

\$35 MILLION green economy bond

The health of our lands, waters, and communities support our way of life and economy in Rhode Island. In November 2016, Rhode Island voters overwhelmingly approved a \$35 million Green Economy Bond to support investments in water quality, land cleanup, farmland, recreational facilities, and open space.

Bikeways, parks & open space: \$18 MILLION

The value of Rhode Island's network of historic parks, bikeways and open spaces goes beyond providing beautiful places and scenic greenways for public enjoyment. This network is an important contributor to the state's economy and ability to attract people and businesses to Rhode Island. Each year, our parks delight visitors and also generate jobs and revenue that support state and local economies – while our farms support continued growth of the state's vibrant food sector.

- **Bikeways:** An investment of \$10 million to expand the state's bikeway network. In March 2017, Governor Raimondo and DEM announced the award of these funds for 10 projects across the state. Combined, these bikeway investments will create over 10 new miles of path and improve safety and connectivity across the network. There are more than 60 miles of bike path in Rhode Island, supporting the use of nearly two million people each year.
- **State Parks:** An investment of \$7 million to improve park facilities. DEM is currently evaluating capital needs across several properties, including the stone barn at Colt State Park in Bristol, the beach pavilion at Goddard State Park in Warwick, Coggeshall Farm Museum in Bristol, Urban Edge Farm in Cranston, and Snake Den Farm in Johnston. The state provides farm incubation space to new and beginning farmers at Urban Edge and Snake Den Farms.
- **Open Space:** An investment of \$4 million to protect historic farmlands, open space, and inholdings that fill gaps within the State's park and management areas. Every state dollar invested in open-space conservation is matched by at least \$2 from other funding sources. In 2017, rules will be finalized for DEM's new voluntary Farmland Access Program, approved under a 2014 environmental bond. The program will invest \$3 million to help preserve historic farmlands and put them within reach of farmers looking for land.



According to a recent URI study, the State's 22 major recreational facilities generate more than:

 **94 MILLION** VISITS

 **\$311 MILLION** CONSUMER SPENDING

 **3,709 JOBS** ANNUALLY

Local recreation & green spaces: **\$9 MILLION**

Helping cities and towns improve recreational facilities and protect open space is key to building a vibrant economy and quality of place. Studies show access to green space improves health, promotes stronger social ties, and enhances neighborhood satisfaction and pride.

The Green Economy Bond provides \$5 million in matching grants to communities to develop and improve public recreational areas. Through a 2016 grant round, \$2 million of these funds have already been awarded to six communities. DEM plans a 2017 grant round for the remaining \$3 million this fall.

The Green Economy Bond also includes \$4 million in matching grants to assist communities in protecting open space. A 2017 grant round is scheduled for summer. In partnership with municipalities and land trusts, DEM has helped protect 160 properties since 1985, attracting over \$42 million in private investment.



Former Hamlet Mills (above) in Woonsocket transformed into public middle school (right) in 2010.



Brownfields: **\$5 MILLION**

Cleaning up former industrial sites or “brownfields” supports a healthier environment and accelerates economic growth. The Green Economy Bond includes \$5 million in matching grants to help return these properties to tax rolls, create jobs, and revitalize our neighborhoods.

Rhode Island is home to thousands of brownfields, and many occupy desirable commercial and industrial space. Through the Brownfields Remediation and Economic Development Fund, created under a 2014 environmental bond, the State has invested \$5 million into 23 projects in 10 Rhode Island communities. These grants leveraged \$575 million in additional investment and support more than 3,700 jobs. Since 1985, some 845 brownfields sites have been cleaned up with assistance from DEM. The 2017 grant round opens this summer.

Stormwater: **\$3 MILLION** combined with \$3.4 million in flood & pollution prevention grants

The Green Economy Bond includes \$3 million in matching grants to help communities and businesses improve their stormwater systems and reduce pollution to Rhode Island waterways. The current grant round – open May 5 to June 30, 2017 – includes this funding in addition to \$3.4 million in other state and federal grant funds for flood and pollution prevention. In all, \$6.4 million will be invested to help improve the safety and quality of our communities.



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