

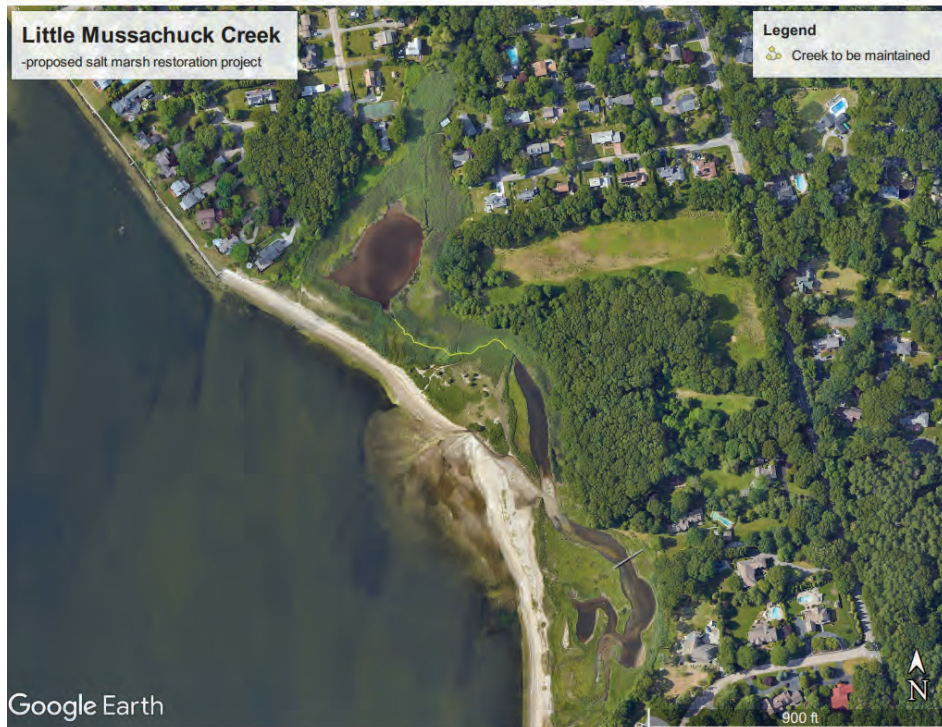
Rhode Island Coastal and Estuary Habitat Restoration Fund

Full Proposal Form 2023/2024

****for planning projects please use Full Proposal Form for Planning Projects**

I. PROJECT SUMMARY

1. **Project Title:** Adaptive Management and Maintenance of Little Mussachuck Creek Salt Marsh Restoration Project
2. **Project Location and coordinates (include map):** Little Mussachuck Creek, Barrington, RI



3. **Project type (Design, Construction or Other):** Other:
4. **If other, please specify:** Management, Maintenance and Monitoring
5. **Habitat type (River System, Salt Marsh, Seagrass, Shellfish Bed, other):** Salt Marsh
6. **If other, please specify:**
7. **Restoration technique (e.g. re-vegetation, tidal restoration, etc.):** Tidal hydrology restoration of the marsh platform using creeks and runnels
8. **Total acreage or miles(river systems) of habitat to be restored, or project area planning unit size:** 5 acres
9. **Project benefits:** Restoration of tidal hydrology of the marsh platform to enable revegetation, reduce subsidence, and restore marsh function

10. Project partners (*organizations providing financial or other support to the project*): Save The Bay, Town of Barrington

11. Is this is an ongoing project that has previously received funds from the CRMC Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Fund? No If yes, year(s) funding was awarded:

II. PROJECT MANAGER CONTACT INFORMATION

1. **Name:** Cindy Elder

2. **Organization:** Barrington Land Conservation Trust

3. **Address:** P.O. Box 324

4. **City:** Barrington

5. **State:** RI

6. **Zip:** 02806

7. **Phone:** 508-733-2443

8. **Email:** cindyelder@blct.org

9. **Property Owner(s):** Barrington Land Conservation Trust

Applicant must document ownership of project site or permission to perform all proposed restoration, maintenance, and monitoring activities (*include appropriate documentation*).

III. BUDGET SUMMARY

(List individuals or organizations providing financial or in-kind support to the project under Project Partners)

Amount Requested from Trust Fund		\$18,750
Matching Funds	Project Partner(s)	Amount of Match
In-kind volunteer support	Barrington Land Conservation Trust	\$2,544
In-kind staff support	RIDEM Mosquito Abatement Coordinator	\$700
In-kind volunteer support and in-kind overhead	Save The Bay	\$3,935
TOTAL PROJECT COST		\$25,929

IV. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE (five pages maximum)

1. Justification and Purpose

Describe the human impacts and previous restoration activities at the proposed project site. If multiple sites, please describe the impacts and previous restoration activities at each). Briefly describe the proposed project, its restoration goals, long-term and short-term outcomes.

