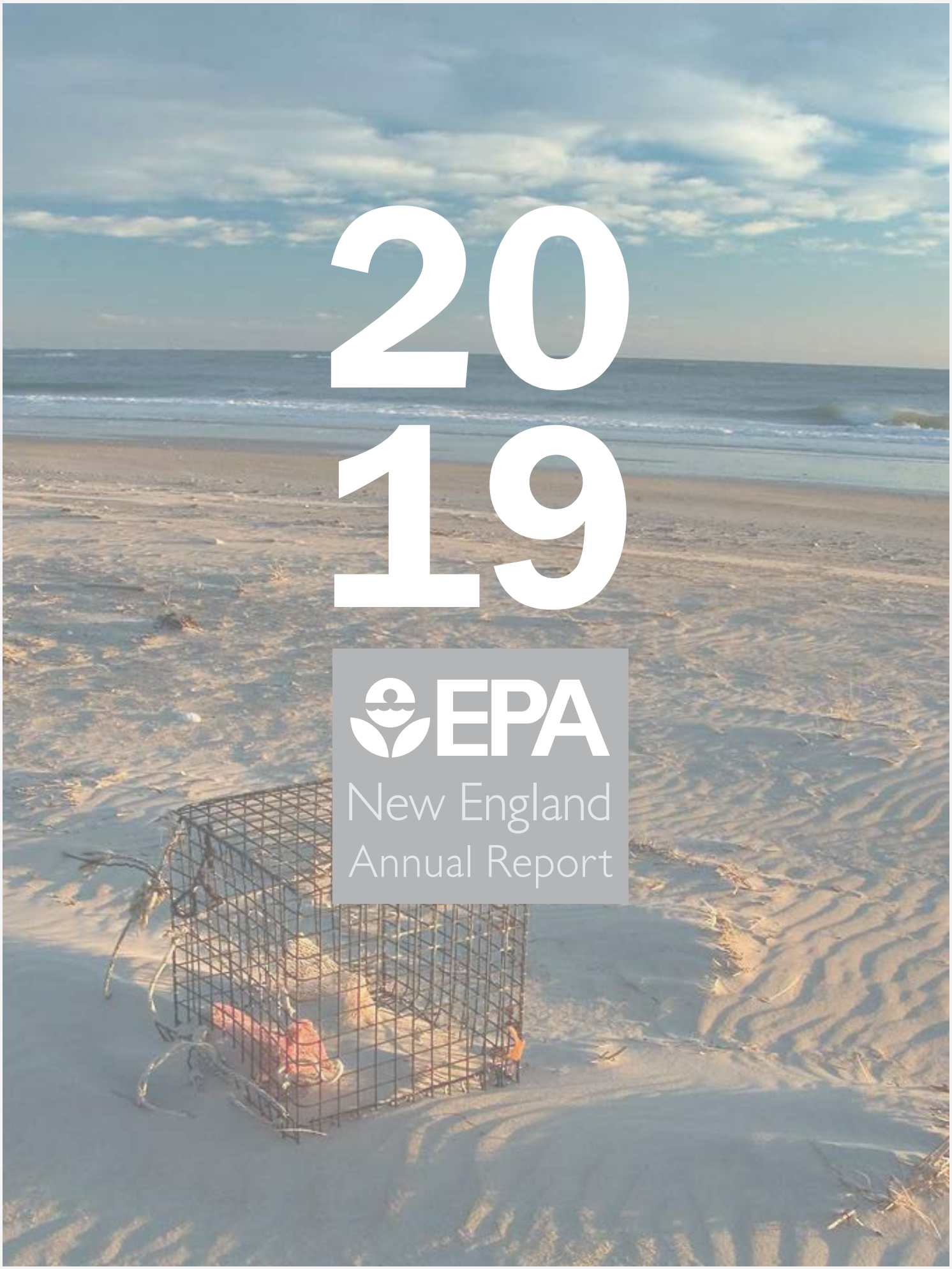
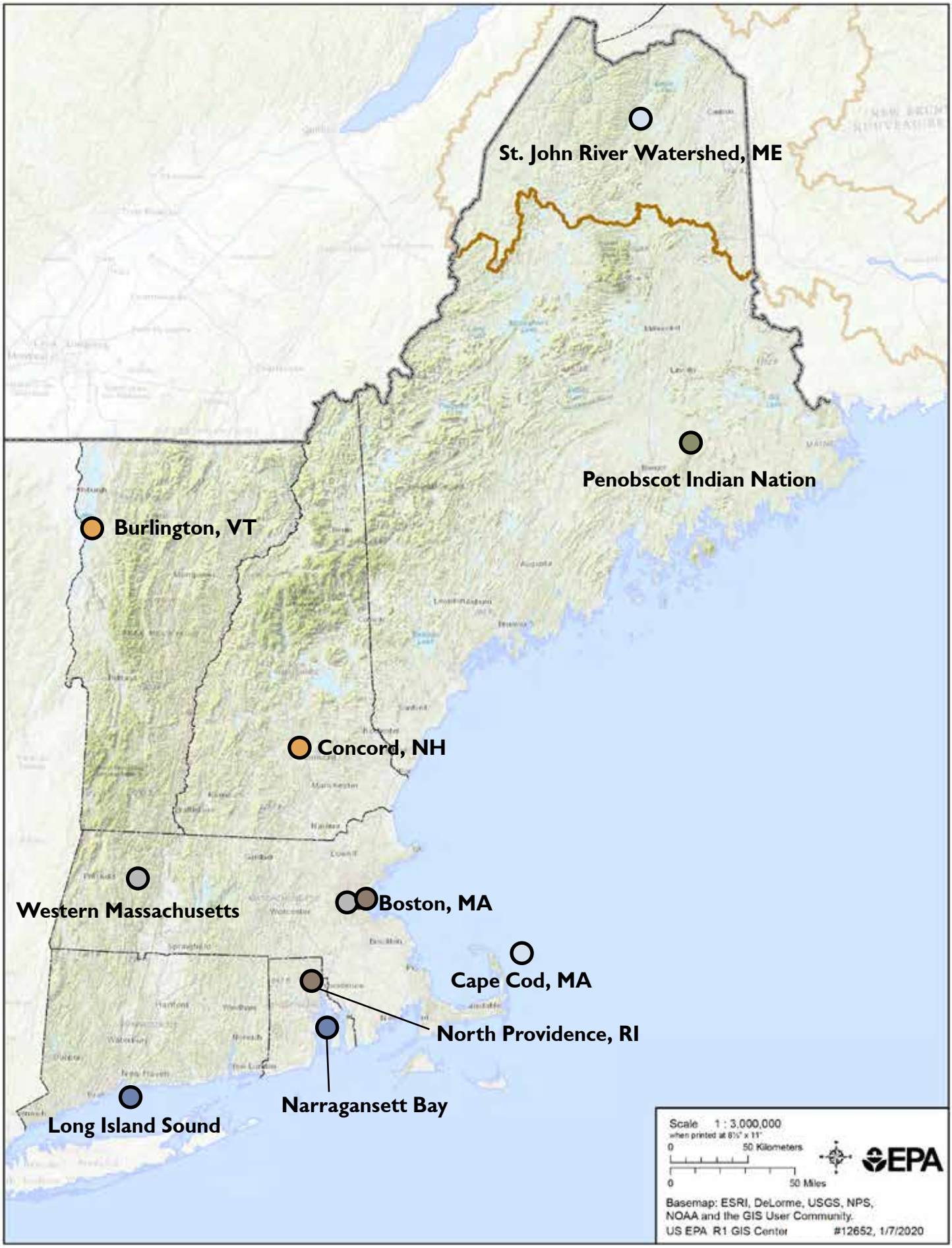


