

\$794,478 in Federal Funds Awarded to Six Entities in the Buzzards Bay Watershed

BOSTON - January 11, 2016 - The Baker-Polito Administration today announced \$794,478 in federal grant money to help towns and organizations protect water quality in Buzzards Bay. The water quality management grants are being awarded by the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program through the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) with funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

"This grant program recognizes that many pollution sources affecting our coastal waters do not stop at state lines and are shared regional issues," said Governor Charlie Baker. "Through these grants, important steps are being made to effectively address priority pollution problems affecting Buzzards Bay."

"While these coastal water quality issues are regional in origin, the solutions are local," said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. "This partnership and funding allows us to provide necessary support for our communities to advance effective local actions that improve the water quality of Buzzards Bay."

"This funding will improve water quality in the Buzzards Bay region by supporting local efforts to reduce nutrient and pathogen pollution from wastewater discharges, runoff and other sources," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton. "The results will be cleaner coastal waters for residents and visitors and healthier coastal habitats. We want to recognize and thank the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for their support of these Southeast New England Program awards."

The grants are being matched by \$346,451 in municipal and private contributions and focus on supporting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Southeast New England Program mission to protect and restore the southeast New England ecosystem by addressing nutrient, pathogen, and stormwater-related issues within the Buzzards Bay watershed.

"Nutrient and pathogen pollution can have significant impacts on coastal waters, closing areas to shellfishing and swimming and impairing the health of estuary habitats," said Coastal Zone Management Director Bruce Carlisle. "The technical support provided by the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program, coupled with these grant funds that they are administering, are key to making meaningful progress to address these problems."

"These grants successfully encourage municipalities, private groups and businesses to work together and share resources to solve serious water quality problems in Buzzards Bay in innovative, collaborative and effective ways," said Joe Costa, Executive Director of the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program.

The following six grants were awarded:

Buzzards Bay Coalition, Inc., will partner with the Towns of Wareham, Bourne and Plymouth and the Massachusetts Maritime Academy to evaluate the feasibility of relocating the Wareham Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) discharge from the Agawam River to the Massachusetts Maritime Academy's (MMA) existing, well-flushed discharge into the Cape Cod Canal. In addition, a sewer needs analysis will be performed within the Agawam and Wareham Rivers, and Buttermilk and Little Buttermilk Bay watersheds, to determine how much sewerage is required to meet water quality goals and to determine whether the WWTF can accommodate the higher volume. (\$200,000)

Marine Biological Laboratory, will partner with the Buzzards Bay Coalition, Inc. and Barnstable County Department of Health and the Environment to quantify the nitrogen removal benefits of conversion of traditional Title V septic systems to innovative alternative (I/A) systems. In addition, they will determine

whether the addition of a carbon source will increase nitrogen removal in I/A systems. The project will take place in West Falmouth Harbor. (\$175,918)

Town of Marion, will coordinate with the Town of Mattapoisett and the Buzzards Bay Coalition, Inc. in hiring a consultant to design an expanded sewage collection system from the Town of Marion's Wastewater Treatment Facility into the existing densely-developed neighborhoods of Indian Cove (Marion) and Harbor Beach (Mattapoisett) on Aucoot Cove. (\$200,000)

Town of Falmouth, will expand an oyster reef to reduce nitrogen loads to West Falmouth Harbor near Mashapaquit Creek. The town will expand the existing quarter acre reef to one acre by planting an additional 1,500 bags of oyster spat-on-shell, as a means to provide a biological filter for water in the Snug Harbor area, where there is a significant source of nutrients. The monitoring results of this project will inform the extent to which oyster reefs can effectively improve water quality, and can contribute to watershed nitrogen reduction for West Falmouth Harbor and other similar estuaries. (\$53,950)

Town of Fairhaven, will prepare designs and permit applications for green infrastructure stormwater best management practices at four high priority outfalls on Sconticut Neck. The effort will reduce pathogen and nutrient loading and other stormwater pollutants to Little Bay and Nasketucket Bay. In addition, the town proposes to conduct an inspection of septic systems on Sconticut Neck. Owners of failed septic systems will be required to tie into the town's existing sewer line pursuant to the town's sewer bylaw. (\$58,350)

Town of Dartmouth, will coordinate with the City of New Bedford and the Town of Dartmouth to implement a series of Best Management Practices, including construction of an underground detention system and several proprietary treatment units, to treat stormwater runoff resulting from two outfalls located at the end of Rodgers Street in Dartmouth. These outfalls discharge untreated stormwater runoff, which is generated from roadways in both Dartmouth and New Bedford, into Clark's Cove. (\$106,260)

"The natural resources of our state are precious and must be protected," said Senate President Pro Tempore Marc R. Pacheco (D-Taunton). "Our communities deserve the healthiest water and the most robust treatment facilities; these awards are vital for water quality management, public health and the safety of our environment. I commend the Buzzards Bay Coalition, along with Wareham and Marion officials, for their hard work in securing this award, and I look forward to seeing the good it will do for Southeastern Massachusetts."

"Clean water is vital to our economic viability and quality of life, so we must do everything we can to protect our watersheds," said State Senator Vinny deMacedo (R-Plymouth). "I am grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration for recognizing this need, and for providing a substantial amount of funding to assist Cape Cod in protecting its important watersheds."

"The actions outlined for reducing pollutants entering Buzzards Bay may prove to be efficient and cost effective solutions," said State Representative Randy Hunt (R-Sandwich). "Additionally, alternatives to Title V systems may well obviate the need for large scale sewerage in these ecologically sensitive areas. These feasibility studies are short money when considering the long term benefits."

"Water is by far our most valuable natural resource so we must take every possible step to protect it," said State Representative Susan Williams Gifford (R-Wareham). "We are so fortunate that Governor Baker and Lieutenant Governor Polito have a great understanding of that and are making these grants available to us."

"This is terrific news," said State Representative Timothy Madden (D-Nantucket). "The Marine Biological Laboratory is the perfect addition to a partnership between the Town of Falmouth and the Buzzards Bay Coalition in their efforts to improve the water quality of West Falmouth Harbor. I appreciate the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs for awarding these grants to allow the Town of Falmouth to continue its work in improving water quality."

"I am grateful Governor Baker has recognized that alternative technologies must have a role in solving our water quality issues on Cape Cod," said State Representative David Vieira (R-Falmouth). "Funding for the oyster reef project in Falmouth, research with the Marine Biological Laboratory on alternative technologies, and potentially finding new discharge options for the Wareham facility; are important steps to protecting the Buzzards Bay resource."

In a coordinated press release issued today, Narragansett Bay National Estuary Program Executive Director Tom Borden announced parallel awards from the Southeast New England Program. Nearly \$800,000 in grants is being awarded to fund eleven projects in the Narragansett Bay watershed to help towns and organizations protect water quality through grants approved by the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program. See www.nbep.org.

"The success of the Southeast New England Program is due in large part to the coordination of our federal delegates from Rhode Island and Massachusetts," said Tom Borden, Executive Director of the Narragansett Bay National Estuary Program. "The Senators and Congressmen from both states are working hard to provide federal funding to restore and protect our shared coastal waters and estuaries so critical to our economic well-being."

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 South Coast and Cape Cod 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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