



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

NEWS

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U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Announces \$10.4 Million for Four Coastal Habitat Restoration Projects in Southeastern Massachusetts

Coastal Communities to Improve Resiliency against Future Storms

As the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Sandy approaches, Secretary of Interior Jewell announced yesterday (<http://www.fws.gov/hurricane/sandy>) that Massachusetts will receive \$10.4 million to support four projects in the towns of Harwich, Chatham, Yarmouth, Dartmouth, and Taunton that are designed to enhance the resiliency of the coastal region to withstand future storms.

The projects are among 45 totaling \$162 million approved under the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act. The funding will enable communities to restore marshes, wetlands and beaches, rebuild shorelines, and research the effects and mitigation options of storm surge impacts.

"This funding will go a long way in furthering the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's ongoing work with the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game, Division of Ecological Restoration to support local conservation partnerships to keep our coastal areas resilient against storms and a changing climate. These projects will provide clean water and healthy habitats for both people and wildlife" said Wendy Weber, Northeast Regional Director of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"Climate change adaptation is one of our top priorities. This substantial infusion of federal funding will aid in our ongoing efforts to protect our coast from devastating impacts of a massive weather event," said Massachusetts Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Rick Sullivan. "These projects will also create jobs, providing an economic boost to our local communities."

"Our Division of Ecological Restoration works very closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to restore and protect wetlands, rivers and other natural areas across the Commonwealth," said Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Commissioner Mary Griffin. "We are thrilled to once again work with the

USFWS, local communities and other partners on these important restoration projects that will greatly benefit fish and wildlife habitats and the people that live and work in these areas.”

Projects receiving funds in Massachusetts include:

- ***Muddy Creek Wetland Restoration Project, Harwich and Chatham, MA – Award: \$3,762,000***
Summary: The Muddy Creek project site is a tidally-restricted estuary with fringing degraded tidal marshes. The objective is to restore natural tidal flow to the Muddy Creek system by replacing outdated culverts that restrict flow with a new 94-foot span bridge and open channel thereby enhancing coastal system resiliency through the restoration 55 acres of estuarine and subtidal wetlands, improving water quality, and the restoring passage for migratory fish.
- ***Parkers River Restoration Project, Yarmouth, MA – Award: \$3,718,000***
Summary: The Parkers River Restoration Project will restore natural tidal hydrology to a 219-acre estuarine system (tidal river and coastal salt pond) through replacement of a degraded and tidally-restrictive bridge with a larger span structure, and enhance migratory fish passage through replacement of two underperforming fish passage structures. The project will correct a severe tidal restriction under a state road in order to restore 60 acres of salt marsh, improve 93 acres of fish and shellfish habitat in tidally-influenced Seine Pond, and improve fish passage to the 63 acres of spawning habitat and approximately 5,500 linear feet of stream habitat.
- ***Round Hill Salt Marsh Restoration Project, Darmouth, MA – Award: \$2,277,000***
Summary: This project will directly restore 11.6 acres of salt marsh functions and values lost for nearly 100 years due to historic filling of the former coastal salt marsh. Additionally, enhancement of the 70-acre Meadow Shores coastal wetland and barrier beach system will mitigate coastal flooding through enhanced drainage and improved tidal dynamics. The project will involve the removal of up to 75,000 cubic yards of fill material and will also include revegetation of the marsh surface and the replacement of an undersized culvert with a larger culvert for unimpeded tidal exchange within the restored marsh.
- ***Whittenton and West Britannia Dam Removals, Mill River, Taunton, MA – Award: \$650,000***
Summary: The Mill River projects will remove two aging mill dams in Taunton, MA and increase the resiliency of natural and human infrastructure. The project will reduce the probability of flooding and eliminate the potential for catastrophic dam breaches posed by these obsolete dams and open up 30 miles of high quality habitat for river herring and American eel.

For more information on the Massachusetts funding provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, please contact Eric Derleth, New England Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 70 Commercial Street, Concord, New Hampshire 03301. Telephone: (603) 223-2541, Fax: (603) 223-2541 or email at eric_derleth@fws.gov.

