

Coastal Features

INFORMATION
ABOUT THE
RHODE ISLAND
COASTAL
RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM

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Threshold Review Comments Received

by *Laura Miguel*

On December 27th, the CRMC received comments from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding Rhode Island's proposed approaches for meeting the requirements of Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990. As discussed in past issues of *Coastal Features*, the CRMC, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) and the Division of Planning (DOP), in conjunction with a series of advisory committees, have been dili-

gently working on developing a Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program (CNPCP) for Rhode Island which will meet the requirements of Section 6217.

In general, the comments provided by NOAA and EPA were quite positive. "Rhode Island's submittal was one of the most thorough and well-organized of any of the threshold review packages yet received. NOAA and EPA commend the State for the substantial amount of work preparing for the review and attention to detail in the threshold review document". Comments on specific elements of Rhode Island's proposed CNPCP primarily focused on requests for additional information or clarification of information contained within the document.

Because Rhode Island chose to undergo an informal threshold review rather than a formal threshold review, no clear determination was made by NOAA and EPA as to whether the proposed approaches would satisfy the requirements of Section 6217. Nonetheless, it appears that NOAA and EPA will allow the state to rely on a network of existing authorities, regulations and agencies, rather than requiring Rhode Island to create an entirely new program.

The deadline for final program submission is July 1, 1995. Until that time, the CRMC, RIDEM and DOP will be working on gathering the additional information requested, clarifying text NOAA and EPA considered ambiguous, and developing a public outreach strategy. As sections of the threshold review document are revised, they will be reviewed by appropriate advisory committees to ensure accuracy and consensus. Prior to submitting Rhode Island's final CNPCP, a public hearing will be held. However, members of the public interested in the development of Rhode Island's CNPCP are encouraged to participate in this process now.

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*If you would like
more information on or
would like to become involved
in Rhode Island's CNPCP,
contact
Laura Miguel or Jim Boyd
of the CRMC
at 277-2476.*

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Seals Make a Come-Back in Narragansett Bay

by Rebecca Makris

There is no longer any need to go to the Mystic or Boston Aquarium to see seals this winter. Narragansett Bay has been visited once again by these mammals. The first sighting, according to Save the Bay, was in Bristol Harbor on October 1st.

The most common type of seal that has been seen in Narragansett Bay is the Harbor seal. Even more exciting, gray, harp, and hooded seals, which are not commonly found in Narragansett Bay, have also been sighted. These mammals migrate from Maine and the Atlantic Provinces of Canada down to Narragansett Bay where they take advantage of the warmer waters and the rocky coves.

The harp seal was at one time highly prized by hunters for its soft white fur. Since 1972, with the adoption of the Marine Mammals Protection Act, hunting of this species, as well as other seals, has been banned in the United States. Accordingly,

many researchers believe that seal populations are increasing. While the data is not yet in, this seems to be the case judging by the number of seal sightings this winter in Narragansett Bay.

For the past few years, increasing numbers of seals have been spotted off of the southern New England shores. According to Save the Bay, the best places to see seals are the rocks off of Rumstick Point in Barrington, Providence Point, Fox Island in North Kingstown, and Point Judith in Narragansett. Mackerel Cove in Jamestown, Ocean

Drive in Newport, Stone Bridge in Tiverton, and Sakonnet Point in Little Compton are also common places to see these mammals.

Because seal populations can be important indicators of human impacts and environmental trends, Save the Bay has taken an active role in recording seal numbers and locations. As part of this effort, Save the Bay has initiated a volunteer seal monitoring program. To become a seal monitor and receive a Bay Watcher Marine Mammal Monitoring Guide, or for more information on Save the Bay's seal monitoring program, contact Wenley Ferguson, Save the Bay's Citizen Monitoring Coordinator, at (401) 272-3540.



The Harp seal is becoming an increasingly common sight in Narragansett Bay. (Illustration by Riley Young, provided courtesy of Save the Bay)

Coastal Features

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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.

CRMC Acquires a Geographic Informational System

by Bob Almeida and Mike Newman

The Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) has recently acquired a Geographical Informational System (GIS) purchased with a grant provided by the Nation Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). This system, consisting of a Del Pentium 90, Altec Datatab Proline Digitizer, and an HP Design Jet 650C Plotter, will allow CRMC to access an array of geographical information utilizing ARC/info and ARC/view software.