2019

EPA

New England

Annual Report


St. John River Watershed, ME
Penobscot Indian Nation
Burlington, VT
Concord, NH
Western Massachusetts
Boston, MA
Cape Cod, MA
North Providence, RI
Narragansett Bay
Long Island Sound
Scale 1 : 3,000,000
when printed at 8½" x 11"
0
50 Kilometers
0
50 Miles
EPA
Basemap: ESRI, DeLorme, USGS, NPS, NOAA and the GIS User Community.
US EPA R1 GIS Center
#12652, 1/7/2020

Examples of Work Across New England

Water	EPA provided $2.6 million in federal grants for 35 projects across the **Long Island Sound Watershed** that will reach 200,000 residents through new education initiatives, lead to the construction of 23,000 sq. ft of new green infrastructure, and reopen 13.5 miles for fish passage. *Page 13* EPA provided a $269 million loan to **Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay Commission** to help reduce combined sewer overflows while creating an estimated 1,700 jobs and saving ratepayers close to $100 million in typical bond financing costs. *Page 12*
Land	In **Johnston and North Providence, Rhode Island**, EPA reached a $100 million settlement that will fund the cleanup of the Centerdale Manor Superfund Site. *Page 8* In **Boston, Massachusetts**, EPA funding helped transform a former mass transit maintenance facility into an innovative mixed-use development that provides housing, public arts and events space, markets and shops in historic Dudley Square. *Page 6*
Air & Science	Off the coast of **Cape Cod, Massachusetts**, EPA devoted significant resources to support the nation's first proposed wind energy development projects in federal waters, including the Deepwater Wind project and Vineyard Wind project. *Page 9* Together with federal and tribal partners, EPA initiated a genomics research project in **Maine's St. John River Watershed** to develop a model of various strains of Atlantic salmon. *Page 7*
Public Health & Safety	Across **Massachusetts**, EPA provided technical assistance to ice rinks that helped significantly increase reporting of the use of ammonia and other regulated chemicals under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act. *Page 11* EPA worked to diligently enforce the nation's environmental laws; for example, in the case of a seafood plant in **Boston, Massachusetts,** violations of chemical accident prevention and mitigation laws were resolved. *Page 11*
Lead	In **Vermont**, EPA launched an integrated community-based assistance and enforcement initiative to address childhood lead poisoning, which included $1.6 million in grants to Vermont's lead-based paint programs, 25 EPA compliance inspections, outreach to 1,300 childcare centers and new certifications for 277 firms and contractors in the state. *Page 10* In **New Hampshire**, EPA partnered with the state to develop an online guide for homeowners about how to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water, identify a lead service line and test drinking water. *Page 10*
Tribes	EPA provided a $99,882 grant to the **Penobscot Indian Nation** to stabilize streambanks and improve erosion control in the Penobscot River watershed. *Page 12*

Letter to New England Residents

EPA New England
Regional Administrator

Dennis Deziel

As the Regional Administrator for EPA Region 1, and a native New Englander, I am grateful to have the opportunity to help protect our region's environment and public health.

