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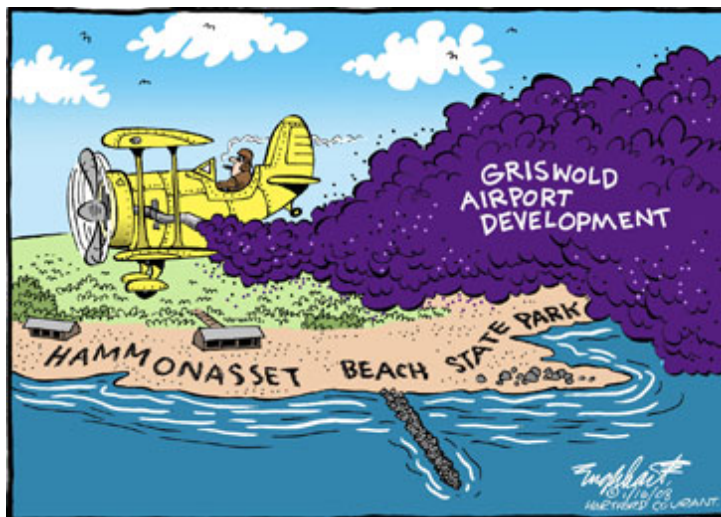
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## January 16, 2008



I love Hammonasset Beach State Park. I've had such fun with my children and my grandchildren there. I learned bird-watching at Hammo. I saw my first cedar waxwing, Baltimore oriole and various colorful warblers there. Hammo is a great place to bird watch because it's an ancient stop-over point for birds that winter in Central and South America and migrate to Canada in the spring. I know, birdwatching is not one of the "manly arts," but it's immensely fun. Birds are like flying flowers.

One New Year's day, my wife and I went down to Hammo for a stroll on the beach. We heard the soft sound of drums coming from the big rocks on the eastern shore. We followed the sound to two American Indian men who were performing a sacred New Year's day ceremony. One of the men was from Oklahoma and the other from Connecticut. The man from Oklahoma asked us if we had had alcoholic beverages the night before. We said something to the tune of "duh."

He said we couldn't help them do the ceremony because we had alcohol within 24 hours, but we watched them and listened to their prayers. They burnt sage and gave us some unburnt sage to keep as a talisman. I put mine in my billfold.

Now I pray for Hammonasset Beach State Park itself, about to be possibly polluted by greedy, stupid developers of the former Griswold Airport to the north because of some sneaky deal by the Rowland Administration's state DEP run by -- guess who -- Art Rocque, possibly the most incompetent and destructive commissioner the DEP ever had. I can only pray that Super AG Richard Blumenthal can figure out a way to stop this madness and save our park.

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