

*Town of Weymouth
Massachusetts*

Robert L. Hedlund
Mayor

75 Middle Street
Weymouth, MA 02189



Office: 781.340.5012
Fax: 781.335.8184

TTY: 781.331.5124

Press Release

For Immediate Release – July 19, 2018

Mayor Hedlund dedicates new culvert and trailhead at Great Esker Park's Puritan Road Entrance

Contact(s): Braydon Marot, Project Engineer
bmarot@weymouth.ma.us, 781-337-5100

Weymouth, MA – Mayor Robert Hedlund joined Project Engineer Braydon Marot, Program Coordinator of Parks Andrew Hultin, and members of the Town's Community Preservation Committee today to dedicate a new culvert and trailhead at the Puritan Road Entrance to Great Esker Park. The new entrance was funded with a \$360,000 grant through the Office of Coastal Zone Management's (CZM) Coastal Resilience Grant Program, which was locally matched by in-kind services from the Town's Engineering Division and \$100,000 in Community Preservation funds. Improvements at the site are anticipated to enhance water flow conditions in the Back River's Spring Brook and, in turn, increase the area's resilience to future climate impacts, as well as restore the natural resources of a nearby degraded salt marsh.

"This project has great value, not just for the residents of Puritan Road but for the community at large," **said Mayor Robert Hedlund.** "The improvements here will increase flood protection for residential homes, safeguard public access to Great Esker Park, and enhance one of Weymouth's most important natural resources. I am grateful to CZM for supporting this project, and for the hard work and planning of our Engineering and Recreation staff. The new Puritan Road Entrance is an outstanding addition to our public infrastructure and to the Back River Trail."

The Puritan Road Flood Mitigation and Ecological Resilience Project was launched by the Town in fiscal year 2015 to study, design, and implement a solution to the area's

persistent flooding and water quality problems caused by a collapsing underground culvert. The structure, now removed, was a corrugated metal pipe running beneath the roadway, which carried storm and tidal flows between the Back River and salt marsh. Advanced deterioration of the culvert led to choking of the Spring Brook and recurring sink holes in the roadway above. These impacts, in turn, led to lingering floodwaters for homeowners, public safety concerns for park visitors, and degraded water quality for the Back River's fish, vegetation, and wildlife.

To improve conditions at the Puritan Road Entrance, the Town replaced the collapsing pipe with 20 feet of concrete box culvert beneath the roadway and 150 feet of open-air channel upstream. The Town also dredged 110 feet of existing stream bed south of the new channel. The project was engineered by Woodard and Curran of Dedham and constructed by Northern Construction Services of Palmer, with direction provided by the Town's Project Engineer Braydon Marot.

The combination of the new culvert and daylighted channel are expected to mimic natural stream conditions and increase flow capacity in the Spring Brook. These improvements should, in turn, reduce the duration of flooding in the area, while also enhancing tidal exchange between the Back River and salt marsh, improving water quality in the Spring Brook, increasing the area's resilience to climate change, and restoring the marsh's natural habitat and resources.

"The Commonwealth's coastal communities are leading by example to proactively integrate climate change projections and impacts into planning and infrastructure improvements, and the Baker-Polito Administration is committed to working with them to protect residents, infrastructure and natural resources," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Matthew Beaton**. "Through our Coastal Resilience Program, we were proud to support the Town of Weymouth's important flood mitigation project, which will meaningfully improve their resilience to intense and prolonged weather events as well as improve the health of a salt marsh."

In addition to the culvert work, the Town has installed a new trailhead at the Puritan Road Entrance, celebrating the site as a model project under the state's Coastal Resilience Grant Program. The trailhead provides a brief description of the project and displays an aerial map of Great Esker Park and the Back River Trail.

CZM's Coastal Resilience Grant Program provides financial and technical support for innovative local efforts to increase awareness and understanding of climate impacts, identify and map vulnerabilities, conduct adaptation planning, redesign vulnerable public facilities and infrastructure, and implement non-structural (or green infrastructure) approaches that enhance natural resources and provide storm damage protection and/or flood protection.

Since fiscal year 2015, Weymouth has secured multiple Coastal Resilience Grants to complete various phases of the Puritan Road project. These include feasibility, design, permitting, construction documents, and actual construction.

The Puritan Road Entrance at Great Esker Park is now open for all to enjoy!

###