For nearly 50 years, EPA, together with our federal, tribal, state and local partners, has worked hard to preserve New England's natural resources through innovation and multi-faceted approaches to prevent pollution and protect public health and the environment. I am proud to share with you highlights of EPA's work to help protect New England's land, air, water and incredible natural resources in 2019.

In 2019, EPA Region 1's priority efforts included reducing lead exposure, preventing pollution and improving chemicals management, remediating contaminated sites and responding to emergencies, ensuring clean air and water using sound science, revitalizing Brownfields, and building and strengthening partnerships to ensure a safe environment and a strong economy.

In 2020, EPA will celebrate it's 50th anniversary. I look forward to building on EPA's past successes and ensuring that everyone in New England enjoys clean air, water and land.

#EPAat50

Celebrating 50 years of
Protecting the Environment
in December of 2020

Revitalizing Brownfields

In 2019, the Brownfields Program supported New England communities by providing various grant and technical assistance programs. The benefits of revitalizing Brownfields sites in New England go beyond the sites and into the community. The developments improve public health and environmental quality, while creating housing, businesses, public facilities, parks and new jobs. The revitalized sites raise awareness of sustainable redevelopment and increase property values. The competitive grants include funding for assessment, cleanup, and related activities in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

Spirit of Partnership

Success in revitalizing Brownfields comes from strong partnerships. EPA Region 1 provided $5.2 million in allocated grants to our state and tribal partners this year for their response programs and voluntary cleanup programs which provide the regulatory and technical oversight for the Brownfields project we fund. The states and tribes can also use this funding for environmental assessments, cleanup grants, environmental insurance, and to update and revise regulations. EPA's Brownfields Program continues to form new partnerships and explore creative new ways to help revitalize communities throughout New England. In 2019, Region 1 invested over $11 million in competitive grant funding to 37 communities, non profits and regional planning organizations.

2019 Work:

64 sites cleaned up and made ready for anticipated re-use

134 sites assessed

1,611 jobs leveraged

$252M in other funding leveraged

$20.1M in EPA funding invested

Also in 2019:

- 15 outreach events focusing on Opportunity Zones (OZs)
- 39 new grants of funding to recipients (32 in OZs)

Opportunity Zones

Nationally, EPA is a member of the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council, which was formed to better coordinate federal economic development resources in Opportunity Zones and other distressed communities, including those with environmental justice concerns. Qualified Opportunity Zones are census tracts of low-income and distressed communities designated by state governors and certified by the Department of Treasury. Regionally, we collaborate with other federal agencies and state partners in the region to conduct outreach and help drive investment.

Bartlett Station

Bartlett Station

Bartlett Station is a former mass transit maintenance facility operated by the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA). The site was cleaned up and redeveloped into an innovative urban mixed-use development designed to enhance Boston's historic Dudley Square neighborhood. In addition to housing, Bartlett Station is providing space for public art and events, markets, and shops.

EPA Grant Recipient:
Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation

Grant Types:
Cleanup

Former Uses:
Bus and Train Maintenance Facility

Current Use:
Bartlett Station
Urban mixed-use development

Building and Strengthening Partnerships

Building and strengthening partnerships is essential for achieving EPA's mission in New England. Through collaboration and partnerships with municipalities, tribes, states and our federal partners, EPA can leverage resources to advance environmental protection for everyone. In 2019, EPA Region 1 launched an interactive platform to combine geospatial data about the Merrimack River watershed and to serve as a collaboration space. In addition to it being a recreational waterway for 200 communities, the Merrimack River serves as the primary drinking water source for 550,000 people in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, making it an area of interest for many residents in the river's watershed.

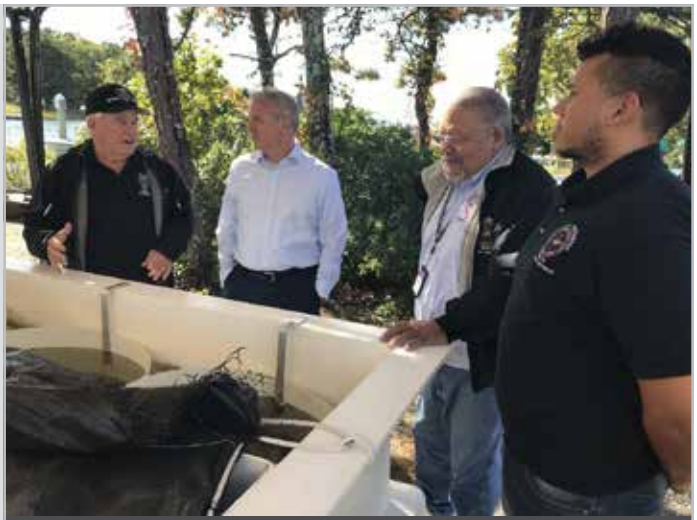
EPA's New England Regional Laboratory in Chelmsford, Massachusetts performs monitoring and analytical work in collaboration with EPA and state programs, interstate organizations, New England tribes, other federal agencies, local governments, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and the general public.

In 2019 EPA's Lab:

- Conducted five large water quality river surveys in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut in partnerships with state environmental agencies.
- Helped finalize and release EPA's Citizen Science Quality Assurance Handbook. Citizen science is a way for the public to engage in the practice of environmental science through formulating research questions, collecting and analyzing data and solving complex problems. EPA supports the use of citizen science to strengthen and inform environmental decision making. The handbook and accompanying templates provide best practices on how to document quality assurance and ensure that the data collected by citizen scientists can be used for its intended purpose.

