

# Coastal Features

INFORMATION  
ABOUT THE  
RHODE ISLAND  
COASTAL  
RESOURCES  
MANAGEMENT  
PROGRAM

SPRING 1995

VOLUME III, No. 3

## Rhode Island Awarded Funding for "Project of Special Merit"

*by Aria Brissette*

For the fourth consecutive year Rhode Island has received an Enhancement Grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to fund a Project of Special Merit (PSM). Under Section 309 of the Coastal Zone Management Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990, PSM Enhancement Grants are awarded to coastal states on a competitive basis and must address recommended program enhancements identified in the assessment of each state's coastal program. Of the 34 PSM proposals submitted to

NOAA, 23 were selected. Rhode Island has received \$134,500 in federal funding for its PSM entitled "A Sustainable Beach and Dune Replenishment Program for Rhode Island's Southern Shore."

This PSM's strategy has two key parts. One is to determine the movement of sand to and from the shoreface and inner shelf, and the residence time of sand on the shoreface before it is returned to the beaches or moved seaward to the inner shelf. Sites to be studied include the Charlestown barrier and Misquamicut headland, as well as a segment of the Misquamicut barrier.

The second key component of this PSM involves close coordination between the researchers, CRMC staff and municipal planners during the course of this project. This will ensure that the geological data collected is useful and that it is recorded in a format which can be used to make, revise, and implement policy decisions for a sustainable beach and dune management strategy.

Attention was refocused on the problem of shoreline sediment supply in southern Rhode Island when two storms of 1991, Hurricane Bob and the Halloween Nor'easter, followed by the intense

blizzard of early December, 1992, hit the state. The question of how to prolong the lives of the beaches as well as protect coastal ponds, residential development, parking and commercial infrastructure once again became an important issue.

Because the Rhode Island shoreline has a very low supply of sediment and the CRMC has policies limiting the use of structural shoreline protection, beach replenishment has become an option. At issue is where to get the sand to use for replenishment. Taking the sand from upland is complicated because these sources are restricted by economic and environmental concerns. Tidal-delta sources are an option but there is a limited volume available. This PSM focuses on a third option, that of obtaining sand from the shoreface. The shoreface is the narrow zone seaward from the low tide shoreline, covered by water, over which the beach's sand and gravel actively oscillate with changing wave conditions. The objective of this investigation is to find out whether sufficient quantities of sand exist and, if so, whether or not this sand can be mined without decreasing the fair-weather supply to the shoreline.

*(continued on page 2)*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Marine Industry Workshop  
Page 2
- Nonpoint Source Tips  
Page 3
- "Coming Attractions"  
Pages 4 and 5
- Right of Way Posting Program  
Page 6
- Artificial Reef Planning  
Page 7



## Marine Industry Workshop Held

On April 12, 1995, CRMC staff participated in the first Environmental Workshop for the Rhode Island Marine Industry. This workshop was discussed in the previous issue of *Coastal Features* and was sponsored by the Rhode Island Marina Assistance Collaborative, the Department of Environmental Management, the Rhode Island Marine Trade Association, the Department of Economic Development, and URI Coastal Resources Center/Rhode Island Sea Grant.

The main objectives of the workshop were to inform and educate the marine industry on issues such as:

- Innovative management practices and proactive pollution prevention approaches that represent cost-effective measures for pollutant source reduction.

- New federal and state regulations pertinent to marine industry operations and the potential impacts of these regulations on the industry as a whole.
- Ongoing efforts of the Rhode Island Marina Assistance Collaborative, the benefit to the industry from these efforts, and how the industry may participate in these efforts and access information resources.

A number of excellent presentations made by representatives of both the regulatory community and the marine industry demonstrated that significant progress has been and continues to be made in developing a cooperative relationship between regulators and the marine industry. It also became increasingly clear that a growing number of those involved in the marine industry were making sincere and successful efforts to reduce and prevent pollution associated with their facilities. With each participant receiving a copy of the *Environmental Guide for Marinas*, it is hoped that even further progress will be made as industry representatives put into practice recommendations and ideas contained in the Guide.

With over 20 facilities, including both marinas and builders participating, the workshop was considered a great success. Plans are now under development for a second workshop to be held in October following the boating season. *Coastal Features* will continue to keep readers informed as details on this workshop become available.

