

# Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Quarterly Newsletter



**Issue 10, Spring 2022**

*Image above: Ginkgo seedlings growing in Springfield's municipal nursery*

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Welcome to the tenth quarterly issue of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Newsletter. The MVP grant program provides support for cities and towns in Massachusetts to begin the process of planning for climate change resiliency and implementing priority projects. The Commonwealth awards communities with funding to complete vulnerability assessments and develop action-oriented resiliency plans. Communities who complete the MVP Planning Grant program become certified as an MVP community and are eligible for MVP Action Grant funding and other opportunities.

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## Announcements

### FY 23 Funding Round is Open

The FY23 MVP funding round is open!

MVP Grant Request for Responses (RFRs) can be found at the following links:

[MVP Action Grant RFR](#) - Proposals accepted until Thursday, **May 5, 2022 at 2pm** EST (via online submittal form; see RFR for details). Answers to clarifying questions submitted to the program prior to the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline have been posted to COMMBUYS as of April 7, 2022. The Action Grant Pre-RFR webinar covers many of the frequently asked questions one might encounter during the application drafting process. [A recording of that session can be viewed here.](#)

[MVP Planning Grant RFR](#) - Communities new to the MVP program are eligible to apply for an MVP Planning Grant to get started on their climate resilience planning. Proposals will be accepted until **June 7, 2022 at 4pm** EST (via email to [kara.runsten@mass.gov](mailto:kara.runsten@mass.gov); see RFR for details).

### Current MVP Grants: Reminder to Check in with your Regional Coordinator as End of Fiscal Year Nears

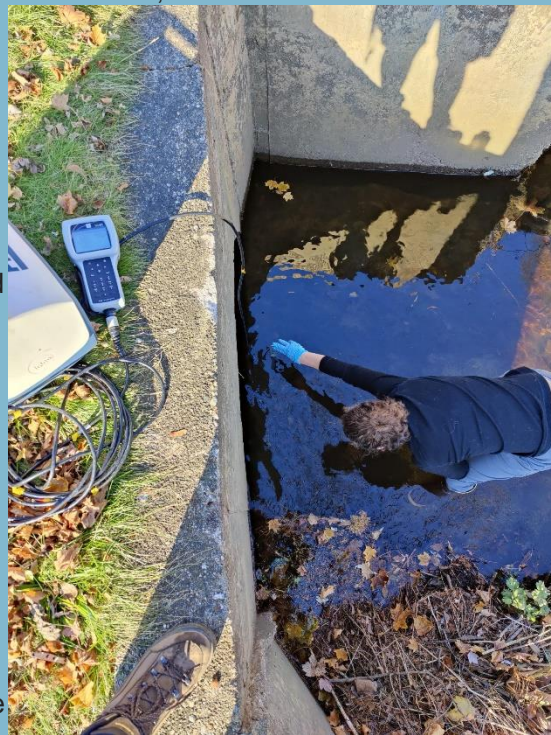
If you have a current MVP Planning or Action Grant, it is an important time of the

year to check in with your regional coordinator (contact information at the end of the newsletter) to discuss the status of your project. If circumstances beyond your control require an extension request (or shift in funding from one fiscal year to another), please discuss this with your RC before the May 1st deadline for such requests. If you expect that the project will be wrapping up under budget please let your RC know that information too.

## Project Spotlights

### **Searles Pond and Bloody Brook Corridor Resilience Planning:**

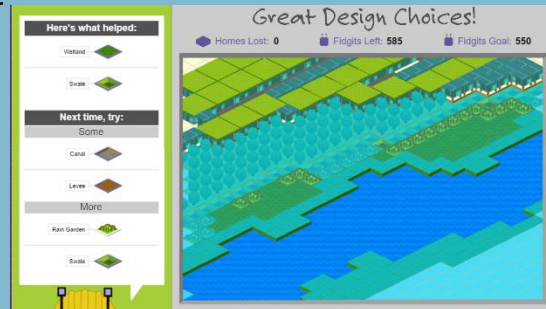
Working with project partners Groundwork Lawrence, Merrimack River Watershed Council, and Pare Corporation, the Cities of Methuen and Lawrence are conducting a community-focused flood resilience strategy in the Searles Pond and Bloody Brook corridor. Bloody Brook originates in Methuen near the High School, runs through Searles Pond and squeezes through commercial and residential areas until it goes underground through Lawrence where it reaches the Spicket River. This urban watershed is prone to flooding and high bacteria counts that are expected to worsen with increases in precipitation and heat due to climate change. Through robust equitable engagement, water quality monitoring, comprehensive conditions assessment, and an alternatives evaluation, the project will explore options to alleviate flooding and improve water quality for long-term climate resilience. An interactive bilingual storymap can be found [here](#) that gives an overview of the history of land use and development in the corridor, tours Bloody Brook today, highlights effects of climate change, and shares water quality data.



