

# **A.G. SCHNEIDERMAN & ACTING DEC COMMISSIONER SEGGOS ANNOUNCE FINAL GRANTS FROM GREENPOINT COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL FUND, BRINGING TOTAL TO OVER \$54 MILLION**

***Fund Created From \$19.5 M Paid By Exxonmobil In Settlement With State  
Over Greenpoint Oil Spill With Matching Contributions From Grantees,  
\$18.5M Invested This Year In 22 Environmental Improvement Projects In  
Greenpoint, Brooklyn***

***GCEF Has Brought Over \$54M To Enhancing Open Space, Greening  
Neighborhoods, Waterfront Restoration, Promoting Environmental  
Education And Stewardship, And Other Community Priorities***

***Schneiderman: We Are Proud To Partner With The Community To Invest  
In A Greener Future For Greenpoint***

NEW YORK - Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman and Department of Environmental Conservation Acting Commissioner Basil Seggos today announced the last round of grant awards by the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund (GCEF), bringing its total investment to \$54.5 million. GCEF is a competitive grant program created from \$19.5 million the state obtained from ExxonMobil in a 2011 settlement over the company's massive oil spill in Greenpoint, Brooklyn.

The Attorney General's office and the DEC are jointly overseeing the program's implementation and selected the projects to be funded. Today, the state is making GCEF's final awards: 5 grants totaling \$4.25 million, including 3 "large grants" (between \$100,000 and \$600,000) and 2 "legacy" grant (over \$600,000) to projects addressing the environmental improvement priorities of the community. The GCEF funding will be matched by \$12.7 million in total contributions from the grant recipients.

"The Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund was created to help reverse this vibrant community's historical legacy of environmental abuse and neglect," **Attorney General Schneiderman** said. "Through the GCEF, New York State and Greenpoint residents have worked together to ensure that the settlement monies are directed to high-quality, locally-led projects that serve the community's environmental improvement priorities. We are proud to partner with the community to grow these funds into an investment of nearly \$55 million in a greener, healthier future for Greenpoint"

"The ongoing environmental restoration of the Greenpoint community has been tremendous and successful in large part due to the environmental fund supported

projects," said **DEC Acting Commissioner Seggos**. "This transformation is continuing through these new projects that will bring residents together to enhance the community, restore the waterfront, and promote greater environmental education and stewardship efforts."

GCEF provided two rounds of grant funding, one in 2015 and one in 2014. With the conclusion of this year's grant round, the program's project funding is now completed.

The projects being awarded funding today– which range from helping to restore Greenpoint's historic Monsignor McGolrick Park to creating a combination "green roof" and community space along Newtown Creek to designing a "living shoreline" at the proposed site of the Greenpoint Monitor Museum – were the top vote-getters in recent community voting organized by the GCEF. Descriptions of these projects can be found [here](#).

Last month, the state awarded a total of \$992,000 in "small grants" (between \$5,000 and \$100,000) to 17 environmental improvement projects in Greenpoint. Descriptions of these projects can be found [here](#).

The total of \$5.2 million in grants made by GCEF in 2015 will be combined with \$13.3 million in matching funds provided by the grantees, bringing a total of \$18.5 million to Greenpoint's environmental priorities. Combined with last year's \$36 million in total grants and matching funds, GCEF has brought a total investment in improving Greenpoint's environment of \$54.5 million – nearly tripling the \$19.5 million obtained in the 2011 settlement.

With its project funding now completed, GCEF will focus on ensuring the projects' successful implementation.

**State Senator Daniel Squadron** said, "GCEF has been a tremendous asset to the Greenpoint community, and has highlighted the environmental needs and rich history of Greenpoint. I thank the Attorney General and the DEC, their team and partners, as well as the organizations who have worked to bring millions of dollars in important green resources, programs, and initiatives to our community, and I look forward to continuing to see these green initiatives grow."

**Assemblyman Joseph R. Lentol** said, "Congratulations to the Large and Legacy grant winners. Over the past few years, the GCEF process has brought the community together in more ways than one. I have witnessed an increase in civic participation and an overall desire to improve Greenpoint's environmental future. I am certain these Large and Legacy grant winners will improve Greenpoint's ecosystem for years to come. The grants that have previously been awarded have already realized results, so I have no doubt that Greenpoint's future is in good hands. We have now seen an investment, including matching funds, of over \$54 million, which speaks directly to Greenpoint residents' commitment to their community. I look forward to seeing the rest of the projects come to fruition."