## Funding for "Project of Special Merit"

(continued from front page)

A number of different methods will be used to conduct this investigation. They include: beach monitoring; side-scan sonar imaging; water-level recorders; and direct observation by SCUBA divers. The project also has a number of different phases including: determination of sand movement on the shoreface; linkage of bottom changes to processes; development of a sand budget; and management linkage. Most of the scientific research will be conducted by the University of Rhode Island, under the direction of Geologist Jon Boothroyd, and coordinated by CRMC staff. Council staff and the University will interact regularly to discuss project direction, expectations, research efforts, and management implications. Once the project has been completed, conclusions will be formulated and, based on those the conclusions, the CRMC staff and the University together will develop various policy options for final review and consideration by the Council.

This project's significance is the realization of a cost-effective, realistic, and long-term strategy framework for enhancing and maintaining beaches and dunes as natural storm buffers while providing the state and general public a practical means to beach recreation, economic viability, and protection of real property. With this federal funding, Rhode Island will be able to carry out the studies needed to achieve this goal. If you have any questions about the project please feel free to call CRMC at (401) 277-2476.

## Coastal Features

*Coastal Features* is a publication of the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC). The Preparation of this newsletter was financed, in part, by a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) pursuant to the 1972 Coastal Zone Management Act (as amended).

This issue of *Coastal Features* was edited by Laura Kelley Miguel. To comment on any article or to make address changes, please write to the CRMC at the Oliver Stedman Government Center, Tower Hill Road, Wakefield, Rhode Island, 02879.



## Nonpoint Source Tips

*by Scott Ringland*

With the summer months approaching and many of us anxious to start the boating season, some simple ways to reduce nonpoint source pollution related to recreational boating activities should be kept in mind. Listed below are several tips that will help reduce the impact of boating and boat maintenance on Rhode Island's coastal waters.

- Never throw trash overboard. Properly dispose of solid wastes such as cans, bottles, paper, etc. in designated areas. Recycle whenever possible.
- Never dump sewage overboard. Familiarize yourself with the location of sewage pumpout facilities available in your area. For information on pumpout facilities, hours of operation and fees, or for a free copy of the Narragansett Bay Marina Pumpout Facilities guide, call the Rhode Island DEM at 277-3961 ext. 7258 or the CRMC at 277-2476.
- Retrofit your boat with a Coast Guard-approved marine sanitation device (MSD), if necessary. (It is illegal in Rhode Island to have an MSD onboard that is not Coast Guard approved.)
- Use proper fueling techniques. Take care not to overfill fuel tanks causing unnecessary and dangerous spills. Safety mechanisms such as automatic shutoff nozzles and whistle valves will help reduce the amount of fuel that is spilled into the surrounding areas.
- Choose an appropriate location to sand or paint your boat. Many marinas provide areas for these specific tasks. Use equipment that is environmentally safe such as vacuum sanders and drop cloths. These will contain the paint particles before they can enter the marine environment. Sweep surrounding surfaces following completion of work.
- When washing your boat try to use just plain water and a sponge, but be sure to limit the amount of water used. If cleaners are necessary, use non-toxic, biodegradable products.
- Invest in oil absorbing materials that can be placed around the bilge and then safely disposed later. This will reduce the amount of oil entering the surface waters through the bilge areas.
- Properly dispose of fish waste. Clean your catch on the return trip in order to disperse the fish waste over a greater area. If cleaning your catch after docking be sure and dispose of the fish waste in either designated containers or compost bins.
- Stay out of shallow water areas. This will reduce turbidity and the physical destruction of shallow water habitats.
- Encourage your marina to adopt Best Management Practices (BMPs).

For more information on reducing pollution caused by boating activities or marina BMPs, please contact the CRMC at 277-2476 or the Department of Environmental Management at 277-3961 ext. 7258.



# Coastal Resources Management

## Council to Celebrate 25th Anniversary... Still Leading the Way!

In 1996 coastal zone management will celebrate its 25th anniversary in Rhode Island. It was in 1971 that Rhode Island, in passing legislation to establish the Coastal Resources Management Council, took the lead nationally in coastal zone management and became the first state to adopt a coastal zone management program. Since then, the Council has persevered in its commitment to "protect, preserve, develop and where possible, restore the coastal resources of the state for this and succeeding generations". We are now reaching the point where the first "succeeding generation" will

enjoy the benefits of coastal zone management in Rhode Island over the past twenty five years. To highlight some of the Council's achievements and to provide a sense of history to the management of Rhode Island's coastal resources during these first twenty five years, *Coastal Features* will be featuring articles from early editions of the original Council newsletter *Coastal Briefings* and interviews with people who were actively involved with the Council during its infancy over the next year. In addition, suggestions on how the Council could celebrate this important milestone

would be greatly appreciated. The Council is asking those who may have ideas on ways to celebrate this anniversary which call public attention to the importance and value of coastal zone management in Rhode Island to pass those ideas along to its staff. Please address your ideas to:

