

INTERFAITH CLIMATE ACTION TEAM

Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts

Select Boards of the Six Towns of Martha's Vineyard

July 28, 2026

Aquinnah • Chilmark • Edgartown • Oak Bluffs • Tisbury • West Tisbury

Re: Support for the Martha's Vineyard Island-Wide Emergency Management and Response Coordination Strategic Integration and Implementation Plan

Dear Members of the Select Boards:

The Interfaith Climate Action Team (ICAT) writes to express our strong support for the Martha's Vineyard Island-Wide Emergency Management and Response Coordination Strategic Integration and Implementation Plan, developed in coordination with the Olson Group, and to encourage each Town's endorsement and continued investment in its implementation.

ICAT regularly convenes members of multiple houses of worship across all six towns of Martha's Vineyard. Our members recognize that the Island's public infrastructure is only as resilient as its capacity to coordinate during emergencies. Storms, public health emergencies, and other regional incidents do not respect town lines, yet our current emergency management structure remains organized on a town-by-town basis. This plan offers a thoughtful, actionable framework for closing that gap.

We particularly support the plan's proposed island-wide Emergency Management Coordinator position. In our experience, the absence of a single point of coordination complicates the timely sharing of resources, information, and response capacity among our towns' human service networks. A dedicated coordinator would strengthen communication between municipal emergency management and the houses of worship our members represent. The houses of worship ICAT represents regularly feed and sometimes house or offer warming centers and other services to vulnerable populations on the island. A coordinator would ensure that our houses of worship can be of most help to those populations — including elders and individuals with disabilities — in emergency situations.

ICAT urges the Select Boards of all six island towns to formally endorse this plan and to support the funding and staffing necessary to implement it, including the Emergency Management Coordinator position. We view this as a critical investment in the health, safety, and resilience of our entire Island community.

Thank you for your consideration. We welcome the opportunity to serve as a continued partner and resource as this important work moves forward.

Interfaith Climate Action Team of Martha's Vineyard

Vision: Faithful stewardship of our land, sea and sky, with resilient, just, and thriving communities.

Mission: As an interfaith community, we foster living free of fossil fuels and sustainably managing waste. We cultivate a healthy relationship with the natural environment of our island home through advocacy, education and activism.