

A MARTHA'S VINEYARD LAND TRUST

Newsletter

Early Summer 2022

Issue No. 77

SUNSET AT CEDAR TREE NECK SANCTUARY

SHERIFF'S MEADOW FOUNDATION

A MARTHA'S VINEYARD LAND TRUS

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Kate Feiffer

Founded in 1959 by Henry Beetle Hough and Elizabeth Bowie Hough

Bob...WHITE!



Bobwhite quail. Photo by David Damroth

Bob...WHITE!

A bobwhite? Could it be? Startled, I stopped my work and sat still for a moment. Then, again:

Bob...WHITE!

"A bobwhite!" I exclaimed, and dashed out the door to listen. In all my years of living at Quansoo, I had never heard a bobwhite calling - until today. Then, again, came the call, utterly unmistakeable, loud as a church bell, ringing across the great green grassy plain:

Bob...WHITE!

Though now uncommon, bobwhite quail were once plentiful across the meadows of Quansoo and Quenames and the south shore of Martha's Vineyard. The bobwhite's namesake call (bob...WHITE!) once played, and now may continue to play, a signature role in the symphony of sounds that signify an Island spring.

When one considers spring, one most often considers a progression of vernal sights. At Quansoo, spring appears later than it does around the rest of the Island. By Mother's Day the shadbush blossoms, and its delicate white flowers adorn the length of each ancient dirt road. After that the sassafras breaks bud, with starbursts of bright green leaves at the end of each twig. Huckleberry blossoms, and then leafs out, and turns the entire forest floor into a bristling carpet of green. Last are the oak tree leaves, which start to emerge around Memorial Day, first red, and then turning to green.

Yet just as there is a progression of these sights of spring, so also is there a progression of sounds. On Martha's Vineyard, spring begins definitively with the evening



Osprey Nest. Photo by Kate Feiffer



call of the pinkletink. Pinkletink is a name that is peculiar to the Island, as everywhere else these tree frogs are called spring peepers. On cold nights in early March, I can hear their amphibious chorus ring out from a stand of oaks off some distance to the west, along the Black Point Road.

Next come the ospreys. The ospreys nest atop a pole set beside the so-called "picnic woods." They arrive sometime in March, and immediately set to work adding sticks and roots and bits of rope to their massive, ragged eyrie. When not fixing the nest or fishing, the osprey call to each other with a loud and incessant series of peeps.

After the osprey, a vast number of birds arrive. Each bird emits its own distinct song or chirp, as each tries to attract a mate, or defend territory, or communicate with its fellows. At the summer solstice, the days are at their longest. The sun lingers as it sets, and the twilight melts into the June evening. On these nights, one hears the call of the whippoorwill. When the whippoorwill calls, I step outside for a spell, to listen to this distinctive coda of the season.

That these sounds of spring may be heard at Quansoo, and across the island of Martha's Vineyard, is due to the decades of work by Sheriff's Meadow Foundation and our conservation colleagues. By conserving land, we allow places for nature to sing out, unmuffled.

And to this springtime symphony, this year the bobwhite joined in. It has long been my hope that Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's management of Quansoo, and of the meadows and heathlands of the nearby Priscilla Hancock Meadow and Wade's Field, would provide suitable habitat for the bobwhite quail. Perhaps this is now the case? When I walk the paths of Quansoo in September, might I spy a mother bobwhite trailed by a covey of chicks? Time shall tell.

In the meantime, just listen: bob-WHITE!

Adam R. Moore Executive Director

Comings and Goings

Thank You, Susan Hughes!



Kristen Geagan, Bill Bridwell, Tom Robinson, Susan

After five and a half years of dedicated service, Susan Hughes retired from her position of Development Associate at the end of May, 2022. Susan joined the staff in October of 2016, just as Sheriff's Meadow Foundation had begun the quiet phase of its comprehensive "For Future Generations" campaign. Susan devotedly supported all aspects of the Sheriff's Meadow advancement program during this time period. She handled all donor acknowledgement letters, tracked progress toward campaign goals, organized and supported receptions and activities, supported our planned giving program, and much more.