Tribal Program

EPA Region 1 is committed to partnering with tribes to help build their capacity to manage environmental programs in Indian country and to ensure that tribes have a voice in decisions that affect their land, air and water. EPA Region 1 works with the 10 federally recognized tribes within the New England states of Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island.



Regional Administrator Deziel visits an aquaculture project to reduce nitrogen in coastal waters with representatives from the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and the Town of Mashpee.

In 2019, EPA Region 1:

- Helped advance cross-boundary restoration efforts in the St. John River watershed through planning and facilitating two international summits involving U.S. and Canadian agencies, tribes and first nations.
- Initiated a genomics research project to develop a phylogenetic model of Atlantic salmon in the St. John River watershed together with federal and tribal partners.
- In collaboration with federal and tribal partners, analyzed and presented initial findings of a toxicity study of returning anadromous fish in the Penobscot River to the Penobscot Indian Nation.
- Hosted an annual tribal leaders' summit and environmental conference that brought together tribal, federal and academic representatives to share expertise in a collaborative forum.
- Awarded more than $2.9 million in grants to New England tribes to advance environmental protection on tribal lands.

Remediating Contaminated Sites and Responding to Emergencies

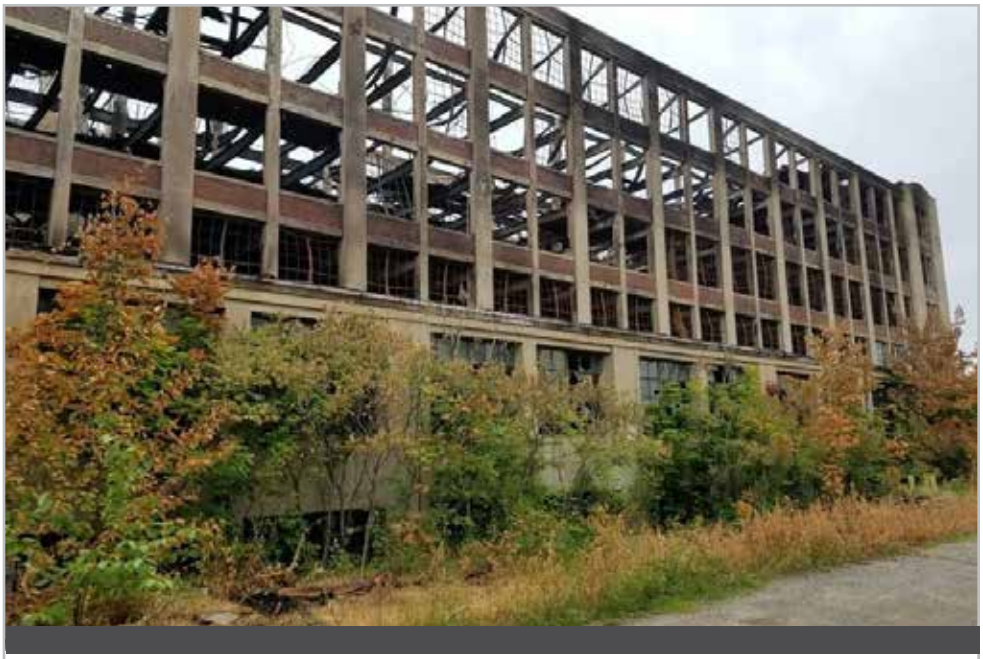
EPA Region 1's Superfund program works to clean up historically contaminated sites and put them back into productive use for New England communities. The Region currently has 123 sites listed on the National Priorities List. The Region's Emergency Response office responds to environmental emergencies and works in communities across the Region on short-term removal actions. In 2019, EPA conducted 13 removal actions in New England and assisted in responding to 15 environmental emergencies.

Work completed in 2019 includes:

- In August 2019, EPA celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Superfund Redevelopment Initiative at the Blackburn & Union Privileges Superfund Site in Walpole, Massachusetts. The site, located on the Neponset River in Walpole, was used for a variety of industrial manufacturing through the 19th and 20th centuries, leaving behind significant contamination requiring cleanup. Walpole acquired the properties by tax title and secured funding to redevelop the properties into a new police station and senior center. EPA awarded the Town with a National Superfund Re-Use award for the significant redevelopment efforts.

- In September 2019, EPA celebrated cleanup efforts at the Centerdale Manor Superfund Site in Johnston and North Providence, Rhode Island. The site was placed on the EPA Administrator's Emphasis List which served as a catalyst for negotiating a $100 million cleanup plan with a responsible party at the site.

- In 2007 the Stenton Trust Mill in Sanford, Maine, was damaged by a fire. EPA worked with the State of Maine and the City to evaluate and remove potential threats to the public and the environment from hazardous materials released from the site. In 2008, EPA removed drums of hazardous materials damaged by the fire, and in the summer of 2019 dismantled parts of the building to dispose of asbestos containing materials properly. Sanford received an $800,000 multipurpose grant through EPA's Brownfields program that will help them address environmental cleanup at this site and other mills in the area.



