Extreme Weather: What to Expect
Climate change means more extreme weather. Floods will be more frequent and damaging, both from heavy rain and rising oceans. More frequent droughts will strain water supplies, water quality, and local fish and wildlife. More heatwaves will test the health of vulnerable residents and natural habitats alike.

Invest in “No Regrets Solutions”
Key policy changes and investments to upgrade our natural and human-built infrastructure will protect lives, property and our local natural resources. Thoughtful climate adaptation measures offer a high return on investment including valuable “secondary benefits” like a higher quality of life and a healthier river immediately. We can:

- Create new parks that also keep rising floodwaters at bay.
- Restore floodplains to protect streets, homes and wildlife habitats.
- Redesign communities to reduce floods, recharge drinking water, stop water pollution, and cool deadly urban heat islands.

NepRWA’s Adaptation Action Plan
Municipalities ultimately determine how communities are designed and built. We will build on our proven track record of partnering with cities and towns to mobilize and support our municipalities for resilience building.

We will begin with personal outreach to local officials to develop shared goals. We will formalize a regional climate collaborative. We will help communities leverage state, federal, and private funding to amplify their own resources and advance key resilience priorities, like:

- Use nature-based solutions to reduce inland and coastal flooding.
- Improve existing storm drain capacity and install green infrastructure.
- Prioritize dam and culvert removals or upgrades to reduce flood failure risk and restore stream health.
- Review and update municipal codes and regulations to minimize impacts on human and ecological health.
- Address other priorities identified by our cities and towns such as public health, equity and water supply.

Project Budget and Resources
To achieve the objectives outlined above, NepRWA must actively engage with a much wider variety of stakeholders across our 14 cities and towns. This will require hiring a full-time Director of Community Resilience, support staff, and interns at an estimated cost of $120,000 per year.

This new initiative positions NepRWA to leverage millions of dollars of project investments by municipalities, state and federal grants, and the private sector.
2019-2020 Donor Impact Highlights
Your support is at the heart of everything NepRWA does including these recent accomplishments.

Stop Water Pollution
- Provided eleven cities and towns with training, workshops, and technical assistance on how to capture and clean polluted road runoff, find and eliminate sewage leaks, and identify better ways to fund needed stormwater upgrades.
- Helped 10 communities draft improved stormwater bylaws using our model, with updates enacted in four communities so far.
- Organized over $400,000 in grants and funding commitments to plan or build stormwater infrastructure upgrades in Stoughton, Canton, Medfield, Quincy, Milton, Norwood, Walpole, and Foxborough.

Greenways and Open Space
- Hired a Natural Resource Specialist to launch our new Greenways Program.
- Strengthened the Neponset River Greenway Council as effective advocates for the DCR Neponset Greenway.
- Opened Willett Pond to public access and canoeing with a new easement.
- Supported park and trail planning in Mattapan, Hyde Park and Canton.
- Advocated for improvements and repairs to the Quincy RiverWalk.

Habitat Restoration
- On Pine Tree Brook, removed invasive phragmites, planted native plants and opened fish passage at the Harland St. Dam in partnership with GBTU.
- Completed 70% design plans and submitted permit applications to remove the Mill Pond Dam on Traphole Brook in Norwood to improve habitat on Greater Boston's best trout stream.
- Secured funding to complete designs for the replacement of a large "problem" culvert on Traphole Brook in Sharon.
- Launched an innovative "environmental DNA" study of cold-water fish habitat in Canton, Dover, Medfield, Milton, Norwood, Sharon, Walpole, and Westwood.

Volunteer Power!
- At our socially distanced fall river cleanup almost 300 volunteers tackled 12 sites and cleared 11 tons of trash.
- Volunteers cleared 500 cubic feet of invasive water chestnut from Shepard's Pond in Canton, a pilot project we hope to expand next year.
- Our incredible volunteers collected more than 1,200 water quality measurements from 41 locations, documenting the health of our waterways and trouble spots that need to be fixed.
- More than 20 volunteers evaluated road culverts and collected temperature and eDNA data to study our trout streams.

Youth and Public Education
- Reached 2,500 5th graders across 10 towns with our watershed lessons and prepared to expand into the Boston Public Schools (prior to COVID-19).
- Reached every home and business in 10 Watershed towns, more than 100,000 households and businesses in all, with information on how to manage pest waste, lawn fertilizers, yard waste, septic systems, dumpsters and more.
- Partnered with X-cel Education to provide occupational environmental science training for underserved youth.

Advocacy and Policy
- Advocated for better protections against climate-related flooding as a member of the MassDEP Stormwater Handbook Advisory Committee.
- Prepared detailed comments on 20-year water withdrawal permits for 5 towns, with an eye toward future droughts.
- Intervened in the permitting process for several high priority development projects to secure better stormwater, stream and public access protections.
- Successfully advocated for the City of Quincy to purchase a flood-prone and environmentally sensitive Harriet Avenue parcel rather than allowing it to be developed.