The fundamental feature of any advancement program is thanking donors and Susan ensured that all of our donors were promptly thanked, in writing. The staff and members of the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation Board are very grateful for all of the support that Susan provided.

Susan also shared her excellent design skills with Sheriff's Meadow Foundation in the newsletter. Working as a team with Editor Kate Feiffer, Susan laid out each page and each issue of the newsletter. During this period the newsletter expanded dramatically, going from two issues to four, and expanding to include occasional special issues, issues that also included an annual report, artwork, and essays from guest writers.

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation wishes Susan the best upon her retirement and expresses its grateful appreciation for all of her work as the Development Associate.

Photo by Sara Piazza

Welcome Catherine Hall, Advancement Coordinator



Catherine Hall was born and raised in New Bedford, MA and has lived yearround on the Island since 2018. Having worked with Island organizations like the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) and the Chilmark Community Center, as well as various other off-Island

museums and nonprofit organizations, Catherine has a great deal of experience coordinating and directing educational/ recreational youth programs and community outreach events. With an affinity for lifelong learning, Catherine has continued to expand her professional development through programs at Northwestern University focusing on Museum Studies, Philanthropy, and Nonprofit Management. Catherine and her family are avid beachcombers and can often be found exploring the beautiful beaches and rocky shores in search of sea glass and other treasures. With a passion for conservation, nature-based education, and life on the Vineyard, Catherine is excited to work with Sheriff's Meadow Foundation to assist in furthering their mission to preserve our beautiful Island. She resides in Chilmark with her fiancé, Chris Manning, and her son, Noah.

Comings and Goings continued

Henry Beetle Hough Intern ~ Owen Favreau



During the summer of 2022, Owen Favreau will be joining the Sheriff's Meadow staff as a Henry Beetle Hough intern, to perform an energy and carbon emissions audit for all Sheriff's Meadow properties. Owen will focus on the carbon emissions associated with Sheriff's Meadow vehicle usage, as well as evaluating the electric and gas bills for its Island facilities. Owen will then draw on this research to make strategic recommendations for Sheriff's Meadow's long-term sustainable operations-including comparing his project conclusions with the Foundation's recent LiDAR forestry scans when that information becomes available, to determine how much of its emissions are offset by the land it conserves. This project is a timely one for the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation, as it begins drafting long-term strategic goals for the next five years to maintain and expand upon its leadership in environmental conservation, education, and stewardship on Martha's Vineyard.

Owen is a rising junior at Amherst College, where he majors in environmental studies. At Amherst, Owen is using his major and related career opportunities to explore the ways in which businesses and organizations can adopt environmentally sustainable practices.

As a longtime Vineyard resident, Owen is particularly interested in promoting long-term environmental sustainability for the local organizations and community he cherishes. Prior to his time at Amherst, Owen co-led the Protect Your Environment club during his senior year at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, to help advance sustainable initiatives for the school. Owen also devoted part of his time in high school to environmental research, including working with Executive Director Adam Moore on an independent project studying fossilized tree pollen on Sheriff's Meadow's public properties.

Owen is excited to be joining the Sheriff's Meadow team.

Out and About



Exploring at Little Beach. Photos by Noah Froh



Visiting the Eastern box turtle, Johnny Sue at Cedar Tree Neck

After a successful fall of outings, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation and the MV Family Center picked up again this spring to bring young children to Sheriff's Meadow properties for nature activities on Thursday mornings. The program will resume in the fall.

Summer Benefit at Nat's Farm

Monday, July 18 ~ 6:00 to 9:30 pm

Please join Sheriff's Meadow Foundation and our host, the Misty Meadows Equine Learning Center, at beautiful Nat's Farm for our 2022 Annual Summer Benefit. We are delighted to announce that the Summer Benefit will take place as an in-person event. Enjoy the pastoral setting of Nat's Farm, while reconnecting with friends and fellow Sheriff's Meadow Foundation supporters.

The cocktail reception will be at 6 pm, with dinner to follow at 7:30 pm. Guests will enjoy a delicious dinner prepared by Buckley's catering and there will be brief, remarks from Executive Director Adam R. Moore and President, Peter Getsinger.

