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Restore America's Estuaries Announces \$4.5 Million in Grants for Clean Water and Healthy Coasts in Southeast New England

(Buzzards Bay, MA) On Monday, Sept. 24, Restore America's Estuaries (RAE), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will announce \$4.5 million in new funding for local organizations working to restore clean water and healthy coastal ecosystems to Southeast New England.

The announcement event is scheduled for **10 a.m. at Mass. Maritime Academy** (agenda attached).

The funding is provided under the 2018 Southeast New England Program (SNEP) Watershed Grants, a collaboration between RAE and EPA Region 1. The goal of the grant program is to build and support partnerships to tackle the region's most pressing environmental issues, such as nutrient pollution and coastal habitat loss.

RAE selected 14 grant recipients through a rigorous competitive process. The awardees include municipalities, non-profit organizations, state agencies, universities and regional planning organizations, each of which is leading an innovative, high-impact project of regional importance. The \$4.5 million in federal funds will be matched by an additional \$1.8 million in state and local dollars – providing altogether more than \$6.3 million in funds to protect and restore Southeast New England's environment.

The 2018 SNEP Watershed Grants are funding \$2.3 million in Massachusetts and interstate projects, including:

- Association to Preserve Cape Cod **to restore water quality in the Three Bays** estuary in Barnstable through an innovative watershed management program (\$350,000);
- Buzzards Bay Coalition to reduce nitrogen pollution to Upper Buzzards Bay and foster economic development by leading a project to expand the capacity of the Wareham wastewater treatment facility (\$419,006);
- Cape Cod Commission to develop a Cape-wide water quality database and management system, to support clean water restoration efforts by federal, state and local organizations (\$399,998);
- Falmouth Rod & Gun Club for an innovative cranberry bog and river restoration project in Falmouth and Mashpee (\$450,000);
- Martha's Vineyard Commission for an innovative project to reduce groundwater pollution to Lagoon Pond on Martha's Vineyard through installation and testing of a Permeable Reactive Barrier (PRB) (\$250,000);

- Pleasant Bay Alliance to restore water quality in Cape Cod's largest estuary by leading a coordinated program by the Towns of Brewster, Chatham, Harwich and Orleans (\$250,000); and
- Southeast Regional Planning & Economic Development District (SRPEDD) to continue leading the Resilient Taunton Watershed Network (RTWN), a collaboration among communities working to preserve and restore the Taunton River watershed (\$100,000).

The program is funding an additional \$2.2 million in Rhode Island projects, which were announced at an event in Pawtucket, RI on Sept. 17.

Senator Ed Markey said, "Massachusetts and Rhode Island are leading the country in coastal innovation. That's why it comes as no surprise that communities from both states are being recognized for their hard work with a \$4.5 million EPA grant from the Southeast New England Program. Congratulations to the award recipients and to the entire Southeastern New England region for their leadership. This funding will bolster our shared coastal ecosystems and communities for generations to come."

"This program provides critical funding to so many projects here in southeastern Massachusetts and I am proud to have supported it throughout my tenure in Congress," said Congressman Bill Keating. "SNEP has helped to improve and preserve the water quality of countless of our estuaries, bays, and rivers. This year's projects not only highlight how this program supports critical regional initiatives to improve water quality on the Cape, the Islands, and South Coast, but also how important the science and conservation programs being undertaken in Southeast New England are. Their success shows that our community is taking seriously water quality issues in our region and is serious about addressing them."

"It's incredibly important that we continue to bring local, state, and federal partners together to preserve and protect our region's water quality," said Congressman Jim McGovern. "Congratulations to all of today's recipients on their hard work to secure these grants - I know they will make a real impact in communities throughout Southeast New England."

"Protecting iconic waters like bays and estuaries in Southern New England is a priority for EPA, and these projects will help further that goal," said EPA New England Regional Administrator Alexandra Dunn. "The funding announced today will help protect clean water and establish innovative, watershed-based models that are vital to the ecological resiliency and economic vitality of our coastal communities."

"Nitrogen pollution in the estuaries of the South Coast of Massachusetts is a major problem, and the Commonwealth is partnering with local communities and the EPA to address this issue," said Deputy Commissioner Gary Moran of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. "Massachusetts is grateful for these additional resources to assist in our efforts to improve water quality and protect our natural resources."

Mass. Maritime Academy President Rear Admiral Francis X. McDonald said, "Massachusetts Maritime Academy is in a unique position to support and participate in the Multi-

community Partnership to Reduce Nitrogen in Upper Buzzard's Bay program. The Academy is bordered on three sides by the bay, and we have our own effective wastewater treatment plant which received the Regional EPA Operation and Maintenance Excellence Award in 2015. Protecting and working on the water is our mainstay."

Restore America's Estuaries President Jeff Benoit said, "We are excited to see communities and organizations working together to improve water quality and coastal habitat throughout Southeast New England. This is important not only economically, but also for the quality of life in the region."

By funding locally based partnerships that are working to reduce pollution and restore coastal habitats, the SNEP Watershed Grants program is helping to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for Southeast New England communities. For more about SNEP Watershed Grants, see www.snepgrants.org.

EVENT AGENDA ATTACHED

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AGENDA
Southeast New England Program (SNEP)
2018 Watershed Grants
Award Announcements
Monday, September 24, 2018
10:00 a.m., Mass. Maritime Academy

Contact: Thomas Ardito, Restore America's Estuaries
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Purpose: To announce \$4.5 million in federal grants to municipalities, non-profit organizations, universities, state agencies and regional planning organizations. Grants will provide funding to preserve and restore clean coastal waters, healthy watersheds, and vibrant communities in Southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Background: SNEP Watershed Grants are a partnership between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Restore America's Estuaries (RAE), a national non-profit organization. Through SNEP Watershed Grants, EPA and RAE are awarding federal funds to innovative programs and partnerships that are working to ensure a clean and prosperous future for Southeast New England. For more on SNEP and SNEP watershed grants, see www.snepgrants.org

Location: Massachusetts Maritime Academy, 101 Academy Drive, Buzzards Bay, MA 02532. Event will be held at the Beachmoor building at the end of Tower Lane; parking is available at the Beachmoor.

Agenda

10:00 – 10:05: Welcome guests, brief overview of program (Thomas Ardito)

10:05 – 10:10: Congressman Bill Keating

10:10 – 10:15: EPA Regional Administrator Alexandra Dunn

10:20 – 10:25: Mass. Dept. of Environmental Protection, Deputy Commissioner Gary Moran

10:25 – 10:30: Mass. Maritime Academy President Rear Admiral Francis X. McDonald

10:30 – 10:45: Introduce Grantees (Ardito)

10:45 a.m. – 1 p.m.: SNEP Meet-&-Greet and Displays at Beachmoor (continental breakfast provided)

Note: This event introduces Massachusetts grantees; a companion event to announce Rhode Island grantees was held on Sept. 17 in Pawtucket, RI.