Little Mussachuck Creek marsh is a highly dynamic tidal creek, salt marsh, and brackish marsh on the east side of the Providence River in Barrington. The western edge of the marsh is bounded by a narrow coastal barrier spit, separating the marsh from Narragansett Bay. The barrier/wetland complex abuts a glacial headland to the east and a brackish and freshwater wetland to the north fed by a small stream. The northern portion of the salt marsh was connected to Narragansett Bay by a tidal inlet, which has since been closed off by longshore deposition in the early 1990s. Once the inlet closed, brackish water became impounded on the marsh platform, the salt marsh vegetation died off, and the marsh platform subsided and converted to open water. The brackish conditions led to the colonization by monotypic stands of the invasive plant *Phragmites australis*, which out-competes native salt marsh vegetation in lower salinities. In 1998, the Barrington Land Conservation Trust (BLCT), in partnership with Save The Bay (STB), conducted a salt marsh restoration project to restore the hydrology of the marsh by connecting the northern marsh with Little Mussachuck Creek to the south. A new tidal creek was excavated by hand to connect the pond to the northern terminus of the Mussachuck Creek. The creek was designed to allow fresh water to drain out of the pond and to convey tidal inputs into the marsh and the pond during spring high tides. In 2004, Save The Bay, the Barrington Land Trust, and a corps of volunteers increased the width of the creek dug in 1998 and cleared *Phragmites* out of the lower section of the creek.

From 2004 to 2012, the creek was self-maintaining and remained open. Between 2012 and 2016, the creek became filled with *Phragmites*, blocking freshwater flow and allowing the *Phragmites* to expand in coverage. During this period, the outlet of Little Mussachuck Creek had moved northward over 380 feet. As the outlet moved northward, the tidal drainage at low tide was reduced due to sedimentation in the creek. The creek's muted tidal drainage could have contributed to the hand-dug creek filling in with *Phragmites*. Between 2017 and 2018, the outlet breached a narrow section of the barrier beach, causing further sedimentation of the creek and a reduction in drainage of the creek and salt marsh at low tide. The flood tide delta has begun to vegetate with salt marsh grasses. Stagnant conditions were documented in the summer of 2023 in the southern part of Little Mussachuck Creek, which has restricted drainage.

The proposed restoration project is to maintain the tidal creek that connects the restricted northern brackish marsh with Little Mussachuck Creek, which has filled in with *Phragmites*. The short-term goal of this restoration project is to improve marsh health, reduce the height and vigor of the invasive plant, *Phragmites australis*, and prevent further marsh platform subsidence by restoring connectivity between the restricted brackish marsh and Little Mussachuck Creek and draining impounded brackish water off the marsh platform. Draining the shallow impounded water will also reduce mosquito breeding habitat. The long-term goal is to enhance saltmarsh sparrow nesting habitat and to provide suitable conditions for marsh migration in areas currently dominated by *Phragmites* or impounded water.

2. Project Activities, Schedule and Work Plan

Describe the planned on-the-ground project activities, and explain how each activity will help to restore ecosystem functions. List specific project activities and when they will occur (month and year). Indicate when annual and final project reports will be submitted.

BLCT and STB will develop state and federal permits to maintain the hand-dug creek using RIDEM's low-ground pressure excavator and to cut and mulch *Phragmites*. Project implementation and pre and post-restoration monitoring will be conducted by Save The Bay. Once the creek is re-established, the partners will develop a maintenance plan and BLCT's stewardship volunteers will conduct regular maintenance of the creek and remove wrack and debris. Additional assessment of Little Mussachuck's outlet will be conducted in coordination with CRMC's Coastal Geologist and the abutting property owner to determine if maintenance of the outlet is warranted. Since the site is dynamic, any excavation at the outlet could fill in quickly and require regular maintenance.

Timeline:

Summer 2024: Finalize restoration plan and review with CRMC's Coastal Geologist.

Late Summer-Fall 2024: Conduct pre-restoration monitoring.

Fall 2024: Prepare and submit the state and federal permit applications.

Spring or Fall 2025: Implement creek maintenance and *Phragmites* mulching once permits are received.

Late summer 2026: Conduct first year of post-restoration monitoring.

Winter – Spring 2026: Conduct regular maintenance of creeks and submit final CEHRTF report.

