

Creating a More Resilient Rhode Island

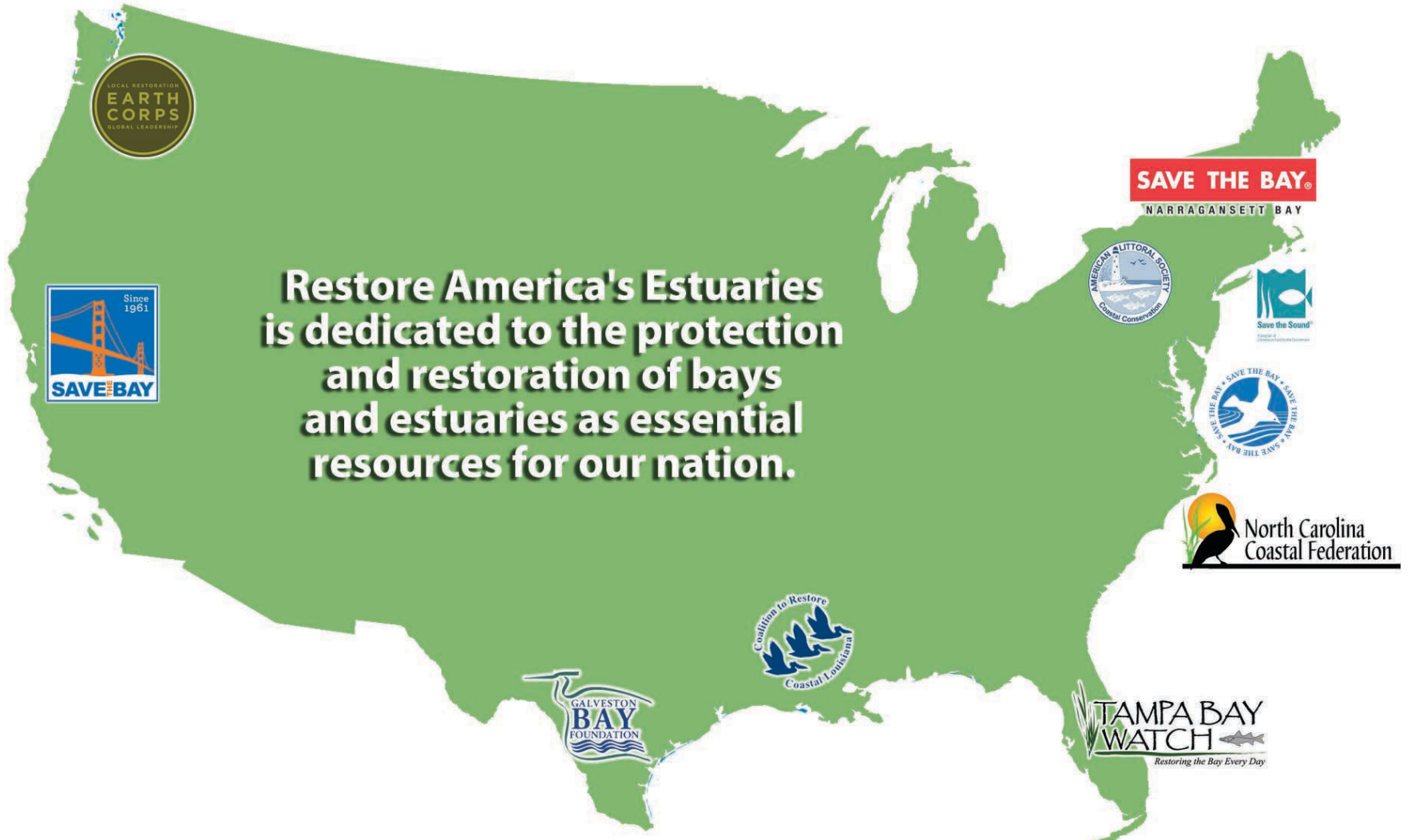


**Presentation to RI House Joint Commission
on Climate Change Impacts & Pawtuxet River Flooding
Tom Ardito
Director, SNEP Grants Program
Restore America's Estuaries**

About Me

- 30 years in Coastal Resilience & Ecological Restoration
- 25 years in Rhode Island
- Direct \$30M environmental grants program for RAE
- NOAA, NBEP, CER, AIPC
- Project Manager: Dam removals, wetland restoration, coastal resilience, urban restoration, stormwater management, oil spills & Superfund site restoration
- Pawtuxet Falls, Roger Williams Park WQ
- Program Manager: Large & small grants in RI & MA, project oversight