Editor, *Coastal Features*  
Rhode Island Coastal Resources  
Management Council  
Oliver Stedman Government Center  
Tower Hill Rd.  
Wakefield, RI 02879

### Coastweeks '95

As the days get warmer and longer, we are reminded that this year's Coastweeks celebration, which will run from September 16 to October 9, approaches. Although it may seem like a long way off, now is the time for organizations to start thinking about sponsoring events related to coastal issues to be included in the annual Coastweeks calendar. As in past years, the CRMC & Rhode Island Sea Grant are putting the calendar together.

Last year, Coastweeks was a big success in terms of involvement and variety of activities. Some examples of the events included: the annual "Get the Drift & Bag It" beach clean up and survey; historical tours of the Providence waterfront aboard a 49 passenger riverboat; several concerts; the U.R.I. Lunchtime Oceanography lecture series; a "Salt Marsh Ramble"; and, the 6th annual "Taste of Rhode Island" festival.

Several fun events for children including a specimen collection/scavenger hunt, were also added last year.

Coastweeks was first started in 1982 in an effort to focus attention on the value of our coast and its natural resources. It has since become an annual nationwide event. Rhode Island first began participating in Coastweeks in 1987, through Rhode Island Sea Grant, and the event has grown each year since. The CRMC has been involved in Coastweeks planning and coordination in partnership with Rhode Island Sea Grant since 1991.

We look forward to Coastweeks '95 being the biggest and best Coastweeks ever. Forms for sponsors of Coastweeks events will be going out in the mail soon. Meanwhile, should you have any questions regarding Coastweeks, please contact the CRMC at (401)277-2476.

### Bring Back Greenwich Bay Day

On June 3, 1995, the CRMC will be participating in the second annual "Bring Back Greenwich Bay Day" sponsored by the Narragansett Bay Project. The event will be held at City Park in Warwick and take place from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. June 4 has been scheduled as a rain date. Last year this event was a huge success owing partly to the great weather and enthusiastic participation of many agencies and user groups. Once again, there will be entertainment for children, food, and a number of booths with displays and information on a variety of coastal and watershed issues. We look forward to another successful year and hope to see many of our readers there. For more information contact the Narragansett Bay Project at (401)277-3961, extension 7272.



# Council "Coming Attractions"

## 1995 Reauthorization of the CZMA

by Charles Carter

Sometime between the months of June and October 1995, the reauthorization of the CZMA is scheduled to be brought to the Floor of the House in this, the 104th meeting of the U.S. Congress. This time around however, Congress in general, and the individual committees governing the various components of the CZMA in particular, have undergone some major reconstruction.

### Changes in the House:

An important change results from the elimination of the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee which in the past had jurisdiction over the CZMA. Now, the Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee, under the direction of the House Resource Committee, will have jurisdiction over the core of the CZMA. In another change the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program, Section 6217 of the CZARA, was separated from the CZMA during the reconstruction process. The House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee is now in charge of overseeing Section 6217, with the Resources and Agriculture Committees having sequential jurisdiction. The Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee has jurisdiction over Section 6217 at the subcommittee level.

### Section 6217:

Late on May 10, the House eliminated a provision from the Clean Water Act (CWA) rewrite bill (H.R. 961) which would have expressly repealed Section 6217. Although the CWA bill brought to the House Floor by Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bud Schuster (R-PA) would have eliminated Section 6217 entirely, the House approved an amendment offered by Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY) which reauthorizes

Section 6217 through the year 2000. The amendment would modify existing requirements by allowing states greater flexibility in developing and implementing Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Programs. The amendment would also remove existing penalty provisions.

### CZMA Reauthorization:

At this early stage in the reauthorization process, several amendments to the CZMA have thus far merely been suggested. One amendment would extend the eligibility period for federal assistance to states developing coastal management plans (CMPs) from two to four years. Another initiative proposes amending section 309 to allow coastal enhancement grants to be used for implementing improvements previously developed under the coastal enhancement grants program. The use of these grants would be limited to two years. (See related story on page 1) Also under consideration is the amendment of Section 315 to allow research grants to be used in support of research conducted outside of the boundaries of the National Estuarine Research Reserves. And perhaps the most important amendment is one which would reauthorize Section 306 funding, the major source of federal assistance to state coastal programs.