Late summer 2027: Conduct 2nd year of post-restoration monitoring.

3. Minimization of Adverse Impacts

What are the potential impacts resulting from project activities (e.g. the disturbance of sensitive species by construction activities), and how will these impacts be minimized (e.g. scheduling construction to avoid disturbance of sensitive species).

Work in the salt marsh will occur outside the salt marsh bird nesting season to minimize disturbance to salt marsh species such as the saltmarsh sparrow and the willet that nest in the high marsh. STB will conduct vegetation and water level monitoring at the end of the growing season between August and September, and excavation and maintenance of the creeks and runnels will occur between September and May.

4. Public Support

Demonstrate public support for the project by providing evidence of communication with adjacent landowners, community members and other stakeholders. Describe planned or completed community / stakeholder education and outreach efforts.

The BLCT's Executive Director, Chair of the Stewardship Committee, and the Sanctuary Steward will recruit members of the BLCT and community volunteers to participate in the restoration implementation and long-term stewardship of the marsh. STB will also help recruit volunteers from their volunteer network to assist with volunteering. STB is also developing a salt marsh steward program to train interested volunteers in assessing salt marshes post-storm events, clearing debris runnels, and assisting with the maintenance of runnels.

5. Economic and Educational Benefits

How will the proposed project provide direct economic and/or educational benefits to a community and/or the state?

The economic benefits of restoring salt marsh hydrology include improved habitat for nekton that live in salt marshes and are forage fish for recreationally and commercially valuable species such as striped bass and bluefish. Other economic benefits include improved recreational opportunities for the public, such as fishing and birdwatching. Healthy marshes can also provide some level of protection for infrastructure

during coastal storms. Restoration of tidal hydrology will reduce mosquito breeding habitat and future mosquito breeding abatement costs.

There are many educational opportunities associated with this restoration project. The BLCT will highlight the restoration project through our monthly enews, printed annual report, press release to the *Barrington Times*, guided tours of the restoration area, volunteer stewardship and learning experiences with our Student Stewardship Team and Tuesday Trails Team, and our Land Trust Learning Series at the Barrington Public Library. STB will also highlight this restoration project through their monthly Currents email, Tides Magazine, and social media.

The BLCT will share information about the restoration project with other land trusts through the RI Land Trust Council. STB will continue to transfer lessons learned from this salt marsh restoration project and other salt marsh restoration projects throughout the region that have restored tidal hydrology of the marsh platform using shallow drainage features with restoration practitioners throughout the region through interagency SMART (Salt Marsh Adaptation and Resilience Team).