Stenton Trust Mill Building

Dredging of New Bedford Harbor

New Bedford Harbor

In 2019, EPA achieved a significant milestone in the cleanup of the New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site in New Bedford, Massachusetts. In September, EPA wrapped up15 years of dredging, hydraulic transport, and shipment of dewatered, highly contaminated PCB subtidal sediment from New Bedford's Upper Harbor. Approximately 600,000 cubic yards of sediment were dredged from the harbor—enough to cover a football field, about 275 feet high. EPA expects that all subtidal dredging should be completed at the site in early 2020. Intertidal cleanup and other work will continue at the site.

- By 2019 - 600,000 cubic yards of material removed.
- 750 residents reached with information on Fishing Advisories.
- 55,000 ft^2 dewatering facility returned to the City of New Bedford for commercial reuse.
- $200,000 grant for Environmental Job Training program for local community.

Ensuring Clean Air and Sound Science

EPA New England's air quality work ranges from asthma awareness campaigns to incineration innovation, technical assistance grants, wind energy permitting, and everything in between. Because air quality affects public health, local and regional airsheds, and the home environment, the Region 1 air program uses every tool available—from planning, monitoring and innovation grants to enforcement actions—in order to ensure clean air for New England.

In 2019, this included:

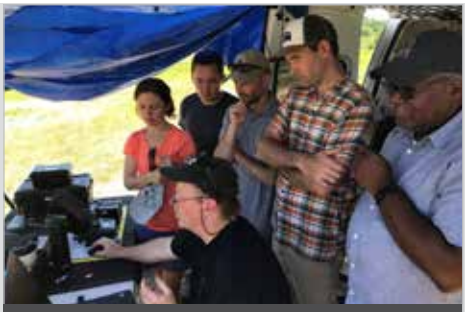
- Obtaining judicial consent decrees in four communities with potential environmental justice concerns in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, ordering the facilities to reduce airborne emissions through advanced controls that will improve local air quality.
- Driving a multi-stakeholder workgroup that developed and implemented new state Enhanced Monitoring Plans to understand ozone formation and transport across the region.
- Drafting an air permit for the first EPA-permitted offshore windfarm in the nation.
- Awarding several hundred thousand dollars of diesel emission reduction grants to schools, port authorities, and public works departments around the region to fund the replacement of old engines with cleaner units.

Offshore Wind

In 2019, the region devoted significant resources to support the nation's first proposed wind energy development in federal waters (off the coast of Cape Cod). Under Clean Air Act outer continental shelf permitting provisions for emissions associated with wind farms, the region issued a final permit for a meteorological buoy at the Deepwater Wind project site, proposed a draft permit for construction and operation of the Vineyard Wind project, and worked with three other companies developing plans for another 1600 megawatts of offshore generation. The region's work to apply Clean Air Act permitting requirements to offshore renewable energy development are innovations which will stand as a model for other states and regions considering offshore wind.

While we continue to face the challenge of New Englanders still living in areas not meeting 2015 ozone standards, the work of the Region 1 air program has achieved several long-term air quality successes. First, between 1999 and 2017, NO_x levels in the region dropped by 60 percent, and fine particulates by 56 percent. Second, in 2019, the central New Hampshire air quality region attained the sulfur dioxide air quality standards, bringing all of New England—for the first time—into attainment for that pollutant.

Robust Data out of Regional Laboratory



EPA team looks over Unmanned Aerial System (UAS, or drone) pilot project at a Cape Cod cranberry bog.

For every water, air, land, or public health decision, Region 1 relies on robust data and sound science provided by its New England Regional Laboratory in Chelmsford, Massachusetts. On average, the Region 1 lab conducts over 10,000 water, soil, sediment, air, biological, and waste analyses on over 6,000 samples each year. The lab is also the hub for Region 1 scientific innovation; in 2019, researchers worked on harmful algal bloom response, real-time water quality monitoring, and new tools for in-the-field data management. In July 2019, the region, in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the Town of Barnstable, Massachusetts, launched EPA'S first-ever Unmanned Aerial System (UAS, or drone) pilot project at a Cape Cod cranberry bog. In one day of drone test flights, 20 acres of bog were mapped and 8 gigabytes of thermal and visible-spectrum imagery were gathered to aid wetland restoration planning efforts. UAS technology, now under consideration for broader agency use, obtained safely and securely, saved the research team weeks of on-the-ground measurements.

Reducing Lead Exposure

Reducing lead exposure and addressing associated health impacts is a top priority for EPA. Region 1 works with the New England states, tribes and municipalities to prevent lead exposure, especially in vulnerable populations such as children and in communities with environmental justice concerns. In 2019, Region 1 awarded more than $3.5 million in grants to state partners and non-governmental organizations to address lead exposure issues in drinking water, soil and lead paint. The Region co-hosted a SoilShop event in Worcester, Massachusetts, which provided an opportunity for homeowners to have soil samples from their home screened for lead in real time. Region 1 has been very active working with states, water utilities, and communities to get lead out of drinking water. In March 2019, over 80 local officials and Department of Public Works directors attended the Region's "Get the Lead Out Summit" that focused on strategies for removing lead drinking water lines. The Region created a video that showcases innovative ways that North Providence, Rhode Island, and Claremont, New Hampshire, have supported residential lead pipe replacements.

Region 1 also partnered with the New Hampshire Department of Environment Services to develop "Protect Your Tap: 10-minute Lead Test," an online guide for homeowners. The step-by-step guide provides information about how to identify a lead service line, reduce your exposure to lead in drinking water and test your drinking water.

