

Revised 1/2/03

## Halfway Pond

Some threats to the environment along the southern section of Mast Road and along other portions of the shore

Threats along the southern section of Mast Road (the first 3/4 mile coming north)

### Direct runoff into the Agawam River

1. After turning onto Mast Road from Halfway Pond Road, and before reaching the bridge over the Agawam River, there is a wide cut at the side of the road which is supposed to collect storm runoff from this dirt road. It doesn't. Instead, a narrow cut at back of this wide cut allows some of the storm runoff to flow directly into the river.

2. In the middle of the Mast Road bridge which crosses the Agawam River, the Highway Department has constructed a cut which feeds directly into the river. Whenever it rains, a large amount of water, sand and contaminated road runoff flows directly into the river, and silt now forms a bar halfway across the river. The runoff flows down to the bridge from both the north and the south.



The runoff from the south flows more than 2/10 mile from the east on Halfway Pond Road, turns onto Mast Road, and then flows more than 1/10th mile further on Mast Road. In other words, the Cape Cod berms of Halfway Pond Road and the earthen edges of Mast Rd. create a long sluiceway which feeds many gallons of contaminated water directly into the Agawam River.

The flow toward the Agawam River from the north begins a few hundred feet away on Mast Road. Some of it runs down the east side of the road to the opening on the bridge. Also, a considerable

amount flows down the west side of the road and runs directly into the river before reaching the bridge.

#### Litter

3. While litter is thought to only present a cosmetic threat to the environment, the particular brand of litter impacting the Agawam River at Mast Rd. is actually destructive. Trucks frequently lose materials such as several rolls of insulation, tires, lubricating fluids and heavy metals; these have fallen directly into the stream and have been removed annually by residents. Moreover, throughout the Agawam watershed traveling South, several old dumps and not so old piles of debris, such as old upholstered furniture, auto parts and household waste adorn the landscape.

#### Bog runoff

4. Where Mast Road passes a bog on lot 109,7A-8, the highway department frequently reopens a cut so that water, sand and road runoff flow directly into the bog ditch. This contaminated water eventually makes its way to Halfway Pond through an outlet pipe from the bog.

5 Outflow from several cranberry bogs lying to the west of Halfway Pond empties directly into the pond.

#### Traffic threats

6. A remarkable amount of traffic comes north on Mast Road from Halfway Pond Road. The majority of this traffic turns west onto Agawam Road/ Fawn Pond Road, but a surprising amount of this traffic continues on north along the road around the shore of Halfway Pond.

7. Potential increases in traffic coming onto Mast Road from possible large-scale development to the west should be given very careful scrutiny.

#### Threats along the Halfway Pond shore section of Mast Road

##### Direct runoff into Halfway Pond

1. Several thousand feet of Mast Road lie just a couple of feet from the west and northwest shore of Halfway Pond. This is a one-lane section of dirt road around the pond. There are a number of places where boaters and fisherman have completely destroyed the very narrow vegetated buffer along the shore, and, in these places, road runoff flows directly into the pond from the dirt road. In addition, over the years, the Highway Department has made a number of narrow cuts in the narrow vegetated buffer

along the shore that allow road runoff to flow directly into the pond.



Recently, the Highway Department made at least six new cuts through this narrow buffer. There are no catchment basins along this section of road, and careful planning would be required to create ones which would not adversely affect this fragile area. In places, the cuts have eroded severely and carried a great deal of sand and silt into the pond.



2. The brook/spring inlet on the northwest side of Halfway Pond is continually at risk. Road runoff flows into this area. The pipe under the shore road connecting the inlet to Halfway Pond is often partially crushed by large vehicles.

#### Traffic

3. In addition to traffic coming up from Halfway Pond Road which continues north around Halfway Pond along the shore, there is the traffic which comes onto Mast Road from Agawam Road and Fawn Pond Road. A surprising amount of this also turns north and takes the very fragile shore road. Likewise, a surprising amount of traffic comes south along the shore road. The vehicles using this shore road include private cars and pickup trucks, commercial pickup trucks, service vans, oil delivery trucks, lumber trucks and others. In many places the vehicles travel only a few inches from the pond. All of these vehicles contribute to the deterioration of the shoreline and to the contamination of the pond.



4. Potential increases in traffic along this shore road from possible large-scale development to the west should be viewed as a very serious threat to the environment.

#### Threats to the condition of the southern and southeastern shore of Halfway Pond

##### Damage to the shore

1. A narrow dirt road runs along several thousand feet of the southern and southeastern shore of Halfway Pond. This one-lane dirt road, which lies just a few feet from the shore, is used by a cranberry grower to bring in equipment to service and harvest its bogs.
2. Over the years, the cranberry grower has repeatedly cut the shore-front vegetation to the point where the buffer is just a foot or two wide in many places and has been completely eliminated in others.
3. A number of years ago, to reinforce the shoreline, the cranberry grower dumped many thousands of pieces of broken cement along a couple thousand feet of the shore. Some vegetation has grown up through the pieces which are above the water line, but the appearance of this shoreline is a truly ugly. At the very least, the Conservation Commission should review what has been done to the shore.



Bog runoff

5. Outflow from three cranberry bogs lying to the south and southeast of Halfway Pond empties directly into the pond.