YORK RIVER WILD & SCENIC

2026 York River Watershed Grants Program
$59,083 in project funding

2026 McIntire Garrison Cider House Investigations and Improvements

Old York Historical Society – $10,000 grant award

Old York Historical Society

Old York Historical Society is continuing its work to restore the McIntire Garrison's Cider House by stabilizing the foundation and replacing the sill and floor planking. New archaeological testing is being conducted inside the Cider House and along its southern and eastern foundation walls, and findings will be shared in a public presentation later this year.

Conservation Easement Purchase

Great Works Regional Land Trust – $10,000 grant award

GREAT WORKS REGIONAL LAND TRUST

Working with Maine Coast Heritage Trust and Maine Farmland Trust, Great Works Regional Land Trust will purchase and manage a conservation easement on approximately 70 acres of mostly forested lands in Eliot. The easement ensures long-term protection of this natural area that includes extensive river shoreline, salt marshes, and forests and will enable salt marsh migration with sea level rise.

Invasive Aquatic Plant Monitoring and Education within the York River Watershed

York County Soil and Water Conservation District – $6,219 grant award

YORK COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

York County Soil and Water Conservation District and volunteers will survey York Pond and Scituate Pond for invasive aquatic plants in 2026 and 2027 using the Lake Stewards of Maine survey protocols. Survey data will be recorded in the state's database. YCSWCD will conduct two public outreach programs to share findings and increase awareness of invasive aquatic plants and best practices to prevent their spread.

Protecting the York River Watershed through Education and Litter Prevention

Blue Ocean Society for Marine Conservation – $8,165 grant award

Blue Ocean Society for Marine Conservation is continuing educational programming, beach and shoreline cleanups, and the fishing line collection program to protect the York River and marine resources. Blue Ocean Society will organize and lead eight school and community education programs and conduct monthly shoreline cleanups, engaging community volunteers to assist in various cleanup opportunities.

Eliot Punkintown Town Forest Trail Improvements

Eliot Conservation Commission — $3,500 grant award

The Eliot Conservation Commission will improve trails on the 108-acre Eliot Town Forest by building and installing new signage on existing existing trails and constructing new boardwalks for several boggy and seasonally submerged sections of the trail. The new signs and boardwalks will enhance public recreation and protect sensitive resources.

Protecting Land and Improving Climate Resilience in the York River Watershed

York Land Trust — $10,000 grant award

York Land Trust will acquire an undeveloped property to manage as an ecological preserve. This conservation project will help protect water quality, sustain unfragmented forested areas, protect habitats and corridors for wildlife, and improve resilience to climate change impacts.

SAR-Based Tidal Inundation Mapping and Tidal Restriction Assessment for the York River Watershed

Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve — $9,999 grant award

Wells Reserve will coordinate acquisition and processing of Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) imagery during high tide conditions to map tidal inundation dynamics across salt marsh systems in the York River watershed, including tidal attenuation, flooding extent, and drainage behavior. Researchers will use results to identify areas of restricted tidal exchange and help prioritize sites for culvert replacements or other restoration approaches.

Steedman Woods Invasive Plant Control Plan

York Parks and Recreation Department — $1,200 grant award

The Parks and Recreation Department, in coordination with the Conservation Commission, will hire a qualified forester to evaluate the Steedman Woods property to identify invasive plants and create a property-specific Invasive Plant Control Practice Plan that recommends best practices for managing invasive plants to restore native habitats.