The Summer Benefit is the chief fundraising event for Sheriff's Meadow Foundation. It provides a very significant amount of our operating revenues. Please consider sponsoring the event at the highest level that is possible for you. Information about sponsorship opportunities is included below, and is available on our website.



Contact Advancement Coordinator Catherine Hall at hall@sheriffsmeadow.org with any questions at all regarding the Summer Benefit. Thank you.

2021 Summer Benefit Sponsorship Levels

Cedar Tree Society - \$50,000

- 16 complimentary Summer Benefit reservations.
- Private, guided walk of SMF property of your choice.
- Exclusive use of Cedar Tree Neck beach one evening in August for a picnic with your friends (limited to 16 people).
- Invitation to President's Circle reception.

Beetlebung Tree Society - \$25,000

- 12 complimentary Summer Benefit reservations.
- Private, guided walk of SMF property of your choice.
- Exclusive use of Cedar Tree Neck beach one evening in August for a picnic with your friends (limited to 16 people).
- Invitation to President's Circle reception.

Cherry Tree Society - \$15,000

- 10 complimentary Summer Benefit reservations.
- Private, guided walk of SMF property of your choice.
- Invitation to President's Circle private reception.

Beech Tree Society - \$10,000

- 8 complimentary Summer Benefit reservations.
- Private, guided walk of SMF property of your choice.
- Invitation to President's Circle private reception.

Sassafras Tree Society - \$5,500

- 6 complimentary Summer Benefit reservations.
- Invitation to President's Circle private reception.
- Holly Tree Society \$3,000
- 4 complimentary Summer Benefit reservations.

Oak Tree Society - \$1,500

• 2 complimentary Summer Benefit reservations.

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation will gratefully acknowledge all of its sponsors in Foundation publications and materials and in print acknowledgement advertisements. Please notify us if you wish to remain anonymous.

Susan Hughes Says Good-bye to Sheriff's Meadow Foundation



Six years ago I moved full-time to Martha's Vineyard, from a town west of Boston. After arriving on the Island, I saw an ad in the paper that Sheriff's Meadow Foundation was looking for a Development Associate and I decided to apply for the position. I had previously worked in development at an independent school close to my home. We had organized three successful campaigns, and I believed that I had the skills needed for the position. I interviewed and completed a tough assignment for Adam (three days in the library) and the rest is history!

I can truly say that working for Sheriff's Meadow Foundation has been a highlight of my career. During my five-plus years here, many acres of land have been conserved and restored, the TrailsMV app was launched, native plants discovered, the bench program was put in place, and we kept our Sanctuaries open during the pandemic and provided places of refuge. We continue to work to engage the Island community, through our guided walks, virtual presentation, storyboard walks at Sheriff's Meadow Sanctuary and Nat's Farm.

Personally, my knowledge of the Island and its diverse habitats has increased exponentially and I have met wonderful people from all over the Island. As I told Adam in my retirement letter, I leave with many mixed feelings. It truly has been a privilege to work with such a wonderful, talented staff. I am impressed with the dedication and commitment of the board members. I feel blessed to have met all of you and I thank you for welcoming me, for stuffing letters, building benches and for sharing your knowledge and expertise over the years.

Storybook Walks

Sheriff's Meadow Sanctuary, in Edgartown, and Nat's Farm, in West Tisbury, will have storybook walks throughout the summer to engage children and their families as they walk the trails. SMF continues its collaboration with the Edgartown Library for the storybook walk at Sheriff's Meadow Sanctuary, which has beautiful new stands, designed and built by Peter Rodegast. The current book on display is the Eric Carle classic "The Very Hungry Caterpillar." SMF thanks children's librarian Elise (Bonnell) Retmier for all her work selecting and installing books. Ingrid Moore, who is a 2022 graduate of MVRHS and class valedictorian, has been collaborating with Misty Meadows Equine Learning Center to bring horse-themed books to Nat's Farm. The current book on display is "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.



New Boardwalk at SMS



Workmanship by Joe Rogers.

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation staff continue their restoration work at Sheriff's Meadow Sanctuary. Joe Rogers, with the help of Land Steward Assistant Andrew Jordan, recently replaced the boardwalk on the west side of the Sanctuary.



