

# Coastal Features



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## CRMC adopts MRDP

*Marine Resources Development Plan will serve as guideline for future management*



*The Marine Resources Development Plan, approved by the Council and adopted on January 10, 2006, will provide a valuable program management tool for the CRMC which will be implemented through the Council's Special Area Management Plans.*

The Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council unanimously approved the Marine Resources Development Plan (MRDP) in January, a program designed to provide a roadmap for improving the health and functionality of the state's marine ecosystem, providing for appropriate marine-related economic development and promoting the use and enjoyment of these resources by all Rhode Islanders.

The plan was designed to guide the fuller use by the CRMC of its authority under Chapter 46-23 of the Rhode Island general laws and under the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act. Last year, the General Assembly comprehensively updated Rhode Island's environmental management statutes, giving the CRMC the power to develop and adopt this plan. The plan will also be incorporated into the State Guide Plan.

"The CRMC is very proud of the work it has done in the span of a little more than a year, along with the other legislatively mandated partners, on this Marine Resources Development Plan," said CRMC Chairman Michael M. Tikoian. "This plan will hopefully foster

increased collaboration between all of the agencies and municipalities in the state, and will continue to improve enjoyment and protection of our state's natural resources, for all Rhode Islanders, well into the future."

The MRDP, by design, will provide a roadmap for the Council to transform itself from a permitting-heavy agency into one that is more policy-driven. The major vehicle through which the Council will implement the goals of the MRDP is the numerous Special Area Management Plans, which allow the CRMC to interact with many groups and agencies on a regional level. The CRMC plans to blanket the entire state and its offshore waters with these SAMPs as part of the MRDP strategy.

During the development of the MRDP it became clear that intensification of use was the new challenge facing the CRMC. The vision of the MRDP includes properly functioning bay and lagoon ecosystems; abundant and sustained fishing and fisheries

## Council grants funding to 11 RI restoration projects

The RI Coastal Resources Management Council has awarded \$250,000 for 11 habitat restoration projects, ranging from continued support for the RI Habitat Restoration Portal to the installation of fish ladders and marsh restoration.

The Council approved the funds at a meeting on February 14, for projects that will restore the Wakefield fishway with a new slide gate; construct a permanent fish barrier screen downstream of the Gilbert Stuart Fishway; restore the fish passage for the lower Woonasquatucket River and restore habitat and improve riparian buffer at the Dyerville Dam site on the river; restore the Lower Shannock Falls Dam to restore access to historic

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## MRDP, continued from Page 1

resources; successful coastal places; and marine-based economic development. The plan outlines strategies for improving the health and functionality of the state's marine ecosystem, and for providing appropriate marine-based economic development. The plan outlines implementation activities for the next five years.

### Changing Dynamics, New Responsibilities

In 1971, the Rhode Island legislature established the CRMC to plan for and manage the state's coastal resources, and the Council quickly became a national leader in allocating areas of the state's coastal zone to different uses and then managing development within those areas through permitting. Rhode Island, however, has changed extensively since the CRMC was created, and its management of sensitive coastal areas needs to reflect those changes.

Rhode Island's economy has shifted in the last 30 years, from being manufacturing-based to being service-based. Wastewater treatment plants have been built and upgraded and water quality has improved. The ship Navy has departed, while marine and military research have flourished. Population migration has continued into suburban and rural towns. When the Council was created, the specter of oil refineries and nuclear power plants were real, and the pressure to develop open space was intense.

Thirty four years later, there are no proposals for oil refineries or nuclear power plants on Narragansett Bay and issues of preserving open space and smart growth and development dominate the CRMC's agenda and workload. Just as important, theories of resource management have evolved as scientific and decision-making understanding have deepened, most recently shown in the report of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy.

### Coordination is Key

The concept of the MRDP came from a series of meetings and task force reports to the General Assembly and the Governor's urging that Rhode Island, as a whole, needed to do a better job in marine and coastal resources management. The same year that the CRMC was tasked with developing the plan, the General Assembly determined that state agency collaboration was not at the level required to meet the challenges and take full advantage of opportunities offered to the state heading into the future. The result was a suite of legislation; one of these statutes called for the CRMC to develop a Marine Resources Development Plan in cooperation with three other key groups: The Department of Environmental Management (DEM), the Department of Administration (DOA) and the Economic Development Corporation (EDC). The University of Rhode Island's Coastal Resources Center and Rhode Island Sea Grant also played a large part in the development of the plan, as well as the RI Senate Policy office, and the RI Economic Policy Council.

