part of the 10 town pilot project to test the idea of all-electric for new construction and major renovations.
  - The West Tisbury School is installing four Level 2 EV charging ports, Chilmark has moved their Level 3 charger to the new Emergency Building where they have two Level 2 EV charging ports, and the new Tisbury School will have chargers.
  - The School Department has 2 electric buses and is seeking EPA funding for more.
  - The Towns of Aquinnah and Chilmark got a federal technical assistance grant to design microgrids with solar and batteries for their town center buildings that are critical to have operational in times of power failure.
  - The MVC and down-island towns got a grant from the same federal program to develop strategies for increased resilience of the down-island water departments.
  - Edgartown received a technical assistance opportunity to look at a microgrid for their police and fire stations.
  - Vineyard Power and the Cape Light Compact (CLC) launched an initiative in September whereby Vineyard Power pledged to donate up to \$200,000 a year for the CLC to distribute among CLC income eligible ratepayers on the Vineyard. This donation will deliver savings totaling between \$300-400 every year to these rate payers.
  - In 2022, the Cape Light Compact has supported the installation of 33 heat pumps and 21 heat pump hot water heaters for low income residences
  - Vineyard Power conducted over 60 outreach events and launched an Energy Coach program that offers Vineyard residents easy to schedule, no-cost, 30-minute sessions with one of their coaches on solar, EVs, and/or buildings. To date, they have recorded approximately 30 coaching sessions. Roughly 20% of those are building coach sessions. Roughly 20% of them are EV coach meetings. Thus far, about 60% of them have been related to solar.
  - Vineyard Power developed a comprehensive EV resources page and FAQs page including important buying information and “how-to” access rebates and tax credits.
  - Vineyard Power has become an Associate Member of the Martha’s Vineyard Builders Association to share resources and training on Stretch Code modifications and new incentives from CLC.
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## Food Security

- IGI has connected with four regional aggregator/distributors, and is looking for ways to increase collective buying capacity and bring distributors here and more regularly.
  - IGI has secured a location in Oak Bluffs for a permanent home for the Food Pantry with warehouse space. Move in date is 2024 with plans for solar and battery back-up for energy resilience
  - The West Tisbury farmers market is now able to process SNAP/HIP. SNAP is accepted year round at Morning Glory Farm, and IGI Mobile market and Norton Farm accept SNAP seasonally.
  - With support from IGI, both the MV Hospital and Island Health Care have enrolled patients in Fresh Connect. Island Health Care has also begun offering nutrition education classes for Fresh Connect clients.
  - Native seeds are now incorporated into the Community Seed Library!
  - The Aquinnah Food Forest planning will take place this winter with installation to begin in spring 2024 and IGI is seeking resources to engage all towns in identifying Food Forest locations.
  - The MV Fishermen's Preservation Trust received a grant to develop a cookbook to promote local seafood by telling the stories of local fishermen while combining local recipes, and species profiles.
  - Grants in 2022/23 allowed the MV Fishermen's Preservation Trust to purchase, process, and donate over 4,600 lbs of whole fish, 75 lbs of sea scallops, 110 lbs of lobster, and 760 clams to islanders in need.
  - The MV Tick Program is compiling training materials for new hunters and in collaboration with IGI donated and distributed 10 deer amounting to ~400 lbs of venison through the Island Food Pantry and other local food equity providers in the 2022 hunting season.
  - Cottage City Oysters is working with the Natural Resources Department in Tisbury to create new aquaculture/waterways regs that will provide gear storage lots.
  - IGI connected the Ag Society to American Farmland Trust who offered to help define climate friendly farming practices.
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## Public Health and Safety

- TA climate change sub-committee was established in the Dukes County Health Council to focus on the links between public health and climate change.
- A survey of healthcare providers and organizations was completed to understand knowledge and gaps in health impacts of climate change
- Two public talks were carried out linking public health and climate change. One on air quality and one on PFAS.
- Implementation actions from the Community Wildfire Protection Plan:
  - Controlled burn in MCSF of 58 acres in April 2022 – this was a state led effort with notable municipal support of personnel
  - 5 controlled burns administered across TNC & Trustees properties in Spring 2023
  - MVC completed a preliminary GIS assessment of Dukes County lands well suited for controlled burns based on vegetation type, working with Mass Division of Fish & Wildlife
  - Aquinnah CERT held a fire safety training
  - MCSF now furnished with an excavator with a mulching head which allows for far more effective fuels management work, following support from federal legislation delegation
  - DCR has formalized a District Fire Patrol(wo)man position dedicated to MCSF
  - WT Fire Chief has sent out a town wide mailing declaring the importance of standardized 3” house numbers clearly posted on homes
  - IGI Farm redevelopment has reportedly used the CWPP to helped them rethink land management at this site
  - 10,000 gallon dry hydrant installed on SMF property on Chappy will help the Town FD suppress fires in that area of high risk
  - Chilmark has secured access to a drone pilot who flies above smoke to the Town can determine where to create breaks and stage people in the event of a brush or forest fire
  - MVC-TNC have applied for funding to create a fire break along the perimeter of the high risk Woods Property
  - MVC has applied for federal funding to install dry hydrants in high risk pockets of the island
  - WT FD is crafting a demonstration project that would utilize a “turbo draft” that can reach water sources over 100’ away; this will change the way WT views swimming pools and small ponds as a fire suppression resource, and help them assess if they should purchase this equipment (benefits are not limited to structural fires)
  - Dodgers Hole residents in Edgartown participated in a Firewise Community Program with DCR and the Town that allowed for hazardous fuel removal in a neighborhood fence line to the State Forest



## Economic Resilience

- Vineyard Power is working with schools to discussion renewable energy and energy efficiency with an focus on career pathways for older students
- Vineyard Power is collaborating with ACE MV to explore the possibility of establishing an on-island certification/training program for HVAC installers.
- Through the MVC an initial analysis was drafted to identify funding needs and potential sustainable finance mechanisms that could be developed (e.g. resilience fee for tourists).

