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**MORE THAN \$720,000 IN GRANTS TO ADDRESS NUTRIENT POLLUTION IN NARRAGANSETT BAY WATERSHED**

**Newport, Rhode Island, Oct. 15, 2014** – The Narragansett Bay Estuary Program (NBEP) and the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) are pleased to announce that more than \$720,000 in grants will be going to six projects aimed at reducing nutrient pollution in the Narragansett Bay watershed. The projects will address nutrient loadings from fertilizers, septic systems, and other sources to help restore water quality in parts of the watershed in both Rhode Island and Massachusetts. The grant recipients are the City of Newport, Mass Audubon, Northern Rhode Island Conservation District, Save The Bay, The University of Rhode Island, and the Town of West Warwick. (For project-specific information, see [project descriptions](#).)

This grant program is funded through the Southeastern New England Coastal Watershed Restoration Program, a partnership of more than 20 organizations collaborating to protect, enhance, and restore the waters along southern New England from Westerly, Rhode Island, to Pleasant Bay, Massachusetts. The grant monies come from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which received \$2,000,000 in funding to address projects in the coastal waters and watershed lands of Narragansett Bay, Buzzards Bay, the Islands, and southern Cape Cod. United States Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, spearheaded this effort to make federal funding available along the coast of southeastern New England. EPA asked the NBEP (along with NEIWPCC, which hosts the NBEP) and the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program to coordinate the grants.

“The Narragansett Bay Estuary Program is very grateful to Senator Reed for his efforts to help restore water quality in Narragansett Bay because clean water is critical, not only for public health and the health of our ecosystem, but to the economic prosperity of the numerous industries, such as tourism and marine trades, that rely on clean water,” said Judith Swift, chair of NBEP’s Management Committee. “The nutrient management grant program was very competitive with over 30 pre-proposals received in Narragansett Bay and 19 pre-proposals received in Buzzards Bay, totaling over \$8.5 million in requests. This demonstrates how critical a problem nutrients are and how many partners have ideas to improve oxygen levels in the Bay.”

“NEIWPCC has long had a vested interest in combating nutrient pollution,” said Ron Poltak, NEIWPCC’s executive director. “As host of the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program, we look forward to working on such worthy nutrient management projects for the Greater Narragansett Bay Watershed. The selected projects are appropriately diverse—from ribbed mussel bioextractions to an outreach toolkit—and reach across the bistate watershed. The Southeastern New England Coastal Watershed Restoration Program is a true partnership, and it’s an honor to be a part of this extraordinary collaboration.”

*Formed in 1987, the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program’s mission is to protect and restore Narragansett Bay and its watersheds—in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island—through collaborative action, sound science, and informed decision-making. The Narragansett Bay Estuary is one of the 28 estuaries in the country designated by EPA as an “estuary of national significance.”*

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*Since 1947, NEIWPCC has been a leader in the work for clean water. As a not-for-profit interstate agency, NEIWPCC serves its member states—Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont—in many ways including by developing resources that foster progress on water issues, training environmental professionals, coordinating scientific research, educating the public, and providing overall leadership in water management and protection.*

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