

The Connecticut General Assembly



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\$200,000 APPROPRIATED FOR WEST HAVEN SHORELINE RESTORATION PROJECT

Project will showcase best practices of coastal resiliency, enhance one of West Haven's best amenities

The [State Budget Adjustment](#) passed during the 2022 legislative session included \$200,000 to help restore a portion of the beachfront along the Savin Rock boardwalk in West Haven previously overrun by invasive plant species.

The West Haven Shoreline Restoration Project will showcase the best practices of coastal resilience educationally and enjoyably while enhancing one of West Haven's best amenities as part of a multi-phase effort.

Recently, the Shoreline Restoration Committee chose SLR International Corporation — which has more than 100 offices in 13 countries, including two in Connecticut — to perform a site analysis and develop design options leading to a nature-based coastal resilience plan to restore a 1.5-acre portion of the shoreline adjacent to Old Grove Park in West Haven.

The Shoreline Restoration Committee was formed in June 2021 to develop a plan of action to remediate the trees and invasive plants at the site. Committee members **Marilyn Wilkes, Vice President of the Land Trust of West Haven**, and **Mark Paine, Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of West Haven**, are co-coordinating the project.

During the next five months, the Shoreline Restoration Committee will work with SLR as it does a site analysis and assessment report, which will contain: natural/green infrastructure opportunities; preparation of two draft concept plans for the project; ongoing community involvement up to and including collecting community input on draft plans; preparation of a final Nature-Based Coastal Resilience Plan; and creation of preliminary engineering plans to 30% design.

"Whether it is the Land Trust of West Haven, the City of West Haven, Shoreline Restoration Committee, local stakeholders or enthusiastic volunteers, this project should be lauded for how it has brought people together in collaboration toward the common long-term goal of showcasing the West Haven's unique assets through the lens of best practices for coastal resilience and sustainability," **said State Rep. Dorinda Borer (D-West Haven)**. "The project's potential is immense from an educational and enjoyability perspective, and I look forward to celebrating the final result for and with our city."

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"The Land Trust of West Haven is grateful to Representative Borer for securing these funds for the West Haven Shoreline Restoration Project," said **Wilkes**. "Given that the overall intent of the project is to turn an existing 1.5-acre area of public shoreline into a best practice model of coastal ecosystem exploration, which includes a 'living classroom,' this money will play a vital role in moving the plans for it forward."

"It's been a tremendous experience collaborating on this project with elected officials, other departments, and our local stakeholders," added **Paine**. "There's been great synergy, and the volunteer participation has invigorated the planning process. The award is crucial to our progress as we enter the design stage of dynamic replanting with multifaceted public and environmental benefits. We are very grateful for Representative Borer's participation and support with the project."

"When I first joined the City Council, I wanted to make this project one of my top priorities. With the help of the City of West Haven, Land Trust of West Haven, the Parks and Recreation Department, Public Works, Dorinda Borer and many volunteers, this project has become a reality," said **Gary Donovan, West Haven City Councilor (D-At Large)**. "My vision for this project was to remove all invasive trees and plants in the area and replace them with native plants with a possible walk-through for individuals to enjoy and for the ecological camp to study. Our goal is to beautify the beachfront property one section at a time."

"This state grant will enhance one of West Haven's longest-serving parks, Old Grove Park, and will bring the protected area into the 21st century as a shoreline destination for passive recreation under the auspices of the Land Trust of West Haven," said **West Haven Mayor Nancy Rossi**. "I want to thank Rep. Dorinda Borer and the rest of our city's General Assembly delegation for working together to secure this important funding on behalf of the great people of West Haven."

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