Therese Murray

President

of the Senate

Robert A. DeLeo

Speaker of the

House of Representatives

The General Court of Massachusetts

State House, Boston, 02133-1053

----

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contacts: Laura Oggeri Seth Gitell

July 31, 2014 Senate President House Speaker

 (617) 722-1500 (617) 722-2500

**Legislature Sends Environmental Bond Bill to Governor**

BOSTON – The Senate and House passed final legislation providing for the preservation and improvement of land, parks and clean energy in the Commonwealth.

“This legislation strengthens our status as a leader in clean energy, reflects our continued commitment to promoting the highest environmental standards and will overall greatly improve our communities,” **Senate President Therese Murray (D-Plymouth)** said. “This comprehensive bond bill makes targeted investments to preserve our natural resources, including reforesting after natural disasters, funding innovative green projects and improving our water quality, which are all essential for protecting the health of our residents and the future of the Commonwealth.”

“Investing in our environment is a step forward for our future,"said **House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo (D-Winthrop)**. "The proactive steps in this bill, cleaning up hazardous waste and protecting our shorelines for example, will have a significant and sustainable return on investment. As I thank my colleagues in the Legislature for their work, I pledge to join with my neighbors and recommit ourselves to improve our community’s environmental condition, while cherishing its character.”

“The environmental bond bill offers an opportunity to continue our state’s leadership in energy efficiency, the promotion of clean and alternative forms of energy, and, by funding a water innovation trust fund, the ability to partner with our fine universities and the private sector to develop leading edge clean water technology that will create jobs,” said **Senator Brian A. Joyce (D-Milton), Chair of the Senate Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets**.

“A goal of the Environmental Bond Bill is to preserve our natural resources and promote economic growth, while at the same time maintaining fiscal responsibility,” said **Representative Anne Gobi (D-Spencer), Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture**.  “We are fortunate in Massachusetts, especially in our area, to have so many wonderful natural resources that make our region a prime place to live and work. This bond bill strengthens our commitment to the environment, and at the same time does not compromise our ability to address our budget needs.  It was wonderful working with the other conferees to be able to present a bill that the entire membership can support."

“This bill is a tremendous achievement for the Commonwealth in terms of the investments it makes in the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the land on which we walk and rely for food,” said **Senator Marc R. Pacheco (D-Taunton), Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture**. “I was proud to work on this important legislation with my colleagues on the Conference Committee, the leadership in the Senate and House, and with our many environmental advocacy organizations in Massachusetts. This plan will help bolster our tourism sector of the economy by enhancing our parks and waterways, and clean up our environment through its investments in clean energy resources. I urge Governor Patrick to sign this bill and both he and the next administration to use its authorization to continue our important climate preparedness strategies across the state.”

 “This is an innovative bill that authorizes critical funds for new approaches to preserving open space and fighting climate change for generations to come, while investing in important projects, like dredging Boston and New Bedford Harbors, that create jobs and spur economic development throughout the Commonwealth,” said **Representative Antonio F.D. Cabral (D-New Bedford), Chair of the House Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets.**

“The Environmental Bond bill was the result of a good process and good debate,” said **Senator Don Humason (R-Westfield)**. “While no bill is perfect, this bill contains funding for important environmental projects statewide and for the communities I am proud to represent. It is a good bill that I am pleased I could support and proud to have worked on as a member of the Conference Committee.”

This legislation authorizes a $1.9 billion, 4-year capital plan and includes:

* $10 million for the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs for general improvements and replacements to infrastructure;
* $1.625 million for a conservation district grant program;
* $75.7 million for the Department of Environmental Protection for investment in water and air quality protection;
* $4 million to restore fresh water aquatic fisheries;
* $20 million for the design, construction, reconstruction, repair or removal of state-owned dams;
* $117.1 million for the design, construction, reconstruction, improvement or rehabilitation of coastal and inland waterways projects;
* $30 million for the dredging of coastal public harbors;
* $57.5 million for the Department of Conservation and Recreation for acquisition of land and interests in land;

--- more ---

* $15 million for the design, construction, reconstruction, repair, improvement, or rehabilitation of flood control facilities and water resource protection related facilities;
* $10.1 million for watershed protection and rehabilitation and technical assistance grants for the removal of aquatic invasive plants;
* $15 million for the Department of Energy and Resources’ Leading by Example Program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts;
* $7 million for a matching grant program for the repair, construction, and modernization of equipment and capital improvements of marine industrial infrastructure located in designated port areas or maritime industrial zones;
* $48.8 million for the design, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, repair or removal of municipally-owned dams and for inland-flood control projects;
* $20 million for the Department of Agricultural Resources for the agricultural preservation restriction program;
* $2 million for the Department of Agricultural Resources for the agricultural environmental enhancement program for the abatement of all forms of pollution generated from agricultural activities;
* $149.7 million for coastal facilities improvements in designated and non-designated port areas;
* $24.1 million for integrated energy and environmental projects;
* $20 million for the acquisition of open space, recreation, and conservation land;
* $51.1 million for the purpose of a forestry and tree planting program;
* $30.350 million for the improvement of recreational opportunities and ecological integrity protection;
* $3 million for oil or hazardous waste assessment, containment, cleanup, control, removal, or response;
* $10 million to capitalize the Water Innovation Technology Fund, through the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, for the creation and operation of testing piloting facilities to determine cost-effective and energy efficient ways to move water;
* $30 million for the Department of Fish and Game for the acquisition of land to protect native flora and fauna communities;
* $2 million for conserving and recovering rare and endangered plant and animal species
* $3.4 million for upland habitat management of forestlands, shrub lands, and grasslands;
* $255.4 million for the Department of Conservation and Recreation for the design, construction, reconstruction, removal, improvement, or rehabilitation of department reservations, forests, parks, harbor islands, and other recreational facilities;
* $5 million for recreational trails matching grants;
* $100 million for Department of Conservation and Recreation parkways, boulevards, multi-use trails, internal state park roads and recreational trails;
* $312 million for the accelerated energy program to improve the energy efficiency of state-owned facilities; and
* $120 million for the design, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or removal of coastal infrastructure.

--- more ---

In addition, the capital plan:

* Establishes the Climate Change Adaptation Infrastructure Investment Fund for projects related to seawalls, jetties, revetments, retaining walls, and inland flood control;
* Adds state agencies and authorities to the municipal street lighting program to add to cost savings for the Commonwealth;
* Requires an inventory and classification by the Executive Office of Public Safety of all existing quarries in the Commonwealth to identify the current use of the quarry, who is responsible, the degree of hazards and if there is potential for accidents;
* Requires the Executive Office of Administration & Finance to submit reports to the legislature detailing the progress on projects funded by this act, noting both the anticipated and actual spending
* Requires the Department of Conservation and Recreation to identify areas in which deer overpopulation is negatively impacting forestation, water resources, or plant growth on department-owned land and to develop a plan to cull deer herds by October 1, 2014;
* Requires that any agency that acquires land protected by Article 97 must obtain the approval of the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs prior to implementing any prohibition on fishing, hunting, or trapping; and
* Requires the State Treasurer to annually issue guidance to state agencies on the issuance of “green bonds.”

The bill now goes to the Governor for his final approval.

###