

Rhode Island State Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Strategy

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State Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Strategy

1. Introduction

The following is a strategy ratified, adopted and revised by the Rhode Island Habitat Restoration Team pursuant to the Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Program and Trust Fund legislation. The legislation mandates that a plan be established with comprehensive public, agency, legislative and other stakeholder participation. In accordance with RIGL § 46-23.1-5, the Habitat Restoration Team (comprised of members from public, agency, academic, legislative, and other stakeholder sectors) developed this strategy, which has been updated by CRMC, that incorporates the elements specified within the legislation, as outlined in the Table of Contents.

This strategy shall serve as guidance for the conservation and restoration of the state's coastal and estuarine habitats, particularly through the Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Program. Habitat restoration trust fund monies are dispersed in accordance with RIGL § 46-23.1-5(2) which allocates funding for design, planning, construction or monitoring of habitat restoration projects. Applicants eligible to receive this funding include cities and towns; any committee, board, or commission chartered by a city or town; nonprofit corporations; civic groups, educational institutions; and state agencies. Trust fund monies are dispersed according to the process outlined in Section 6 of this document.

2. Description of Rhode Island's Coastal and Estuarine Habitat

2.1 Environmental and Economic Importance

Rhode Island is home to an array of coastal and estuarine habitats including salt marshes, seagrass beds, river systems, dunes and barrier beaches. These habitats contribute greatly to the state's biological integrity and diversity by supporting a wide variety of fish and wildlife species. Coastal and estuarine habitats provide economic benefits such as supporting finfish and shellfish stocks. These stocks contribute to the state commercial fishery valued at 75 million dollars, and a recreational fishery valued at 150 million dollars. Coastal habitats also provide scenic beauty and recreational opportunities that are attractive to residents and visitors, as evidenced by a tourism and outdoor recreation industry valued at two billion dollars in Narragansett Bay alone.

Despite their importance and value, Rhode Island's coastal habitats have suffered from several hundred years of degradation from human impacts. Most negative coastal and estuarine habitat impacts are the result of coastal development, as residential, commercial and industrial land use in coastal areas has intensified. In recent decades, scientists, engineers, and community groups have begun working with federal, state and local governments to identify and restore habitats that have been adversely impacted by human activity.

2.2 Priority Habitat Types

The Rhode Island Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Program identifies salt marshes, river systems (anadromous fish passages and riparian corridors) and seagrass beds as priority habitats for state restoration activities.

2.2.1. Seagrass

Rhode Island's primary seagrass is eelgrass (*Zostera marina*). Eelgrass provides many ecologically valuable functions. It produces organic material that becomes part of the marine food web, helps cycle nutrients, stabilizes marine sediments, and provides important fish and wildlife habitat. Many species of fish and wildlife depend on eelgrass. Eelgrass beds provide protection for bay scallops, quahogs, blue crabs and lobsters. Tautog and other fish lay their eggs on the surface of eelgrass leaves, and young starfish, snails, mussels, and other creatures attach themselves to the plant. Waterfowl such as brant feed on eelgrass. Studies in New England have documented the occurrence of 40 species of fish and 9 species of invertebrates in eelgrass beds.

As new growth replaces older eelgrass leaves, the dead leaves decay, becoming a valuable source of organic matter for microorganisms at the base of the food chain (NOAA Damage Assessment and Restoration Program, 2001). Eelgrass reduces shoreline erosion caused by storms and wave energy thus protecting adjacent coastal properties. Eelgrass meadows can stabilize sediments and filter nutrients from the water column. Eelgrass also provides a unique habitat for recreational SCUBA divers and snorkelers to explore (Chesapeake Bay Program, 2000).

Among the human-induced threats to seagrass beds is decreased water clarity resulting from excess nutrient inputs to coastal waters. Nitrogen from anthropogenic sources such as lawn fertilizers and septic systems enters coastal waters through groundwater flow and stormwater runoff. This can cause algae blooms that decrease light penetration through the water, often resulting in eelgrass die-off. Other threats to seagrass include disturbance from boat propellers and water craft, and in-water structures such as docks and floats which prevent sunlight from reaching the submerged aquatic vegetation.

