

TO: Robert Malley, Director of Public Works, Cape Elizabeth

FROM: Bruce Rayner, 309 Fowler Road, Cape Elizabeth

RE: Proposal for the Town of Cape Elizabeth to designate two weeks a year as Plogging Weeks.

DATE: January 10, 2019

Dear Bob,

Many thanks to you and the Cape Elizabeth Recycling Committee for the favorable reception to my "Plogging Weeks" idea at the January 3 committee meeting.

As you requested, I'm following up with a formal proposal to ask the Town of Cape Elizabeth to designate the weeks of April 21-27, 2019 and October 13-19, 2019 as official Plogging Weeks. April 22, 2019, is Earth Day and October 14, 2019, is Indigenous Peoples' Day.

[Plogging](#) is the practice of picking up trash while running (it's a mashup of jogging and the Swedish word "plocka upp" meaning pick up). Walkers and cyclists can also engage in plogging.

Plogging is gaining popularity in running communities around the world, including in Maine, as it enhances the workout (using different muscles to bend and pick up trash, which is a form of cross-training) and provides a significant social and environmental benefit to the community.

I plog regularly on my runs on Cape roads and trails. On January 1, 2019, I plogged along a mile of Route 77 on both sides of the road from Crescent Beach State Park to Grange Hall. I collected 32 pounds of trash including 54 redeemable bottles and cans, some pieces of polystyrene (Styrofoam), two windshield wipers, and a lot of paper, cardboard, and plastic.

Zoe Evans, a Cape Elizabeth High School sophomore and member of the cross country team, also participated in the January 3 Recycling Committee meeting. She shared with the committee that she organized a plogging run once a week into the cross country teams' training schedule. She attested to the need for regular plogging cleanup runs.

Besides improving the appearance of our Cape roads and trails, plogging keeps trash (particularly hazardous waste such as polystyrene) out of streams, ponds, estuaries, and the ocean.

Plogging is an informal activity, requiring no cost or organization to participate. The only requirement is a reusable or a plastic bag and gloves.

I would recommend that during the official Cape Elizabeth Plogging Weeks, ploggers are encouraged to bring their plogging trash to the Cape Transfer Station and deposit it in a designated plogging container. I would be willing to recruit volunteers from the town to sort the trash, document the types of trash and weigh it. We would report the data to the Recycling Committee. The town would incur a cost for a 6-yard container twice a year as a consequence. I would be willing to organize a fundraising campaign to offset that cost.

One important element of the Plogging Weeks initiative is communication. Opportunities include reaching out to running and cycling clubs, local media, schools, and businesses.

I run and cycle Cape roads and trails year-round and I'm a passionate environmentalist. I am the founder and Chief Green Officer of **Athletes for a Fit Planet** that for 11 years has provided sustainability consulting and onsite support to races across the country. FitPlanet has worked with the TD Beach to Beacon 10K since 2009 to help make it one of the most environmentally responsible races in the country. I am a member of the Maine Track Club and am taking over as the race director of the Cape Elizabeth Turkey Trot 5K in 2019.

I am willing to donate my time to help lead the effort for the town of Cape Elizabeth to make the two Plogging Weeks a reality in 2019.

Sincerely,

Bruce Rayner
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Cape Elizabeth
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