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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Campaign Launched to Solidify Efforts to Protect the Taunton River

Sheehan Family Foundation Funding Will Continue Efforts To Protect Land and Water Resources

A new campaign to protect water and land resources throughout the Taunton River Watershed was launched today with the help of \$250,000 in grants from the Sheehan Family Foundation to nine environmental groups and a regional planning agency. The Foundation, based in Kingston, is funding work in the Taunton River watershed, which extends from Halifax to Narragansett Bay. The funding will link up environmental groups and municipalities working to protect natural resources.

The Foundation funding will increase the ability of environmental groups in the Taunton River region to take steps to protect watershed resources. SRPEDD, the regional planning agency, will provide technical assistance to towns in the region to help them meet the challenges of growth.

The Campaign builds on ongoing efforts across the region, and aims to bring together and solidify ties among the organizations and municipalities. These efforts include the Taunton River Stewardship Program, National Wild and Scenic Study, the Woods Hole Research Center mapping project, the Southeastern Massachusetts Environmental Collaborative, and the Watershed Action Alliance. In particular, the recent votes by municipalities along the river to support federal Wild and Scenic designation for the Taunton River played a critical role in the Sheehan Foundation's decision to launch the campaign.

"In the past several years we have seen many positive developments in the effort to preserve natural resources in the region," said Margaret Sheehan, Executive Director of the Sheehan Family Foundation. "Local support for the Wild and Scenic designation and the Nature Conservancy's recent decision to add the Taunton River to its list of global priorities provides a great impetus to all of us to step up and make a difference. We continue to face many challenges in the effort to protect natural resources in the region, and working together these groups can enhance their effectiveness." she added.

Sheehan Family Foundation grants will go to the following organizations:

- Taunton River Watershed Alliance
- Save the Bay – Narragansett Bay, Providence, RI

- Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District
- The Nature Conservancy, Massachusetts Chapter
- The Trust for Public Land
- The Trustees of Reservations
- Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts
- Environmental League of Massachusetts
- Manomet Center for Conservation Science
- Mass Audubon

“By supporting increased and coordinated efforts by local governments, watershed associations, and land trusts, we can ensure that funding and human resources are used efficiently and in a targeted manner,” Sheehan said. “Each group has something different to offer and coordination will ensure that priority natural resources are protected. This will help municipalities make informed decisions in guiding future development. Growth and development will happen, but identifying environmental priorities ensures growth happens in a way that supports biodiversity, keeps the water clean, and preserves the character of our communities.” Sheehan continued.

The Sheehan Family Foundation was established in 1992. Its mission is to protect the environment and enhance the quality of education. It is endowed by L. Knife & Son, Inc. an Anheuser-Busch distributor serving Southeastern Massachusetts, Cape Cod, and the Islands. Grants made by the Foundation since 1992 total nearly \$7 million

“We are proud to be able to support the work of these organizations and individuals in this region. We have worked with many of them before and look forward to having an impact to help protect the environment in the area,” said Tim Sheehan, General Manager and an owner of the fourth generation family business, L. Knife & Son, Inc.

[SEE QUOTES FROM ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS ON PAGES 3-5]

What They Are Saying.....

“The City of Taunton looks forward to working closely with the Taunton River Watershed Alliance and the Sheehan Foundation to help make Taunton the focal point of environmental conservation, awareness and education for the entire region. We are hopeful that the Alliance and Foundation’s efforts will be based at the historic Boyden Refuge in Taunton.”

*Robert G. Nunes, Mayor
City of Taunton*

“As a leader in land protection, we are thankful to the Sheehan Family Foundation for their support and are excited about the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead as we work together to protect some of the most critical resources in the Taunton River Watershed.”

*Gabriela Silva, Ph.D. Director of Land Protection
The Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts.*

"The Taunton River Wild & Scenic Study Committee/Stewardship Council is thrilled with the Sheehan Family Foundation's investment in the Taunton River Watershed. This grant emphasizes the importance of this magnificent resource and honors the work of hundreds of citizens who care so much about the Taunton River and its surroundings. We look forward to working closely with all the members of the Taunton River Campaign for years to come."

*Jim Ross, Chairman
Taunton River Wild & Scenic Study Committee*

"These generous grants from the Sheehan Foundation will ensure that the coalition built over the past three years will reach its potential. Save The Bay will continue to do its part to ensure that

this remarkable estuary, so critical to the health of Narragansett Bay, gets the protection that it deserves.”

*John Torgan, Narragansett Baykeeper
Save The Bay, Providence, RI*

"The directors of the Taunton River Watershed Alliance are pleased to have this opportunity and distinct honor to collaborate on this Taunton River Campaign initiative with such distinguished and skilled partners. This generous support from the Sheehan Family Foundation will provide an opportunity to strengthen our role as the grassroots stewards of the watershed we've served for the last 16 years. The River deserves this tremendous honor and TRWA looks forward to continuing to help to protect it for generations to come. We look forward with great interest and enthusiasm in actively participating in this critical and timely regional campaign."

*Cathy Kuchinski McCormick, President
Robert W. Davis, TRWA Technical Advisor/Advocacy Director
Taunton River Watershed Alliance, Inc. (TRWA)*

“Many communities in the Taunton River Watershed are facing increasing pressure on their natural resources from fast-paced development. ELM looks forward to working with our partners in the region to ensure that the river and natural areas that make the region special are protected and enhanced, and that new development is well-planned and happens in places where it can best be accommodated.”

*Nancy Goodman, Vice President for Policy
Environmental League of Massachusetts*

"We have worked extensively with the Sheehan Family Foundation to preserve globally rare resources in the Plymouth Pinelands landscape, and we are very pleased to have their support as we expand our work in the Taunton River watershed. Our staff scientists will provide technical

assistance to the steering committee on areas of critical conservation concern as well as management of water to meet both human and ecosystem needs."

Alison A. Bowden, Aquatic Ecologist
The Nature Conservancy MA Chapter

"The Taunton River Watershed is in a part of the state that is under heavy pressure from development. This region is home to some absolutely gorgeous, pristine areas that are worthy of protection."

*Andrew Kendall, executive director
The Trustees of Reservations*

"SRPEDD has been working for many years with Taunton River communities on getting local protection measures adopted, and there is much more work to be done. We look forward to bringing our experience and expertise to this important campaign that is being made possible by the Sheehan Family Foundation."

*Stephen C. Smith, Executive Director,
SRPEDD*

"Mass Audubon salutes the Sheehan Family Foundation for its generous grants in support of the Taunton River Watershed Region and we look forward to providing our expertise to help to ensure the future health of the Taunton River and the important plants and wildlife that it supports."

*Laura Johnson, president
Mass Audubon*

"We are delighted that the Sheehan Family Foundation is supporting TPL and so many like-minded groups in this Taunton River Watershed campaign. We're excited to continue to collaborate in this partnership effort to help communities protect the land and natural resources that people most cherish along the Taunton River."

*Craig MacDonnell, Massachusetts State Director
Trust for Public Land*