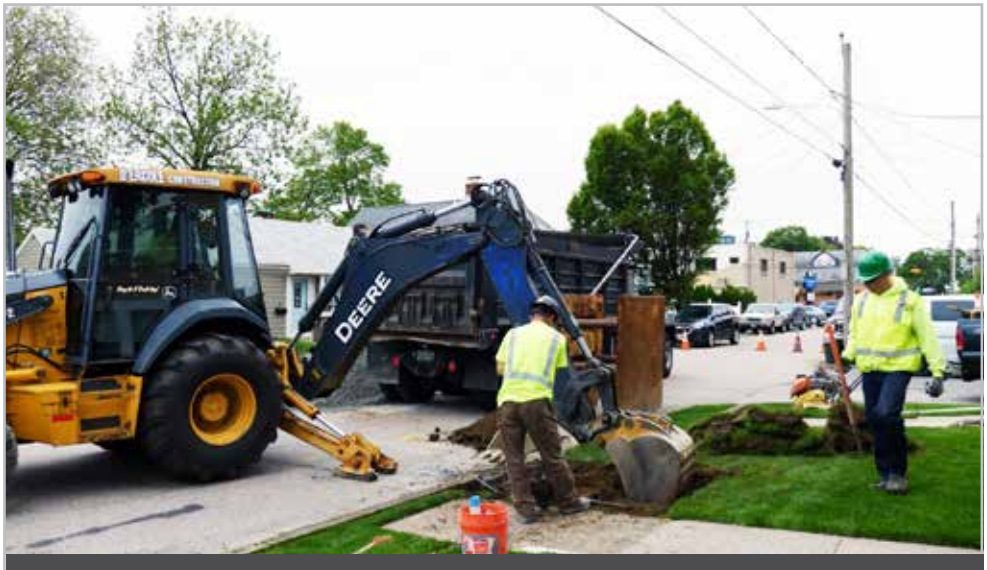
Vermont Lead Renovation:

25
EPA's *Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule* and *Disclosure Rule* compliance inspections

$204 K
EPA grants awarded to state program in Vermont for lead-based paint programs

1,300
Vermont childcare centers received technical assistance to identify risks of lead exposure

277
newly *Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule*-certified renovation firms and contractors in Vermont



Workers begin the process of replacing a lead service line in a North Providence, Rhode Island neighborhood.

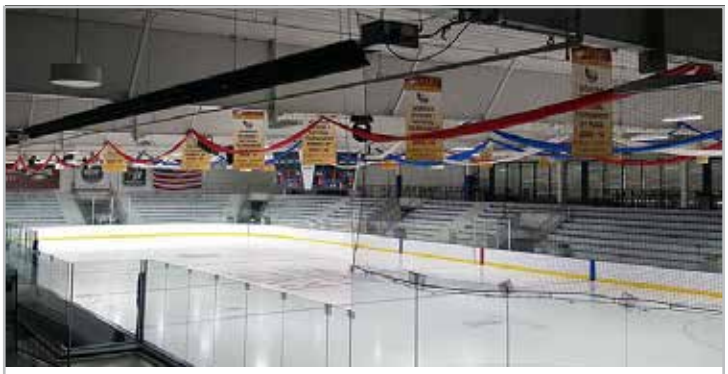
Regional Administrator Deziel presents a $25,000 grant to the Providence-based Childhood Lead Action Project.

Reducing Childhood Lead Poisoning

In 2019, Region 1 launched an integrated community-based assistance and enforcement initiative to address the high incidence of lead poisoning in some Vermont communities. The initiative included GIS mapping to identify areas with a history of childhood lead poisonings and outreach to the regulated community in Vermont. Efforts included trainings, mass mailings and press outreach to raise awareness of how to comply with regulatory requirements prior to compliance inspections. The effort included a first-of-its-kind web-based training covering *Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule* and *Lead Disclosure Rule* requirements which was captioned and posted on-line in August 2019.

Preventing Pollution & Improving Chemicals Management

EPA Region 1 works to prevent pollution and improve chemical management through its programs and activities, including grants, outreach, training and partnership programs, compliance assistance and enforcement. In 2019, the Region offered outreach, technical assistance and training to diverse stakeholders on issues including storm water management, sustainable materials management, drinking water treatment, chemical safety requirements of the Clean Air Act, and Emergency Planning & Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA) reporting. EPA awarded over $2 million in diesel emissions reductions grants to the New England states and co-sponsored a WasteWise Forum to help New England businesses, institutions and local, state and federal government agencies reduce their environmental footprint.



Protecting communities from potential risks, including those associated with ammonia refrigeration systems operations, is the main goal of EPCRA.

Ice Rink Assistance Initiative:

300
ice rinks assisted by EPA

50
new EPCRA Tier II filers following EPA's outreach

120%
increase in number of EPCRA Tier II ice rink filers in Massachusetts

In 2019, EPA Region 1 promoted chemical safety through integrated actions:

- To address serious noncompliance, Region 1 brought enforcement actions against facilities such as Stavis Seafoods, a Boston seafood plant, which paid $700,000 under a judicial settlement to resolve violations of chemical accident prevention and mitigation laws. The case stemmed from a 2016 ammonia release at the plant, which killed an employee.

- In addition to traditional enforcement, Region 1 also started implementing a compliance pilot to ensure that refrigeration facilities using smaller amounts of ammonia complete process hazard reviews. After conducting compliance outreach to over 500 contacts, the Region contacted 13 companies to assess compliance. By the end of 2019, three had come into compliance after receiving EPA's compliance assistance, and four entered expedited settlements requiring compliance and penalties. The initiative will continue in 2020.

