



September 15, 2008

Rockport Open Space & Recreation Advisory Committee
Rockport, MA 01966

Dear Committee Members,

On behalf of Mass Audubon I would like to bring to your attention the potential importance of the fifteen-acre parcel known as “Andrews Woods” on Andrews Point as habitat for wildlife, including both resident and migratory songbirds.

The proximity of the “Andrews Woods” parcel to Halibut Point and its similarity to other North Shore open spaces, such as Eastern Point Wildlife Sanctuary in Gloucester, Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary, and Nahant Thicket Wildlife Sanctuary are strong indicators of its habitat significance.

“Andrews Woods” has a healthy mix of native vegetation that is a good food source and provides excellent cover for migrating songbirds to feed and rest during their spring and fall migrations. Also, many Massachusetts birds, although appearing to be quite common, are, in fact, thought to be in decline by ornithologists. Some of these species include Baltimore Oriole, Eastern Phoebe and Eastern Towhee, which almost certainly use Andrews Woods to feed and nest.

One of the biggest threats to bird and wildlife populations is habitat destruction. Coastal habitats, especially, have disappeared at an alarming rate, making it difficult for native birds to successfully complete their migratory journey and to nest and rear young. We know that even relatively small parcels such as the Andrews Woods play a significant role as important habitat.

Mass Audubon has identified many of the rocky headlands and wooded uplands of Cape Ann as an Important Bird Area and we hope you will give serious consideration to including protection of this parcel in your Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Sincerely,

Kathy Leahy
Director