



Braintree Town Council

ORDER NO: 25 058

DATE FILED: AUGUST 26, 2025

REQUEST OF: THE MAYOR

UPON THE REQUEST OF HER HONOR, THE MAYOR, THE TOWN OF BRAINTREE, THROUGH THE BRAINTREE TOWN COUNCIL, IT IS SO ORDERED:

MOTION: In accordance with Chapter 2.700.010 of the Code of the Town of Braintree, I respectfully move for the approval and ordination of proposed Chapter 2.900, entitled "Braintree Herring & Fisheries Commission," for the creation of the Herring and Fisheries Commission in the Town of Braintree.

YEAS: Boericke, Flaherty, Maglio, Morin, Quilty, Reynolds, Ringius, Ryan

NAYS: NONE

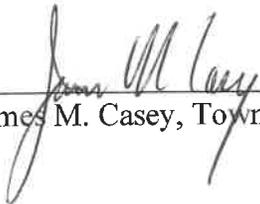
ABSENT: Hume

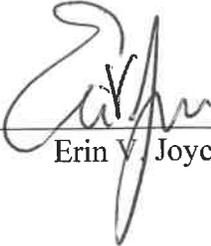
PASSED IN COUNCIL: SEPTEMBER 16, 2025
PRESENTED TO MAYOR: SEPTEMBER 17, 2025

A True Record, Attest:

9-24-2025

Date Approved


James M. Casey, Town Clerk


Erin V. Joyce, Mayor

CHAPTER 2.900 BRAINTREE HERRING & FISHERIES COMMISSION

2.900.010 Preface and Establishment

The Monaquot River Restoration Project in Braintree is one of the most impactful fish passage improvement initiatives in coastal Massachusetts. In 2023, both the Armstrong Dam and Ames Pond Dam were removed, while the Great Pond Reservoir fishway and the Rock Falls fishway were installed. As a result, migratory fish can now reach the Great Pond for the first time in over 200 years. For centuries dedicated Herring Wardens have played a vital role in monitoring and managing fish runs in Massachusetts municipalities.

In 2025, the Town now hereby establishes the Braintree Herring & Fisheries Commission, comprised of 3-5 Herring Wardens, to advise the Mayor and the Mayor's designees, the Director of Planning and Community Development and the Conservation Agent, regarding regulating and maintaining fish migration passageways to expedite the removal of blockages that naturally occur due to fallen trees, debris jams, and plant growth.

2.900.020 Purpose

The purpose of the Braintree Herring & Fisheries Commission is to advise on restoring, protecting, and enhancing the ecological health of local waterways to support thriving populations of migratory fish, including Blueback Herring, Alewife, Rainbow Smelt, and American Eel. The Commission shall advise the Mayor and the Mayor's designees on keeping rivers, streams, brooks, and ponds free from debris to facilitate the safe passage of river herring and other migratory species. By advising on the removal of migration barriers, the operation of fish ladders, the improvement of culverts, and collaboration with community partners, the Commission helps to promote sustainable fish passage, healthy ecosystems, and resilient infrastructure for Braintree's current and future generations.

2.900.030 Composition and Direction of the Commission

The Mayor shall appoint at least three (3) but no more than five (5) voting members, who shall serve on the Commission without pay. Commission members shall be residents of the Town of Braintree. The Mayor may also appoint at least one (1) but no more than two (2) non-voting youth members of the Commission, who shall be residents of the Town of Braintree, at least 16 years of age, and students at Braintree High School. At the first meeting of the Commission, the Commission members shall elect one member to serve as Chair, another member to serve as Vice-Chair, and another member to serve as Clerk, and those members so elected shall serve as Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk for twelve months following the date of election. After that twelve-month period expires, the Commission shall meet to elect members to serve as Chair, Vice-Chair, and Clerk for twelve months, and this process shall repeat every twelve months for the duration of the Commission's existence. The Commission shall work under the supervision of the Mayor, who may authorize the Planning and Community Development Director, or the Director's designee, working in unison with the Director, to supervise the Commission. Members of the Commission fall under the Conflict-of-Interest Law, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 268A. Commission Wardens shall be considered special municipal employees under Chapter 268A and shall not engage in conduct contrary to their status as special municipal employees.



2.900.040 Duration of Term

The members of the Herring & Fisheries Commission shall serve an indefinite term.

2.900.050 Advisory Powers

The Commission's work shall include the following:

- Work with state and local authorities to ensure that herring are being harvested in accordance with established regulations and work with local and state law enforcement to restrict unlawful poaching of migratory fish.
- Conduct periodic public education programming on the importance of fish passage, migratory fish conservation, and ecosystem restoration in Braintree.
- Work with state and local authorities to develop and update interpretive signage about fisheries throughout town.
- Coordinate at least one annual river cleanup in Braintree with Town officials.
- Work with state and local authorities to review, implement, and make recommendations for improvement regarding, the Town's efforts to meet the goals of the Great Pond Dam, Braintree, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) Fishway Operations and Maintenance Plan and the Stream Channel Maintenance for Diadromous Fish Passage.
- Review, and make recommendations for improvement regarding, the restoration and enhancement of habitats and waterways critical to the movement of migratory fish species in Braintree, including but not limited to American Eel (*Anguilla rostrata*), Blueback Herring (*Alosa aestivalis*), Alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*), and Rainbow Smelt (*Osmerus mordax*).
- Recommend measures to remove barriers, restore natural hydrological conditions and ecosystem connectivity, and promote safe passage for migratory fish species in Braintree to facilitate access to critical spawning and rearing habitats.
- Recommend improvements regarding the management, maintenance, and operation of fish ladders and other passage structures to facilitate safe and effective fish migration in Braintree, with particular emphasis on the needs of migratory species critical to local ecosystems and fisheries.
- In collaboration with Town Staff, assist in the operation and maintenance of fishways and passage structures, including Great Pond Dam Fishway, McCusker Drive Culvert, Sunset Lake Outlet, Pond Meadow Eel Ladder, and the Rock Falls Fishway.
- Collaborate with the Planning and Community Development Department, Department of Public Works, and other relevant local, state, and federal agencies regarding the identification, design, and implementation of culvert replacement projects that enhance fish and wildlife passage and improve flood resilience in Braintree.

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- In collaboration with Town staff, conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation of projects to ensure their effectiveness in supporting migratory fish passage, habitat connectivity, and flood flow improvements, and recommend strategies based on findings and emerging science related to migratory fish ecology.
- In collaboration with Town staff, partner with governmental, non-governmental, and community organizations to secure funding, technical expertise, and support for initiatives aimed at improving aquatic and riparian ecosystems, with an emphasis on migratory fish conservation.
- In collaboration with Town staff, actively identify grant opportunities, assist with the application process, and serve as the applicant when appropriate, for grants that support the mission of the Braintree Herring and Fisheries Commission.

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