With the GIS, data collected in the field can be converted to an accurate scale representation on the compu-

ter. Each map can then be analyzed separately or in layers, enabling the user to compare different data sets at the same time. For example, a map representing water quality classifications in Rhode Island can be layered over a map of suspected sources of nonpoint pollution, allowing the user to identify potential areas of concern. Desired representations can then be printed on the color plotter and be kept on file for quick reference.

The system was purchased by CRMC to allow the agency to better define Rhode Island's coastline and

(continued on back cover)

Nonpoint Source Tips

by Scott Ringland

A significant source of nonpoint source pollution can be the improper planning and maintenance of residential lawns and gardens. Since many people use the winter months as a time to start planning their summer yards, now is a good time to begin considering how you can reduce or eliminate nonpoint pollution resulting from lawn and garden activities. As an added benefit, these steps may reduce the amount of time and money necessary to create and maintain an attractive outdoor area. In short, these easy steps will help prevent nonpoint source pollution without taking away from the beauty of your yard.

- Use pesticides and herbicides in accordance with manufacturer's application directions. Many people abuse these chemicals in an effort to control weeds and insects. When buying these products, consult with a professional to select a brand that is appropriate for your particular lawn care problem.
- Have your soil tested before buying and applying fertilizer. Soil tests can also help determine suitable plants for your yard.
- When buying fertilizers, consult with a lawn care specialist. Do not over-apply these chemicals to get better results. More is not always better!
- Avoid overwatering. Use a watering method that delivers the required amount of water at a slow rate. This will conserve water, and lessen the amounts of nutrients that are leached from the soil by runoff.
- Limit unnecessary ground disturbances to avoid soil loss caused by erosion. Also, use proper soil erosion and sediment control techniques when necessary.
- Be creative. Use plants that are suitable to the soils in your yard, are pest resistant, and require little maintenance.
- Leave a section of your yard untouched as a buffer zone. This natural area will provide aesthetic value, and also act as a filter between natural areas and areas of human activity.
- Lawn clippings contain nutrients which can benefit your home landscape. Simply leave clippings on the lawn or use a home composting pile to recycle lawn clippings. Lawn clippings can be a source of nutrients which, when improperly disposed of, can result in significant nonpoint problems. Properly composted lawn clippings, however, can be used by the homeowner to increase soil productivity. When deciding where to locate your home compost pile, avoid areas adjacent to water supplies and roadways which can transport leached nutrients.
- When hiring a lawn care professional, choose someone that has been properly trained, certified, and licensed in the application of lawn chemicals and other maintenance responsibilities.

For more information on creative and environmentally friendly approaches to lawn and garden care, contact the University of Rhode Island, Cooperative Extension Education Center at 1-800-448-1011.

"Perspectives on Narragansett Bay" Symposium

by Donna Doyle

On December 9th, 1994, CRMC policy staff participated in a symposium entitled "Perspectives on Narragansett Bay: Setting an Agenda" held at the University of Rhode Island. The URI Sea Grant Program, Coastal Resources Center, and the DEM Narragansett Bay Project sponsored the day-long discussion to facilitate transfer of information and coordination between invited attendees, and with the public. The assembled group was a mixture of regulators, scientists, policy makers, and representatives from user-groups and non-profit organizations, all of whom share common interests in the health of the Bay. Speakers and panel members throughout the day discussed fisheries and water quality issues, regulatory mandates, legislative initiatives, habitat monitoring needs, and a host of other related topics of concern. After an introduction to economics and environmental health, CRMC Marine Resources Specialist, Jeffrey Willis, provided the CRMC's perspective during panel discussions on land use management within the watershed and water quality in the Bay. Margaret Lemin, Vice Provost for Marine Programs at URI, helped wrap-up the day with an action agenda which identified follow-up discussions/actions.

With so many different groups and individuals having interests or authority over the use and quality of the Bay, it becomes a challenge to merely stay abreast of what every group is accomplishing. It became increasingly apparent during the course of the day that the sum of our cooperative efforts is greater than what each of us can accomplish on our own. Joint and coordinated efforts can not only save money, but also lead to more productive planning and successful management. Future areas of attention will be on fisheries management and aquaculture research, habitat protection and monitoring, and legislative coordination, with follow-up meetings on these topics already scheduled. The CRMC is committed to this valuable effort and congratulates the symposium sponsors on putting together an excellent workshop.

