



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 18, 2021

### **CCOM Installs Pilot Floating Wetlands in Fort Pond, Montauk:**

Part of Comprehensive effort to reduce nutrients and harmful algal blooms

On Saturday May 15th, Concerned Citizens of Montauk were joined by nearly 40 volunteers to install approximately 3,000 square feet of floating wetlands in Fort Pond, Montauk.

7,200 carefully selected native plants were planted and secured into custom mats designed by family-owned, Florida-based company [Beemats Floating Wetlands](#). As the plants mature, their roots will uptake excess nitrogen and phosphorus from the pond as food. The goal is to reduce the nutrient load in the pond to lessen the extent and severity of the harmful algal blooms (HABs) which have plagued Fort Pond for years.

The floating wetlands are seasonal and reusable. At the end of the growing season, when the plants reach full maturity, the mats will be removed from the pond and the nutrient-rich plant material will be donated to local community gardens for composting.

“I am so thankful to those who made this installation possible. After a year of isolation, it felt great to get out there as a community and do some good! We are excited to monitor the growth over the next few months and continue our work to reduce nutrient loading into the Pond”, said CCOM President Laura Tooman.

Concerned Citizens of Montauk (CCOM) embraces a science-based comprehensive watershed-driven approach to produce measurable water quality improvements. Conceived as a result of our extensive [bacteria and HAB testing program](#), the Fort Pond Floating Wetlands project is just one of several approaches aimed at reducing pollutant loadings in Fort Pond and Montauk’s surrounding waterbodies. Our outreach efforts include encouraging property owners to upgrade to new nitrogen-reducing septic systems through the Town’s incentive program, having their cesspools or septic tanks serviced every 3-5 years, implementing community-based wastewater treatment in downtown, and committing to minimal or no use of lawn fertilizers.

This remediation project was made possible by a grant from the [East Hampton Town Community Preservation Fund Water Quality Improvement Program](#).