

PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Awards Funding to Communities for Recreational Saltwater Fishing Access Projects

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Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Department of Fish and Game

Division of Marine Fisheries

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BOSTON — The Baker-Polito Administration today awarded \$50,000 in grants to saltwater fishing access projects in four coastal communities. The grants were awarded through the Department of Fish and Game’s Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) Public Access Small Grant Program, which uses revenue from the sale of recreational saltwater fishing permits to improve angler opportunity in Massachusetts’ marine waters.

“The Public Access Small Grant Program is crucial to supporting environmental and recreational opportunities while ensuring a vibrant tourism economy in the Commonwealth,” **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton.**

“Through the continued support of Massachusetts’ 160,000 licensed saltwater anglers, the Baker-Polito Administration is working with municipalities across the state to enhance access and infrastructure in Massachusetts’ coastal cities and towns.”

“The Public Access Small Grant Program is an excellent complement to the Baker-Polito Administration’s capital funding for sport fishing piers and boat access areas overseen by the Department’s Office of Fishing and Boating Access,” **said DFG Commissioner Ron Amidon.** “These funds from the sale of saltwater fishing permits directly benefit projects for the state’s recreational anglers.”

These grants are funded from revenues in the Marine Recreational Fisheries Development Fund, and are the sixth round of grant funding since the state saltwater fishing permit was established in 2011. The saltwater fishing permit program provides funds for marine recreational fishing programs including fisheries research, management, and public access for anglers.

The following municipalities will receive funding this year:

- **City of Beverly:** The \$15,000 grant will fund maintenance on the existing pier that allows recreational fishing on the Beverly Pier abutting the harbormaster’s office. This pier is a popular location to fish for striped bass, squid, winter flounder, and mackerel.
- **City of Lynn:** The \$15,000 grant will fund the installation of a solar pathway and overhead lighting on the pier at the Lynn Heritage State Park. This popular fishing location is managed cooperatively between the City of Lynn and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. This project will make it safer for nighttime fishing.

- **City of New Bedford:** The \$15,000 grant will fund the installation of overhead lighting at the Gifford Street Boat Ramp. This City-owned and managed ramp will be a safer place to launch and retrieve boats at night. The ramp is protected from wind and waves inside the New Bedford Harbor dike, making a preferable boat launching location when conditions make other New Bedford boat ramps less desirable.
- **Town of Marshfield:** The \$5,000 grant will fund the addition of kayak racks at Green Harbor and Peter Igo Park. These amenities will enable overnight and seasonal storage of kayaks, complementing improvements that have taken place at the Green Harbor State Ramp, the Green Harbor Walkway, Harbor Park, and Peter Igo Park in the Green Harbor area over the past decade.

“These projects will improve fishing opportunities for thousands of shore-based anglers and boaters in Massachusetts marine waters,” **said DMF Director David Pierce.** “We are excited to maintain this state-local partnership for the good of recreational anglers.”

“The completed project will immediately improve access to the New Bedford Harbor and our local waterway; I thank the Baker administration for supporting it,” **said State Representative Bill Straus (D-Mattapoisett).**

“When we make our City’s waters more accessible to the public for recreational purposes, we are fully capitalizing on our assets,” **said State Representative Antonio F.D. Cabral (D-New Bedford).** “This \$15,000 DFG grant, to fund overhead lighting at the Gifford Street Boat Ramp in New Bedford, will create a safer recreational environment for our residents and visitors alike.”

DMF administers the Marine Recreational Fisheries Development Fund with the assistance of the Marine Recreational Fisheries Development Panel, a group of private stakeholders that advises DMF on recreational fishing projects and initiatives. Under the state law that established the recreational saltwater fishing permit, one-third of all license fees are dedicated to recreational saltwater fishing infrastructure projects in Massachusetts, ensuring better access to coastal fishing.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) is responsible for promoting the conservation and enjoyment of the Commonwealth’s natural resources. DFG carries out this mission

through land protection and wildlife habitat management, management of inland and marine fish and wildlife species, and ecological restoration of fresh water, salt water, and terrestrial habitats. DFG promotes enjoyment of the Massachusetts environment through outdoor skills workshops, fishing festivals and other educational programs, and by enhancing access to the Commonwealth's rivers, lakes, and coastal waters.

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Department of Fish and Game (</orgs/department-of-fish-and-game>)

The Department of Fish and Game works to preserve the state's natural resources. We exercise responsibility over the Commonwealth's marine and freshwater fisheries, wildlife species, plants, and natural communities, as well as the habitats that support them.

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Division of Marine Fisheries (</orgs/division-of-marine-fisheries>)

The Division of Marine Fisheries manages the state's commercial and recreational saltwater fisheries and oversees other services that support the marine environment and fishing communities.

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