

# Patrick-Murray Administration Announces Federal Grants to Seven Buzzards Bay Watershed Communities

BOSTON - August 27, 2010 - Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Ian Bowles today announced \$282,512 in federal grants to help seven South Coast communities protect and restore Buzzards Bay.

The grants will fund land conservation and infrastructure improvement projects designed to conserve open space and rare species habitat, protect drinking water resources, and restore herring migration grounds.

Administered by the Office of Coastal Zone Management's (CZM) Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program, the grants help South Coast and Cape Cod communities to protect and restore water quality and natural resources in Buzzards Bay and its surrounding watershed.

"These funds help communities protect their coastal environments, which are some of the Commonwealth's most treasured landscapes," said Governor Deval Patrick.

"These Buzzards Bay communities are prime examples of environmental stewardship and leadership," said Secretary Bowles, whose office includes CZM. "The Commonwealth is proud to partner with them by providing grants that will continue important efforts to protect our precious coastal resources."

The federal grants, which last year totaled \$167,000 for eight southeastern Massachusetts communities, are funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program is one of 28 similar programs designated by the EPA.

In 1985, Congress designated Buzzards Bay an Estuary of National Significance. The effort was led by the late Senator Edward M. Kennedy, who joined with other legislators to pass legislation that led to the creation of the National Estuary Program in 1983. The programs are administered by the EPA and state or local partners, and founded on the principal that good science could lead to good management. Through the program, scientists and managers meet with the public, industry, local officials, and other stakeholders to develop rational and publicly-supported Action Plans to protect and restore their estuaries.

"These important grants will help protect Buzzards Bay, and ensure that it will be enjoyed by future generations," said Congressman Barney Frank.

"These grants further the work we've done to protect Buzzards Bay and the surrounding communities," said Senate President Therese Murray. "With this increase in federal aid, we will be able to better preserve and improve our natural resources, which are important for the safety and well-being of our residents and the environment."

"Protecting and restoring water quality and natural resources in this state needs to remain a top priority," said Sen. Marc R. Pacheco. "The efforts of the EEA Office of Coastal Zone Management's, Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program will ensure these towns in the Buzzard Bay area will preserve and protect hundreds of acres of land, clean drinking water, and rare species habitats. Initiatives like these are crucial if we intend to leave our next generations these precious natural resources."

"The continued commitment of this administration to enhance Buzzards Bay is something that is refreshing and long overdue," said Sen. Mark Montigny. "For those of us who have fought so hard to keep this water pristine for future generations, it is important to reflect on how far we have come and how much progress has been made."

"These grants that have been awarded to the towns in my district will protect drinking water supplies, expanded public green space, and improve wildlife habitats," said Rep. William Straus, co-chair of the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Committee. "I am proud to have helped secure grants for Buzzards Bay to make improvements to our

water infrastructure and open green spaces. These move us in the right direction for conservation and improved recreational opportunities for our residents."

"Opening up a culvert doesn't seem like much but it can make all the difference in how long nitrogen remains in the pond so I want to thank Governor Patrick and Secretary Bowles for making this award to the town of Bourne. It will help in the ongoing effort to clean up our salt ponds and estuaries," said Rep. Matthew C. Patrick.

"These grant awards, in conjunction with the passage of the Buzzards Bay Oil Spill legislation are great steps toward continuing the protection and preservation of the Bay," said Rep John F. Quinn.

This year's awards to Buzzards Bay watershed communities are:

