

Department of Fish and Game

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Baker-Polito Administration Awards Grants to Municipalities and Organizations for Wildlife Habitat Management

BOSTON - The Baker-Polito Administration today awarded \$341,396 to individuals, municipalities and organizations across the state for projects to improve habitat for native Massachusetts wildlife. The grants are provided through the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game's Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's (MassWildlife) Habitat Management Grant Program and will fund 13 wildlife habitat improvement projects totaling 698 acres in 14 communities.

"Investments in wildlife habitat improvement both enhance recreational opportunities and promote land conservation," **said Governor Charlie Baker**. "The funding awarded under the Habitat Management Grant Program will provide municipalities, organizations and private partners with the resources needed to strengthen wildlife conservation efforts throughout the Commonwealth."

In its fifth year, the Habitat Management Grant Program provides financial assistance to private and municipal landowners of conserved lands to improve and manage habitat for wildlife deemed in greatest conservation need and certain game species. The projects are also designed to complement ongoing habitat management efforts on state lands and expand opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and other outdoor recreation.

“The Habitat Management Grant Program furthers the Baker-Polito Administration’s commitment to habitat management and wildlife protection,” **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen A. Theoharides**. “Conservation science has repeatedly demonstrated that continuous active habitat management activities for common and rare wildlife and plants are necessary for ecological resiliency and diversity.”

“Habitat management is key to benefiting the uncommon birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians which are declining because their habitats are uncommon,” **said Department of Fish and Game Commissioner Ron Amidon**. “This program provides us the opportunity to expand our habitat management footprint and improve recreational opportunities for sportsmen and women, birders, naturalists and other outdoor enthusiasts.”

“Fish and wildlife habitat management for both rare and common species and to enhance wildlife-related recreation opportunities is a top priority for MassWildlife,” **said Dr. Mark Tisa, Director of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife**. “Because 80% of Massachusetts is in private ownership, working with committed municipal and private landowners is a no-brainer. These grants help protect everyone’s investment in wildlife, habitat, and the enjoyment of outdoor activities such as fishing, hunting or watching wildlife.”

The following landowners will receive MassWildlife Habitat Management Grants:

- **Barnstable** - The Town of Barnstable has been awarded \$23,570 to use prescribed fire to improve pitch pine – oak woodland habitat at the West Barnstable Conservation Area.
- **Edgartown** - The Nature Conservancy has been awarded \$25,889 to improve sandplain grasslands on the Katama Plains.
- **Great Barrington** - The Nature Conservancy has been awarded \$28,576 to create and improve old field and shrubland habitats at the Schenob Brook Preserve.
- **Hardwick and North Brookfield** - The East Quabbin Land Trust has been awarded \$13,642 to conduct invasive species control at Mandell Hill and Wendemuth Meadow.
- **Lenox** - The Town of Lenox has been awarded \$26,810 to remove the invasive hardy kiwi plant at Kennedy Park and Mass Audubon’s Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary.
- **Marshfield** – Mass Aududon has been awarded \$40,814 to perform field restoration work at the Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary.
- **Mashpee** – The Orenda Wildlife Land Trust has been awarded \$16,704 to

conduct a prescribed burn to improve wildlife habitat.

- **Nantucket** – The Nantucket Conservation Foundation has been awarded \$9,433 to manage heathlands on the Middle Moors property.
- **North Andover** – The Trustees of Reservations has been awarded \$44,272 to conduct habitat restoration work at the Weir Hill Reservation.
- **Orange** – A private landowner has been awarded \$49,681 to create young forest habitat.
- **Sandwich** –Town of Sandwich has been awarded \$23,570 to conduct a prescribed burn on the Maple Swamp Conservation Area.
- **South Lee** – South Lee Associates has been awarded \$13,655 for efforts to control invasive species on Housatonic River properties.
- **Yarmouth** – The Town of Yarmouth has been awarded \$24,780 to conduct a prescribed fire to restore pitch pine – oak woodlands.

“The Department of Fish and Game’s grant investment in these projects are going to prove essential in completing ongoing habitat management efforts across the Commonwealth,” **said State Representative Smitty Pignatelli (D-Lenox), Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture.**

“Personally, I have been working on removing hardy kiwi plant in Kennedy Park for the past four years, so on behalf of the 4th Berkshire District, I want to thank the Baker-Polito Administration for once again improving Massachusetts Wildlife.”

“I am grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration and to the Department of Fish and Game’s Division of Fisheries and Wildlife for their dedication to wildlife conservation and habitat management,” **said State Representative Randy Hunt (R-Sandwich).** “It is essential to preserve our beautiful wildlife here on the Cape and throughout the Commonwealth”.

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