

A.G. SCHNEIDERMAN & DEC COMMISSIONER MARTENS ANNOUNCE \$11 MILLION IN GRANTS AND NEARLY \$24 MILLION IN MATCHING FUNDS FOR SIX ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS IN GREENPOINT

Projects Selected By NYS And Community Win Awards From Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund; Environmental Benefits Fund Created With \$19.5 Million Paid By ExxonMobil As Part of Settlement With State Over Greenpoint Oil Spill

A.G. Schneiderman: We Will Continue To Partner With The Community To Ensure A Cleaner, Healthier Future For Greenpoint

NEW YORK - Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman and Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Joseph Martens today announced \$11 million in the latest grant awards by the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund (GCEF), a \$19.5 million environmental improvement fund created from money obtained by the state in a 2011 settlement with ExxonMobil over its massive oil spill in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. In this round, the state awarded grants to six projects that address environmental priorities of the Greenpoint community. The projects – which range from establishing an environmental education center at the Greenpoint library to creating natural habitats along Newtown Creek – were the top vote-getters in recent community voting organized by the GCEF. These grants will be combined with \$23.8 million in matching contributions from the recipients, bringing the total investment in improving Greenpoint’s environment to nearly \$35 million. The Attorney General’s office and the DEC are jointly overseeing the program’s implementation and, along with community input, selected the winning projects.

“Through the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund, New York State and Greenpoint residents are working together to lift the cloud of environmental abuse and neglect that has long shadowed this proud community,” **Attorney General Schneiderman** said. “With these projects, we are investing a total of \$35 million in the community’s environmental priorities, priorities that include restoring Greenpoint’s waterfront and fostering a new generation of environmental stewards.”

DEC Commissioner Joe Martens said, “The aid from this environmental improvement fund will enable several deserving and beneficial projects to come to fruition. These are projects, like the roof top outdoor classroom for school children, planting trees, and improving waste water management that will have long-term benefits for the community, and a positive impact on its economy while improving and protecting our state’s environment.”

The six projects being funded are:

- **Greenpoint Environmental Education at Greenpoint Library:** The project will remodel the library as a LEED silver certified building (which meets sustainability standards related to energy- and water-efficiency and the use of recyclable and non-toxic materials), create the Greenpoint Environmental Education Center on the library's second floor, and an outdoor classroom on the roof for Greenpoint schoolchildren.
Project Lead: Brooklyn Public Library
Grant Amount: \$5,000,000
Matching Contribution: \$5,780,300
- **Greening Greenpoint:** The project will develop and implement a comprehensive urban forest plan in Greenpoint, including planting 500 trees, and funding maintenance for existing street and park trees.
Project Lead: City Parks Foundation
Grant Amount: \$1,950,719
Matching Contribution: \$1,933,786
- **West Street Watershed Stormwater Project:** By designing and installing infrastructure to capture, store and treat storm water, the project will promote green streets and reduce chronic flooding and sewer backups for over 10,000 Greenpoint residents.
Project Lead: Brooklyn Greenway Initiative, Inc.
Grant Amount: \$1,917,717
Matching Contribution: \$5,030,000
- **Greenpoint Eco-Schools:** The project will develop and empower a generation of student leaders by funding a comprehensive environmental education program in four Greenpoint schools—PS 31, PS 34, PS 110, and MS 126—serving 1,800 students.
Project Lead: National Wildlife Federation
Grant Amount: \$1,434,735
Matching Contribution: \$10,732,324
- **Curb Your Litter:** The project will fund an on-the-ground assessment of Greenpoint's litter problem, targeted anti-litter campaigns, and a collaborative effort with the City of New York to improve waste management infrastructure in the community.
Project Lead: Greenpoint Chamber of Commerce
Grant Amount: \$569,145
Matching Contribution: \$232,680
- **Intertidal Wetland Project:** The project will foster Greenpoint waterfront restoration by funding an assessment of shoreline sites and eroded bulkheads along Newtown Creek for opportunities to establish natural habitats and expand existing habitats along the creek.