Rhode Island's Coastal Resource

by Henrik

CRMC Marina Certification Program

Recognizing that certain marinas in Rhode Island may not have current and/or valid authorization(s) for their facilities or certain activities taking place at these facilities, and in order to properly inventory/authorize all of the marinas in Rhode Island, the CRMC approved the Marina Certification Program on August 10, 1993. This program expired on October 1, 1994, but due to the positive response of marina operators, the Council has extended the program until July 7, 1995.

The purpose of this program is to absolutely identify, establish, quantify, and document the in-water and upland conditions of each marina as they currently exist. To help identify existing marina facilities, the CRMC has aerial photographs of the State's coastal areas as of June 1, 1992. This program will provide CRMC with a baseline data set of authorized marinas and their activities. This information will document existing conditions and activities at marinas and be used as basis

for any future applications, thereby facilitating the permit process for CRMC-certified marinas.

This certification program establishes for each marina an in-water perimeter and allows routine maintenance and alterations at the marina facility to occur without a CRMC Assent as long as the design, capacity, purpose or use of the marina is not altered. Routine maintenance and alterations include: replacement of dock and decking or planks; replacing pilings; extending slips and/or finger piers within the perimeter and capacity of the marina; and other similar, non-substantial activities. When routine maintenance at certified marinas involves the use of heavy machinery, the CRMC need only be notified at least 10 days in advance of the work being undertaken. If the in-water layout or configuration is to be altered but does not increase the number of boats to be accommodated, only a Certification of Maintenance from the CRMC is needed to ensure that the original conditions of the marina Assent (or Certification) are being met and maintained.

The extended deadline for application under the Marina Certification Program is July 7, 1995. As a CRMC-certified marina, future plans for expansion and/or maintenance will be facilitated when it comes time to apply for the necessary permits. Marinas that are not CRMC certified may be subject to fines, fees and possible enforcement for unauthorized activities and/or facilities.

Recent Changes Facilitate CRMC Permit Process

Streamlined Permit Process

The Coastal Resources Management Council has recently made two changes that should make the application process more accessible. The first is a change in the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) Process that allows individuals to obtain over-the-counter permits for repair activities that do not require site plans. Examples of these activities include: window, roof and door replacements; siding and exterior shell replacements; and other minor repair activities. Information on these permits can be obtained from Greg Baribault or William Mosonic at the CRMC.

Reduced Maintenance Application Fees

The second change the Council has made is to reduce the cost of maintenance and repair permits. The new fees took effect on January 11, 1995 and are based on Estimated Project Costs rather than the standard \$50 fee charged in the past. The new fee schedule is:

<u>Estimated Project Cost</u>	<u>Fee</u>
Up to \$500	\$20
greater than \$500 and up to \$1,000	\$35
greater than \$1,000 and up to \$5000	\$50

Maintenance of structures is defined as the rebuilding, reconstruction, repairing or re-establishing to previously assented conditions and dimensions of a damaged or deteriorated structure or facility. With the exception of marinas, maintenance includes only those activities that do not significantly alter the assented design, purpose, and size of the structure. For more information on regulations relating to maintenance activities, see Section 300.14 of "The State of Rhode Island Coastal Resource Management Program, As Amended" or call the CRMC.

es Management Program Update

Dunlaevy

CRMC Pre-existing Residential Boating Facilities Program

On July 1, 1993, the CRMC put into effect the CRMC Dock Registration Program. This program required all docks in Rhode Island's tidal waters to be registered with the CRMC. The original deadline to register for this program ended on July 1, 1994. On July 7, 1994, the General Assembly signed into law the Pre-existing Residential Boating Facilities Program to both further the goals and intent of the Dock Registration Program and assist the residential dock owner in complying with state regulations.

Under the Pre-existing Residential Boating Facilities Program, residential boating facilities constructed prior to January 1, 1985 which do not have a CRMC permit and which meet the requirements of the program, may apply for a CRMC assent which will be valid for 50 years. In order to be eligible for the program, the residential boating facility can not pose any significant risk to

coastal resources and/or human safety; -must exist in substantially the same configuration as it did prior to January 1, 1985; and must be presently intact and functional. Owners of these facilities must be able to provide clear and convincing evidence of the dock's existence prior to January 1, 1985. Acceptable proof includes town or city council authorization prior to 1972, dated photographs, and/or sworn affidavits. Once an assent has been granted, the CRMC will issue registration plates and numbers for these structures. The registration plate is to be placed on the most seaward face of the structure.