- Town of Wareham (Tucy North - Agawam River Land Protection Project) - \$45,000 to protect 180 acres of land in the Plymouth-Carver Aquifer, the principal sole source of drinking water for a large geographic area. The property includes frontage on the Agawam River (Glen Charlie Pond) and contains some of the best remaining pine barren habitat on the North Atlantic coast of the United States. The land acquisition will protect forested watershed lands, wetlands, rare species habitat and drinking water supplies. The land will also provide public access via a walking trail.
- Town of Mattapoisett (Decas Mattapoisett River Lands Protection Project) - \$45,000 to purchase three parcels of undeveloped land totaling 63.6 acres within the Mattapoisett River Valley Aquifer, which acts as a drinking water supply source for surrounding communities. The property includes 1,500 feet of frontage on the Mattapoisett River and over 1,000 feet of frontage on one of its tributaries, Tripps Mill Brook. Completion of this project will permanently protect wetlands, wildlife corridors, rare species habitat and water resources. This project is a component of a larger effort to acquire and protect 195 acres in the Mattapoisett River Valley.
- Town of Marion (Acquisition of Rentumis Property/Rochester) - \$45,000 to protect 54.2 acres of undeveloped land in the Mattapoisett River Valley Aquifer, which acts as a drinking water supply source for surrounding communities. The property includes a ¼ mile of frontage on the Mattapoisett River and contains critical wetland habitats. Acquisition of this property will provide a key link to completing a solid greenbelt of permanently protected open space from Hartley Road in Rochester to south of Wolf Island Road in Mattapoisett. While the property is in Rochester, the town of Marion sought to protect it because it abuts land currently owned by Marion containing two of its drinking water wells.
- Town of Bourne (Bournedale Herring Run - Little Sandy Pond Culvert) - \$45,000 to conduct the necessary survey, engineering and construction work to replace an existing culvert under Little Sandy Pond Road in Bournedale. The culvert acts as the sole access point into and out of the 376-acre Great Herring Pond and 90-acre Little Herring Pond both of which serve as herring spawning grounds. While the existing culvert is passable by fish, it is compromised due to erosion, scouring and daily traffic loads, which threaten its structural integrity. The replacement of this culvert will ensure migrating herring will have safe and available passage through this section of the herring run.
- Town of Rochester (Carr Family Bogs Land Reservation Project) - \$45,000 to acquire and protect a 35-acre property on the Rochester/Marion town line. Acquisition of this parcel will provide a key link to over 750 acres of existing permanently protected land and will create a greenway from Mary's Pond in Rochester to County Road in Marion. The property contains more than 1,500 feet of frontage on Hales Brook, two potential vernal pools, diverse upland, wooded swamp, and beautiful stonewalls along an ancient way. Public access for passive recreation purposes will be provided.
- Town of Dartmouth (Dartmouth's Assessors' Parcel) - \$6,500 to hire a contractor to digitize the 2009 assessors' parcel map changes, incorporate the assessors data into digital format, bring existing parcel data and updates up to state mapping compliance, and correct any discrepancies in the data. These activities will keep the town's digital data updated for multiple municipal uses.

- Town of Fairhaven (Wolf Island South Land Conservation Project) - \$30,506 to acquire and protect an undeveloped 18-acre property within the Mattapoissett River Valley Aquifer, which acts as a drinking water supply source for surrounding communities. The property proposed for protection has nearly 1,700 feet of frontage on the Mattapoissett River. Protection of this property will reduce development pressure on the Mattapoissett River aquifer, preserve critical wetlands and rare species habitat and result in a block of 210 contiguous acres of protected land. This project is a component of a larger effort to acquire and protect 195 acres in the Mattapoissett River Valley.
- Town of Rochester (Mahoney Wolf Island North Land Conservation Project) - \$20,506 to acquire and protect an undeveloped 10.7-acre parcel within the Mattapoissett River Valley Aquifer, which acts as a drinking water supply source for surrounding communities. The property proposed for protection has over 600 feet of frontage on the Mattapoissett River. Acquisition of this property will ensure permanent protection of wetlands, floodplain, wetland buffers and rare species habitat. Additionally, the land would provide public access for passive recreation directly adjacent to protected lands owned by various municipalities and the Department of Fish and Game. This project is a component of a larger effort to acquire and protect 195 acres in the Mattapoissett River Valley.

The Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) is the agency within the EEA charged with protecting Massachusetts' approximately 1,500-mile coast. Through educational and regulatory programs, CZM seeks to balance human uses of the coastal zone with the need to protect fragile marine resources. The agency's work includes helping coastal communities anticipate and plan for sea level rise and other effects of climate change, working with cities and towns and the federal government to develop boat sewage no-discharge areas, and partnering with communities and other organizations to restore coastal and aquatic habitats.