

# The Blackstone Valley Mill Plate from the Massachusetts Environmental Trust



The Blackstone Valley, running through the central part of the state, was the birthplace of the American industrial revolution. It was on this river in 1790 that Slater's Mill in Pawtucket, RI began operation and would become America's first successful textile mill. This development led to a profound change in the Massachusetts landscape as mills and cities grew around rivers that could power the industry.

Offered since 1999, the Blackstone Valley Mill Plate highlights the need to restore our urban rivers and streams to enhance their ecology and improve the health of riverfront communities.

Many communities have found that transitioning from industrial economies to more diverse economies can be assisted by the redevelopment of riverfronts.

The legacy of our industrial history remains in many of our cities. Contamination in sediment and lingering water quality impairments can make contact with the rivers unhealthy. Outdated and unused dams make rivers impassible for fish and present hazards to people. Aging sewer infrastructure and paved surfaces add new pollutants to the waters.

The Massachusetts Environmental Trust supports projects throughout Massachusetts with these license plates. Protection and restoration of rivers, estuaries, and groundwater supports the people, natural resources, and economic development of communities statewide.



## Recent Grants for Urban Rivers

### **American Rivers, Greenfield: \$50,000**

To conduct final engineering and permitting for the removal of two dams on the Green River in Greenfield.

### **Charles River Conservancy, \$15,000**

To prepare resources offering explanation of water quality and its effects on public swimming in the Charles River and other urban rivers.

### **Charles River Watershed Association: \$50,000**

To gather data and create a Geographic Information System (GIS) data layer and maps to inform local and regional planners about culverts and bridges in need of upgrading to improve hydrologic and wildlife passage functions.

### **Merrimack River Watershed Council, Lowell: \$35,000**

To conduct water quality monitoring in the Merrimack River.

### **Massachusetts Audubon Society, Worcester: \$29,500**

To address stormwater runoff as a major source of water quality impairment in the Blackstone River

### **Nashua River Watershed Association, Fitchburg: \$19,540**

To engage and educate residents from the Cleghorn neighborhood, students, and other interested stakeholders about the barriers to clean water & recreational opportunities on the North Nashua River and the steps that can be taken to help improve water quality

### **Neighborhood of Affordable Housing, East Boston: \$35,000**

To restore additional salt marsh area, help create the 'Creekside Commons' Park, and continue the development of new walkway along Mill Creek.

### **Neponset River Watershed Association: \$21,625**

To utilize the presence of optical brighteners to identify sources of water pollution in parts of the Neponset River.

#### ***Did you know?***

*Massachusetts has over 1,500 miles of coastline*

*There are 30 major river systems in Massachusetts*

*Massachusetts is home to 25 federally endangered and threatened species*

All Massachusetts' drivers have a unique opportunity to safeguard the Commonwealth's waterways by selecting a "Preserve the Trust" environmental license plate.

These are the only specialty plates that exclusively benefit the environment. Proceeds from the sale of the plates have funded more than \$18 million in environmental protection and education projects throughout the Commonwealth. From Provincetown to Pittsfield, approximately \$1 million in grants is awarded annually to fund a diverse array of environmental efforts.

Grants from the Massachusetts Environmental Trust have been used to: find sources of pollution, restore marine and freshwater habitat, protect endangered species, monitor water quality throughout the state, educate students on environmental issues, and much more.

To purchase your Blackstone Mill specialty plate, visit your local Registry of Motor Vehicles or log on to [www.mass.gov/rmv](http://www.mass.gov/rmv) and select "order special plates"

The initial registration fee for your new plate is: \$50

The special plate fee is: \$40  
(\$28 is tax-deductible; \$12 is to manufacture the plate)

Total First time cost of your Environmental Specialty Plates: \$90

Renewal Fee: \$90 every 2 years (\$40 is tax-deductible)

To learn more about the Massachusetts Environmental Trust, please visit [www.MassEnvironmentalTrust.org](http://www.MassEnvironmentalTrust.org)



**MASSACHUSETTS  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
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