6. Climate Change and Coastal Resiliency

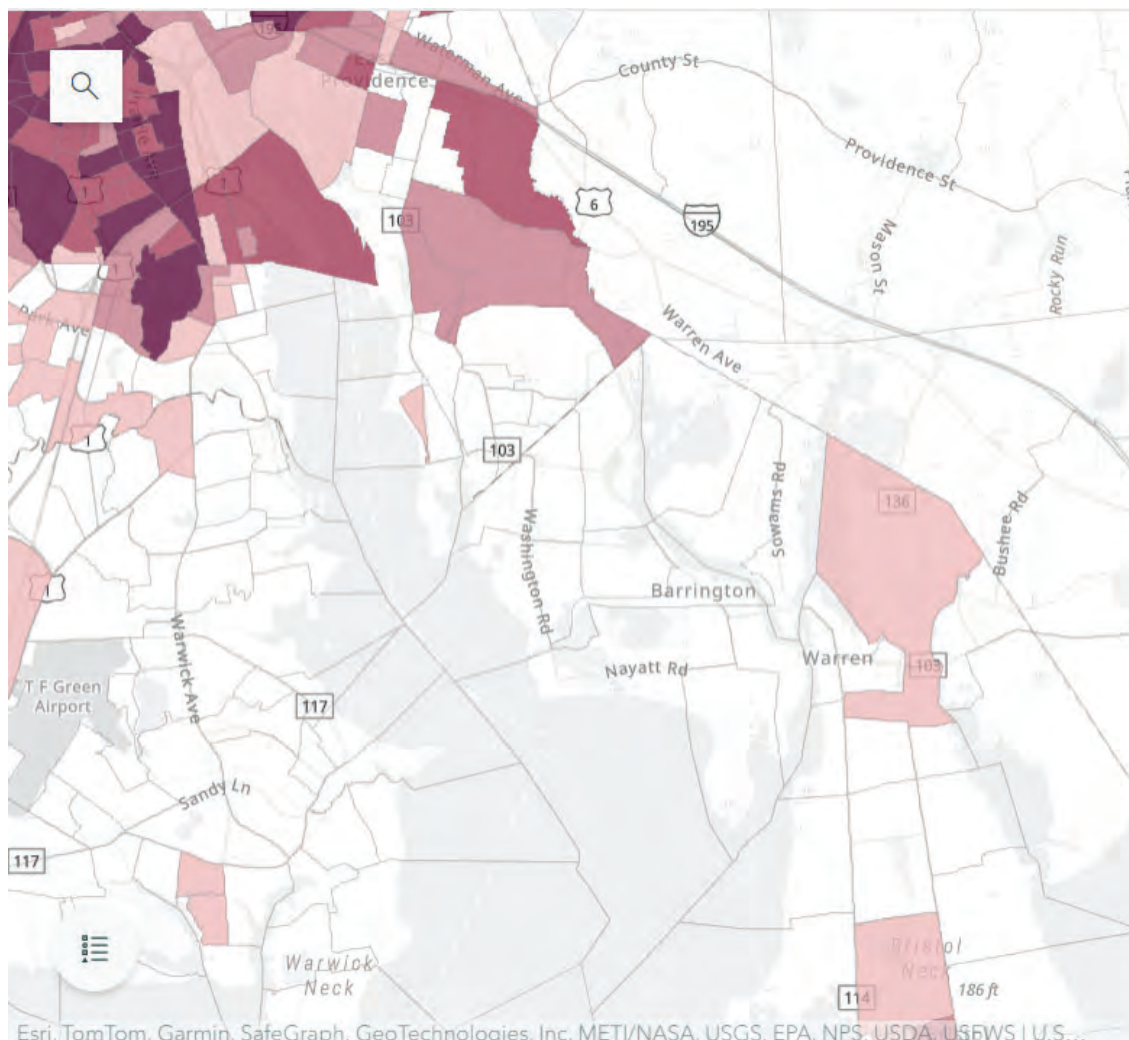
How have the present and future impacts of climate change been considered during the project planning and design phases? What impact will the project have on resilience of coastal or estuarine habitat to climate change?

Improving the health and function of salt marshes by providing shallow drainage of expanding impounded water areas will allow plants to recolonize the marsh, stabilize the peat and unconsolidated sediments, and increase the ability of the salt marsh to keep pace with accelerated sea level rise. Little Mussachuck Creek has area for marsh migration into the wetlands associated with the unnamed freshwater stream that flows into the marsh. Addressing the impounded water in the salt marsh and along the upper edge of the marsh will reduce the height and vigor of *Phragmites australis* and will help facilitate marsh migration as sea level rise accelerates. The loss of vegetated marsh threatens the ecological health of salt marshes and the functions and values they provide for fish and wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, nutrient cycling, and storm buffering.

7. Environmental Justice

Will the proposed project take place within or otherwise benefit environmental justice “priority areas” as defined by the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program’s analysis of [Environmental Justice in the Narragansett Bay Region](#)? Does the proposed project incorporate Environmental Justice concerns as defined by the US EPA’s Guidance on [Environmental Justice and Equitable Development](#)?

Neither the marsh nor the watershed that drains into the marsh is within an environmental justice priority area. The BLCT provides educational programming for residents throughout the region, including neighboring East Providence and Warren, which are within Environmental Justice priority areas. The Barrington Land Conservation Trust seeks to work with members of the community in the planning and implementation phases of the project.



8. Planning Consistency and Restoration Priority

Is the proposed project consistent with the goals of a local, state or regional planning initiative? Please specify initiative and explain (see [CRMC website](#) for guidance). Does the proposed project involve a state, regional or federal priority habitat restoration need or special consideration? Please specify and explain (see [CRMC website](#) for guidance).

Rhode Island's Coastal Wetland Restoration Strategy (2018) describes the need for salt marsh restoration due to past stressors and accelerated sea level rise. It highlights restoration techniques including drainage enhancement through runnels and tidal hydrology restoration. The State's Wildlife Action Plan (2015) finds salt marshes as highly vulnerable to climate change, and the saltmarsh sparrow is listed as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

USFWS's Northeast region has identified the conservation of the saltmarsh sparrow and their habitat as a regional priority, including the most recent strategic planning document for the Coastal Program (Northeast Region Strategic Plan, 2017-2021). This plan specifically includes the intent to 'Facilitate projects to restore and enhance salt marsh, particularly high marsh habitat, to improve habitat quality for Saltmarsh Sparrow and other priority species. The Atlantic Coast Joint Venture (ACJV) recently published a [Salt Marsh Bird Conservation Plan](#) (2019) in which they identify saltmarsh sparrow among the highest priority species for conservation. The plan identifies as a priority the implementation of promising management actions, including 1) the creation of runnels to improve drainage of ponded areas, 2) improving drainage by remediating ditches, trunks, and dikes to restore more natural hydrology, and 3) the creation of micro-

topography/mounds to provide nesting areas less prone to flooding. The ACJV Conservation Plan identifies evaluating these restoration techniques as a priority science needed to advance conservation for this species.

