



Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

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RESILIENCE PROJECTS RECEIVE OVER \$2M IN GRANT FUNDING

PROVIDENCE, RI – The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) and the [Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council](#) (CRMC) announce thirteen projects are receiving over \$2M in funding from the first round of the 2024 [Ocean State Climate Adaptation and Resilience](#) (OSCAR) Fund Program. This financial assistance is for adaptation and resilience projects that protect or enhance coastal or riverine habitats to address the impacts of climate change.



In 2021, the Rhode Island General Assembly [adopted legislation](#) establishing the OSCAR Fund as a program jointly administered by DEM, CRMC, and the [Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank](#) (RIIB). Funding was allocated to support the program in 2022 and [were adopted in 2023](#). The following approved projects were selected [through a competitive review process of project proposals](#) by representatives from CRMC, DEM, the Rhode Island Division of Planning, and the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA).

“When it comes to the potential impact of rising waters and extreme weather events, the Ocean State must be a leader in climate resiliency,” **said Governor Dan McKee**. “These OSCAR grants are helping Rhode Island communities protect and plan for the future.”

“Rhode Island is confronting significant and varied impacts from climate change, particularly coastal threats like sea level rise and storm surge along our over 400 miles of coastline,” **said DEM Director Terry Gray**. “These OSCAR grants are providing funding to protect and strengthen the vital functions that coastal and riverine habitats play in mitigating the most severe impacts of climate change in our communities.”

“The CRMC is excited to work with RIIB and DEM on this project to support impactful and inventive projects that protect crucial habitat, encourage resiliency in Rhode Island communities in the face of increased impacts from sea level rise and erosion, and safeguard and enhance public access to the shore,” said **CRMC Executive Director Jeffrey Willis**.

“The OSCAR fund is another important tool for our cities and towns to invest in green and resilient infrastructure solutions to protect and enhance coastal and riverine habitats that are vulnerable to the impacts of extreme weather events,” said **RIIB Executive Director William Fazioli**. “We are pleased to partner with DEM and CRMC to administer this program, and to award these OSCAR grants to our municipal and other partners.”

“We tend to think of infrastructure in terms of roads and bridges. But the next generation of infrastructure that we’re going to need to invest in are the places where our shorelines are at risk due to the effects of climate change,” said **Senator Ryan W. Pearson** (D-Dist. 19, Cumberland, Lincoln), who sponsored the Senate bill that created the fund. “The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration projects that in the next 15 years, sea levels could potentially rise an additional foot, two feet by 2050, and nine feet by 2100. This funding will give these communities needed assistance to better prepare for the impacts of climate change.”

“Working together with our partners in CRMC and RIIB, these OSCAR Fund awards are supporting projects that help protect our state from climate change impacts by enhancing and restoring crucial coastal and riverine habitats,” said **RI Chief Resilience Officer (CRO) Kim Koriath**. “Rhode Island continues to take action to minimize climate impacts, and I remain focused on helping our communities and environment adapt and adjust to the current and future effects of climate change.”

Planning and Design Projects:

Town of Coventry – Improved Designs for Mitigating Flood Risks and Improving Aquatic Habitats - \$275,000

The Town of Coventry will retain consultants to design replacements of two undersized culverts that are associated with repeated riverine flooding. The project will focus on open-bottom culvert designs that will enhance the passage of aquatic organisms. The targeted locations involve crossings of the Flat River at Maple Valley Road and at Franklin Road. The new designs will enhance resiliency to the increased frequency and size of rainstorms, will reduce flooding impacts including erosion, and will enhance protection of water quality and aquatic habitat.

City of Cranston – Implementing Nature-Based Solutions through Two Pilot Projects - \$225,000

The City of Cranston, working with consultants, will undertake a two-part, City-wide flood study to identify public areas where restoration of degraded wetland habitat and other flood mitigation measures can be implemented to enhance resiliency. The work will focus on river and stream corridors and lead to the development of conceptual design alternatives for two pilot projects for flood-prone areas associated with Furnace Hill Brook and Bellefont Brook.

Town of Hopkinton – Restoring Aquatic Organism Passage and Reducing Flooding at Canonchet Road in Hopkinton - \$150,000

The Town of Hopkinton, in partnership with Save the Bay, will retain consultants to design a replacement of an undersized culvert to reduce road flooding and restore stream passage for aquatic organisms in a portion of Canonchet Brook that is designated as cold-water trout habitat. Upgrading the culvert to an open-bottom

stream crossing design will enhance stream connectivity and minimize flooding events during the more intense precipitation events being experienced in and projected for RI.

