

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ipswich River group awarded grant from Essex County Community Foundation: Funding will help municipalities protect open space throughout Essex County

IPSWICH, MA. December 11, 2020. Ipswich River Watershed Association, a leading environmental nonprofit working on behalf of communities and the environment on the North Shore, is excited to announce it has received a new grant from Essex County Community Foundation. The grant is part of ECCF's new Essex County Land and Environment Initiative (ECLEI), a countywide effort to improve the quality of life for residents by promoting stewardship of our natural resources. With ECCF's support, Ipswich River and its partners in the Greenscapes North Shore Coalition will provide bylaw review training and community outreach for municipalities to incorporate nature-based solutions that promote Low-Impact Development (LID) and protect Open Space throughout Essex County. The project is part of a larger effort to encourage greater collaboration across town borders in protecting our environment.

"We're really excited about this new partnership with ECCF," said Patrick Lynch, Environmental Planner at Ipswich River. "A big component of resiliency planning is rethinking how our regulations can better promote preservation of Open Space." Lynch, who studied environmental policy at Harvard Kennedy School and earned a Master's in Public Administration from the school prior to joining Ipswich River, will be in charge of managing the project.

Wayne Castonguay, Executive Director of Ipswich River, is enthusiastic about the grant. "We are thrilled and honored to receive ECCF's seal of approval and be one of the first to receive a Land and Environment grant. The year 2020 has been an unprecedented year for both nonprofits and funders, and especially for our towns and cities as they grapple with both a pandemic and the second severe drought in the last five years." For Castonguay, an expert on resiliency planning, there is no time to waste. "We're hitting this critical juncture where so many of our towns are trying to take the lead on climate, but lack the time or resources to do so in a way that really sets them up for long-term success. This grant will assist our municipal partners and help our region demonstrate statewide leadership in protecting our limited natural resources."

This is the first grant round ECCF has launched under its new Land and Environment Initiative, the latest in its approach to systems-based social change. ECCF's Senior Program Officer Hehershe Busuego spoke about the goals of the ECLEI. "Those of us who work in philanthropy are always looking for new ways we can help our communities

thrive. While we have high hopes for expanding this initiative over the long term, a key challenge over the coming year is ensuring this round is successful in demonstrating how we can collaboratively improve our environment to improve the quality of life in Essex County. We look forward to working with Ipswich River and with our many municipal leaders through this grant in 2021.”

For more information on ECCF’s new Land and Environment Initiative, visit <https://www.eccf.org/essex-county-land-and-environment-initiative/>.

To subscribe to project updates, contact Rachel Schneider, Ipswich River Outreach Manager, rschneider@ipswichriver.org

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About Ipswich River

Ipswich River (Ipswich River Watershed Association) is a leading 501(c)3 nonprofit working to create a more resilient North Shore. We represent over 350,000 residents and businesses who depend on the watershed for clean water. Ipswich River and our municipal and nonprofit partners work across 28 communities on the North Shore, from Salem to Newbury. Since 2007 Ipswich River helped establish the Greenscapes North Shore Coalition, which assists municipalities north of Boston in promoting and protecting beautiful landscapes for clean and plentiful water. For more information visit www.greenscapes.org and www.ipswichriver.org.

About ECCF

The mission of Essex County Community Foundation is to inspire philanthropy that strengthens the communities of Essex County. We do this by managing charitable assets, strengthening and supporting nonprofits and engaging in strategic community leadership. Since 1998, ECCF and its family of 235 charitable funds have granted \$85 million to nonprofits, schools and students in Essex County and beyond. Our ultimate goal is to have 34 thriving cities and towns in Essex County and to improve the quality of life for the region’s nearly 800,000 residents. Learn more at eccf.org.

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