

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Town of Orleans Receives State Grant for Rock Harbor Wharf Reconstruction

Orleans, MA – The Town of Orleans is honored to announce the receipt of a \$1 million grant from the Massachusetts Seaport Economic Council to support the much-anticipated reconstruction and improvement of the Rock Harbor Commercial Wharf. This funding will play a vital role in ensuring the resilience and functionality of this critical municipal asset, which serves as a cornerstone of the local maritime economy.

The Rock Harbor Commercial Wharf, owned and operated by the Town of Orleans, is a key hub for commercial fishing, providing berthing, offloading, and fuel services to the fishing fleet. However, aging infrastructure and vulnerabilities to high tides and coastal conditions have necessitated a comprehensive upgrade to secure its future use and safety.

“This grant represents a major step forward for the Town of Orleans,” said Richard Waldo, Director of Public Works & Natural Resources. “The improvements to Rock Harbor Wharf will not only address longstanding infrastructure challenges but also support our fishing industry and create opportunities for public engagement with the waterfront.”

The reconstruction will include:

- Installation of a new steel sheet pile bulkhead designed to accommodate future elevation increases to adapt to rising sea levels.
- Construction of two commercial floats with pier and gangway access for improved vessel berthing.
- Development of a 5,420-square-foot pile-supported commercial offloading deck equipped with a hoist.
- Addition of a 1,480-square-foot public viewing area to enhance community access to the waterfront.
- Upgrades to fuel dispensers, with removal of outdated fuel tanks and optimization of the wharf layout.
- A 20-foot landward retreat of the wharf, restoring approximately 3,400 square feet of water sheet area.

The project design incorporates feedback from local fishermen and community members, ensuring that the wharf not only meets the operational needs of the fishing

industry but also reflects the Town's commitment to coastal resiliency and public accessibility.

“The State's investment in the Rock Harbor Wharf project underscores the importance of supporting coastal communities and their vital economic infrastructure,” said Orleans Town Manager Kim Newman, “Orleans is grateful to the Seaport Economic Council for recognizing the value of this project and investing in the future of our town.” She went on to say, “I’d like to also commend Nate Sears, Harbormaster and Natural Resources Manager for educating the community on the importance of this project to our local economy and continuing to support and recognize Rock Harbor as a cornerstone of the Orleans community.”

For more information about the Seaport Economic Council grants can be found [here](#).

Images attached.