Dedication of the Bill Bridwell Trail





Photos by Noah Froh

On May 21, 2022, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation dedicated the blue trail at Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary to honor longtime SMF Property Manager Bill Bridwell. At the dedication, SMF Executive Director Adam Moore said, "Bill, you have been the greatest ambassador for Sheriff's Meadow Foundation. You have patiently explained our work to our neighbors and to the public, and always in a polite and professional manner, even in difficult circumstances. You have worked incredibly hard, outdoors, mowing fields, building bridges, pulling weeds, trimming trails, helping others - and always with a smile."

eDNA Update - winter 2022

What was swimming at Squibnocket Pond Preserve?



Jennifer Blum collecting water for eDNA sampling in 2021.

On December 27, 2021, Jesse Ausubel along with Jake Lavalette, Chris Alley, Giuliana, Natalie, and Craig Barton, collected water samples to analyze for eDNA from Lily Pond, Witch Pond, the big Squibnocket Pond, Black Brook, and the Atlantic Ocean. Ausubel reports back that Lily Pond had a freshwater fish, dog, mallard, and goose, and bullfrog/ green frog detections. Witch Pond had a species of freshwater fish and eel (which can live in salt or fresh), rat, mouse, raccoon, and lots of Great Blue Heron and other birds. There were many herring-like menhaden and some red throated loon at Squibnocket. Black Brook had a lot of eel and rat. Not surprisingly, there were fish in the Ocean, including cod and conger eel. A bit of salmon was detected, but the source may be wastewater or it could be a stray salmon from the Gulf of Maine. There was also harbor or gray seal.

Coming soon. TrailsMV gets a new look!



Photo by Nancy Tutko

Five years ago, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation created the TrailsMV mobile app, a free interactive guide to the island's 220+ miles of public trails. This summer, look for a brand new TrailsMV with a lively redesign and the latest in ArcGIS geospatial mapping technology. We'll announce its exact launch date and details on our website, social media, and local press in the weeks to come. TrailsMV, a dynamic collaboration with our Island land conservation partners, will be available free in the Apple and Google app stores, thanks to the generous support of many individuals and charitable foundations.



Stategic Plan Letter from Executive Director



Squibnocket Pond Reservation. Photos by Kate Feiffer

Dear Supporter of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation,

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation is pleased to share with you this Strategic Plan, covering the period from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2026. The plan resulted from the extensive work of our 11-member Strategic Plan Committee, interviews with staff, donors, and colleagues, and a comprehensive, two-day board retreat held at the Grange Hall in West Tisbury in October 2021.

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation performs an essential role in land conservation for the community of Martha's Vineyard. Since our founding in 1959, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation has succeeded in conserving extraordinary lands. Our role as the Island's local land trust provides us with unique flexibility in working with landowners and colleague organizations to conserve and care for land.

The Foundation is governed by a board of directors that represents the community and is committed to the conservation and stewardship of land on Martha's Vineyard. Sheriff's Meadow Foundation conserves properties both large and small, in each Island town and in a wide variety of neighborhoods. Sheriff's Meadow Foundation charges no fees for access to its lands. Focused on its mission of conservation, Sheriff's Meadow entrusts the important work of environmental advocacy to other organizations. Sheriff's Meadow Foundation is a non-profit, charitable organization, funded by philanthropy. Sheriff's Meadow Foundation lands range from the tumbling glacial moraine of Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary, to the sweeping outwash plain of Quansoo Farm, to the majestic pitch pines of West Chop Woods, to the towering dunes and wind-scoured moors of the newly-established Squibnocket Pond Reservation. This strategic plan aims to strengthen Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's ability to continue its conservation work while ensuring a strong organization that reflects the diverse and dynamic community of Martha's Vineyard.