The MRDP is not a regulatory document, nor does it replace or supersede the existing Rhode Island Coastal Resource Management Program regulations or Special Area Management Plans. The plan is a policy statement adopted by the Council that is intended to serve as a guide to action and to practice. *A PDF version of the MRDP is available at the CRMC web site, [www.crmc.state.ri.us](http://www.crmc.state.ri.us).*

## CRMC Approves Bristol Harbor Management Plan

The Bristol Harbor Management Plan and Harbor Ordinance, which was approved by the CRMC on Feb. 14, 2006, replaces and supersedes the 1994 Harbor Management Plan (HMP), and is designed to be current and have full CRMC approval for five years.

During the period of updating the HMP, the town's Harbor Commission, Harbor Commission Advisory Committee and town council held regular meetings to prepare the update, conducted public workshops, offered a boat tour of Bristol Harbor and had several meetings with the RI Department of Environmental Management.

Some of the visions and goals of the Bristol Harbor Management Plan are:

- To gain proper balance between the diversity and intensity of activities taking place on the water to provide for the safe and orderly use of the water and waterfront;
- To provide for equitable and efficient distribution and management of commercial, transient and private moorings;
- To manage the location of moorings in the mooring fields for efficient distribution without compromising boating safety;
- To improve, expand and maintain public access to the water and waterfront to maximize the ability of residents to use and enjoy coastal and marine resources;
- To safeguard and improve water quality, natural resources and habitat, to ensure continued swimming, boating and fishing in Bristol's jurisdictional waters; and
- To promote and encourage the prudent use of the water and waterfront in a manner that stimulates economic development and protects the coastal environment.

The town of Bristol worked, along with the CRMC and DEM, to develop a novel approach to allow mooring areas where they are typically prohibited by the DEM. The town's willingness to adhere to stipulations in the HMP which ensure a high level of water quality protection in such situations was a key to this success, and was a first among Harbor Management Plans in the state. These new conditions will provide guidance for all other coastal communities as they update and improve their HMPs.

The updated Harbor Management Plan provides guidelines, rules and implementation measures for the management of harbor facilities and boat ramps, moorings and mooring fields, municipal shoreline zones (beaches, swimming and windsurfing areas), shoreline public access, management of harbor activities and water quality, as well as information and policies for commercial fishermen and storm preparedness.

# Harbor Management Plans: What you need to know

New England has experienced a great deal of development along the waterfront and adjacent harbor areas during the past decade. Increases in the population density of coastal areas has brought increased demand for water related activities and uses of harbors and shoreline areas. Changes in the attitudes of society, business and industry, and the effects of nature have had a dramatic affect on shoreline use and harbor areas. These changes have led to user conflicts and water quality degradation. In response to increasing pressures and multiple conflicts over existing water resource uses, the State of Rhode Island has empowered the Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) to enact regulations and planning programs designed to proactively stimulate coastal communities to develop comprehensive municipal harbor management plans (HMPs).

The purposes of HMPs are to:

- 1) Provide a comprehensive and continuous evaluation of municipal harbor management activities;
- 2) Provide for a detailed assessment of current and/or proposed municipal harbor management programs, ordinances or regulations to ensure compliance with applicable regulatory and management requirements of the State of Rhode Island; and
- 3) Delegate the primary management authority and responsibilities of consistent local harbor management programs to the municipalities.

It is in the interest of every coastal community to have a well-thought out, carefully developed harbor management plan that provides a long range vision for controlled growth and development of harbor and shoreline areas. HMPs that achieve this aim routinely include policies and programs outlining goals for the development of the tidal waters adjacent to a municipality and/or the designation of specific locations, conditions, or other management requirements for activities conducted within the local harbor area. CRMC's success in implementing a statewide program for harbor management and emphasis on HMPs as a vital element of community comprehensive planning programs has created a standard by which other coastal states judge the success of their own efforts in land use planning. The harbor planning process must be integrated closely with a community's comprehensive land use plan and zoning regulations in order to be successful. Recommendations for controlled development in a harbor plan that are nullified by land side zoning restrictions undermine the integrated planning cycle and may result in reducing economic returns to the community. A sound harbor management plan allows a community to guide expansion of waterfront development, marinas, mooring fields and other recreational boating activities. The time to examine these issues is before they reach a critical point. Communities must look closely at their present position and prepare long range recommendations and goals for the future.