Project Lead: Research Foundation of CUNY (LaGuardia Community College)
Grant Amount: \$130,178
Matching Contribution: 130,911

How the projects were selected:

In July, GCEF received 24 proposals for large grants (between \$25,000 and \$2 million) and two proposals for legacy grants (greater than \$2 million), totaling \$25.3 million in requested funding. These proposals were evaluated and scored by a panel of independent technical experts using criteria presented in the proposal invitation (e.g. environmental results, workplan, budget, and Greenpoint support). The panel was assembled by GCEF's co-administrator, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), according to its established procedures and best practices. The purpose of the independent expert review was to identify the proposals of highest quality, greatest likelihood of success, and most environmental benefit to the community.

The 13 proposals scoring the highest in the independent expert review were selected by the state to be shared with the Greenpoint community in order to solicit residents' preferences among the projects. Following extensive community outreach, GCEF held three community "preferencing" events over two days in November. Greenpoint residents over the age of 16 were invited to review information detailing each of the 13 proposed projects and cast ballots in support of up to six. With 525 residents voting, the six projects selected to receive GCEF grants are the ones that received the most votes.

Applicants that did not receive a grant in this round of funding will be offered one-on-one assistance by NFWF for the purpose of enhancing their proposals' competitiveness for next year's GCEF grant funding round. The state intends to grant the full remaining balance of the Fund – roughly \$5.5 million—in 2015.

U.S. Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY) said, "I am very pleased that the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund is listening so attentively to the community, and awarding grants to projects that they have voted as top priorities. For years, Greenpoint has suffered from the environmental fallout of a massive oil spill, and I look forward to the day when the impact of the spill has been entirely negated. With this funding, the community is well on the path to recovery, and the educational efforts being put forth ensure that the future of Greenpoint is indeed green."

State Senator Daniel Squadron said, "North Brooklyn has faced years of environmental damage, and the projects awarded funding today through the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund take important steps towards correcting that. These grants bring additional green space and environmental education and programming to 11222. Thank you to the Attorney General, DEC, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, North Brooklyn Development Corporation, and all of the community members working toward a greener North Brooklyn."

Assemblyman Joseph R. Lentol said, “Reversing the long history of environmental abuse in Greenpoint is no easy task, but I am confident that the projects announced today are a leap in the right direction. The residents of Greenpoint have waited long enough for the positive environmental change they deserve. The variety of these projects illustrates the serious dedication this community has in improving our neighborhood. The Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund has been critical in bringing these projects to fruition, and I am proud to have partnered with everyone involved. I look forward to the success of these projects and the positive environmental impacts they will have on Greenpoint and its residents.”

New York City Councilmember Stephen Levin said, “Greenpoint deserves a clean and healthy future and thanks to these grants, we are one step closer to accomplishing these vital goals. The Greenpoint community made their voices heard and I look forward to seeing the winning grants make a positive impact throughout Greenpoint. Thank you to Attorney General Schneiderman, Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Joseph Martens, and everyone who came out to vote.”

GCEF’s Community Advisory Panel (CAP), an advisory group comprised of 17 Greenpoint residents, and representatives of local organizations and elected officials, provides direct, ongoing input to the state on GCEF’s development and implementation. A partnership of NFWF and the Greenpoint-based North Brooklyn Development Corporation, selected through a competitive process, is administering the GCEF for the state.

In March 2014, the state awarded the first grants from the GCEF: \$395,135 in small grants (less than \$25,000 each) to 18 projects addressing environmental improvement priorities of Greenpoint residents. The funding has been combined with \$196,916 in matching funds, bringing a total of \$592,055 to Greenpoint’s environmental priorities.

More information on GCEF, details on the six funded projects, and the community voting results can be found at www.gcefund.org.

The GCEF is being overseen for Attorney General Schneiderman by Environmental Policy Advisor Peter C. Washburn, with the assistance of Environmental Scientist Joseph Hass. The Environmental Protection Bureau is led by Bureau Chief Lemuel Srolovic. Executive Deputy Attorney General for Social Justice is Alvin Bragg. Janet Sabel is the First Deputy Attorney General for Affirmative Litigation. The fund is being overseen for Commissioner Martens by Michelle Moore, DEC Region 2. The state is being assisted in working with the CAP and conducting outreach to the Greenpoint community by Enviro-Sciences Engineering/ARC Engineering & Construction, P.C.

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