Our work depends entirely on you, our supporters. Soon this strategic plan will be on the website and we invite you to read the report and engage in Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's mission to conserve the natural, beautiful, rural landscape and character of Martha's Vineyard for present and future generations. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Adam R. Moore Executive Director



Sheriff's Meadow Foundation *Strategic Plan, 2022-2026*

- *Mission:* The mission of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation ("SMF") is to conserve the natural, beautiful, rural landscape and character of Martha's Vineyard for present and future generations.
- Vision: Our natural, beautiful, rural Island landscape, forever conserved, for the benefit of all.
- Values: SMF puts integrity, inclusiveness, collaboration, respect, and gratitude at the core of all that we do.
- What we do: We conserve land, we care for the land, and we foster a love of nature.
- **Who we are:** SMF is the local land trust for the island of Martha's Vineyard. Henry Beetle Hough and Elizabeth Bowie Hough founded SMF in 1959 to conserve the Sheriff's Meadow, a small property with a pond just outside of the Edgartown village. Today, SMF protects over 3,200 acres across the island of Martha's Vineyard.

Summary of Five-Year Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Approved by Board of Directors, March 18, 2022

Our first priority is to conserve. From creating new sanctuaries along the shores of great ponds, to preserving fertile soils in alluvial valleys, to protecting woodlands of ancient oaks and barrens of scrub and windswept plains that stretch to the sea, we serve our community by conserving lands that protect the Island landscape and connect trails and properties. We nurture land conservation partnerships as a central aspect of our work.

Our second priority is to care for the land. SMF serves the community by caring for the lands entrusted to its stewardship in the most ecologically sound manner. To complement our stewardship responsibilities, SMF intends to become carbon-neutral by 2027 and carbon-negative by 2030, by measuring the carbon sequestered in the SMF forests, soils, bogs, and marshes, by employing sustainable agricultural practices, and by reducing or eliminating the fossil fuels in SMF vehicles, equipment, structures, and investments.

Our third priority is to foster a love of nature. SMF serves our community by increasing the opportunities for all to visit SMF lands, join SMF guided walks, read SMF newsletters, and use the SMF TrailsMV app. We offer property-specific, natural history educational programs that foster a love of nature in the community. We are creating two universal access trails so that all people can enjoy nature on an SMF property.

To advance our ability to accomplish these goals and prepare for the future, SMF is enhancing its governance, growing its organizational capacity, and building its financial resources.

We are enhancing our governance. SMF is characterized by a highly engaged board working hand-in-hand with a professional staff through committees. This engaged model remains a key feature of SMF governance. We are enhancing execution of essential programs and priorities and are developing a board that reflects the demographic diversity of the Island.

We are growing our organizational capacity. We are implementing our approved Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan, and ensuring our lands are accessible and welcoming to everyone. We are building a maintenance facility and establishing a firm plan for the future office. We are engaging the community with a robust communications effort and a range of activities.

We are building our financial resources. To realize its program priorities, SMF requires funds for operations, maintenance, facilities, equipment, land acquisition, and endowment. We are undertaking initiatives to grow the endowment to \$19.5 million while raising additional funds for other important needs.

This strategic plan affirms our commitment to stay focused on our mission, to be both nimble and patient, to remain always flexible, and to be prepared to act when opportunities arise.





Program Goals

1. *Conservation:* Conserve lands that preserve the natural, beautiful, rural landscape and character of Martha's Vineyard.

Initiative:	Objective:	Measurement:
1.1	Conserve key properties Island-wide.	Acreage conserved.
1.2	Continue leadership role as the Island's local land trust	Completed partnership
	in conservation and in partnerships.	conservation efforts.

2. Stewardship: Care for lands in a sustainable and ecologically thoughtful manner.

Initiative:	Objective:	Measurement:
2.1	Care for conservation lands in a manner that serves the community, surpasses standards, and distinguishes SMF.	Annual property monitoring.
2.2	Operate in as sustainable a manner as possible.	Periodic carbon measurement.
2.3	Enhance trails program with improvements to TrailsMV,	Usage metrics and user satisfaction.
	adoption of standards, and creation of universal access trails.	
2.4	Repair interior of Hancock-Mitchell House, complete	Measure usage and visitors.
	landscape, and commence public use. Open to public in 2023,	
	complete interior by 2027.	
2.5	Continue to establish a welcoming sense of place for the	Annual Review.
	community.	

