Charles River Watershed Association

HARDY POND PROJECT

Protection from Future Flooding in Waltham

Climate change isn't coming—it's here. Precipitation during heavy rain events increased by 55% between 1958 and 2016 in the northeastern United States. And, as our climate continues to warm, we are expecting even more severe storms.

What does this mean for our watershed? More flooding. And, in our highly urbanized watershed that is home to over a million people, that means homes, businesses, critical infrastructure, roadways, and more are vulnerable to flood damage.

HARDY POND is a scenic forty-five-acre pond buffered by wetlands in Waltham. Originally almost twice the size, water levels were lowered in a prior effort to reduce flooding. Today, the pond suffers the effects of stormwater pollution–impaired water quality, cyanobacteria blooms, and invasive species.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Formed in 2019, the **Charles River Climate Compact (CRCC)** is a collaboration of twenty-eight cities and towns, led by CRWA, working together to adapt to climate change. In 2021, the team developed the **Charles River Flood Model (CRFM)** which shows when and where flooding will occur as our climate changes and tests out the impact of potential flood reduction solutions.

Through this collaborative effort, the CRCC published the **Charles River Climate Adaptation and Flood Mitigation Implementation Plan** in 2022. The Plan identifies many potential flood solutions, including a high-priority flood storage and restoration opportunity at Hardy Pond in Waltham.

By the Numbers:

20% REDUCTION IN NEAR-TERM FLOODING DOWNSTREAM OF HARDY POND

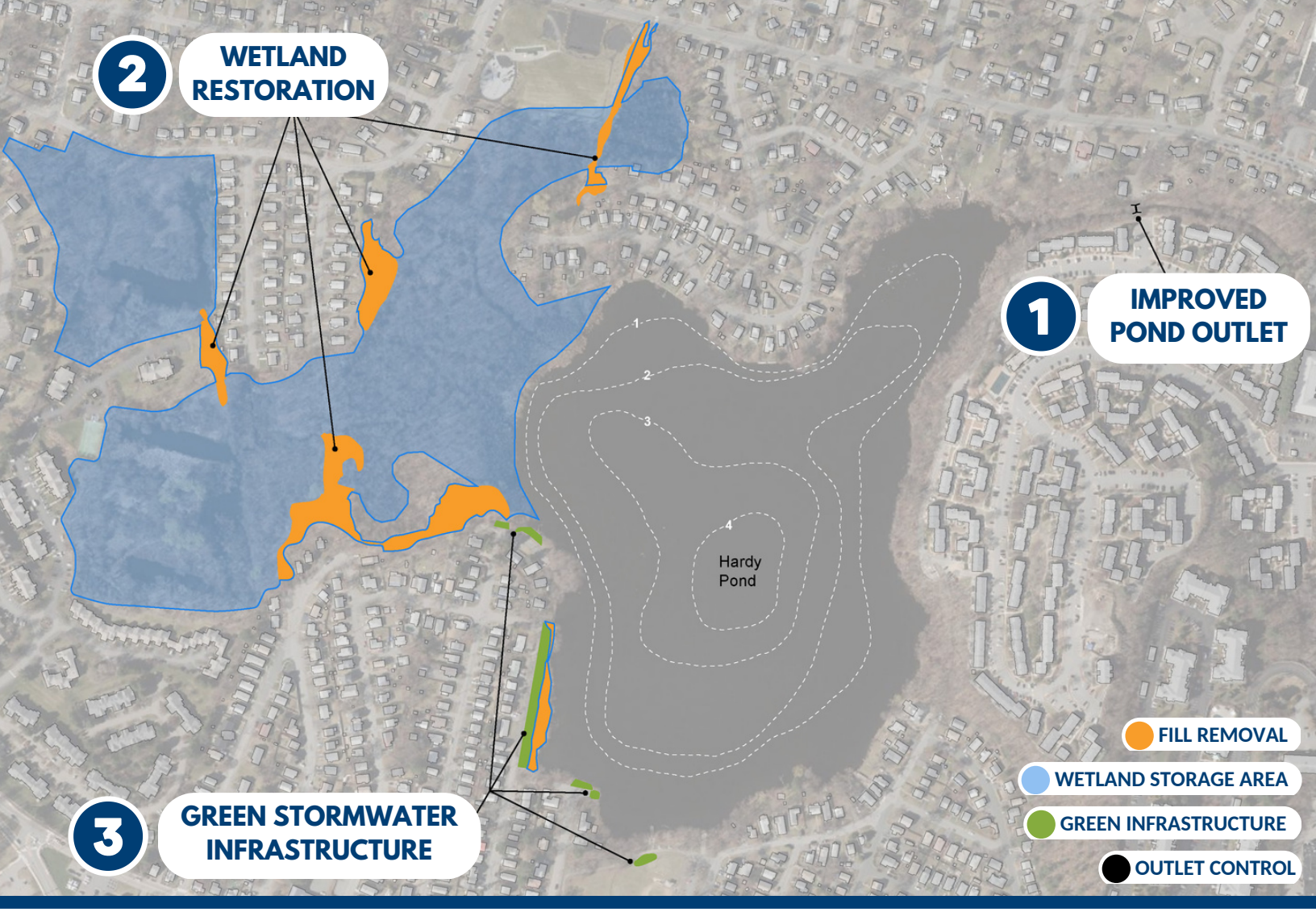
127,400 sq.ft. OF WETLANDS RESTORED TO STORE FLOODWATERS

The project builds on four previous studies including the City of Waltham's Resilient Stormwater Action + Implementation Plan developed with funding from the MVP Action Grant program.

RESTORING HARDY POND

The proposed project will **increase flood storage capacity in the pond** to protect shoreline and downstream areas and **restore the adjacent wetlands** to improve water quality and habitat. The project was selected for its flood mitigation impacts, local community support, benefit to environmental justice populations, and ecological benefits.

LEARN MORE >>>



Three Nature-based Solutions for Hardy Pond:

1 IMPROVED POND OUTLET

Converting the passive outlet to an active control device will allow the City of Waltham to lower the pond level in advance of a storm, making room to **hold stormwater** until it's safe to release downstream, **to protect properties from flooding** and improve water quality and fish passage.

2 WETLAND RESTORATION

Adjacent wetlands have been degraded by development and fill. Building on an effort that removed 32,000 sq. ft. of fill in 2020, sediment removal will restore the health and storage capacity of the wetlands, improve wildlife habitat, and boost biodiversity.

3 GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Waltham residents have identified numerous opportunities for green stormwater infrastructure and bank restoration around the pond to reduce flooding, improve water quality, cool surrounding areas, build habitat, and beautify the neighborhood.

THE OPPORTUNITY

We are asking for support for the City of Waltham to finalize the feasibility investigation and create designs for the proposed project. Sponsored by Representative Thomas Stanley of Waltham, **$200K for the City of Waltham will accelerate the design and implementation of this priority flood mitigation project, and implementation of this priority flood mitigation project,** allow Waltham to leverage additional federal funding for construction, and serve as a model for other communities exploring similar approaches to prepare for climate change.

QUESTIONS? Contact Dep. Director of Advocacy Jen Ryan, jryan@crwa.org, & Climate Compact Director Julie Wood, jwood@crwa.org.