If a holder of a Temporary Dock Permit, which is a ten year assent previously issued under the Dock Registration Program, wishes to convert to a standard 50-year assent, as provided for under the new legislation, the Temporary Dock Permit will serve as adequate proof that the

dock is in compliance with CRMC requirements and is eligible for this program. If a Temporary Permit holder does not wish to apply for the assent, the owner must still abide by the conditions and stipulations of the Temporary Permit.

Structures built after January 1, 1985 are not eligible for this program. If such a facility does not have a valid CRMC permit, the owner must apply for an as-built permit through the CRMC's regular review process. Such structures may be subject to applicable fines, fees, and/or enforcement actions.

To apply for an assent under this program, there is a \$400 fee for Temporary Dock Permit holders and a \$500 fee for Pre-existing Residential Boating Facility permit applications. **Remember, the deadline to apply for this assent is July 7, 1995.**

CRMC File Photo of Residential Dock



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To obtain further information on the Pre-existing Residential Boating Facilities Program, Marina Certification Program, or any other aspect of the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Program, contact the CRMC at (401)277-2476.

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Rhode Island's Nonpoint Source Pollution Abatement for Recreational Boating Facilities Project

Mark Amaral - URI, Coastal Resources Center

Pollution from nonpoint sources has been identified as a national concern which needs to be addressed at the federal, state and local levels. Sources of nonpoint pollution regularly introduce contaminants such as bacterial concentrations, nutrient and BOD loading, suspended solids and petroleum products. Studies show that these contaminants have significant effects on water quality as it relates to fin and shell fishing, and recreational activities such as boating and swimming. In extreme cases, this pollution can have economic impacts on the tourism, recreational boating and fishing industries as water quality decreases.

During the last year CRMC and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) have been developing management policies and practices to minimize the effects of nonpoint sources of pollution in response to new federal mandates. To support and build upon this initiative the Coastal Resources Center at the University of Rhode Island (CRC) produced a document that details guidelines to help marina operators curb nonpoint source pollution and improve water quality problems at their facilities, and comply with new regulations.

Designed to help marina operators develop and implement management practices, *Environmental Guide for Marinas: Abating Nonpoint source and Storm Water Pollution in Rhode Island*, is the result of a two-year collaborative effort of the Rhode Island Sea Grant, the CRC, the Rhode Island Marine Trades Association, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the CRMC, the RIDEM, and the U.S. Coast

Guard. The document addresses common environmental concerns at marina facilities such as:

- Management of hazardous materials;
- Controlling stormwater runoff;
- Eliminating the illegal discharge of boat sewage;
- Responding to accidental oil spills;
- Reducing solid waste.

Management practices that address these issues were developed in close coordination with marina operators in Rhode Island so that they are both financially feasible and practical within the current regulatory framework.

The manual may be the first to address both nonpoint source and storm water pollution regulations. It may also be the first technical manual that presents a process for selecting and implementing pollution abatement practices, not just technical information about best management practices. All the information is presented in an easy-to-use format that will speed the application and permitting process for marina operators in Rhode Island.

Follow-up to the publication will include distribution of the manual and a series of workshops. With funding from EPA through RIDEM's Office of Environmental Coordination and the Narragansett Bay Project, CRC/Rhode Island Sea

Grant also plans to work with several marinas in Rhode Island to further test best management practices and the process for developing operations and maintenance programs. This phase of the project is being conducted in cooperation with the Rhode Island Marine Assistance Collaborative (see related article on opposite page). The Collaborative was created in December 1994 by state agencies and marine interests to guard against duplication of effort, promote cooperation between marina related projects, and provide a structured mechanism for projects to interface with the marina industry. It is the Collaborative's hope to improve the transfer of information and assistance between marine related programs and allow for more efficient interaction between the projects and the marine industry.

The cost of the marina manual is \$10.00. Send requests to the Rhode Island Sea Grant Communication Office, URI Bay Campus, Narragansett, RI 02882; or call (401)792-6842.