3. Education: Foster a love of nature in the community.

Initiative:	Objective:	Measurement:
3.1	Enhance SMF "walk and talk" educational programs.	Number of programs per year.
3.2	Offer self-guided natural history information and walks.	Number of properties included.
3.3	Facilitate in-house and partnership research, encouraging	Research initiatives undertaken
	living laboratories.	and reporting of results.
3.4	Facilitate educational partnerships with MVRHS and other	Projects undertaken and impact.
	organizations. Support the Henry Beetle Hough internship.	







Squibnocket Pond Reservation. Photos by Kate Feiffer

Organizational Goals

4. Governan	ce: Enhance Board oversight and effectiveness.
Initiativo	Objective

Initiative:	Objective:	Measurement:
4.1	Review and update By-laws and Articles of Organization.	Bylaws revision.
4.2	Implement committee charters and changes.	Committee charters completed
		and in use.
4.3	Prioritize board diversity. Achieve a diverse board that	Board diversity
	reflects the racial and ethnic diversity of the Island.	(annual measurement).
4.4	Implement proposed changes to board processes.	Annual board engagement survey.
4.5	Ensure a strong and effective Executive Director	Annual Review.
	who is well supported.	

5. Organizational Capacity: Enhance the capacity and broaden the diversity of SMF.

Initiative:	Objective:	Measurement:
5.1	Encourage community engagement to support donations,	# of active 'touches" – mailing list,
	membership, and volunteerism.	social media, app downloads
5.2	Implement Diversity, Equity & Inclusion plan.	Annual review of DEI plan
		objectives.
5.3	Renew land trust accreditation in 2025.	Accreditation renewal submission
		and status.
5.4	Build maintenance facility and complete office feasibility	Progress toward facility design
	analysis by 2024.	and completion.

6. Resources: Raise funds sufficient to accomplish the mission and achieve plan goals.

Initiative:	Objective:	Measurement:
6.1	Set the stage for a future campaign, undertake a successful	Fund raising results (annual, trend,
	interim fundraising period, and launch new campaign.	# and composition of donors).
6.2	Increase planned giving and individual support.	Donor commitments and results.
6.3	Grow the endowment and maintain a conservative and sustainable spending policy.	Endowment levels and percent of operating budget supported (annual, trend).
6.4	Establish dedicated funding for TrailsMV, efforts in sustainability, accessibility, and education, and capital projects.	Proportion of operating expenses supported from dedicated and grant funds.



A MARTHA'S VINEYARD LAND TRUST

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Upcoming Events

ANNUAL SUMMER BENEFIT

Nat's Farm, West Tisbury

Monday, July 18, 2022, 6:00 pm-9:30 pm Support Sheriff's Meadow Foundation by sponsoring or attending our Annual Summer Benefit. See this newsletter and visit www.sheriffsmeadow.org to sponsor or buy tickets.

GUIDED PUBLIC WALKS - Please call to reserve a space, 508.693.5207

Brookside Ridge Preserve, Chilmark Tuesday, July 26, 2022 9:00 am-11:00 am	Located in Chilmark, the Preserve offers a path through a magnificent grove of American beeches. Please call to register and for parking information.	
Caroline Tuthill Preserve, Edgartown Tuesday, August 23, 2022 9:00 am-11:00 am	Join us for a guided walk and explore the woods, salt marshes, and shoreline at one of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's largest sanctuaries. Plan to meet at the kiosk which is located 0.4 miles west of the Triangle in Edgartown.	
HENRY BEETLE HOUGH SOCIETY WALKS	The Henry Beetle Hough Society walks are offered for donors who contribute \$500 or more in a given fiscal year.	
Eastman and Knapp Preserves, Menemsha Thursday, July 28, 2022	Located in Menemsha this preserve offers a lovely trail that descends to the shore of	
9:00 am-11:00 am	Menemsha Pond and offers breathtaking views of Menemsha Pond and Prospect Hill.	
Oyster Watcha Midlands Preserve Edgartown		
Thursday, August 11, 2022 9:00 am – 11:00 am	Join Director of Stewardship, Kristen Geagan, to explore our native sandplain grassland species at Oyster Watcha Midlands. Take Edgartown-West Tisbury Road. Turn onto Oyster Watcha Road. Stay straight for one mile. You will see SMF staff directing parking.	