- The Region provided assistance to ice rinks in New England to increase EPCRA Tier II reporting for facilities using ammonia or other regulated chemicals. Assistance activities included signing an agreement with a local trade association to collaborate on training and educational materials including outreach to rinks throughout the year.

Smart Sectors

EPA's Smart Sectors is a partnership program that provides a platform to collaborate with regulated sectors and develop sensible approaches that better protect the environment and public health. In 2019, Region 1 established and strengthened partnerships with stakeholders in the maritime, outdoor recreation and food and beverage sectors. EPA provided outreach to the maritime industry on Clean Diesel Grants for ports projects and joined federal partners to help revitalize rural communities in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont through outdoor recreation. In 2019, Region 1 worked to support brewery innovation as part of its Food and Beverage Sector outreach, helping New England breweries explore ways to reduce waste water discharges, energy use and organic waste generation.

Ensuring Clean Water

Clean water has always been a priority for Region 1. The iconic rivers and harbors of New England are steeped in history and remain integral to local economies. EPA ensures that these waterways are safe, clean, and well-managed. Our work extends from the Long Island Sound in Connecticut to Lake Champlain in Vermont, the Gulf of Maine, and every watershed in between. With aging infrastructure, resiliency demands of changing water cycles, and emerging contaminants of concern, the agency's clean water work is as vital as ever.

This work is diverse; EPA runs grant programs, protects drinking water, and, unique to Region 1, writes Clean Water Act permits for Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Clean Water Act permits are broad, covering drinking water and wastewater facilities, storm sewer systems, industrial facilities, highway systems, and more. Within this work the region's municipal stormwater program alone–in MA and NH–oversees permitting for over 300 cities and towns.

Region 1's 2019 accomplishments include:

- Advancing drinking water sector resilience by hosting six workshops on spill response, vulnerability assessments, and emergency response that reached more than 200 public water supply system operators and first responders.
- Developing an innovative nitrogen general permit for 13 municipalities in the Great Bay watershed in New Hampshire; it represents a flexible, adaptive management approach to permitting that allows communities to make local choices about nitrogen load reduction.
- Reaching a mediated settlement with permittees and environmental groups that would resolve litigation over stormwater general permits for municipalities in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. These permits are important tools to reduce pollution impacts to lakes, rivers, ponds and other waters in both states.
- Awarding $200 million in State Revolving Fund grants to all six New England states, providing low-interest and subsidized loans for infrastructure projects like upgrades to municipal sewage plants and public drinking water systems.
- Supporting EPA and state underwater research priorities with 51 logged dives by the Region 1 scientific diving unit.
- Awarding the Penobscot Indian Nation $99,882 in competitive grant funds under the Clean Water Act 319 program to stabilize streambanks in the Penobscot River watershed and conduct erosion control certification trainings for municipal road crews. This was the 10th such competitive grant won by the Penobscot Indian Nation.
- Driving, as home to 6 of the nation's 28 National Estuary Programs, regional watershed management and wetland restoration progress across New England, such as increasing citizen science capacity in the Massachusetts Bays Estuary, developing new nutrient monitoring and reduction strategies in Casco Bay, and deploying 360 underwater cameras to assess seagrass ecosystem health in Great Bay's Piscataqua Estuary.

Narragansett Bay Water Infrastructure

Regional Administrator Deziel and partners celebrate the Narragansett Bay Commission WIFIA loan.

In September 2019, under the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program, EPA announced a $269 million loan to Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay Commission for combined sewer system infrastructure work–the first WIFIA loan awarded in New England. In combined sewer systems, where storm sewers are connected to sanitary sewers, even low levels of rainfall can exceed the capacity of the system and overflow into local waterways–carrying pollutants such as sewage solids, metals, oil, grease and bacteria that can affect human health and the environment. The funds will directly reduce these pollutant discharges into Narragansett Bay, create an estimated 1,700 jobs, and save water district ratepayers close to $100 million in typical bond financing costs.

(cont. Ensuring Clean Water)

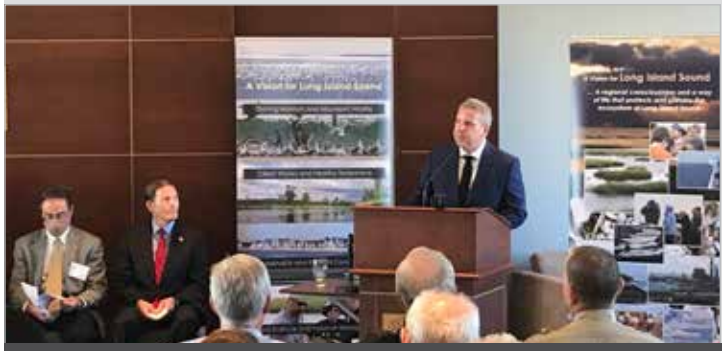
The water program at Region 1 is also tasked with creating watershed-wide, integrated solutions to the pollution and public health issues facing our communities and ecosystems. In three corners of New England, this "geographic program" approach continues to drive progress and environmental innovation.