Restore America's Estuaries



**Restore America's Estuaries
is dedicated to the protection
and restoration of bays
and estuaries as essential
resources for our nation.**

**Partnership since 2017 with EPA Region 1 to
manage SNEP Watershed Implementation Grants**

Southeast New England Program (SNEP)

Federal Funding Program managed by EPA since 2014

Program Goals:

- Clean Water
- Healthy Ecosystems
- Sustainable Communities

Link to SNEP program & Strategic Plan from www.snepgrants.org

SWIG 2018 - 2025

- RAE/EPA Cooperative Agreement since 2017
- Awards 2018 -- 2025
 - Nearly 100 Grants
 - With partners, ~200 Grantees
 - \$ 20+ M awards
 - \$ 10 M match
 - \$ 30+ M total
 - Grants to \$500k, leverage larger projects
- See www.snepgrants.org for program reports and project information

2026 SWIG Grants

- SNEP Watershed Implementation Grants (SWIG)
- \$250,000 max.
- **RFP Open Now**
- Two-step process
 - Letter of Intent (LOI)
 - Full Proposal by Invitation Only
- Online Applications Only
- Go to www.snepgrants.org for RFP, application link and supplemental materials
- **LOI Deadline Friday April 3**
- May be final year of funding

SWIG26

Restore Ecosystems, Improve Communities

2026 Funding Themes:

- Restore Small Cities & Urban Environmental Resources;
- Conserve and Restore Rural and Natural Landscapes;
- Innovate to Improve Water Quality;
- Foster Adaptation;
- Build & Sustain Local and Regional Partnerships; and
- Foster Regional Learning.

Examples of Projects Funded

- Watershed-scale Estuarine Restoration
- Green Streets & Neighborhoods
- Community engagement, job training, etc.
- Stormwater Demonstration & Training
- Innovative Wetland & River Restoration, other habitats
- Coastal adaptation, shorelines, flood plain restoration
- Pilot Projects: PRBs, bioreactors, innovative septic, etc.
- Watershed & Regional Plans
- Marine pollution, solid waste
- Conferences & Tech Transfer (smaller \$\$\$)