### **Playful opportunities for engagement:**

Four communities in the Berkshires have been working to build regional flood resiliency, and are prioritizing fun in the process! The Town of Lenox, in partnership with Stockbridge, New Marlborough and Pittsfield (all communities in the Housatonic watershed) have developed an

innovative culvert assessment and youth workforce development project for regional flood resiliency. A large part of their community engagement centers on a partnership with Mass Audubon who is working in three different school districts in the county to develop curriculum that focus on flood resilience to climate change for a variety of class levels. One tool that is being used in the classrooms is a PBSkids game called Don't Flood the Fidgets.



- For more information about the Lenox project, check out our winter webinar [here](#).
- To try your hand at building a flood resilient community, help the fidgets here: [Don't Flood the Fidgets Game - Flood Science Center](#)
- Another interactive game to try: [Cards Against Calamity](#).

### **Regenerative Soil Management:**

The Town of Deerfield received MVP funding in FY22 to conduct a town-wide assessment of its soils with the intent of identifying locations that are prime for regenerating soil health and soil carbon sequestration functionality. Working with the Regenerative Design Group, the Town has assessed soil organic carbon with the goal of identifying locations of soils with high regeneration values. Regeneration, as a term, describes the net difference between the current health of soils on a parcel and the health of that same soil if actions are taken to heal and restore its overall health. The net gain in soil carbon storage (and overall health) is the regenerative capacity of that soil. In addition to mapping, the Town is implementing regenerative practices on demonstration plots to facilitate broader adoption of soil management practices that will enhance the regenerative capacity of the community's lands.

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## Upcoming Dates, Events, and Other Opportunities

Want to share details of your event or other related climate opportunities in our upcoming MVP newsletters? Submit to [kara.runsten@mass.gov](mailto:kara.runsten@mass.gov)

### Webinars and Events

- **4/20/2022 - ICARES Training**. The Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC) is hosting a webinar to provide an overview of the new I-Cares model, which assesses ecosystem services at the urban and rural scale. Concepts, features, and applications of the model can be applied across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The workshop will include a Q&A to answer specific questions of attendees. Individual consultations will be available and scheduled between April 21-30. [Register to learn more](#)
  - **5/7/2022 - Women on the Land Series**. A free woods walk for women hosted by the Women on the Land network and the Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust (DNRT). Linda Vanderveer (DNRT Land Manager) and Marianne Piche (MassWildlife Habitat Management Biologist) will lead a discussion and woods walk through DNRT's Helfand Farm. The event will be focused on planning forest management strategies to diversify bird habitat with a particular focus on woodcock. The program will include a discussion of understanding landscape context, identifying habitat types on the landscape, and options for wildlife habitat management. Lunch will be provided. This program is *limited to 25 participants*. [Click here to Register for the Woods Walk](#)
  - **5/19/2022 & 6/15/2022 - ARPA Training Offered by the Massachusetts Office of the Inspector General**. The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) has brought millions in public dollars to cities, towns and other public entities to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic consequences. This free training will give an overview of eligibility rules for fiscal recovery funds, limits on the use of ARPA funds and reporting requirements. Participants will also learn about applying Chapter 30B to ARPA funds; using collaborative and cooperative contracts, and complying with federal single audit requirements. [Register here](#).
  - **Multiple dates with the Western Mass Health Equity Network**. Public health film series in Western Mass this spring. With these [six events](#) across the region, the aim is to increase the understanding of the role racism plays in health inequities and to highlight the work of local activists who are taking the lead in trying to improve health systems and promote wellbeing within their communities.
  - **Gallery Installation**. Museum of Science, climate change exhibit. Gain insight into the ways climate change is affecting us and gain insight on taking action. [Learn more here](#).
  - **Boston Globe Sustainability Week**. Engaging discussions focusing on the climate crisis, current environmental issues and actionable solutions.
    - April 19, 5 PM: [GlobeDocs Presents: 'Mardi & The Whites'](#)
    - April 20, 12 PM: [Exploring Environmental Benefits of Digital Healthcare Tools and Other Approaches to the Greening of Healthcare](#), sponsored by Philips
    - April 20, 2 PM: [Climate Change in Massachusetts: Hear from State Residents](#)
    - April 21, 12 PM: [The Carbon-Free House of 2030](#)
    - April 21, 7 PM: [Cocktails with Nino Geraci from the Grandten Bar](#)
    - April 22, 10 AM: [Business Must Pivot To Address The Climate Challenge: Policy, Finance, And Activism](#), sponsored by Brandeis
    - April 22, 12 PM: [Boston.com Book Club Discussion: "Paradise Falls" with Keith O'Brien](#)
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- All events are free and virtual, and will be recorded. Recordings will be emailed to all those who register. **Register here:** [globe.com/sustainabilityweek](https://globe.com/sustainabilityweek)
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## **Grant Opportunities**