**City Councilman Stephen Levin** said, “The latest round of GCEF grants has shown that this process has been a model for the disbursement of public funds -- transparent, participatory, and effective. Greenpointers have lived with significant environmental hazards for generations. In this instance, thanks to Attorney General Eric Schneiderman and Acting DEC Commissioner Seggos and their staffs, as well as all the community partners, Greenpointers are seeing some real and lasting community benefits.”

"This may be the final grant cycle, but it's the start of a new era in Greenpoint. This entire community has coalesced behind the idea of a greener future build on top of a polluted past. Riverkeeper is proud to stand with them, the Attorney General, and the Department of Environmental Conservation - as well as all of the other organizations, advocates, and elected officials who have spent a decade working on restoring Greenpoint's economy, environment, and potential," said **Paul Gally, President of Riverkeeper**.

### **How the projects were selected:**

After obtaining the \$19.5 million from ExxonMobil in 2011, GCEF held community meetings in Greenpoint that were attended by roughly 300 residents and which identified community priorities for environmental improvements. These priorities were used by GCEF to help shape Request for Proposals soliciting project funding proposals from the community.

On April 28<sup>th</sup> of this year, GCEF put out a “Request for Proposals” soliciting grant proposals. The RFP yielded 26 proposals for small grants, 12 proposals for large grants and 4 proposals for legacy grants. These 42 proposals addressing Greenpoint’s environmental improvement priorities requested a total of \$14 million.

Small grant proposals were reviewed and scored by the program’s co-administrator – the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) – with respect to criteria presented in the RFP (i.e., environmental results, workplan, budget, Greenpoint support, and communication and results dissemination). The resulting scores served as the basis for the state’s selection of the 17 small grant awards made in November.

Large and legacy grant were reviewed and scored by a panel of independent experts, also using the criteria presented in the RFP. The panel was assembled by 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 9 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

9 proposed projects and cast ballots in support of up to 4. With 640 residents voting, the 5 projects selected to receive GCEF grants are the ones that received the most votes.

A partnership of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Greenpoint-based North Brooklyn Development Corporation, selected through a competitive process, is administering the GCEF for the state. The administrator has day-to-day responsibility for implementing the program, including application review and grant management, fiscal and fiduciary management, community engagement and collaboration, and program tracking, recordkeeping, and reporting.

The RFP, the applicant assistance program, and the small grant application evaluation process were all developed in collaboration with the Greenpoint Community Advisory Panel (CAP), an advisory group comprised of Greenpoint residents, representatives of local organizations and elected officials that provides direct, on-going input to the state. Since the fund's inception, the CAP has played an integral role in guiding the program's development and implementation.

More information on the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund can be found at [www.gcefund.org](http://www.gcefund.org).

“From the beginning, the GCEF has been committed to partnering with our community in the design and execution of a program that understands the residents of this community are also experts when it comes to our own legacy of environmental abuse. The result has been a truly home grown effort – projects chosen by Greenpoint residents that not only address the community's environmental priorities but also partner with local community organizations in finding solutions. I am proud to have participated in this process,” said **Christine Holowacz, Greenpoint resident and member of GCEF Community Advisory Panel**.

**Ingrid Bromberg Kennedy, Greenpoint resident and member of GCEF Community Advisory Panel** said, “I have started to see the impact of the GCEF grants in my neighborhood already. With funding from the program, the Audubon Society has created a garden in McGolrick Park to attract native birds back to our Park and tree beds along Nassau Avenue have been enlarged to help the trees grow larger. I am very excited for the parks stewardship program to get underway – it should be a great support to our all-volunteer McGolrick Park Neighborhood Alliance. GCEF has made a real and important contribution to my neighborhood and Greenpoint.”

**Katie Denny Horowitz, Greenpoint resident and member of GCEF Community Advisory Panel** said “As a member of the Community Advisory Panel, I commend New York State for its leadership throughout this multi-year granting process, through which a community - previously struggling to be heard - was encouraged to lend a strong voice. Together we developed a transparent, inclusive process to distribute nearly \$20 million in grants and \$55 million in total funding to address deep-seated vulnerabilities created by Greenpoint's toxic history. With the final round of grants now complete, dozens of innovative projects are underway or getting started, each leveraging additional funding and attracting new stakeholders from across the city, ultimately

creating a critical mass of environmental interventions that will impact Greenpoint for generations to come.”

The GCEF is being overseen for Attorney General Schneiderman by Environmental Policy Advisor Peter C. Washburn and for Acting Commissioner Seggos by DEC Regional Director for New York City, Venetia Lannon. The state is being assisted in engaging the Greenpoint community by GCEF Outreach Consultant Laura Treciokas.

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