9. Species of Concern

Will the project result in benefits to wildlife species listed as federally or state endangered, threatened, or species of concern within Rhode Island? Please specify which species will benefit and how. For a list of species, see the Rhode Island National Heritage Program's listing of animals at: http://www.rinhs.org/wp-content/uploads/ri_rare_animals_2006.pdf or a listing of plants at: http://www.rinhs.org/wp-content/uploads/ri_rare_plants_2007.pdf

Tidal marsh specialists such as the saltmarsh sparrow, *Ammodramus caudacutus*, and other bird species that nest on the marsh, such as the willet, *Tringa semipalmata*, rely on the high marsh for nesting areas (i.e., *Spartina patens*, *Juncus gerardii*). With increased inundation of the marsh platform and loss of high marsh species, the salt marsh sparrow population has significantly declined over an 18-year period, according to the SHARP (Salt Marsh Habitat and Avian Research Program). The Saltmarsh Sparrow is listed as globally Vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and is being considered for listing as federally endangered by the USFWS. Without healthy plants on the marsh platform to trap sediment and increase marsh surface elevation through the accumulation of belowground biomass, the marsh's surface subsides and converts to shallow standing water. Since the impounded water areas become warm and hypersaline during summer, they do not support fish species that feed on mosquito larvae. The loss of vegetated marsh poses a profound threat to the ecological health of salt marshes and the functions and values that they provide for fish and wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, nutrient cycling, and storm buffering.

10. Permitting

List any federal, state or local permits required to complete the project and the permit application status for each.

Save The Bay will prepare the following permits on behalf of the Barrington Land Conservation Trust in consultation with RIDEM's Mosquito Abatement Coordinator:

- Coastal Resources Management Council Assent
- Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Water Quality Certificate
- General Permit from the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). During the permitting process through the ACOE, federal agencies, including EPA, USFWS, and NOAA, are consulted to ensure that the tidal hydrology restoration does not affect endangered species or essential fish habitat.

11. Capacity of Lead Organization (attach additional materials if necessary)

Demonstrate the capacity of the lead and/or partner organizations to successfully complete the proposed project by providing any or all of the following: a) a description of the organization(s) b) resume(s) or summary of qualifications of involved personnel c) evidence of successfully completed habitat restoration or conservation projects.

The Barrington Land Conservation Trust combines the resources of approximately 100 active volunteers, the oversight of BLCT's Chair of Stewardship Victor Lerish, and the organizational abilities of Executive Director Cindy Elder. Cindy was hired as BLCT's first executive director in 2022. She has a 30-year history of nonprofit leadership roles and is well-versed in managing a large volunteer force.

Save The Bay staff, Wenley Ferguson, Director of Habitat Restoration, Ben Gaspar, and Ian O'Hara, Restoration Ecologists, will conduct the restoration activities in coordination with the Barrington Land

Conservation Trust. Wenley has conducted tidal hydrology restoration projects since 1999 and has overseen over twenty tidal hydrology restoration projects using runnels and selective ditch maintenance since 2013. She has experience designing projects, developing permit applications, overseeing implementation, and conducting pre- and post-restoration monitoring. Wenley has worked at STB since 1990 and on watershed-wide habitat restoration projects since 1996. Ben has worked at Save The Bay for over two years and has been a Field Technician for USFWS for nine years. Ben has experience implementing and monitoring salt restoration projects. Ben and Wenley have collaborated on tidal hydrology restoration projects over the past ten years while Ben was at USFWS. Ian O'Hara will assist with the restoration activities and mapping of stormwater inputs in the watershed.

V. SUSTAINABILITY (one page maximum)

1. Maintenance

What is the estimated "lifespan" of each planned restoration activity? What are the anticipated short-term and long-term (beyond the funding period) operation and maintenance requirements of the project? Specify who will be responsible for funding and carrying out each O & M activity. Indicate when and with what frequency activities will occur.

Tidal hydrology restoration through the use of runnels and selective ditch maintenance requires ongoing maintenance of the drainage features. The Barrington Land Conservation Trust's Chair of Stewardship and Executive Director will work with Save The Bay to train Land Trust volunteers to assess how the drainage features are functioning and to maintain them if they are clogged by sediment, wrack, or vegetation. STB will request 10-year permits from the permitting agencies since these projects require multiple years of phased runnel installation and maintenance.