City of Newport – Restoring Marsh Habitat and Public Green Spaces at South Easton Pond - \$150,000

The City of Newport, with assistance from consultants, will complete a comprehensive study to evaluate the site conditions of the drainage channel along South Easton Pond and create a restoration plan that utilize bioengineering and nature-based strategies to improve erosion control and bank stabilization. Additionally, the project will identify an approach to restoring existing marshland habitat and creating new marsh habitat. The project will also plan for increased public access via an extended walking path.

Town of North Kingstown – Town Beach Sea Wall Revetment - \$300,000

The Town of North Kingstown will procure engineering services to enhance the resilience of the town beach. The project plan is to relocate and redesign the existing seawall as well as stormwater controls at the facility. The existing seawall has sustained damage from storms including overtopping by bay waters during weather events, scouring creating voids and shifting of stones. The project builds on earlier work and collaboration with CRMC and Save The Bay on the technically feasible solutions to enhancing long-term resiliency at the beach complex.

City of Pawtucket – Moshassuck River Urban Restoration Program - \$250,000

The City of Pawtucket will retain consultants to complete a study of its portion of the Moshassuck River to address on-going climate and ecological resilience challenges in this urbanized area. The project will evaluate site conditions, identify flood-prone areas, and assess invasive species and public access. With stakeholder engagement, the project will develop and assess alternative strategies, including nature-based solutions, to address the ecological and climate resilience concerns.

City of Providence – India Point Park Shoreline Improvement Project - \$400,000

The City of Providence will address the challenges of climate change and shoreline degradation due to increased storm events and tidal inundation at India Point Park located at the confluence of the estuarine Seekonk and Providence Rivers. The City will retain consulting services to conduct additional technical feasibility and design work for select park shoreline improvement projects which will prioritize nature-based solutions and may include living shorelines, wetland restoration, vegetated buffers, and protective reefs.

DEM Division of Planning and Development – Improving Resilience at Gull Cove Public Shoreline Access Point - \$50,000

DEM will complete planning and design for enhancing the public access site at Gull Cove in Portsmouth by restoring degraded areas, creating safe shoreline access, and minimizing negative impacts to shoreline habitats from human activity. The project will involve minimization of impervious surfaces, redesign of parking to keep vehicles out of flood or erosion prone areas, and re-vegetation of shoreline habitat.

City of Warwick – Pawtuxet Park Waterfront Improvement Project - \$193,000

Building upon a prior planning and community engagement, the City of Warwick with assistance from engineering consultants will complete further planning, design and permitting tasks related to improvements that will enhance resiliency and address existing habitat degradation at Pawtuxet Park located adjacent to Pawtuxet Cove. Key aspects of the project involve restoring and enhancing shoreline natural habitats including vegetated buffers. Living shoreline approaches will be designed to mitigate erosion and provide greater resilience against storms.

Implementation/Construction Projects:

Town of Bristol – Low Lane Resilience and Right of Way Improvements - \$257,690

The Town of Bristol will retain engineering and construction services to design and implement site improvements at the Low Lane public right of way that leads to the waters of the upper East Passage of Narragansett Bay. The planned improvements will address severe erosion associated with increased frequency of intense rainfall events through improved stormwater controls. Additional plantings to improve upland habitat are also expected.

Edgewood Waterfront Preservation Association – Restoring Resilience of Stillhouse Cove Park - \$59,150

The Edgewood Waterfront Preservation Association, in collaboration with the City of Cranston and other partners, will complete permitting and implementation of a nature-based shoreline stabilization projects aimed at addressing erosion which has worsened due to recent successive storms. The approach, developed in consultation with CRMC, will involve coir logs and native plantings. The project will improve the resilience of Stillhouse Cove Park and enhance protection of the vegetated bluff habitat as well as salt marsh associated with a brackish creek.

Town of Jamestown – Mackerel Cove Dune Restoration and Resiliency - \$199,400

The Town of Jamestown will undertake a project to develop and implement a strategy to restore and stabilize the sand dunes at Mackerel Cove to protect Beavertail Road from flooding and sustain essential habitat for migrating and nesting birds and pollinators. Consultants will be hired to conduct a resiliency study of the area and develop a dune restoration plan in coordination with the Jamestown Conservation Commission. A cost-benefit analysis will be employed to select an approach with permitting to follow.

DEM Division of Planning and Development – Enhancing Coastal Resilience and Safe Public Access at Black Point, RI - \$100,000

Within the state-owned Black Point Access Point Property in Narragansett, this project will undertake implementation of work to repair, stabilize and enhance the resilience of the heavily used primary shoreline access trail. The site improvements will preserve public access by installation of stairs and nature-based best management practices for stormwater management among other components. The project will reduce site erosion and enhance protection of the rocky shore habitat.

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