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*For more information on the
Environmental Guide for Marinas
or the Rhode Island
Marine Assistance Collaborative,
contact Mark Amaral at
Rhode Island Sea Grant
Advisory Service
URI Coastal Resources Center
University of Rhode Island
(Bay Campus)
Narragansett, RI 02882;
or call (401)792-6224.*

Rhode Island Port Authority Marine Trade Pollution Prevention Research Project

John Toic - Rhode Island Department of Economic Development

The Rhode Island Port Authority Marine Trade Pollution Prevention Research Project is now underway. This project is being funded by the Department of Environmental Management's Pollution Prevention Program under the authority of the Hazardous Waste Reduction, Recycling, Treatment, Research and Demonstration Act of 1986 and is taking place in participation with the Rhode Island Marine Assistance Collaborative. This committee, dedicated to providing technical and regulatory assistance for the marine industry is a joint effort of the Department of Economic Development (DED), Rhode Island Marine Trades Association (RIMTA), Department of Environmental Management, Coastal Resource Management Council, University of Rhode Island Department of Civil Engineering (URIDCE), URI Coastal Resource Center/RI Sea Grant, and the Narragansett Bay Project.

As a part of this project, ten RIMTA member companies were chosen to receive a technical assistance assessment as a free service from the DED. The assessments for this project will be conducted by project staff from the RI Port Authority with technical support being provided by URIDCE. Prior to an assessment team visit, the team leader meets with the facility manager to outline procedures and to learn about company policies. The team leader then describes the program and how the assessment can be expected to proceed. Preliminary conclusions are provided after a short review following the assessment. Later, a formal written hazardous waste assessment is issued to the participating company at the project's conclusion.

As a result of the on-site technical assistance assessment, program staff from the RI Port Authority and the URIDCE discuss and demonstrate various proven cost effective technologies related to hazardous waste reduction. Company management is encouraged to incorporate suggested source reducing technologies as a means of eliminating hazardous waste streams. As a result of an investment in these technologies and methods, companies should realize a quick pay back period as well as cost savings. In many instances, only a minimal investment will be needed to successfully

reduce the amount and toxicity of hazardous waste. This includes improving housekeeping measures and providing hazardous waste training to employees.

Selection of RIMTA volunteers for the project was done in cooperation with the DED and URIDCE with assistance from RIMTA. All together, there are five boat builder/repair facilities and five marina/boatyards of different sizes and locations scheduled to receive assessments for this project year.

On-site technical assistance assessments began in late January, and will continue through early summer for the volunteer RIMTA members. During the on-site visits, the assessment team will be focusing on the following items:

- Identification of all processes that generate hazardous waste;
- Techniques and technologies to minimize and reduce waste generation;
- Cost effective technologies or process changes tailored to the individual members' needs in order to achieve the goals of waste reduction and elimination.

As a result of this project, technical assistance/pollution prevention

literature, articles, research reports, and case studies will be generated for Rhode Island's marine industry. Dissemination of these materials will take place during two marine trade pollution prevention seminars being held in early April and November of 1995. The framework and agendas for the seminars are now being developed.

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For more information on the Rhode Island Port Authority Marine Trade Pollution Prevention Research Project, or if you would like a particular topic to be addressed at the above-mentioned seminars, please contact John Toic, Environmental Planner at the DED at (401)277-2601.

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CRMC Acquires a GIS System

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adjacent land uses. As a planning and development tool, the GIS will assist the agency in designating areas and characteristics such as mooring fields, coastal features, buffer zones, habitats, water uses, permit locations and a wide variety of other useful information. The system will allow CRMC to recompile its existing data and collect new data sets to be used by the agency while assisting other governmental entities as well. The new information will be shared among all organizations concerned with the natural environment and its resources.

CRMC has recently signed an agreement with the Rhode Island Geographic Informational System (RIGIS) to "develop, maintain and utilize a geographic information system with an associated digital database of comprehensive statewide data". Future plans for the RIGIS include linking the system on the Internet, which will allow data sets to be easily accessed by all RIGIS users with a modem.

In the future, GIS will prove to be extremely helpful in developing more complete and accurate records of important coastal resources. This will allow for better planning in Rhode Island's coastal region which, in turn, will assist the CRMC in achieving its overall goal - "to preserve, protect, develop, and where possible, restore the coastal resources of the state for this and succeeding generations".



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RI CRMC
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