



# City of New Bedford

## Office of City Council

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**Ryan J. Pereira**  
Councillor Ward Six

March 14, 2022

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries  
Mr. Jeff Kennedy  
Shellfish Program Director  
251 Causeway Street  
Suite 400  
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Mr. Kennedy:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the residents of Ward Six, which constitutes the South End, and the residents of the City of New Bedford. It has been brought to my attention that the New Bedford shell fishing areas in the City's South End were closed last year by DFM. I am opposed to the "blanket" closure of all of New Bedford's shell fishing areas.

While I cannot dispute the merit and dangerousness of shell fishing in contaminated waters, I believe there are contradictions with DFM's evaluation of the outfall contamination and the fact that preventative measures can be taken to reopen these areas. While all personal/recreational shell fishing areas are closed, commercial fishing is permitted in Buzzards Bay waterways. The waters that we are recreationally fishing in is the same water that our friends in the commercial field are fishing in.

I would like to specifically point out the area around Fort Taber beach, which would be an ideal area to allow shell fishing. This area contains no outfall pipes that could contaminate the shellfish. I can understand the closure of other areas around the peninsula due to the direct outflow from these pipes and that the concentration is probably higher in these areas. However, as stated above, commercial shell fishing is permitted in Buzzards Bay and this section of beach has no outflow pipes, so the closure of this area does not make sense to me. This area is also well protected by a rock jetty to the north and Merchant Marine Walkway to the south. I would also like to point out that we can implement a plan of testing the shellfish after every rainfall, weekly, or at another interval that DFM and New Bedford believes to be appropriate.

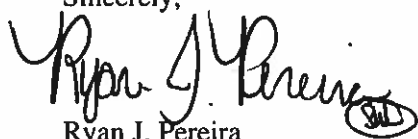
This area is the site where over 4,500 bushels of quahogs were transplanted and over the past two years, due to closures, have spawned over 6 times. This area is very sandy and clean, the exact reason this location was chosen for transplant. This is a recreational past time that many of our residents enjoy and rely on for entertainment, harvesting, and decompressing as this can be an affordable outlet for many on tight budgets. If DFM does not want to put in the work to test the shellfish in this area on a regimented schedule, I would like to advocate and express my concern about the mental benefits of fun water activities.

Page 2  
Jeff Kennedy Letter  
March 14, 2022

In conclusion, the fact that commercial fishing is open in Buzzards Bay, the lack of outfall pipes in the Fort Taber beach area, and the protection of this site by a jetty and pier there is no sensible reason to close this area. Please keep in mind that quahogs were planted here because of the condition of the area, the history of shell fishing in the area, and the mental health benefits of recreational harvesting. These facts, stated in this letter, should absolutely play a role in the decision from DFM. My contact information is listed below, please keep myself and the New Bedford City Council updated on this issue.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan J. Pereira". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and a circular flourish at the end.

Ryan J. Pereira  
Ward Six City Councillor

cc: Department of Public Infrastructure Commissioner Jaime Ponte  
Thomas Ringuette, Shellfish Warden