



For Immediate Release

**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF STORM RECOVERY ANNOUNCES SUPPORT FOR
SUNSET COVE RESTORATION PROJECT**

*Governor's Office of Storm Recovery Announces \$500,000 for Broad Channel Committee
Proposed Project Aimed at Restoring Five Acres of Wetland and Seven Acres of Upland Habitat
in Queens, New York*

New York, NY (July 16, 2014) - The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) today announced the commitment of \$500,000 in federal Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds for the Broad Channel NY Rising Community Reconstruction (NYRCR) Planning Committee's Sunset Cove Restoration Project. The project, which was developed by the Planning Committee to compliment broader New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC DPR) restoration and resiliency efforts, will include the installation of an oyster reef at the shoreline to protect the planned habitat improvements, recreational amenities, and surrounding existing assets from wave and erosion damage. The Sunset Cove Restoration Project also incorporates an oyster nursery to address the need for an overall and bay-wide increase in spat-producing oysters to support the sustainability of the oyster shoreline. The oyster revetment and nursery, in conjunction with the larger NYC DPR project, will remove contaminated fill from the site, replenish sand, and restore wetland and maritime forest and shrubland.

"The Sunset Cove Restoration Project is an innovative, nature-based approach that will both protect the State's Sandy-impacted communities, and create green collar jobs," said State Director of Storm Recovery Jamie Rubin. "This effort exemplifies the success of the NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program, and demonstrates how Committee proposals can work alongside existing agency endeavors."

"Jamaica Bay is one of the City's greatest natural assets and can play a major role in buffering adjacent communities from the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events," said Daniel Zarrilli, Director of the Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency. "Under the leadership of Mayor de Blasio, the City has adopted a comprehensive climate resiliency plan. Thanks to a strong partnership with the Governor, the New York Rising's Howard Beach committee, and our Federal partners, the City is eager to invest in Spring Creek to promote resiliency and restore natural ecosystems."

“New York City’s waterfront parks and beaches serve as one of the first lines of defense against the continuing impact of climate change,” said NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP. “This grant for restoration of Sunset Cove will help in so many ways, including focusing attention on these most valuable of our City’s resources and at the same time restoring wetlands and upland habitat to serve the purpose that nature had intended.”

The Broad Channel Planning Committee submitted this project as one of 10 projects included in its final NYRCR Plan, which was announced at the NY Rising Spring Conference in April 2014. NYC DPR was awarded a \$4.85 million Coastal Resilience Grant from the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) on June 16, 2014 to support the Sunset Cove Restoration Project. NY Rising’s contribution will cover a portion of the \$2.24 million needed to match the DOI grant award. Governor Cuomo has committed an additional \$400,000 through the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. To further support this effort, NYC DPR also received a \$1 million grant through the same program to develop a self-sustaining oyster population in Jamaica Bay.

“This breakwater will incorporate an oyster cage system which will assist in eliminating storm surge while helping to release oyster seed into the waters of Jamaica Bay in an effort to restore this keystone species to these waters where they once flourished,” said Dan Mundy, Chair of the Broad Channel Community Reconstruction Committee. “The combined effects of this project will make the southern portion of this island town more resilient as we prepare for the possibility of more frequent storm events due to climate change.”

The project will also provide recreational and educational benefits to residents of Broad Channel as well as the larger Jamaica Bay community. There would be a strong opportunity to partner with local environmental organizations, who are engaged in ongoing restoration efforts around the bay—as well as citywide groups such as the New York Harbor School—who have recently launched the “Billion Oysters Project” to restore oysters to New York Harbor. The school is developing an “oyster gardening manual,” which provides public school teachers with a manual for how to incorporate oyster restoration and monitoring into their science curriculums.

“The Broad Channel Civic Association is extremely pleased that the Department of the Interior has funded the Sunset Cove Resiliency Grant,” the Civic Association said. “This project will also see funding from Governor Cuomo’s NY Rising program. The town of Broad Channel has voted to allocate \$500,000 under the NY Rising program to help fund a natural stone breakwater at Sunset Cove which will help to reduce wave energy in the event of another hurricane.”

The NYRCR Program is a grassroots process designed to empower communities that suffered significant damage from Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene, and Tropical Storm Lee. The program was established in April 2013 by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and is funded almost entirely by more than \$650 million of federal funds through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant- Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program. In 50 community planning areas across New York State, the NYRCR Program has produced community reconstruction plans that include locally driven projects aimed at recovery and long-term resiliency. This summer, GOSR will embark on “Round 2” of the NYRCR program, welcoming 16 new Committees from across the State.

The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery coordinates Statewide recovery efforts for Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene, and Tropical Storm Lee. Through its NY Rising Housing Recovery, Small Business, Community Reconstruction and Infrastructure programs, GOSR is investing more than \$4 billion made available through HUD CDBG-DR funds to better prepare New York for future extreme weather events. Leveraging CDBG-DR funding with additional federal funding that has been awarded to other State agencies, GOSR enables homeowners, small businesses, and entire communities to build back even better than before.

For more information go to www.stormrecovery.ny.gov.

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