2. External Factors

Identify existing external (off-site) factors that could reduce the chances of achieving the project goals (e.g. stormwater inputs to the site from the surrounding drainage area). Explain how these external factors will be addressed. Describe any additional measures taken to help ensure long-term success of the project (e.g. installation of stormwater management practices or securing of conservation easements). What are the likely future effects of climate change and future sea level rise on the proposed project and how will these be addressed?

The salt marsh is bordered by protected land to the east and residential development along the tributary that flows into the marsh to the northeast. Stormwater runoff from the surrounding watershed could add excess nutrients and freshwater to the marsh, creating conditions more suitable for *Phragmites australis*. STB has worked with the Town of Barrington on stormwater management in other coastal watersheds and will identify and assess potential stormwater infiltration opportunities in the Little Mussachuck Creek watershed that could be implemented to reduce the volume of untreated runoff from discharging directly into the marsh.

The barrier spit on the western side of the marsh has experienced significant erosion over the past 25 years since the first restoration project occurred in 1998. As the barrier spit moves inland, the outlet to the creek has shifted northward. Sand from the spit has blocked the outlet and muted the tidal drainage. As the barrier spit continues to move inland, the drainage of the marsh will have to be evaluated after coastal storms to ensure adequate drainage of the marsh platform.

VI. EVALUATING PROJECT SUCCESS (one page maximum)

1. Performance Measures

How will the success of the project be measured in relation to the restoration goals set forth in this proposal? List performance measures and how they will be recorded. Include a detailed monitoring plan; if applicable (see below).

The project's success will be measured by monitoring the vegetation response and the change in water level on the marsh surface, as described in the monitoring plan below. Additional metrics will include number of land trust members and community volunteers involved in the project implementation and maintenance and press or social media about the restoration efforts. The time it will take for the tidal restoration efforts to restore functional salt marsh habitat will depend upon the existing conditions of the marsh.

2. Monitoring Plan

Describe any planned or completed pre- and post-project monitoring activities. For each monitoring activity list the frequency and month/year of start and end date and the parameters measured. List the entity or entities responsible for funding and carrying out each monitoring activity, and describe how results will be made available to CRMC and the public. If using an established monitoring protocol, please provide references (see CRMC website for information on established monitoring protocols).

Monitoring transects will be established at Little Mussachuck Creek salt marsh restoration to document changes to vegetation communities and water levels over time. Monitoring will be conducted pre- and post-restoration. STB uses a line point intercept method to monitor vegetation and conducts water level monitoring along each point of the transect as well. STB will conduct tidal marsh bird monitoring to determine if saltmarsh sparrows are present during the breeding season pre-restoration and post-restoration. In coordination with the Land Trust, STB will conduct three years of pre and post-restoration monitoring during this project. Additionally, photo stations will be established at the salt marsh and BLCT's Sanctuary Steward will take photos at least annually at the photo stations to assess vegetation response and water level. The presence and absence of mosquito larvae will be assessed pre- and post-restoration. Adaptive management techniques will be implemented during subsequent years in direct response to the monitoring data.

References:

Adamowicz, S.C., G. Wilson, D.M. Burdick, W. Ferguson, and R. Hopping. 2020. Farmers in the marsh: Lessons from history and case studies for the future. *Wetland Science & Practice* 183–195.

Besterman, A., R. Jakuba, W. Ferguson, D. Brennan, Costa, J., L. Deegan. 2021. Buying Time with Runnels: a Climate Adaptation Tool for Salt Marshes. *Estuaries and Coasts*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12237-021-01028-8>

Hartley, M.J. and A.J. Weldon, eds. 2020. Atlantic Coast Joint Venture's Saltmarsh Sparrow Conservation Plan.