- **Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' PARC/LAND Grant Program** - Open until July 14, 2022: Grants are available for communities with an approved Open Space and Recreation Plan. Communities with land preservation projects can apply for funding through [Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity \(LAND\)](#) Grant. Communities with an interest in developing recreational projects for their communities can apply to the [Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities](#) (PARC) program.
  - **Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)** Deadline July 11, 2022. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is pleased to announce the availability of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Assistance funding. \$110,760,576 is available statewide through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. In alignment with the “State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (SHMCAP)” mission statement, the Commonwealth prioritizes projects that reduce loss of life, and protect natural resources, property, infrastructure, public health, and the economy from natural hazards and climate change impacts through the development of integrated hazard mitigation and climate adaptation projects. More information on the grant program as well as the official state Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is posted on the [MEMA Website](#). To inquire about a project’s eligibility, please submit a [Statement of Interest](#) or email us at [mitigation@mass.gov](mailto:mitigation@mass.gov) for more information.
  - **Department of Energy Resources (DOER) Green Communities Competitive Grants** Deadline (for Block One communities) – Open until April 22, 2022. Learn more about eligibility and funding at the [Program Opportunity Notice](#) landing page.
  - **The Dam and Seawalls Removal or Repair Loans** - Open until April 29, 2022: Qualified organizations may apply for a loan from the Dam and Seawall Removal or Repair Fund. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until April 29, 2022. [See Commbuys for more details](#).
  - **Land Use Planning Grants** - Deadline May 20, 2022. Through the procurement available at the links below, EEA is making grant funding available to the Commonwealth’s municipalities and Regional Planning Agencies in support of their efforts to plan, regulate (zone), and act to conserve and develop land consistent with the Massachusetts Sustainable Development Principles. Grants are available for diverse land use planning related work with a preference given to zoning to address compliance with Section 3A of the Zoning Act (MBTA Communities) or any of the Housing Choice Best Practices, zoning that results in permanent land conservation, and mitigation of climate change through zoning and other regulations that reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. Full details can be found in the procurement available on EEA’s webpage [here](#) or on the CommBuys [page](#).
  - **Multiple Greening the Gateway Cities/DCR Urban Forestry Funding Opportunities.**  
**Summarized below:**
    - [Explore opportunities by clicking on this link](#)
    - The Municipal Partnership Grant program will award up to \$20,000 to municipalities to identify and prepare urban areas for tree planting in coordination with DCR planting crews. Grant deadline: Thursday, May 19, 2022 at 3:00 pm. An information session will be held Wednesday, April 20, 2022 at 1:30pm.
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- The Non-Profit Partnership Grant program will award up to \$15,000 to qualified non-profits to raise awareness of the benefits of urban trees and encourage residents to participate in tree planting. Grant deadline: Thursday, May 19, 2022 at 3:00 pm. An information session will be held Wednesday, April 20, 2022 at 11:00am.
  - The Tree Planting Implementation Grant program will award up to \$100,000 to Gateway City municipalities and qualified non-profits to facilitate tree planting work with a measurable impact on the urban canopy in Gateway Cities. Applications must include a detailed planting plan and adhere to 'right tree, right place' policies. Planting work must be managed by a certified arborist. Grant deadline: Monday, June 6, 2022 at 3:00 pm. An information session will be held Tuesday, April 19, 2022 at 1:00pm.
  - **Southeast New England Program (SNEP) Watershed Implementation Grants.** Letters of Interest due by 4/26. *Restore America's Estuaries* offers grants to target water pollution, habitat degradation, and other high-priority environmental issues to foster sustainable coastal and watershed communities. [Learn more.](#)
  - **Community One Stop for Growth: Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, Department of Housing and Community Development, and MassDevelopment.** Deadline 6/3/2022. The Community One Stop for Growth is a single application portal and collaborative review process of community development grant programs that make targeted investments based on a Development Continuum. This process streamlines the experience for the applicant and better coordinates economic development programs and staff on engagement and grant making. For more information on the One Stop, and to click the link to submit a full application, visit [mass.gov/onestop](https://mass.gov/onestop).
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## MVP Program Resources

Below is list of resources to assist communities on their current MVP grants and in thinking about future projects.

### Planning Grant:

- [MVP Planning Grant Municipal Training Grant Webinar Recording January 2020](#)
- [Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness \(MVP\) program Planning Reports](#)
- [resilient MA Climate Change Clearinghouse](#)

### Action Grant:

- [Learn More About Action Grant Projects](#)
  - [Explore MVP Core Principles](#)
  - [resilient MA Climate Change Clearinghouse](#)
  - [Discover other grants to support your project](#)
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## Have a question? Reach out to our MVP Regional Coordinators.

*Not sure which region you are in? Click [here](#).*

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