



The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation announces the first recipients of its Water Stewardship Grant in honor of World Water Day

March 22, 2021

Funding will support nonprofit innovation and programming aimed at protecting water quality for The Everglades and The Long Island Sound, two of America's most treasured waterbodies

MARYSVILLE, Ohio, March 22, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Driven by the critical need to bring bold clean-water innovation to our nation's most critical waterways, The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation today announced the first recipients of its Water Stewardship Grant—The Nature Conservancy's New York Chapter and The Everglades Foundation. Both groups will work to advance scientific innovation and solutions related to the reduction of harmful algal blooms (HABs), which affect freshwater and marine waters in over 50% of U.S. states every year.

The Water Stewardship Grant will be presented annually by The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation to a group or groups of scientific innovators working to reduce the impact of Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs), which continue to pollute freshwater in America's most important waterbodies and threaten drinking water and wildlife. Typically caused by excess phosphorus, these harmful algal blooms are estimated to cost the U.S. economy \$2.2 billion annually. The Grant aims to provide additional critically needed funding to enable nonprofit organizations to advance research and real-life scientific solutions to this problem.

"Clean water is one of the most vital environmental issues of our time and far too many communities experience the negative effects of nutrient pollution in their local waterways year after year," said Jim King, president of The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation. "The Water Stewardship Grant supports the important, and often expensive, work to bring bold, lasting clean-water innovation to fight against harmful algae blooms. The solution-driven efforts of The Nature Conservancy and The Everglades Foundation to help reduce nutrient pollution in their local and regional waterways are beyond inspiring, they are pragmatic approaches that engage communities, homeowners and each of us in the fight for clean water."

This year's recipients were selected based on their critical work to battle the effects of harmful algae blooms in their communities. Funding for The Nature Conservancy will be used to support the upgrade of residential septic systems on Long Island to diminish nitrogen pollution from sewage and to provide assistance to low-to-moderate income families looking to make septic system improvements. This Grant aligns with ScottsMiracle-Gro's broader initiative to educate Long Island homeowners on lawn care practices that protect the Long Island Sound.

"Water is a vital resource on which all life depends. On Long Island, it anchors our local economy, from recreational fishing to tourism. Polluting septic systems are the number one source of nitrogen pollution in the region. We are grateful to be among the first recipients of the Water Stewardship Grant, which will support our work to help homeowners install clean water septic systems—one of the key ways Long Islanders can prevent pollution and protect clean water," said Kevin McDonald, The Nature Conservancy's Long Island Policy Advisor. "Addressing nitrogen pollution and its effects on water quality along Long Island's coastline, ponds, streams, and drinking water is not a one-stop solution. It takes collaboration and the committed participation of Long Islanders, their legislative representatives, and dedicated organizations that can each contribute in their own way."

Funding for The Everglades Foundation will further science, advocacy, environmental policy and programming to restore the Everglades in South Florida, one of the world's largest and most endangered wetlands. Grant funding will support on the ground research as well as public awareness to advance water quality innovation surrounding the economic impact of Everglades restoration. Previously, The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation was the presenting sponsor for The Everglades Foundation's George Barley Water Prize, a \$10 million global competition to discover a solution for removing phosphorus from freshwater. Groundbreaking scientific innovations were developed during this competition that are still being researched today.

"Restoring and protecting our water quality is one of the core missions of The Everglades Foundation," said CEO Eric Eikenberg. "We are grateful for The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation's continued support, both for Everglades restoration and in our joint efforts to reduce the occurrence of harmful algal blooms in fresh waterways all over the globe."

Driven by its purpose to GroMoreGood everywhere, The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company has taken action over the last decade to prevent local nutrient pollution from lawn and garden activity by removing phosphorus from its traditional lawn fertilizer products sold under the Scotts® brand. The move reduced consumer use of phosphorus by 10,000 tons each year. The Company also increased its use of slow release nitrogen and redesigned spreaders and other application devices to minimize the potential for product misuse and runoff. Most recently, the company has created custom products for communities with vulnerable waterways, such as the newly launched *Scotts® Turf Builder® Long Island Lawn Food*. Unfortunately, more than 10 million metric tons of phosphorus continue flowing into freshwater from other sources.

That's why, as part of its ongoing commitment to this issue, The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation continues to fund the work of leading environmental organizations in critical areas across the United States through its [National Partner Network](#). The addition of the Water Stewardship Grant enables the Foundation to prioritize scientific innovation and emerging environmental needs as they are rapidly developing each year.

Securing a clean water future remains ScottsMiracle-Gro's number one environmental priority. To learn more about ScottsMiracle-Gro's water stewardship efforts, and how you can help, visit: www.scottsmiraclegro.com/cleanwater.

About The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation

The mission of The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation is to inspire, connect and cultivate a community of purpose. The Foundation is deeply rooted in helping create healthier communities, empower the next generation, and preserve our planet. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that funds non-profit entities that support its core initiatives in the form of grants, endowments and multi-year capital gifts. For more information, visit www.scottsmiraclegrofoundation.org.

Media contact:

Molly Jennings
molly.jennings@scotts.com
937-578-1352