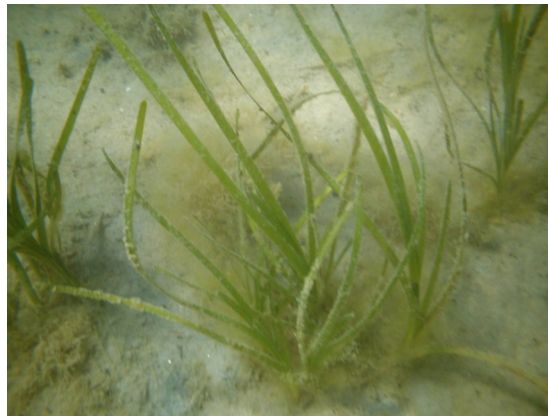


Report: Eelgrass on decline in RI V.3 Iss.5 July 2017

A recently-completed report from the URI Environmental Data Center (EDC) shows eelgrass and other submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), protected by the CRMC, is on the decline in most of the salt ponds and in Narragansett Bay. Eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) – a rooted, flowering plant that grows beneath the water’s surface in small beds or larger meadows – and other species of submerged aquatic vegetation play a vital role in the function of coastal ecosystems. Eelgrass, the most common type of SAV in Rhode Island, serves many ecological functions, including supporting the marine food web and providing important habitat for many species of fish and invertebrates. Fish such as tautog lay their eggs on the surface of eelgrass leaves. Shellfish such as bay scallops, quahogs, blue crabs and lobsters can be found in eelgrass beds and some species of waterfowl feed on eelgrass.



An underwater view of eelgrass in Ninigret Pond in Charlestown.

[Learn more](#)

Industry talks of State of Aquaculture in RI



Floating oyster bags in Point Judith Pond (Photo: Ayla Fox)

The CRMC, along with growers, and advocacy non-profit groups recently discussed the state of the aquaculture industry in Rhode Island, as part of the ongoing state Shellfish Initiative.

The public discussion was the last in a series of discussions on the regulatory framework, best management practices and economy of aquaculture in the state, driven by the Initiative, which recognizes the economic and cultural value of shellfish to all Rhode Islanders.

“It’s important for all stakeholders to continue to participate and be a part of the CRMC’s public (management and permitting) processes,” said David Beutel, aquaculture coordinator for the CRMC, which is the lead management agency for aquaculture activities. “Due to the Shellfish Management Plan, state agencies enjoy much better communication with each other, even if they don’t always agree.”

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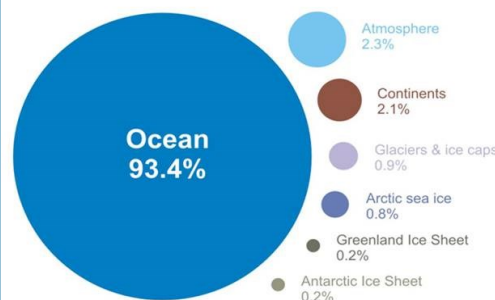
Whitehouse, CRMC talk CC, SLR to appraisers

Rhode Island will be particularly susceptible to the impacts of climate change and sea level rise by 2100, and one of the industries to feel those impacts acutely is the real estate and appraisal industry, according to experts who recently spoke to members of the Massachusetts and Rhode Island Chapter of the Appraisal Institute. “The ocean absorbs all of the heat the earth generates” – 93.4 percent, said Senator Sheldon Whitehouse. “It’s the earth’s heat regulator.” And as a direct result of all of that heat absorption, said the Rhode Island’s senator, the oceans are warming.

“A three or four-degree change in water temperature wouldn’t make much of a difference to you and me, but for life in our oceans, it’s what [scientists] call an ecosystem change,” he told a room full of real estate appraisal professionals on June 26 at Save The Bay.

[Learn More](#)

Where is global warming going?



Graphic courtesy of Senator Whitehouse (source IPCC)