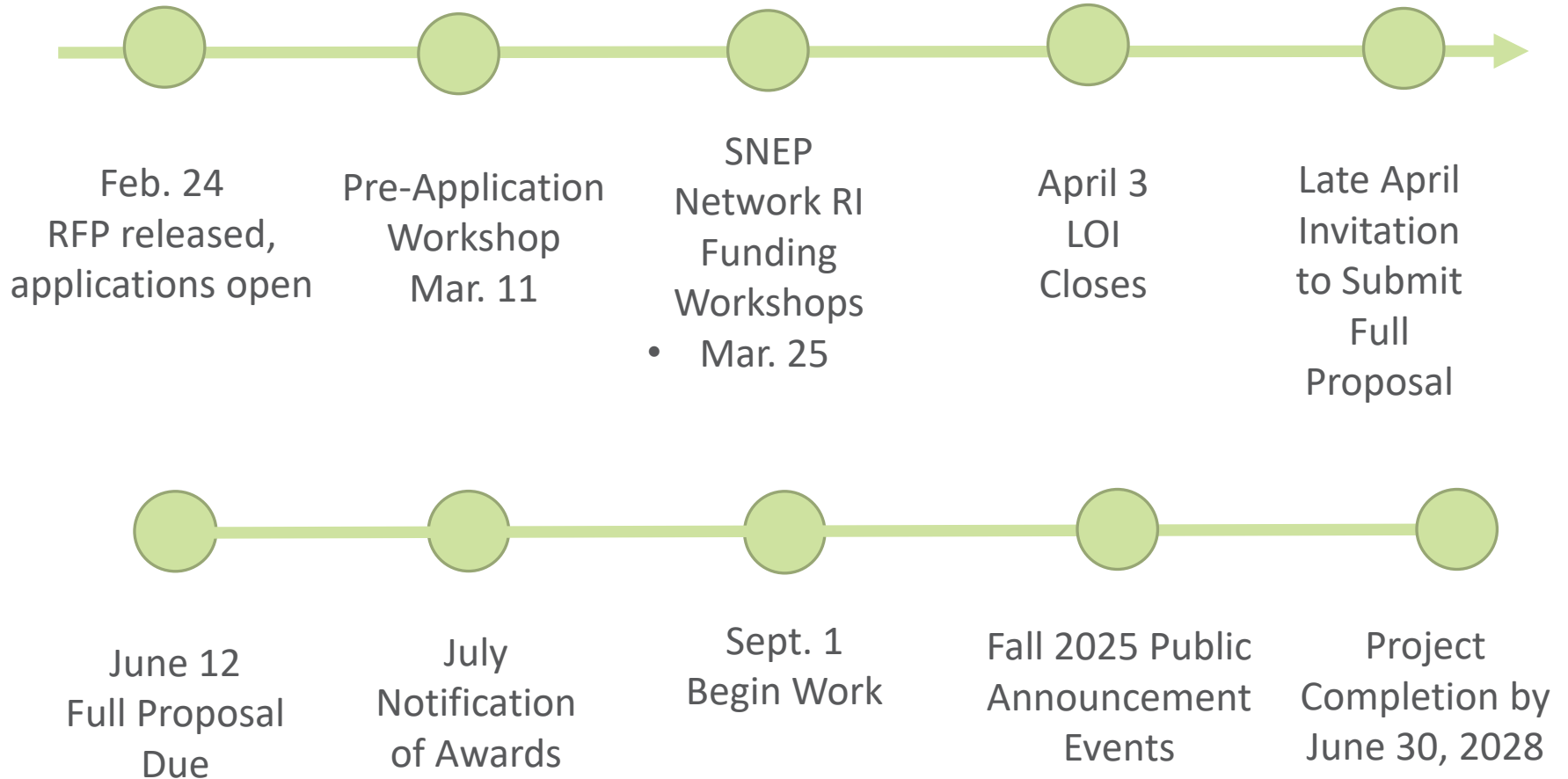
Types of Organizations Funded

- Municipalities
- State Agencies
- Tribes
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Regional Planning Organizations
- Universities & Other Academic Institutions
- Partnerships: Multi-community, regional & public/private

Grantees include:

- Town of Bristol, RI
- RI Dept. of Environmental Management
- CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection
- City of Pawtucket, RI
- Save The Bay, RI
- University of Rhode Island
- Assn. to Preserve Cape Cod
- Buzzards Bay Coalition
- Cape Cod Commission
- Falmouth Rod & Gun Club
- Martha's Vineyard Comm.
- Pleasant Bay Alliance
- New Eng. Interstate Water Poll. Control Comm.
- Southeast Regional Planning & Econ. Dev. Dist.
- Audubon Society of RI
- City of Cranston, RI
- Groundwork RI
- City of Newport, RI
- Northern RI Conservation Dist.
- Town of Warren, RI
- Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council
- Mass. Maritime Academy
- Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
- City of Providence, RI
- RI Div. of Marine Fisheries
- Town of South Kingstown, RI
- Friends of Bass River
- Mt. Holyoke College
- Center for Coastal Studies
- Mass. Audubon Soc.

2026 Award Calendar



SNEP Restoration Capital Minigrants

- Available again this year
- Mid-Spring RFP
- \$10,000 max
- Purchases only of supplies, materials and equipment for use in restoration work
- Scientific instruments, mowers, plant material, soils, etc.

SNEP Network

- Provides training, technical assistance and capacity-building.
- Support can be coordinated with SNEP Watershed Grants.
- Use Network for SNEPWG project development, or to implement SNEPWG-funded plans and projects.
- Tools available – see RFP.
- Contact Network for assistance:
www.snepnetwork.org

Green & Complete Streets Truman Drive, Woonsocket



Dam Removals Kickemuit River, Warren



Urban Restoration Community Music Works, Providence



Training & Information Stormwater Innovation Center, Providence



Innovative Financing Stormwater Utility District Development, Providence



Recommendations -- Statewide

- Resilience efforts must be scaled up significantly to address current trends
- Rectifying 150 years of past development plus increasing SLR, storms, etc.
- Increase capacity within and beyond state government – e.g. DEM resilience coordinators
- Power of partnerships
- Regulatory reform – e.g. dam safety and permitting

Recommendations – Pawtuxet River

- Watershed approach needed
- Better collaboration / institutional framework among municipalities
- Pull together existing flood studies
- Large scale planning
- Immediate action
- Explore opportunities as well as challenges
- Gray & Green Infrastructure
- Pawtuxet River Authority
- Dam removal opportunities – Pontiac, etc.
- Stormwater financing

Questions?

For more information, to download the RFP,
and apply:

www.snepgrants.org

Contact Tom Ardito for assistance

tardito@estuaries.org

More about SNEP:

Google “SNEP Strategic Plan” or link from
SWIG25 RFP