Watson, E., W. Ferguson, L. Champlin, J. White, N. Ernst, H. Sylla, B. Wilburn, C. Wigand. 2022. Runnels Mitigate Marsh Drowning in Micro-Tidal Marsh. *Frontiers in Environmental Science*. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fenvs.2022.987246/full>

PROJECT BUDGET TEMPLATE

BUDGET CATEGORY	CRMC REQUEST	MATCH	MATCH PENDING OR SECURED? (select one)	SOURCE OF MATCH	TOTAL
Project Management: Barrington Land Conservation Trust	\$700				\$700
Project Design, Permitting, Implementation and Monitoring: Save The Bay staff time, mileage, and overhead rate of 10%	\$14,100				\$14,100
Project Implementation: Low-ground pressure excavator use	\$3,000				\$3,000
Project Implementation: Excavator transportation	\$950				\$950
Project Design/Implementation: RIDEM Mosquito Abatement Coordinator		\$700		RIDEM Mosquito Abatement Program	\$700
Project Implementation and Maintenance: Barrington Land Conservation Trust volunteers		\$2,544		Barrington Land Conservation Trust volunteers	\$2,544
Project Implementation and Monitoring: Save The Bay interns		\$1,240		Save The Bay Interns	\$1,240
Save The Bay overhead		\$2,695		21% overhead rate of Save The Bay costs	\$2,678
TOTAL	\$18,750	\$7,179		TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$25,929

VII. BUDGET NARRATIVE (one page maximum)

Please provide a description and justification for each line item included in the project budget form (e.g. for personnel costs, provide hourly and fringe rates, for travel specify rate and estimated number of miles). Please specify any match requirements for each source of funding. Please include costs associated with required annual and final reports to CRMC. Be sure to detail how CRMC funds will be used.

The Barrington Land Conservation Trust's Executive Director will spend 20 hours on project coordination, volunteer recruitment, and report writing at \$35 per hour.

Save The Bay Staff, Mileage & Overhead: Wenley Ferguson, STB's Director of Restoration, will spend 49 hours at \$53.21/hour; Ben Gaspar, Restoration Ecologist, will spend 168 hours at 48.00/hour on the implementation and monitoring phase of the project; Ian O'Hara, Restoration Ecologist will spend 40 hours at \$43.19 per hour assisting with restoration implementation and adaptive management. Mileage to Little Mussachuck Creek will be 650 miles at \$0.665/mile for a total of \$432. Save The Bay's overhead rate is 31%. The overhead rate of 10% has been applied to staff time and mileage as a project expense (\$1,283), and the remaining 21% has been applied to match (\$2,695). Total Save The Bay expenses will be \$14,100.

RIDEM Mosquito Abatement Program's excavator: RIDEM's low-ground pressure excavator will be rented for three days at \$1,000 per day.

Excavator Transportation: A hired contractor will provide a truck and trailer to transport the excavator to and from URI's East Farm, where RIDEM's Mosquito Abatement Program is located, to Barrington for \$950.

RIDEM Mosquito Abatement Coordinator (10 hours): Al Gettman, RIDEM's Mosquito Abatement Coordinator, will dedicate 10 hours at \$70/hour for mosquito breeding assessment, design review, and construction coordination associated with the use of the low ground pressure excavator.

Barrington Land Conservation Trust Sanctuary Steward and volunteers will spend 80 hours on tidal hydrology restoration, maintenance, and photo station monitoring valued at the federal volunteer rate of \$31.80 for a total of \$2,544.

Save The Bay interns will spend 38 hours on restoration implementation and monitoring, valued at the federal volunteer rate of \$31.80 for a total of \$1,240.

IX. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Please include the following with your application:

☒ Site and Locus Maps

☒ Ground-level photographs of existing site conditions

☒ Aerial photographs, if available

☐ Preliminary design drawings, maps or engineering plans, if available

☐ Pertinent physical, ecological, biological, and cultural / historical survey data

☒ Letters of support

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

AUTHORIZED AGENT OF LEAD ORGANIZATION

Cindy Elder

3.30.24

Signature

Date

Return your completed proposal by 4:00 p.m. on **April 1, 2024** to:

Caitlin Chaffee
NBNERR
RI Dept. of Environmental Management
235 Promenade Street
Providence, RI 02908

caitlin.chaffee@dem.ri.gov

Applicants are required to submit one (1) signed hard copy of the proposal form and one (1) electronic copy in Adobe PDF format. **Please submit electronic copy as a **SINGLE PDF FILE** containing all application materials.**

Contact Caitlin Chaffee at **401-222-4700 xt. 277-4417** with any questions.





Town of Barrington

TOWN MANAGER

Barrington Town Hall | 283 County Road | Barrington, RI 02806

To: Caitlin Chafee, CRMC Rhode Island Coastal and Estuary Habitat Restoration Fund
From: Philip Hervey, Town Manager, Town of Barrington
Re: Adaptive Management and Maintenance of Little Mussachuck Creek Salt Marsh Restoration Project
Date: March 25, 2024

We are writing in support of the application from the Barrington Land Conservation Trust and their partner, Save the Bay, for the proposed restoration of fragile salt marsh at Little Mussachuck Creek. We are very confident in this partnership to develop and implement a solution that will improve the salt marsh health, reduce the proliferation of *phragmites* and prevent further salt marsh degradation.

