

PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Funding for Recreational Fishing Access Projects in Beverly, Danvers, and Wareham

Grants will to improve access to saltwater fishing areas popular with Massachusetts' recreational fishing community.

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Department of Fish and Game

Division of Marine Fisheries

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BOSTON — The Baker-Polito Administration today awarded \$45,000 in grants to the City of Beverly, the Town of Danvers, and the Buzzards Bay Coalition to improve access to saltwater fishing areas popular with Massachusetts' recreational fishing community.

“The Baker-Polito Administration is committed to ensuring residents and visitors have opportunities to enjoy the Commonwealth’s natural resources, and to improving access to coastal waters for the more than 160,000

licensed saltwater anglers in Massachusetts,” said **Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides**. “Through these grants, we are proud to work with municipalities and nonprofits to improve saltwater fishing opportunities and support the tourism economy along the coast.”

The funds were awarded by the Department of Fish and Game’s (DFG) Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF). DMF collects revenue from the sale of saltwater fishing permits, a portion of which is dedicated to improving angler opportunity and public access to Massachusetts marine waters.

“The partnership between the state, municipalities, conservation organizations and recreational anglers make these projects possible,” said **DFG Commissioner Ron Amidon**. “These grants help maintain and improve facilities and fund other efforts that benefit recreational saltwater angling.”

The following projects have received funding:

- **Beverly-** The City of Beverly was awarded \$15,000 to repair decking on an existing recreational fishing pier. The City of Beverly has agreed to provide an additional \$5,000 to purchase more materials and install a fish cutting station on site. This collaborative investment preserves the access and extends the useful life of the pier.
- **Danvers-** The Town of Danvers was awarded \$15,000 to identify and properly mark existing right of ways to the water. The Town will be professionally surveying, clearing, and providing signage at legal ways to shore fishing areas. This work will protect the ability of the public to identify and access the shoreline by utilizing public ways to water.
- **Wareham: Buzzards Bay Coalition-** The Buzzards Bay Coalition (BBC) was awarded \$15,000 to repair a stone pier on Wickets Island in Onset Bay in Wareham. The pier is a part of a larger project called the Onset Bay Reserve owned and being improved by the BBC. The Onset Bay Reserve protects over 100 acres of beach, dune, saltmarsh, tidal flats, and coastal forest. The BBC has protected access along the shoreline of Buzzards Bay for decades, and the partnership between the Division of Marine Fisheries and the BBC will further protect that access.

“These projects will improve fishing opportunities for shore-based anglers who utilize the facilities in Beverly, Danvers, and Wareham,” said **DMF Director Dan McKiernan**. “We are excited to maintain this state-local partnership for the good of recreational anglers.”

The projects are being funded from revenues in the Marine Recreational Fisheries Development Fund, which was established in 2011 when the Massachusetts Legislature created a state recreational salt water fishing permit. Prompted by a federal mandate enacted to improve estimates of saltwater fishing effort and catch data, the permit program provides funds for marine recreational fishing programs including fisheries research, management, and public access for anglers.

DMF administers the 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 Buzzards Bay Coalition does incredibly important work to protect the Onset Bay Reserve, and I have been proud to work with them over the years,” **said State Senator Marc Pacheco (D-Taunton)**. “This grant will ensure that the Coalition will be able to continue their efforts to improve the area and protect access upon the shoreline.”

“Wickets Island is a diamond in the rough and this grant will go a long way in assisting the Buzzards Bay Coalition to turn the Island into the gem that it will be for all to enjoy,” **said State Representative Susan Gifford (R-Wareham)**. “This is another great example of the collaboration between the BBC, DMF and the Baker-Polito Administration to improve access to our greatest resources.”

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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[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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