2.2.2. Salt Marshes

Rhode Island salt marshes are found along the shores of salt ponds, the Narragansett Bay estuary, small embayments (such as Allin's Cove in Barrington), and estuarine rivers (such as the Narrow River estuary). Salt marshes provide nursery grounds and foraging habitat for hundreds of species of fish, shellfish, birds, and mammals. Fish of all sizes, from mummichogs to striped bass, feed in creeks and ponds. Quahogs and oysters live beneath the surface, while mussels, fiddler crabs, and snails occupy intertidal areas. Many kinds of birds including osprey, herons, ducks, and mosquito-eating sparrows visit the marsh to feed on the fish and invertebrates and in some cases use the marsh as nesting area.

In addition to their habitat value, salt marshes serve as natural pollution treatment systems by filtering out pollutants from upland runoff. Salt marshes between developed coastal communities and coastal waters also provide stormwater storage capacity and absorption of wave energy, helping to mitigate flooding during storms.

Seventy-five percent of commercial fish species depend on estuaries for their primary habitat, spawning grounds, and nursery areas. In Rhode Island, the role that salt marshes play in the economy is evidenced by a 75 million dollar commercial fishery and a recreational fishery valued at 150 million dollars. The sweeping vistas afforded by the low lying salt marsh landscape contribute immeasurably to the beauty and serenity of Rhode Island's coastline, as well as the state's tourism and outdoor recreation industry, which is valued at 2 billion dollars on Narragansett Bay alone.

Salt marshes have been altered by humans for centuries. Ditching, diking and filling of salt marshes were once common practices related to farming and upland development. Salt marshes have been altered by roads and other structures that restrict tidal flow. Tidal restrictions alter the hydrology and water chemistry of the marsh, often allowing invasive species such as *Phragmites australis* to colonize. This creates monocultures with little habitat value that replace native salt marsh vegetation. Salt marshes face additional threats from sea level rise. Increased rates of sea level rise due to climate change may overwhelm marshes' ability to maintain their elevations through sediment accretion, and result in a shift in plant communities or conversion to open water. This affect may be exacerbated in some areas by human activities such as upland development which reduce sediment sources to the marsh. In addition, salt marshes in many areas of the coast are bordered by upland development and public infrastructure, eliminating areas to which they can migrate landward as sea level rises.

2.2.3. River Systems

Anadromous fish runs in Rhode Island occur in rivers, streams, and adjacent areas that drain into coastal ponds, Narragansett Bay, and Block Island Sound. These systems are used by migratory fish to feed and reproduce. River herring, Atlantic salmon, rainbow smelt, sturgeon, and American shad depend on passage upstream for survival. These anadromous fish spawn in fresh water, and mature and spend most of their lives in salt water. Conversely, American eels are catadromous fish, living in lakes and ponds as adults. They migrate downstream and eventually far out into the Atlantic, where they spawn and die in the Sargasso Sea, and their newly born young travel on ocean currents back to Rhode Island's rivers and streams.

Many of Rhode Island's rivers are blocked or obstructed by dams, weirs, tide gates, and other water-control structures—more than 500 on Rhode Island rivers alone. These obstructions prevent fish passage and have eliminated historic fish runs from many of the state's rivers.

2.3 Additional Habitat Types

It is recognized that there are habitat types other than the priority habitat types listed in Section 2.2 of this document that are important to coastal and estuarine ecosystems and should be eligible for restoration funding through the Trust Fund.

2.3.1. Riparian and Coastal Buffers

Coastal and riparian buffers are naturally vegetated areas adjacent to surface water bodies that provide important functions such as intercepting stormwater overland flow, mitigating flooding, reducing erosion and creating contiguous natural habitat corridors. Coastal vegetated buffers help to protect sensitive habitat areas such as salt marshes and dune systems from threats related to encroaching development and rising sea level. In addition to unobstructed passage through the water, migratory fish need healthy, vegetated riparian areas that provide cover, pollutant and sediment attenuation, bank stabilization, and temperature regulation. Riparian vegetation also provides detritus (leaf litter and other particulate organic matter), which forms the base of the riverine food chain. As watersheds become more developed with a higher percentage of impervious surface and less natural open space, the functions and values that coastal and riparian buffers provide become increasingly important.