## HARBOR MANAGEMENT PLANNING AUTHORITIES

**1. State Authority** - CRMC - The submerged lands, coastal resources and tidal waters of the state are subject to the State of Rhode Island's jurisdiction. These areas are owned by the state and held in trust for the public. The state carries out several different management and regulatory programs to protect the rights and interests of the public in these areas, primarily through the CRMC and the Department of Environmental Management (DEM). The CRMC is the state's primary agency for planning and management of coastal resources and the uses made of tidal waters. The CRMC was given jurisdiction over all activities taking place in tidal waters of the state and along the coastline by the RI General Assembly in 1971 (RIGL 46-23). CRMC was charged with "preserving, protecting, developing and, where possible, restoring the coastal resources of the state through comprehensive and coordinated long range planning and management." It was the aim of the General Assembly that these charges be implemented so as to produce the maximum benefit for society.

The approval of municipal harbor management regulations and plans is regulated under Section 300.15 of the CRMP. This section establishes that "all rules or management functions that apply to the use of tidal waters adjacent to a municipality" are considered Municipal Harbor Regulations and subject to review and approval by the CRMC. While the primary responsibility for developing and implementing harbor management remains at the local level, regulations to ensure that actions taken by the municipalities are consistent with the overriding management programs are reserved by the state.

The DEM has primary responsibility within the state for implementing requirements of the Federal Clean Water Act, managing living resources of the state's waters, and for overseeing federal and state land acquisition and open space programs. The DEM has promulgated specific regulations and water quality standards to implement its authority under the Clean Water Act, through its Division of Water Resources. Water Quality Classifications and Standards are designed to protect and improve the quality of the state's waters where these may be threatened or impaired by pollutant discharges. The regulations contain an anti-degradation clause, which establishes that there can be no degradation of classified high-quality waters from their assigned classification due to a proposed activity. The regulations specifically identify concentrations of vessels, as in a marina or mooring area, as a potential source of pollution. The DEM currently utilizes a methodology developed by the National Shellfish Sanitation Program and the US Environmental Protection Agency to determine the potential impacts to water quality from marinas and mooring areas. Compliance of an activity with these requirements is obtained through the issuance of a Section 401 Water Quality Certification, which is prerequisite for CRMC approval of some activities.

**2. Municipal Authority** - Local Harbor Ordinances and Harbormaster Authorities - Chapter 4 of Title 46 of the General Laws of Rhode Island (Harbors and Harborlines) confers upon the coastal municipalities of the state certain powers concerning the regulation of public waters within their jurisdiction. These powers can be segregated into management of vessel operations within harbors, including the removal of wrecks and derelict or abandoned boats or docks, management of anchorages and moorings, and regulation of activities

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## Harbor Management Plan, continued from previous page

such as water-skiing, skindiving, regattas, and marine parades.

The enabling legislation clearly grants towns these powers to ensure the orderly development of the harbor areas within their jurisdictions, particularly as applied to the use of these areas by vessels. Specifically, municipalities are granted authority and power to enact, through ordinance and an appointed harbor master, rules and regulations to control activities on or in the waters under their jurisdiction. They may also impose penalties for violations of such ordinances. In addition, municipalities are empowered to enact zoning ordinances, wastewater management districts, erosion and sediment ordinances, and stormwater management ordinances, each of which can enhance the management of shoreline areas. However, the powers and duties granted through the enabling legislation may not be construed to abrogate the powers and duties of the CRMC.

It is also important to understand what municipalities are not empowered to do under Chapter 4 Title 46 of the RIGL. They are not specifically empowered to consider environmental impacts of activities, prevention of conflicts with other water dependent uses, or to decide resource allocation questions. This is significant, because these issues are often a consequence of how the municipalities exercise their existing authority and how these concepts are included in the HMP process is discussed in Section II of the Guidelines for the Development of Municipal Harbor Management Plans.

**3. Federal Authority** - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, under regulations outlined in Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, requires permits for all work seaward of the mean high water line in the navigable waters of the U.S. In Rhode Island, navigable waters are those subject to the ebb and flow of the tide. Therefore, harbor management plans that identify requirements for improvements to the harbor waters of the municipality such as public boat ramps, docks or commercial moorings, may require the municipality to obtain permits from the Corps' New England Division. Corps permits are also required under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for activities involving the discharge of fill material into U.S. waters. On the coastline, the Corps' jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act extends landward to the high tide line, or to the landward limit of any wetlands, whichever is more extensive. The Corps' regulatory program seeks to ensure that unobstructed access to harbor channels is maintained, and that harbors that have been dredged or maintained with federal funds by the Corps (federal navigation projects) are made available on a policy of "open to all on a fair and equitable basis." Under provisions of this policy, moorings located in harbor areas that were dredged or maintained by the Corps are considered integral elements of the accessibility issue, and are subject to the Corps policy that access to these moorings be non-exclusionary. This means that non-residents of a coastal community must be granted equal opportunity to obtain mooring permits with those of residents, and that a certain percentage or proportion of available mooring space within a federally maintained harbor must be made available to transit boaters for anchorage. The policy also states that any funds received by the municipality for the rental of moorings in federal navigation projects must not exceed that required to maintain and service the mooring area.