### What Lies Ahead

Even as Coastal Features goes to press, new proposals for reauthorization are being put on the table for consideration. As the House CWA rewrite bill has not been finalized, and the Senate has yet to have its say, it is unclear exactly what requirements states will have to meet in accordance with Section 6217. Given the level of effort that has been put into complying with Section 6217 and the fact the statutory deadlines

for program submission have not been changed, Rhode Island continues to work towards developing an approvable Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program. Should the program be modified or repealed, a manageable framework for controlling Nonpoint Source Pollution in Rhode Island will nonetheless remain valuable. Should the program be retained, Rhode Island will be prepared to move forward. With regard to the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Coastal States Organization (of which Rhode Island is a member) supports reauthorization which allows for a modest increase in program funding.

Lacking a crystal ball and given the current trend in Congress, the reauthorization package Congress agrees upon cannot be predicted. One can only hope that Congress will recognize the achievements and value of coastal zone management when considering the reauthorization of the CZMA.

### Septic System Workshop Scheduled

On June 10, the Rhode Island On-Site Waste Water System Demonstration and Training Program (see Coastal Features, vol. 3, no.1) will sponsor a workshop on septic system operation and maintenance for home owners, buyers and sellers. The purpose of the workshop is to educate participants on the proper way to treat and maintain septic systems. The workshop will be held at the University of Rhode Island, University Club on Upper College Road from 9:00 a.m. until noon. There is a \$5.00 fee for the workshop and preregistration is encouraged. For registration and information, call (401)792-5398.





## Right of Way Posting Program Breaks Ground in Warwick

by Scott Ringland

On March 29, 1995, the CRMC, represented by Marine Resources Specialist Jeff Willis, met with Warwick Mayor Lincoln Chafee to celebrate the posting of a CRMC designated right of way (ROW). Also participating in the celebration were Warwick Director of Public Works, Ted Sheen, William DePasquale of the City Planning Department, a number of city employees and neighborhood residents.

The Mayor, together with the CRMC, announced that 15 locations had been selected and designated as public ROWs. These sites represent the first ROWs designated in Warwick in almost sixteen years. "I am pleased that CRMC has recognized that rights of way to tidal waters exist within the City of Warwick and these rights of way should be preserved for the public good," said Mayor Chafee.

Located at the intersection of Ogden Avenue and Burnett Road, the first ROW to be marked is approximately 20 feet wide and 150 feet long. It is a paved road that is bordered on both sides by houses. This ROW provides citizens with access to the shore so that they may enjoy the tidal areas for activities like scuba diving and fishing. It also provides a beautiful view of Narragansett Bay with the towers of the Jamestown and Newport bridges rising in the distance.

In its enabling legislation the CRMC was given the task by the Rhode Island General Assembly to designate sections of land as public ROWs. The importance of these areas in providing access to the shore has been a part of Rhode

Island's history and is codified in the State's constitution. Mayor Chafee recognized this at the posting by quoting Section 17 of the Rhode Island Constitution which states that "[t]he People shall continue to enjoy and freely exercise all the rights of fishery, and the privileges of the shore, to which they have been entitled under the charter and usages of this state, including but not limited fishing from shore, the gathering of seaweed, leaving the shore to swim in the sea and passage along the shore, and they shall be secure in their rights to the use and enjoyment of the natural resources of the state with due regard of their values..."

Recently the CRMC resumed responsibility for placing signs at rights of way locations from the RIDEM. (The CRMC has always retained responsibility for designating ROWs.) The CRMC has implemented the use of a special post made of a durable material

which will be securely set in the ground at the beginning of each right of way. Each post will stand almost seven feet tall and will have a sign fastened to the top that reads "Shoreline Public Access". The poles are expected to stand up to most acts of vandalism and should not have to be replaced very often, if at all.

The CRMC will continue working with the City of Warwick and other coastal communities in order to protect public access and ROWs to the shoreline. In addition, the CRMC hopes to improve public awareness and reduce trespassing by clearly identifying legally designated ROWs to the shore throughout the State. Accordingly, the marking of this ROW in Warwick is just the first of many that will be marked in the future.

For more information on the CRMC's ROW designation process or ROW posting program, contact the CRMC's Jeff Willis at 277-2476.



