

2022 \$50 MILLION green bond

QUESTION 3

The health of our lands, waters, and communities is central to our environment and supports our way of life in Rhode Island. The value of Rhode Island's network of green spaces, outdoor recreational areas, and waterways goes beyond beautiful places and recreational opportunities for public enjoyment. This network is important to the state's economy and ability to attract people and businesses. This proposed bond invests in open space, outdoor recreation, land revitalization, green energy, climate resilience, forest, habitat, wildlife conservation, water quality, and new facilities at Roger Williams Park and Zoo.

MUNICIPAL RESILIENCE PROGRAM \$16 MILLION administered by RI Infrastructure Bank (RIIB) to help local communities restore and improve resiliency of vulnerable coastal habitats, river and stream floodplains, and infrastructure. This investment will fund matching grants up to 75% to directly support Rhode Island's cities and towns to identify top hazards, improve community resiliency, and strengthen public safety in the face of increased flooding and more frequent and intense storm events driven by climate change. The Municipal Resilience Program has provided action grants to implement 35 priority projects across 27 participating communities to date. This funding will unlock additional resources for those communities and allow all 39 Rhode Island municipalities to participate in the program over the next two years.

SMALL BUSINESS ENERGY LOAN PROGRAM \$5 MILLION administered by RIIB to help small businesses "green" their operations by providing grants and zero or below market rate loans for implementation of clean energy projects. The program will save small businesses money, increase energy efficiency, and reduce their carbon footprint.

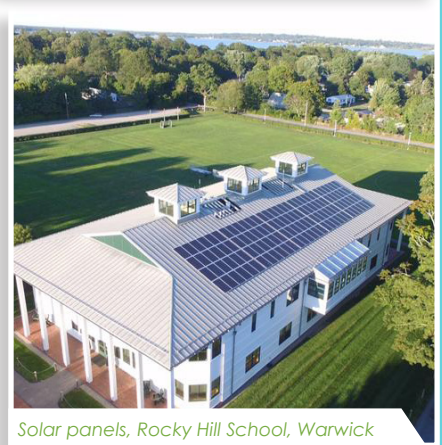
NARRAGANSETT BAY AND WATERSHED RESTORATION \$3 MILLION to restore and protect water quality, aquatic habitats and the environmental sustainability of Narragansett Bay and the state's watersheds. Distributed as matching grants, this infusion will advance work toward clean and safe waters for drinking water, shellfishing, recreation and other valued uses. The investment will support jobs and a variety of projects including improved stormwater management, green infrastructure, control of aquatic invasives, in-lake nutrient management actions and riparian buffer and aquatic habitat restoration.



Durfee Hill Management Area, Gloucester



Fort Wetherill State Park, Jamestown



Solar panels, Rocky Hill School, Warwick



Clamming, North Kingstown



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ROGER WILLIAMS PARK AND ZOO \$12 MILLION for the construction of a state-of-the-art-carbon-neutral education center and event pavilion. These projects will help the Zoo meet the technology demands of the modern-day classroom, increase student capacity, expand its education programs for Rhode Island schools, and establish a large venue with seating capacity for lectures, assemblies, and artistic performances. Both projects will improve access and further enhance the Zoo's positive economic impact on Roger Williams Park, the city of Providence, and all of Rhode Island.

FOREST AND HABITAT RESTORATION \$3 MILLION for forest health management and wildlife habitat projects at state management areas. Rhode Island's forests and trees may seem like a green backdrop to our landscape, but they are in fact hard at work generating a wide range of services and values. Forests are a place where humans and native wildlife can live and thrive by providing habitats for animals and livelihoods for humans. They also offer watershed protection, prevent soil erosion, purify our air, clean our water, and mitigate climate change.

BROWNFIELDS \$4 MILLION in matching grants to clean up former industrial sites or "brownfields" so they may revitalize our neighborhoods, be returned to tax rolls, and create jobs. The State has already invested more than \$14 million for 62 projects in 15 communities across Rhode Island through the Brownfields Remediation and Economic Development Fund. Half of State funding has developed projects in Environmental Justice areas. This money has leveraged more than \$948 million in other investments, supported thousands of jobs, and cleaned up over 200 acres of contaminated brownfields. These projects have helped build new schools, businesses, affordable housing, and recreational space on formerly vacant properties throughout the state.

OPEN SPACE \$5 MILLION investment to protect open space to enhance our communities. Provides \$3 million for the State Land Conservation program used to acquire and conserve lands of statewide interest and significance. Also includes \$2 million in matching grants to municipalities, land trusts, and non-profit conservation land organizations to preserve valuable open space throughout the state. Protecting open space is a key to building a vibrant economy and quality of place.

LOCAL RECREATION \$2 MILLION in matching grants to create new and improve existing community parks and recreation facilities. Studies show access to green space improves health, promotes stronger social ties, and enhances neighborhood satisfaction and pride. Previous grant rounds received requests totaling twice the available funds. There have been nearly 550 grant-funded projects totaling more than \$80 million invested in improvements in all 39 Rhode Island communities since the inception of DEM's Community Recreation Grant program in 1988. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation in Rhode Island generates \$2.4 billion in consumer spending and supports 24,000 local jobs.

Questions? Contact Ryan Mulcahey, DEM Legislative Liaison at 401-222-4700, ext. 2772038 or Ryan.Mulcahey@dem.ri.gov



Open space, South Kingstown



Woonsocket's former Hamlet Mills transformed into a school in 2010



Tour of new growth forest at Great Swamp Management Area, West Kingston



Joslin Spray Park, Providence