

Buzzards Bay



*National Estuary
Program*

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For Immediate Release Announcement: Buzzards Bay NEP awards \$75,000 in grants and support to twelve Buzzards Bay towns

Today at Acushnet Town Hall, Susan Snow-Cotter, Director of the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management awarded \$75,000 in Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program municipal minigrants and support to Buzzards Bay municipalities for their efforts to implement recommendations contained in the Buzzards Bay Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan.

The awards included:

- The Town of Rochester and its partner Old Colony Regional Technical Vocation High School will receive \$8,500 to remove fill from and restore a small wetlands on the High School property. This project is a partnership between the Town and the school department, and students will be involved with the planting of wetland plants at the restored site.
- The Town of Acushnet, and its partner the Fairhaven-Acushnet Land Preservation Trust, will receive \$2,500 to conduct a baseline survey of habitat and wetlands boundaries and resources on a parcel of land that has a conservation restriction in place, but is also in part an active tree farm. This study is useful because too often protected lands are not adequately mapped or evaluated for natural resources and protected species.
- The Buzzards Bay NEP will hire an engineering firm to help the Town of Fairhaven develop stormwater remediation designs for stormwater discharges at Seaview Avenue, near the boat ramp, beach, and a closed shellfish growing area. The Buzzards Bay NEP will first work with the town to develop an agreed upon conceptual design. The value of the contract is to be determined, but will not exceed \$20,000. Any remaining funds will be rolled into a new grant round this summer.
- The Town of Marion will receive \$20,000 to help pay for the purchase of a 248-acre conservation restriction on property known as Aucoot Woods or the White Eagle property. This award is being used to help match a larger project involving contributions and grants from the Town of Marion, the Sippican Lands Trust, the Trustees of Reservations, and the state Department of Conservation and Recreation.



- The Town of Acushnet, will receive \$23,500 to purchase Tablet PCs and GPS units for the communities of Acushnet, New Bedford, Dartmouth, Westport, Fairhaven, Rochester, Mattapoisett, Marion, Bourne, Wareham, Carver and Plymouth. This grant is in partnership with the Buzzards Bay Action Committee (BBAC) and the Greater New Bedford Regional Vocation Technical High School, who will help these communities use and update data gathered in the Buzzards Bay watershed stormwater mapping collaborative. The objective of this effort is to map every discharge pipe, catch basin, and drainage network in the watershed. This grant follows up on a \$19,000 grant given by CZM last year to the BBAC to expand upon earlier mapping efforts by the Buzzards Bay NEP, where stormwater discharges were mapped along the coast.

Besides the grant awards, Snow-Cotter presented a certificate of appreciation to outgoing Buzzards Bay Action Committee Executive Director Leonard Gonsalves. Mr. Gonsalves, a retired high school teacher, and former Town of Dartmouth Selectman, came out of retirement to help run the operations of the BBAC for the past 9 years. Snow-Cotter said "Mr. Gonsalves' contributions proved more than part time. We can thank Len for some important initiatives like the establishment of the free boat bilge sock program in Buzzards Bay, supporting oil spill training for town officials and updating an oil spill response manual for Buzzards Bay which was helpful during the 2003 oil spill, and for establishing the stormwater mapping collaborative program with the Voc-Tech high school that has proved so helpful to Buzzards Bay communities."

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[Note to the editor: The Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program is a planning unit of Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management. It is often confused with two nonprofit corporations: the Buzzards Bay Action Committee (BBAC- a lobbying organization composed of municipal officials), and the Coalition for Buzzards Bay (a citizens group). The Coalition is most widely recognized for its "Bay Watchers" water quality monitoring program. All three organizations are working together to implement the Buzzards Bay Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan.]