The Land Trust has been an active partner with the Town of Barrington on conservation for many years. Their volunteers steward three major town preserves in addition to caring for 300 acres of land under its ownership. The Land Trust engages the community in active stewardship and learning experiences, with adult and student stewardship teams and a Learning Series that features experts in a variety of environmental topics, including the challenges facing our salt marshes. The Town is also collaborating with the Land Trust in the installation of a Resilience Garden at Barrington Government Center, funded by the Eastern RI Conservation District.

Save the Bay has a long history of providing solutions to Barrington's coastal areas. Save the Bay was instrumental in efforts to begin the restoration of Allin's Cove in the 1990s. Save the Bay's Wenley Ferguson has been focused on the challenges at Little Mussachuck Creek over the last two decades and is the most knowledgeable person to tackle this task.

We encourage you to fund Barrington Community Land Trust's request for grant support, as this investment will result in improvements to the Little Mussachuck area for years to come.

Sincerely,

Philip Hervey
Town Manager





Audubon Society of Rhode Island

To: Caitlin Chafee, CRMC Rhode Island Coastal and Estuary Habitat Restoration Fund

From: Jeffrey C. Hall, Executive Director, Audubon Society of Rhode Island

Re: Adaptive Management and Maintenance of
Little Mussachuck Creek Salt Marsh Restoration Project

Date: March 18, 2024

We are writing to support the application for a restoration project at Little Mussachuck Creek being submitted by the Barrington Land Conservation Trust and its partner Save the Bay. This partnership can develop and implement a solution that will improve the salt marsh's health, reduce the proliferation of phragmites, and prevent further degradation.

The Barrington Land Conservation Trust is a long-time partner of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island. We work closely with them on properties where we maintain an easement, like the PIC-WIL Nature Preserve, which abuts Little Mussachuck Creek. They have responded to our recommendations and have worked collaboratively to make their conservation properties a safe and welcoming habitat for breeding and migratory birds. On the beach at Little Mussachuck Creek, the Land Trust recently installed 60 gourd birdhouses for Purple Martins, which were fully occupied last season.

Save the Bay is focused on the restoration and preservation of our coastal resources. Their expertise and resources make them an invaluable partner in this project. We have the utmost confidence in Save the Bay's ability to bring this project successfully to fruition.

I wholeheartedly encourage the funding of the Barrington Community Land Trust's request to support the restoration efforts at Little Mussachuck Creek. We look forward to seeing the habitat change as the project unfolds.

Thank you for considering this important project.

Connecting People With Nature

12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, Rhode Island 02917 • (401) 949-5454 • www.asri.org



10 Davol Square, Suite 100
Providence, RI 02903
401-212-0832

March 20, 2024

To: Caitlin Chafee, CRMC Rhode Island Coastal and Estuary Habitat Restoration Fund
From: Kate Sayles, Executive Director, Rhode Island Land Trust Council

Re: Adaptive Management and Maintenance of Little Mussachuck Creek Salt Marsh Restoration Project

Dear Caitlin,

The Rhode Island Land Trust Council (the Council) is pleased to offer our support for the application from the Barrington Land Conservation Trust and their partner, Save the Bay, for an important restoration project at Little Mussachuck Creek. We have faith in this partnership to develop and implement a solution that will improve the salt marsh health, reduce the proliferation of *Phragmites* and prevent further degradation of the salt marsh.

The Rhode Island Land Trust Council (Council) is a coalition of over 50 land trusts – mostly all-volunteer, community-based organizations that protect and steward Rhode Island's open spaces, farms, forestland, historic sites, and natural areas for the benefit of all Rhode Islanders. The lands that we conserve protect wildlife habitat and drinking water supplies, and provide critical outdoor spaces for public recreation. The Barrington Land Conservation Trust is an active member of the Council and demonstrates the ability of volunteer-powered organizations to accomplish great things on a limited budget. They manage more than 300 acres of land, maintain a volunteer force of approximately 120 adults and youth, and work to educate the public about the challenges facing our natural resources.

Their partner, Save the Bay, brings a depth of knowledge to the project based on decades of experience tackling the challenges of our coastal areas. Their expertise and resources make them an invaluable partner in this project. We have the utmost confidence in Save the Bay's ability to bring this project successfully to fruition.

We encourage you to fund Barrington Community Land Trust's request for support in restoration efforts at Little Mussachuck Creek, and would be happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kate Sayles", written over a light blue rectangular background.

Kate Sayles, Director