2.3.2. Shellfish Beds

Besides being commercially important resources, shellfish species such as quahogs, soft-shell clams, scallops, oysters and blue mussels perform a variety of ecological functions. Because these bivalves are filter feeders, large populations have the capacity to improve water quality and control phytoplankton populations. This has the secondary effect of increasing eelgrass abundance and improving habitat quality for other organisms. Certain shellfish species such as oysters also form structures that serve as important habitat, providing refuge and substrate for other organisms to colonize. Shellfish beds can also help to reduce shoreline erosion by absorbing wave energy and stabilizing sediments. Over-harvesting, degraded water quality, disease and habitat alteration due to fishing and dredging activities are some of the stressors that threaten shellfish populations (Brumbaugh 2006). In Rhode Island, quahogs and oysters are examples of shellfish populations that have experienced decline from historical levels.

2.4 Restoration Goals

Habitat restoration is defined as the intentional alteration of a site to establish the approximate biological, geological and physical conditions that existed in the indigenous ecosystem or habitat prior to human disturbance. Habitat restoration projects attempt to reestablish the functional characteristics of a site to improve wildlife habitat value. This may be accomplished through a variety of strategies or combination of strategies, including the re-establishment of physical habitat structure (e.g. restoring altered elevations or landforms, removing dams or other impediments to fish passage), restoration of water chemistry (e.g. limiting excess nutrient

inputs), restoration of site hydrology (e.g. restoring tidal prism and flood regimes), control of non-native invasive species of plants or animals or re-vegetation with native plant species.

Restoration planning efforts such as the Governor's Bay Commission Habitat and Restoration Panel 2004 recommendations and the 2003 Visioning Technical Report for the Partnership for Narragansett Bay have set specific goals for restoration of priority habitat types. These goals include:

- Restore 50 acres of eelgrass beds by 2010, and an additional 100 acres by 2015.
- Restore 100 acres of coastal wetland by 2008, and an additional 100 acres by 2015.
- Restore 100 acres of coastal buffer by 2008, and an additional 250 acres by 2015.
- Increase anadromous fish habitat by 400 acres by 2008, and an additional 250 acres by 2015.
- Restore fish passage on Blackstone, Pawtuxet, Ten Mile, and Wood-Pawcatuck rivers.
- Restore anadromous fish to the Blackstone River.
- Restore 100 acres of riparian buffer by 2010, and an additional 100 acres by 2015.
- Achieve desirable levels of key fish and shellfish species.

3. Inventory of Coastal and Estuarine Restoration Projects

Considerable progress has been made towards meeting state habitat restoration goals. Projects receiving Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Funds have contributed significantly to this effort. A summary of these projects can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Projects funded by the Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Fund (FY2004—2008)

Year 5: Projects Approved by CRMC for FY2008 (2007-2008)

Project Name	City/Town	Total Project Costs	Match Secured	Amount Awarded	Habitat Type	Acres Restored	Project Status*
1 Ten Mile River Fish Passage	East Providence	\$808,755	\$808,755	\$100,000	Fish Passage		IP
2 Woonasquatucket River Paragon Dam Fish Passage	Providence	\$338,000	\$298,000	\$40,000	Fish Passage		IP
3 Pawcatuck River Lower Shannock Falls Fish Passage	Richmond	\$56,500	\$56,500	\$35,000	Fish Passage		IP
4 Blackstone River Fish Passage	Pawtucket	\$2,102,662	\$1,817,662	\$35,000	Fish Passage		IP
5 Silver Creek Salt Marsh Restoration	Bristol	\$148,029	\$148,029	\$10,000	Salt Marsh		IP
6 DEM Mosquito Abatement Program Equipment Request	Statewide	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	n/a		C
Totals, Year 5		\$3,463,946	\$3,133,946	\$225,000		0	