*Warwick Mayor Lincoln Chafee and local resident admire the view from the newly-posted right-of-way.*



## Artificial Reef Planning in Rhode Island

by Aria Brissette

Do you ever wonder what is to become of the Old Jamestown Bridge? The old bridge has been standing idle over the West Passage of the Narragansett Bay unused since the activation of the new Jamestown Verrazano Bridge in 1992. One plan under development supports the deployment of the old bridge as a series of marine artificial reefs in the waters of and adjacent to Rhode Island. Leading the project for the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) is Dr. William Gordon, Jr., Associate Professor of Marine Affairs at the University of Rhode Island. Dr. Gordon is responsible for delivering a recommendation to RIDOT detailing candidate reef sites and associated artificial reef development plans.

Essentially, artificial reefs consist of materials which are strategically placed on the ocean floor specifically to attract aquatic species including finfish and benthic organisms. Artificial reef development has typically made use of suitable materials as they become available. With "materials of opportunity" driving the process, artificial reef development has been a reactive process to date. Not all materials are suitable for artificial reef development. Wooden ships and automobiles are among those materials that are unacceptable. Prefabricated materials have seen limited application in the United States.

According to Dr. Gordon, the deployment of materials from the Old Jamestown Bridge as artificial reefs offers the State an opportunity for continued economic benefit from the bridge instead of it wasting away in a landfill.



*Old and New Jamestown Bridges*

Dr. Gordon explains that there is a well documented history of deploying old bridge materials as artificial reefs and that the placement of the Old Jamestown Bridge is very similar to the placement of the Old Sunshine Skyway Bridge in the waters off of Florida. Approximately 6,100 feet of the concrete and steel structure would be removed and deployed as predesigned artificial reefs. The remaining 1,600 would serve as a fishing pier.

Various benefits could arise from the creation of artificial reefs in Rhode Island waters. Marine recreational fisheries, sport diving, and marine aquatic resources could potentially benefit from the creation of habitat where little or none had previously existed. Also, the Rhode Island tourism economy could benefit from an increase in recreational fishing and diving within the state.

When asked about concerns that have been raised regarding the proposed artificial reef project,

Dr. Gordon responded by saying that "there is appropriate concern over whether or not this planning and deployment exercise is responsible because there is always the problem of the uninformed, where people are unfamiliar with the involved literature on case history of deployments located elsewhere". Dr. Gordon feels that the current project is very responsible, saying "the practice of artificial reef deployment is an everyday occurrence in the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic. The Old Jamestown Bridge represents the largest undertaking of its type on the East coast. Therefore, with a lack of prior experience, many agencies and organizations are cautious, as they should be. My background in artificial reef planning and the role I've had in promoting responsible development activities I believe is a benefit to this process here in Rhode Island. I believe Rhode Island will eventually have the best artificial

*(continued on back cover)*

## Coastal Resources Management Council Members

Sandra Thornton-Whitehouse, Chair  
Paul T. Hicks, Secretary  
David Abedon  
Michael Bernstein  
George N. DiMuro  
Noelle F. Lewis  
Lloyd Sherman  
Turner C. Scott  
Jerry Sahagian  
William F. Harty, Jr.  
Michael Tikoian  
James Beattie, RIDEM  
Representative Paul E. Moura  
Representative Edward J. Smith  
Senator Dennis L. Algieri  
Senator Helen Mathieu

Grover J. Fugate, Executive Director  
Jeanne Shepard, Esq. Legal Counsel

## Artificial Reef Planning in Rhode Island

(continued from page 9)

reef management plan in the country".

When and where would the bridge material be deployed as artificial reefs? Proposed candidate reef sites are yet to be revealed and the bridge demolition is slated to begin in 1997. Reef construction is anticipated to be a year once the applicable permits have been received. The CRMC has not yet received any formal application for the artificial reefs but looks forward to working with Dr. Gordon, RIDOT, other state agencies and interested parties to ensure the best possible disposal of the Old Jamestown Bridge, whether it be as artificial reefs or through another means.

It should be emphasized that the CRMC has not yet permitted the disposal of the Old Jamestown as a artificial reef. However, the Council remains dedicated to making decisions which are based upon sound scientific principles, which consider all viable options, and which balance the interests and needs of all Rhode Islanders. It is on this basis that the Council would consider the artificial reef option, should the CRMC receive a formal application for the deployment of the Old Jamestown Bridge as artificial reefs. The CRMC also believes that artificial reefs show promise in the Rhode Island coastal zone for fishery habitat enhancement.

Updates on this project will be provided in future issues of *Coastal Features* as more information becomes available.

## Coastal Features

RI CRMC  
Oliver Stedman Government Center  
Tower Hill Road  
Wakefield, R.I. 02879

Bulk Rate  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 1286  
Providence, R.I.