



PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Awards Grant to Protect 73 Acres of Wildlife Habitat

\$35,000 Federal Grant Awarded to the Town of Dartmouth

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Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management

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BOSTON — Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Matthew Beaton today announced \$35,000 in federal grant money for the Town of Dartmouth to preserve 73 acres of wetlands, saltmarsh and forest on Dike Creek. When completed, the project will protect habitat and water quality, provide public access for recreation and scenic views, and create a block of 450 acres of adjoining conservation lands. The grant, awarded by the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program (NEP) through the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM), with funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is being matched by \$11,550 in private contributions that will support the protection of important habitat in the region.

“The Baker-Polito Administration is committed to protecting vital environmental and recreational resources at the local level,” **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton**. “The Town of Dartmouth has a tremendous record of land protection efforts, and this project represents an impressive local, state and federal partnership that ensures the protection of important natural resources.”

“The Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program is committed to working directly with local partners to protect and restore water quality and habitat in this region,” **said CZM Acting Director Lisa Berry Engler**. “This project is another excellent example of how their collaborative efforts benefit the Buzzards Bay watershed.”

The following grant was awarded:

The **Town of Dartmouth** will receive \$35,000 to permanently protect 73 acres of undeveloped land fronting on Dike Creek. The property contains wetlands, saltmarsh and upland forest, and is designated as habitat for rare species. Surrounded on three sides by 380 acres of existing permanently protected land, protection of this parcel fills an existing gap in the protection of the Dike Creek watershed. The Town’s partner, the Buzzards Bay Coalition, will acquire the property, which it will then sell to the Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust. The Town of Dartmouth Conservation Commission will hold a conservation restriction on the 73 acres. The purpose of the project is to permanently prevent development of the property and provide passive recreational opportunities to the public.

“Preserving open, public access to this beautiful shoreline will complement the existing trail and recent improvements to the nearby causeway,” **said Senate Assistant Majority Leader Mark Montigny (D-New Bedford)**. “Dartmouth is a shining example of how conservation efforts and public access can work together to improve the community and natural habitat.”

“Dartmouth has been blessed with its natural beauty and access to the amazing Buzzard’s Bay,” **said State Representative Christopher Markey (D-Dartmouth)**. “The grant money provided today by the Baker-Polito Administration is an acknowledgment of that and the resources required to maintain that beauty. We owe lots of thanks to the Baker Administration.”

“For more than 20 years, we have provided funding and technical assistance to the Town of Dartmouth and Buzzards Bay Coalition in their collaborative efforts to protect open space, restore salt marshes and reduce pollution discharges in the Apponagansett Bay watershed,” **said Joe Costa, Executive Director of the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program**. “We look forward to continuing these efforts protect and improve water quality in the bay.”

The Office of Coastal Zone Management is EEA’s lead policy and planning agency on coastal and ocean issues. Created in 1985, the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program provides grants and technical assistance to Buzzards Bay watershed communities to protect and restore water quality and natural resources in Buzzards Bay and its surrounding watershed and is one of 28 similar programs designated by the EPA.

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