



PRESS RELEASE

# Baker-Polito Administration Awards \$1 Million Grant for Herring River Restoration Project

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Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Department of Fish and Game

Division of Ecological Restoration

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**WELLFLEET** — The Baker-Polito Administration today announced a \$1 million grant to advance the Herring River estuary restoration, the largest tidal estuary restoration project ever undertaken in the Northeastern United States. The grant, awarded by the Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Division of Ecological Restoration (DER) and funded by the Environmental Bond Bill, will complement another \$1 million in newly-approved funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Restoration Center.

The Herring River Estuary Restoration Project will restore tidal flow to approximately six miles of waterways and 1,000 acres of degraded salt marsh and estuarine habitats that have been blocked for more than a century. It will also improve water quality within Wellfleet Harbor, enhance migratory fish access to

hundreds of acres of spawning ponds, restore a significant area of shellfish habitat, and enable the wetlands to build elevation and keep pace with future sea level rise.

“The Herring River restoration effort will improve water quality, increase climate change resiliency, boost recreation and tourism, and help sustain commercial and recreational fisheries,” **said Governor Charlie Baker**. “I am proud that state and federal agencies could work together with the Friends of Herring River and other groups to make this important project possible.”

“This funding will allow the Friends of Herring River and its project partners to continue the important engineering and design phase of this large-scale estuary restoration project,” **said EEA Secretary Matthew Beaton**. “The Baker-Polito Administration is committed to building on partnerships like this one to conserve the Commonwealth’s land, as well as proactively taking steps to increase our resilience to the effects of climate change.”

The \$2 million total will support engineering design for multiple infrastructure elements and advance other technical services tasks, including archaeological investigations, rare species assessments, preparation of permit applications, and development of mitigation measures to protect low-lying roads and structures from higher tide levels. The project is being managed by Friends of Herring River, a non-profit organization based in Wellfleet.

“The restored Herring River estuary will support greater fish and wildlife populations, including waterfowl, herons, and shorebirds on the expanded marsh and migratory fish such as river herring and white perch that spawn in the upper reaches of the watershed,” **said DFG Commissioner George Peterson**. “The project will also improve opportunities for shellfish harvest, fishing, and other recreation.”

“This grant from the Division of Ecological Restoration allows the continuation of critically important engineering and other technical services designed to restore the natural environment of the Herring River estuary for enjoyment by generations to come,” **said Friends of Herring River President Don Palladino**. “It has long been a goal of this community to achieve the ecological and social benefits of a healthy and productive tidal marsh and we greatly appreciate the state’s continued partnership and investment to help move the project forward.”

“One measure of this project's critical importance is the remarkable coalition of people working hard to make it happen,” **said State Senator Dan Wolf (D-Harwich)**. “Town, county, state and federal support for an initiative powered by citizen activists makes us all proud. Thanks to Secretary Beaton and Governor Baker for recognizing that restoring the Herring River should and will be one of the great environmental success stories of our time.”

“I am grateful for this significant grant to help further the Herring River Restoration Project, which is one of the most significant projects of its time in the Northeast,” **said State Representative Sarah Peake (D-Provincetown)**.

Members of the Herring River Restoration Committee charged with developing the project’s design include the Towns of Wellfleet and Truro, National Park Service, NOAA Restoration Center, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the DER. Other project supporters include the

Massachusetts Environmental Trust, Association to Preserve Cape Cod, Cape Cod Conservation District, Massachusetts Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership, The Nature Conservancy, Massachusetts Bays Program, Environmental Protection Agency, Marine Biological Laboratory, Massachusetts Audubon Society, Wellfleet Conservation Trust, Restore America's Estuaries, Conservation Law Foundation, American Rivers, Ducks Unlimited, Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies, Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment, and the Friends of Herring River.

More information on the project can be found at

[www.friendsofherringriver.org](http://www.friendsofherringriver.org) (<http://www.friendsofherringriver.org/>)

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