



Hurricane Sandy Disaster Recovery


Rhode Island's Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief Grants for
Historic Preservation: Final Report

*Funded by the Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund of the National Park Service,
Department of the Interior, and administered by the R.I. Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission*

March 2019



*Front Cover: The Benjamin Church House under repair in Bristol.
Background: Lighthouse Road in Westerly on the morning after Hurricane Sandy.*



In 2013, the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) was awarded \$3.2 million from the National Park Service to rehabilitate and preserve historic properties and sites impacted by Hurricane Sandy.

Rhode Island's historic properties are most densely clustered in the same coastal areas that bore the brunt of Hurricane Sandy's damage. In Newport, entire sections of Rhode Island's most visited tourist attraction, the historic Newport Cliff Walk, were washed away by a huge storm surge. Westerly reported the highest sustained winds (68 mph) and gusts (86 mph) anywhere in New England, and at the town's Watch Hill Lighthouse, the seawall was largely demolished, fences crumpled, and the road ripped up and buried in boulders.

All five of Rhode Island's counties touch the Atlantic Ocean or Narragansett Bay, and all five received Presidential disaster declarations in the aftermath of the storm. Sandy's effects also rippled throughout the state's economy, in which heritage tourism and our historic resources play a huge role. To address these many needs, RIHPHC used the disaster relief grant to fund a competitive sub-grant program for the repair and rehabilitation of properties that suffered hurricane-related damage. RIHPHC awarded over \$1.8 million in sub-grants to recipients including homeowners repairing damage to private property, municipalities restoring civic landmarks, and non-profit organizations restoring beloved public spaces.

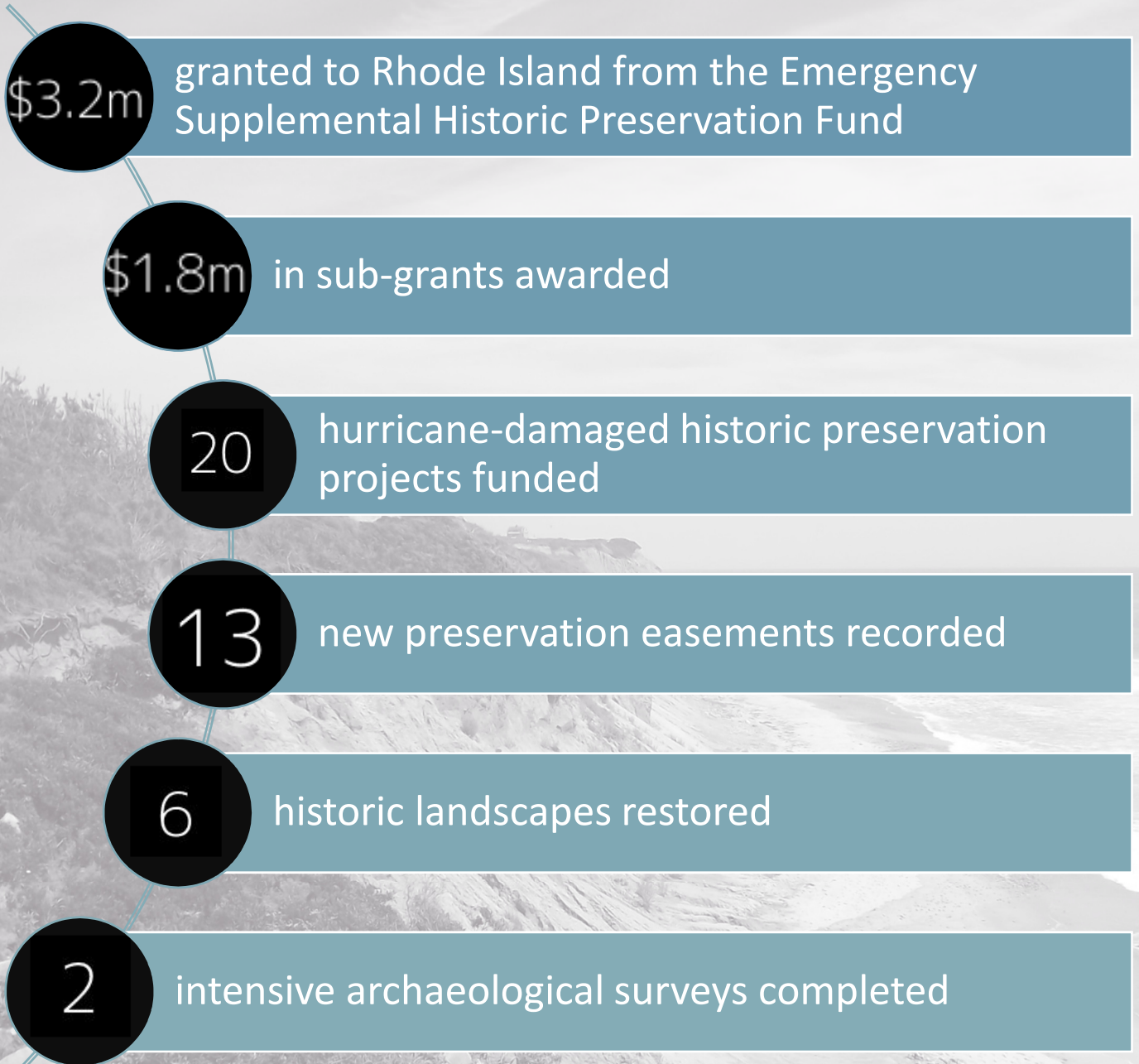
The commitment of Congress and the National Park Service to the repair of historic properties affected by natural disaster has been highly valued by the stewards of these special places.



THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO REPAIR OUR HISTORIC BUILDING, THE BRISTOL FERRY LIGHTHOUSE, WITH HURRICANE SANDY DISASTER RELIEF FUNDS. WE ARE SO GRATIFIED TO HAVE BEEN ABLE TO REPAIR THE DAMAGE WE SUSTAINED THROUGH THE STORM.

Todd and Paula Butlin, sub-grant recipients

Facts and Figures



Sub-grant Project Summary

Property Name	Location	Project Description	Grant Amount
Beavertail Lighthouse	Jamestown	Grant funds were used to repair masonry and replace missing stones of the historic lighthouse foundation (1749).	\$3,500.00
Benjamin Church Home	Bristol	Building serves as town's Senior Center. Damaged cedar shingle roof replaced in-kind.	\$49,000.00
Rose Island Lighthouse	Newport	Foundation of Fog Signal building repaired, and southwest bastion of Ft. Hamilton repointed. Lighthouse is a museum open to the public.	\$103,500.00
Southeast Lighthouse	Block Island	Roof repair and replacement of approximately 100 slate roof shingles. Lighthouse is a museum open to the public.	\$1,958.00
Stillhouse Cove	Cranston	Historic landscape restoration at public park.	\$31,856.70
Stone Lea	Narragansett	Repair of extensive damage to the roof and two dormer windows. Building is a private residence.	\$99,276.00
W.T. Grant Building	Pawtucket	Complete replacement of the damaged roof, masonry repairs, interior repairs, and the replacement of three skylights.	\$191,000.00
Watch Hill Lighthouse	Westerly	220 feet of seawall rebuilt, and protection for the new seawall provided in the form of a stone revetment system.	\$447,500.00
Cliff Walk	Newport	Stabilization and repair of a dangerously eroded earthen slope and other stone and mortar seawalls. The Cliff Walk is RI's most popular tourist stop.	\$600,938.00
Peace Dale Mfg. Co. Barns	South Kingstown	Roof replacement.	\$9,124.70
The Towers	Narragansett	Roof replacement. Civic landmark of the Town of Narragansett.	\$57,820.00
The Breakers	Newport	Historic landscape restoration. Museum open to the public.	\$7,135.00
Newport Congregational Church	Newport	Repaired hurricane damage to the roof and interior plaster walls of the Parish House. Museum open to the public.	\$2,902.00
Bristol Ferry Lighthouse	Bristol	Extensive exterior and interior water—damage repairs. Private residence.	\$99,999.00
Vinland	Newport	Roof repair. Building is part of Salve Regina University.	\$4,913.00
Ochre Court	Newport	Replacement of missing and broken slate roof shingles in-kind, repair of 2 storm-damaged copper finials on dormers, and repair of the copper portion of the roof ventilator. Building is part of Salve Regina University.	\$4,863.00
Chateau-sur-Mer	Newport	Historic landscape restoration. Museum open to the public.	\$4,028.00
Rosecliff	Newport	Historic landscape restoration. Museum open to the public.	\$16,723.00
Lanphear Livery Stable	Westerly	Repair and replacement of stressed and damaged foundation and first floor structural systems.	\$49,999.00
Rough Point	Newport	Historic landscape restoration. Museum open to the public.	\$7,657.50
Christopher Townshend House	Newport	Study of architectural, landscape, and engineering interventions that might be incorporated into preservation planning for this 1728 residence owned by the Newport Restoration Foundation, and other colonial-era houses at risk of damage from storm related events and sea level rise in Newport's historic Point Neighborhood.	\$33,950.00
			\$1,827,642.90

Other Accomplishments

Archaeological Surveys

In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, damage to famous Rhode Island historic properties, such as Newport's Cliff Walk, immediately drew public attention. The status of less visible, but potentially important, archaeological resources remained unclear. RIHPHC administered two surveys to identify and evaluate archaeological sites along the South Coast and on Block Island. Fieldwork was conducted in two phases, the first being Phase I reconnaissance survey of the coastline to identify, describe, photograph, and map locations where Hurricane Sandy had exposed archaeological materials. Phase II intensive survey was also conducted to evaluate the National Register eligibility of sites. This project documented the transformative effects of Hurricane Sandy on coastal archaeological sites, evaluated the eligibility of many of those sites for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and provided new insights into ancient Native American coastal occupation. The archaeological contractors also produced GIS deliverables consisting of shapefiles and metadata that locate sites, their boundaries, and associated excavation units, which were produced to ensure compatibility with the Rhode Island Geographic Information System (RIGIS) – a database of geographically referenced information managed at the University of Rhode Island on behalf of state government agencies. Findings were presented at two public stakeholder meetings in September 2016.

Total Cost of Surveys: \$884,086.14



Above: Field work on Block Island (left) and the South Coast (right).

Geographic Information System

Following the completion of the grant-funded archaeological surveys, RIHPHC entered into a cooperative agreement with the University of Rhode Island to translate data derived from these studies into a Geographic Information System for historic preservation planning and management. RIHPHC archaeology staff are now using the GIS system to aid in the review of small-scale projects, and the result has been a substantial reduction in the amount of time required for review.

In April 2018, RIHPHC and URI staff presented papers at the Annual Meeting for the Society for American Archaeology concerning institutional responses to managing archaeological sites damaged by Hurricane Sandy and facilitated a discussion among several experts on the topic of how to most effectively use GIS for coastal archaeological site registry and management.

Total Cost of GIS: \$260,817.00

Before and After



Above: Fog Signal Building at Rose Island Lighthouse, Newport



Above: Roof of The Towers, Narragansett



Above: Seawall at Watch Hill Lighthouse, Westerly



Before and After



Above: Ochre Court, Newport



Above: Original foundation of Beavertail Lighthouse, Jamestown



Above: Vinland, Newport





RI Historical Preservation
& Heritage Commission