### PLANNING CONSISTENCY: FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL CONCERNS

The final HMP must be consistent with the requirements of the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Plan (RICRMP), Section 300.15, Special Area Management Plans, and State Guide Plan Elements. It must also meet specific federal and local standards. Specifically, goals and recommendations made in the harbor management plan must be consistent with those contained in the local comprehensive land use plan and with current zoning regulations of the respective community. This is important in order to ensure that the two planning concepts are carried out in conjunction with one another. Land and water side planning must be considered as one in the long range goals of the community in order to maximize social, economic and environmental benefits.

1. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - The Coastal Resources Management Council forwards all harbor management plans to the New England Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for review of consistency with applicable federal regulatory guidelines.
2. Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Program (RICRMP) - The CRMP provides a blueprint for allowable activities in particular areas of the state's coastal waters. The purpose of this section is to assist municipalities in fully understanding the CRMC policies that pertain to each Water Type within the jurisdiction of the municipality. By following these guidelines consistency with the CRMP can be achieved, and thereby reduce potential problems in the CRMC review of Harbor Management Plans. The following list is a simplification of the allowed and prohibited uses of specific water areas under the CRMP and attempts only to provide general guidance to where differing uses might be allowed.
3. RI DEM - The DEM has primary responsibility within the state for implementing requirements of the Federal Clean Water Act, and managing living resources of the state's waters. To implement its authority under the Clean Water Act, the DEM Division of Water Resources has promulgated specific regulations and water quality standards. Water Quality Classifications and Standards are designed to protect and improve the quality of the state's waters. The regulations contain an anti-degradation clause, which establishes that there can be no degradation of classified waters from their assigned classification due to a proposed activity.
4. Local Compliance - Coordination with Community Comprehensive Plan - The CRMC considers harbor management plans to be the seaward extension of comprehensive plans, therefore municipalities are encouraged to develop HMPs in conjunction with the town's comprehensive plan. In order to accomplish this, the town has three options:
  1. Incorporate information required by the HMP and necessary recommendations into the community's comprehensive plan.
  2. Keep the HMP as a separate stand alone element of the comprehensive plan.
  3. Incorporate the HMP as an Appendix to the comprehensive plan.

For additional information, visit the CRMC web site, at <http://www.crmc.ri.gov/regulations/index.html>, and click on "Guidelines for the Development of Municipal Harbor Management Plans."

# CRMC seeks partners for its Public Rights-of-Way Adopt-an-Access Program

The Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council is looking for partners in every coastal city and town in the state to promote public access to the shore at CRMC-designated Rights-of-Way (ROW) through its Adopt-an-Access Program.

"The CRMC encourages all of Rhode Island's municipalities to participate in this worthwhile program," said Michael M. Tikoian, CRMC chairman. "In addition to their status as CRMC Rights-of-Way, these areas have additional protection from development and will be maintained as access points to prime fishing spots, to be enjoyed by all. We hope many more cities and towns will make this a priority."

The Adopt-an-Access program was established in 2005, prompted by the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association's (RISAA) adoption of a CRMC-designated Right-of-Way in Barrington, the Daunis ROW, off Nyatt Road. Later that year, RISAA adopted another CRMC Right-of-Way, the Tuckerman Right-of-Way, at Tuckerman Avenue opposite Wolcott Avenue in Middletown.

The RI Saltwater Anglers Association adopted the two ROWs through the CRMC initiative to ensure that they are maintained and protected as scenic access points that lead to quality fishing sites, to be utilized and enjoyed by the public. The two locations are now further protected from the rapid development of the coastline, and the lapse of time, which has left many ROWs overgrown and difficult to access. The CRMC is working with RISAA and Rhode Island municipalities to re-establish these rights-of-way as accessible scenic ways.