Lake Champlain Basin Program

Lake Champlain is the environmental, social, and economic heart of an 8,000 square-mile watershed encompassing mountains, farmlands, and vibrant communities across Vermont, New York State, and Quebec, Canada. For many years, the Region's water program – through the Lake Champlain Basin Program – has worked to protect the clean water heritage of this vital ecosystem. In 2019, EPA helped with the establishment of a major Vermont long-term annual funding source for Lake Champlain restoration through ongoing oversight of the State's commitments to implement the Lake's TMDL. EPA also increased its support for the Basin Program, providing $11 million in 2019 to complete priority phosphorus control and habitat restoration projects, investigations on new nutrient reduction technologies, and new education and outreach initiatives. EPA also worked with Vermont as it developed new methods for tracking ecosystem recovery progress and completed the development of a new tool to help dairy farmers more precisely value the economic benefits of water quality-friendly grazing practices.

Long Island Sound Program

Protecting and restoring water and habitat quality in Long Island Sound has been a Region 1 priority since the Long Island Sound Study began in 1985. The primary focus has been reducing nitrogen loads to reduce the impacts of eutrophication and restoring habitat loss across the six-state, 16,000 sq. mile watershed. To support on-the-ground implementation by state, local, and stakeholder organizations, EPA established the "LIS Futures Fund" in 2005; since then, EPA has invested $22 million in 451 water quality and habitat improvement projects in communities throughout New England and New York. In 2019, EPA announced a new round of support for our community partners; $2.6M in federal grants for 35 projects across the watershed will reach 200,000 residents through new education initiatives, lead to the construction of 23,000 sq. ft. of new green infrastructure, and reopen 13.5 river miles for fish passage.



Regional Administrator Deziel speaks at a November 2019 LIS Futures Fund event.

Southeast New England Program

The Southeast New England Program (SNEP) has provided $27 million over the past five years to generate and apply innovative management strategies at a bi-state regional scale in the Narragansett Bay, Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod and Islands watersheds. In 2019, EPA hosted the first SNEP Forum at Brown University, bringing over 80 stakeholders together from Rhode Island and Massachusetts to identify watershed priorities for the next 5 years; topics ranged from stormwater financing and green infrastructure to septic system innovation. EPA also announced an award of $1.75 million to the New England Environmental Finance Center to establish a technical assistance network to support communities, tribes, and non-profits with stormwater control, flood risk reduction, habitat restoration, and coastal resilience planning.

SNEP and other Region 1 water programs are also testing efforts to improve water quality on Cape Cod. Cape-focused implementation projects and applied research have included deployment of innovative technologies like permeable reactive barriers, collaboration with the Massachusetts Alternative Septic Test Center on new non-proprietary designs for nitrogen-removing septic systems and testing for development of a low-cost on-site septic system nitrogen sensor.

Looking Ahead to 2020

In 2020, as EPA celebrates it's 50th anniversary, Region 1 plans to pursue a course driven by national agency priorities and shaped by the issues facing New England communities. In conjunction with our federal, state, tribal, and local partners, Region 1 plans to focus on the following New England environmental and public health priorities over the coming year:

Protecting Iconic Waters and Watersheds

- Provide technical assistance to help towns and cities find economically and environmentally sustainable solutions to flooding, aging infrastructure, and stormwater challenges;
- Provide grants to support communities at work in the Region's geographic program areas, including Casco Bay Estuary, Long Island Sound, Great Bay and the Piscataqua River Estuary, and the Massachusetts Bay estuary;
- Develop and support inter-municipal watershed solutions for nutrient impairments in New England waterways; and
- Collaborate with states, tribes, scientists, and businesses on innovative approaches to water quality and quantity problems, such as new real-time environmental monitoring sensors, stormwater mapping solutions, and new green infrastructure designs.

Promoting Brownfield Redevelopment

- Provide clean water grants, clean air solutions, and land remediation support to communities seeking to revitalize their neighborhoods;
- Work with New England communities, non-governmental organizations and planning commissions to help ensure that New England continues to receive the greatest amount of Brownfields grant funds in the nation;
- Support revitalization under the new federal Opportunity Zone program in over 300 state-selected census tracts in New England; and
- Support local efforts to repurpose old mills, former tanneries and other Brownfields into the industrial and commercial hubs of the next generation.

Protecting Public Health

- Continue the Region's successful lead renovation and repair initiatives to help reduce risks associated with lead-based paint in New England's older housing stock;
- Armed with a new Lead and Copper Rule, and building on the Region's longstanding commitment to lead pipe replacement, continue to work with communities to find, map, and quickly remove and replace lead pipes;
- Assist states in expanding safe drinking water protection programs to even more schools and daycares;
- Provide continued support for school bus diesel engine improvement and replacement grants, environmental education grants, and indoor air quality improvement partnerships;
- Support EPA's national PFAS action plan as the agency engages with community groups, state and local leaders, and drinking water system managers around New England on PFAS; and
- Unwavering support for environmental justice communities.

Promoting Sustainability

- Support offshore wind project permitting processes for installations proposed for the waters off Cape Cod, in the Gulf of Maine, and around Block Island Sound;
- Develop new stormwater and solid waste strategies for reducing marine debris;
- Support climate resiliency; and
- Support food waste reduction initiatives and build new partnerships with states and the private sector through EPA's Smart Sectors Program.

The past 50 years of innovation, environmental progress, and public health protection would not have been possible without the support of the New England states, tribes, local communities, and the public, private, and academic partners around the region working hand in hand with our agency experts. In 2020—and the 50 years beyond—Region 1 will continue to build these, and create new, partnerships as we work to protect New England's environment and public health.

cover photo credit: A.Sergeev

2019

EPA 901-R-20-001