

State Of Maryland

2024 Bond Initiative Fact Sheet

1. Name Of Project		
North East Nature Preserve		
2. Senate Sponsor	3. House Sponsor	
Gallion	Cecil County Delegation	
4. Jurisdiction (County or Baltimore City)	5. Requested Amount	
Cecil County	\$90,000	
6. Purpose of Bond Initiative		
the acquisition, planning, design, construction, repair, renovation, reconstruction, site improvement, and capital equipping of the North East Nature Preserve, including an environmental study		
7. Matching Fund		
Requirements:	Type:	
Grant		
8. Special Provisions		
<input type="checkbox"/> Historical Easement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Sectarian	
9. Contact Name and Title	Contact Ph#	Email Address
Delegate Jefferson L. Ghrist		jeff.ghrist@house.state.md.us
Grant Handley		410-287-5801 ext.111
10. Description and Purpose of Organization (Limit length to visible area)		
<p>The Town of North East is a municipal entity committed to the well-being and sustainable development of its community. Its latest initiative, the creation of the "North East Preserve," reflects the town's dedication to conservation, environmental education, and fostering economic growth. With a 60-acre parcel along the North East River and NE Creek, the town aims to transform this land into a multifaceted preserve that incorporates tidal and non-tidal wetlands, woodlands, and a native grass meadow. The organization is driven by the enthusiastic support of its citizens who recognize the project's potential to benefit the environment and help counter the negative effects of climate change, promote tourism, and contribute to the economic prosperity of both the Town of North East and Cecil County.</p>		

11. Description and Purpose of Project (Limit length to visible area)

The North East Preserve in Cecil County, nestled along the Upper Chesapeake Bay, could do its part in the fight against climate change. The project's conservation efforts, in its diverse range of ecosystems, can help mitigate shoreline erosion and implement stormwater best management practices. It can enhance environmental education, tourism and regional economic growth with trails, educational signage, recreational amenities like kayak landing and fishing spots, and a walkway/bridge linking the town center. While substantial capital investment is needed, the project is moving forward with a citizen-approved concept design in place. Funding is sought for the next design phase-- an environmental assessment--covering habitat protection, wetland delineations, and archaeological assessments, to meet regulatory requirements and address environmental impacts.

Round all amounts to the nearest \$1,000. The totals in Items 12 (Estimated Capital Costs) and 13 (Proposed Funding Sources) must match. The proposed funding sources must not include the value of real property unless an equivalent value is shown under Estimated Capital Costs.

12. Estimated Capital Costs

Acquisition	
Design	\$90,000
Construction	
Equipment	
Total	\$90,000

13. Proposed Funding Sources - (List all funding sources and amounts.)

Bond Initiative Legislative for Environmental Study	\$90,000
Total	\$90,000

14. Project Schedule (Enter a date or one of the following in each box. N/A, TBD or Complete)			
Begin Design	Complete Design	Begin Construction	Complete Construction
7/1/2024	10/1/2024		
15. Total Private Funds and Pledges Raised	16. Current Number of People Served Annually at Project Site	17. Number of People to be Served Annually After the Project is Complete	
0.00	0	104,600 Cecil; 3,572 North East	
18. Other State Capital Grants to Recipients in the Past 15 Years			
Legislative Session	Amount	Purpose	
N/A			
19. Legal Name and Address of Grantee		Project Address (If Different)	
Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of North East Town Hall/106 S. Main Street North East, MD 21901-0528			
20. Legislative District in Which Project is Located	35B - Cecil County		
21. Legal Status of Grantee (Please Check One)			
Local Govt.	For Profit	Non Profit	Federal
[X]	[]	[]	[]
22. Grantee Legal Representative		23. If Match Includes Real Property:	
Name:	David Beste, Esq.	Has An Appraisal Been Done?	Yes/No
Phone:	410-398-0313		Yes
Address:		If Yes, List Appraisal Dates and Value	
Downs, Beste, & Blackson, LLC. 202 E. Main Street Elkton, MD 21921		2/4/2020	5090000.00

24. Impact of Project on Staffing and Operating Cost at Project Site			
Current # of Employees	Projected # of Employees	Current Operating Budget	Projected Operating Budget
N/A	N/A	0.00	0.00
25. Ownership of Property (Info Requested by Treasurer's Office for bond purposes)			
A. Will the grantee own or lease (pick one) the property to be improved?			Own
B. If owned, does the grantee plan to sell within 15 years?			No
C. Does the grantee intend to lease any portion of the property to others?			No
D. If property is owned by grantee any space is to be leased, provide the following:			
Lessee	Terms of Lease	Cost Covered by Lease	Square Footage Leased
E. If property is leased by grantee - Provide the following:			
Name of Leaser	Length of Lease	Options to Renew	
N/A			
26. Building Square Footage:			
Current Space GSF			
Space to be Renovated GSF			
New GSF			

27. Year of Construction of Any Structures Proposed for Renovation, Restoration or Conversion	
28. Comments	
<p>The Town of North East acquired a sprawling 60-acre plot of land situated alongside the North East River, NE Creek, and the town itself. Fifty-six acres of this land encompasses a diverse range of ecosystems, including 10 acres of tidal wetlands, 12 acres of non-tidal wetlands, 28 acres of woodlands, and 6 acres of native grass meadow.</p> <p>The Town formed a Study Group with the mission: "To create and maintain a renowned nature preserve focused on protecting habitats and native wildlife of the North East Creek watershed while providing waterfront access, passive recreation, and educational opportunities within easy walking distance accessible to residents and the visitors of North East (Resolution No. 2021-12-01). The Study Group needed to consider how best to align the Town's 2012 Comprehensive Plan with this property. Plan goals are to "respect the significant natural environment of the North East area" and to "preserve and protect the important natural features of the Town including streams, wooded areas, wildlife habitats and other sensitive natural areas" (5-1). With these goals in mind, the Town hired YSM Landscape Architects for the North East Preserve Master Plan. After six Study Group meetings, and three public meetings, the Plan received resounding public support. The Town is now determined to proceed with establishing the North East Preserve in the Upper Chesapeake Bay.</p> <p>The Town must move forward with a comprehensive environmental assessment to accomplish this ambitious endeavor. This valuable assessment addresses all the mandated Chesapeake Bay Critical Area requirements for development, including habitat protection areas for threatened or endangered species. It would include wetland and forest delineations, surveying, and soil testing. Highly erodible soils and areas of shore erosion, with consideration of the 100 Year Floodplain, will also be studied. An archeological study will be included in this environmental assessment; determining if there are archeological or historic artifacts of significance in the project area, and Maryland Historic Trust compliance. Valuable and informative data from these assessments will guide concept site plan/construction documents and help develop Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control Concept Plans. Information of anticipated environmental impacts will be shared with MD-DNR, the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission, the US Army Corps of Engineers, Maryland Historic Trust, and all other agencies responsible for permitting.</p> <p>This expansive project not only promises significant environmental benefits to the Upper Chesapeake Bay but also aims to foster environmental education, stimulate interest in natural conservation, bolster tourism, and generate economic growth for Cecil County and the Town of North East. Key features of the Preserve include Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs), measures to prevent shoreline erosion, accessible loop trails, boardwalks, educational and historical signage, a kayak landing, fishing spots, bird blinds, observation decks, and a walkway/bridge connecting to the Town center.</p> <p>The project necessitates a substantial capital investment. To propel this project forward, the Town seeks funding for the next phase, the environmental assessment. With funding, the assessment can start in July of 2024 and be completed during early autumn.</p>	