Under the Adopt-an-Access Program the CRMC, RISAA and the towns entered into an agreement that permitted the Association to install Adopt-an-Access signage that contained logos of both the CRMC and RISAA. Under the program, RISAA has agreed that its members will be responsible for trash

*'In addition to their status as CRMC Rights-of-Way, these areas have additional protection from development and will be maintained as access points to prime fishing spots, to be enjoyed by all.'*

*- Michael M. Tikoian  
CRMC Chairman*

removal at Adopt-An-Access ROWs. RISAA members using an Adopt-An-Access ROW on a regular basis also produce monthly reports on the conditions at each one, and submit their reports to the Association's Public Access Committee.

The CRMC, under this program, will also provide standard Shoreline Public Access signs, free of charge, and multi-language signage that outline a Code of Conduct for the public to follow while utilizing a CRMC-designated Adopt-An-Access ROW. This Code of Conduct emphasizes respecting private property rights and warns against trespassing, illegally parking in driveways, and littering. The Code of Conduct is printed in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian and Hmong.

As a result of the success the Council experienced working with RISAA and the towns of Barrington and

Middletown, the CRMC is interested in expanding the Adopt-an-Access Program. Public access to the shore is for all the citizens of Rhode Island, and for those who visit to enjoy the state's coastline. As Article I Section 17 of the Rhode Island Constitution states, the public's constitutional rights to use the shore include, but are not limited to, fishing from the shore, swimming from the shore, passage along the shore, and even gathering seaweed.

Any groups, neighborhood associations or individuals who would like to partner with the CRMC to promote public access to the shore at a CRMC-designated ROW should contact Kevin Cute, CRMC Marine Resources Specialist, at (401) 783-3370 or via e-mail at [k\\_cute@crmc.state.ri.us](mailto:k_cute@crmc.state.ri.us). For more information on partnering with the CRMC in the Adopt-an-Access program, please go to the following links to the CRMC's web site: [www.crmc.state.ri.us/pubs/pdfs/row2004.pdf](http://www.crmc.state.ri.us/pubs/pdfs/row2004.pdf) (for the annual ROW report, which includes all of the ROWs), [www.crmc.state.ri.us/pubs/briefings/CoastalBriefingROW.pdf](http://www.crmc.state.ri.us/pubs/briefings/CoastalBriefingROW.pdf) (which explains the CRMC-designation process for ROWs), and [www.crmc.state.ri.us/pubs/pdfs/ROWCitizenGuide.pdf](http://www.crmc.state.ri.us/pubs/pdfs/ROWCitizenGuide.pdf) (for information on how to assist the CRMC in designating Rights-of-Way to the shore). Under Title 46, Chapter 23 of RI General Laws, the CRMC has jurisdiction over the discovery and designation of public rights-of-way.

**TRUST FUND, continued from Page 1**

upstream spawning and rearing habitat for American shad, river herring, sea-run brown trout and American eel; restore fish passage at the Pawtuxet Falls dam and natural ledge; restore salt marsh and brackish plant and animal habitat in Little Massachusett Creek salt marsh; control invasive species and facilitate wetland restoration on three Rhode Island national wildlife refuges; support the Portal web site, a site dedicated to coastal restoration opportunities in the state; inventory potentially restorable wetlands; and for equipment that will be used statewide for restoration projects.

"The CRMC is encouraged by the volume of restoration projects it received this year," said Chairman Michael M. Tikoian. "With the funding the Council has granted toward these fish ladders, restoration and wetlands inventory projects, Rhode Island's coastal and estuarine habitats will be greatly improved."

The RI Department of Environmental Management's Fish & Wildlife Division requested and was granted \$10,000 for its Wakefield Fishway Slide Gate project, one of three fishways on the Saugatucket River in South Kingstown. The river system provides more than 350 acres of habitat for river herring and American eel. The Wakefield fishway has been in operation since 1971 but the original slide gate has been out of commission for nearly 10 years, and needs to be replaced. In addition to improving fish passage, a new slide gate will also allow the Fish & Wildlife staff to collect scientific data, maintain the fishway and enhance downstream passage by aiding a proposed juvenile diverter planned at the site.

The Council awarded \$10,000 toward the construction of a permanent fish barrier screen downstream of the Gilbert Stuart Fishway, located on the Pettaquamscutt River in Saunderstown. The new barrier will prevent anadromous river herring from entering a dead end channel and divert migrating fish toward the fishway, which provides access to the spawning and nursery area.

The Rising Sun Mill Fish Passage project, which will restore fish passage for the lower Woonasquatucket River with the construction of a denil fish ladder and plunge pool to allow upstream and downstream fish access to the reservoir, received \$37,500 from the Habitat Restoration Trust Fund.

