



CRMC appoints new executive director

The CRMC unanimously appointed former Deputy Director and longtime CRMC staffer Jeffrey Willis as the agency's new executive director. His appointment is effective immediately.

Willis began his tenure at the CRMC 32 years ago as a research associate and intern, working on harbor management planning and the Pawcatuck River Special Area Management Plan. For eight years, Willis served as a marine resources specialist at CRMC, managing aquaculture program development and other regulations. He was then an environmental planner for another four years, supervising the agency's policy and program development section, developed the CRMC's Clean Marina Program with the RI Marine Trades Association, served as Rhode Island's state lead for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Providence River and Harbor dredging project, and worked on CRMC state and federal budgets.



Goetsch joins the CRMC staff after working for different aquaculture and fishing companies in Connecticut. (Photo courtesy of B. Goetsch)

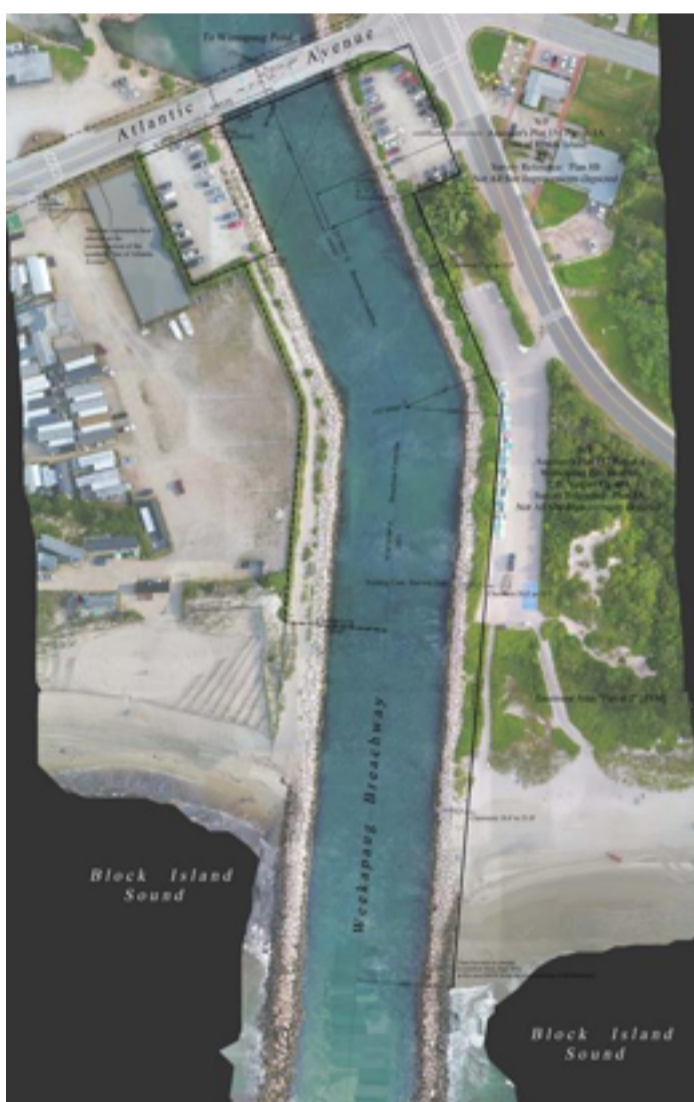
"We congratulate Jeff on this well-deserved appointment to executive director. Jeff's intimate knowledge of the inner workings of the CRMC - its regulatory framework, its programs, its staff, its impacts on the state and beyond - will serve him well in this next phase of the CRMC's growth." - CRMC Chair Jennifer Cervenka

[Read more here](#)

State agencies improve Weekapaug public access

The RI CRMC and the RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM) are improving public access along the Weekapaug Breachway in Westerly, following concerns voiced by local residents and other Rhode Islanders.

This summer, the state agencies became aware that the public was having difficulty accessing what had been an historically used path from the DEM fishing lot down to the beach. Traditionally the footpath - which begins at the public lot, goes through a small vegetated area, then through the Weekapaug Fire District's private lot, down to the water - has been used for decades by fishermen. This summer access was closed off, forcing the public to traverse the rocky breachway.



An aerial image of the Weekapaug breachway area (image courtesy of the Town of Westerly)

[Read more here](#)

CRMC seeking CEHRTF proposals

The CRMC, in partnership with the Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NBNERR), is currently seeking pre-proposals for habitat restoration project funding through the R.I. Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Program and Trust Fund.

Municipalities, committees, boards or commissions chartered by a municipality, nonprofit organizations, civic groups, educational institutions and state agencies are eligible to submit a project pre-proposal. Proposed projects must be located within Rhode Island. Priority will be placed on those projects that seek to enhance coastal habitats' resiliency to climate change and sea level rise; for example, projects that remove barriers to future wetland migration with sea level rise or that enhance shoreline vegetation where habitat is threatened by increased coastal erosion.

[Read more here about how to submit your proposal](#)



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