The CRMC also awarded \$32,000 to the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council for the Dyerville Dam project on and along the Woonasquatucket River, which includes the restoration of anadromous fish passage and habitat restoration. The project aims to increase the functional wildlife and buffer value of the area, promote stream-bank stabilization and link to downstream efforts to promote fish restoration in the



*A permanent fish barrier screen will be constructed downstream of the Gilbert Stuart Fishway, located on the Pettaquamscutt River in Saunderstown. This is one of 11 Habitat Restoration Trust Fund projects to which the Council awarded state funding.*

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**TRUST FUND, continued from previous page**

Woonasquatucket River system.

The Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association received \$50,000 from the Council for its Shannock Village Dams Fish Passage project, which will restore American shad, river herring, sea-run brown trout and American eel access to historic upstream spawning and rearing habitat by providing efficient passage at the Lower and Upper Shannock Falls Dams. Both dams are located on the main stem of the Pawcatuck River. These dams currently bar access to upstream spawning and nursery habitat.

The CRMC awarded \$50,000 to the Pawtuxet River Authority for its Pawtuxet River Anadromous Fish Restoration project, which would restore a self-sustaining run of river herring and American shad to the river. Currently, fish passage is obstructed by the Pawtuxet Falls Dam at the river's mouth. Restoring the fish run would open up 7.5 miles of spawning habitat above the dam on the main stem of the River and Pocasset River.

The Barrington Land Conservation Trust received \$2,562 from the Trust Fund for its Little Mussachusuck Creek Marsh Restoration project, which would restore salt marsh and brackish plant and animal species to the area. A breach in the 1980s allowed bay saltwater to reach the beach pond, and by the 1990s the breach had migrated north and closed in completely; since then, the only entrance of salt water is from a small creek at the southernmost end of the breach. The goal of the project is to continue the existing effort to control the invasive Phragmites in the marsh.

The CRMC also awarded \$20,000 to the US Fish & Wildlife Service for a project encompassing the towns of Charlestown, Narragansett and South Kingstown. The Invasive Species Control and Wetlands Restoration on Three National Wildlife Refuges and Adjacent Lands in Rhode Island project includes the Ninigret, Trustom Pond and John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuges. These three refuges have an extensive distribution of non-native invasive plant species. In 2002, staff conducted a three-year experimental Phragmites removal at Trustom Pond NWR, which was successful in reducing the cover by 90 percent. The result has been recovery of native plants and enhancement of the shoreline habitat. This project aims to continue the Phragmites removal and restore the native habitat.

Funding will also go toward the Army Corps of Engineers' (ACOE) continued inventory 50 Rhode Island coastal wetland sites, which will be further evaluated for restoration areas along the coast. The inventory will build upon the approximately 75 sites (299 acres) which were identified by the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program in a 2001 report. The Corps project was awarded \$14,725 during FY 2005 from the Trust Fund.

The Rhode Island Coastal Wetlands Inventory project will identify potentially restorable coastal wetlands stretching from the state's western border to Narragansett Bay, and also Tiverton, Little Compton and Block Island, to identify opportunities for future wetland restoration projects. The Corps will release a report with details of each wetland or site studied. Congress will provide \$65,000 in funding for the Corps under the Planning Assistance to States (PAS) program for the \$130,000 project; CRMC awarded \$17,775 toward the project.

The CRMC also awarded more than \$9,500 to the University of Rhode Island's Environmental Data Center for continued support for the RI Habitat Restoration Web Portal. DEM's Mosquito Abatement Program also received more than \$10,000 for equipment upgrades for its Positrack, which is used for, among other things, removal of Phragmites in restoration projects.

Habitat restoration projects are funded through the RI Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Trust Fund and are selected from recommendations by the RI Habitat Restoration Team, established by CRMC, Save The Bay and the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program in 1998. Members of the team serve as a technical advisory committee for the CRMC as required by law. Funds for the program come from the state's Oil Spill Prevention Administration and Response Act (OSPAR), established by the legislature following the 1996 North Cape oil spill. Each year, the RI General Assembly allocates \$250,000 from the OSPAR account to habitat restoration projects in the state. For FY 2006, the Trust Fund and the projects that received funds leveraged \$1.3 million in matching federal and other funds.

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## Council Members

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*Erosion at the South Kingstown town beach in last 2005*

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Coastal Resources Management Council  
Stedman Government Center  
4808 Tower Hill Road  
Wakefield, RI 02879  
Phone: 401-783-3370  
Fax: 401-783-3767



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