Year 4: Projects Approved by CRMC for FY2007 (2006-2007)

Project Name	City/Town	Total Project Costs	Match Secured	Amount Awarded	Habitat Type	Acres Restored	Project Status
7 Town Pond (Boyd's Marsh) Salt Marsh Restoration	Portsmouth	\$5,750,000	\$731,792	\$50,000	Salt Marsh		C
8 Gooseneck Cove Salt Marsh Restoration	Newport	\$1,058,917	\$682,917	\$50,000	Salt Marsh	13	IP

9	Jacob's Point Salt Marsh Restoration	Warren	\$207,310	\$159,310	\$48,000	Salt Marsh	47	IP
10	Atlantic Mills Fish Passage Restoration	Providence	\$334,700	\$297,950	\$36,750	Fish Passage		IP
11	Equipment: Low Ground Pressure Utility Vehicle	Statewide	\$25,000	\$12,500	\$12,500	n/a		C
12	Third Beach Dune Restoration	Middletown	\$27,100	\$14,100	\$9,373	Dune		C
13	RI Oyster Gardening for Recreation & Enhancement	Narragansett Bay	\$90,114	\$59,314	\$8,622	Shellfish Beds		C
14	Monitoring & Management of Rare Plant Populations	Narragansett, Statewide	\$16,256	\$9,750	\$6,505	multiple		C
15	Stillhouse Cove Salt Marsh Restoration	Cranston	\$43,184	\$30,738	\$3,250	Salt Marsh	2	C
	Totals, Year 4		\$7,552,581	\$1,998,371	\$225,000		62	

Year 3: Projects Approved by CRMC for FY2006 (2005-2006)

	Project Name	City/Town	Total Project Costs		Amount Awarded	Habitat Type	Acres Restored	Project Status
				Match Secured				
16	Wakefield Fishway Slide Gate	Wakefield	\$27,000	\$17,000	\$10,000	Fish Passage	350	C
17	Gilbert Stuart Fishway	North Kingstown	\$23,000	\$13,000	\$10,000	Fish Passage	57	C
18	Rising Sun Mill Fish Passage	Providence	\$346,075	\$285,500	\$37,500	Fish Passage	1.5	C
19	Woonasquatucket River: Dyerville Dam fishway	Providence	\$242,500	\$210,500	\$32,000	Fish Passage		IP
20	Shannock Village Dams Fish Passage	Richmond	\$119,298	\$59,298	\$50,000	Fish Passage		IP
21	Pawtuxet River Anadromous Fish Restoration	Warwick, Cranston	\$207,750	\$107,750	\$50,000	Fish Passage		IP

22	Little Mussachuck Creek Salt Marsh Restoration	Barrington	\$26,200	\$23,363	\$2,562	Salt Marsh	5	C
23	Rhode Island Wetlands Inventory NWR Invasive Species Control/Wetland Restoration	Narragansett Bay	\$130,000	\$65,000	\$17,775	Coastal Wetlands		C
24	Modifications to Low Ground Restoration	Statewide	\$178,438	\$110,938	\$20,000	Salt Marsh	52	O
25	Pressure Excavator	Statewide	\$10,603	0	\$10,603	n/a		C
26	Continuing Support for the RI Habitat Restoration Portal		\$9,560	0	\$9,560	n/a		C
Totals, Year 3			\$1,320,424	\$892,349	\$250,000		465.5	

Year 2: Projects Approved by CRMC for FY2005 (2004-2005)

	Project Name	City/Town	Total Project Costs	Match Secured	Amount Awarded	Habitat Type	Acres Restored	Project Status
27	Walker Farm Salt Marsh Restoration	Barrington		\$183,900	\$30,000	Salt Marsh	15	C
28	Factory Brook Fishway	South Kingstown		\$85,500	\$35,000	Fish Passage		D
29	RI Coastal Wetlands Inventory Mapping Submerged Aquatic Vegetation in Narragansett Bay (Phase I)	South Coastal, BI		\$97,500	\$14,725	Coastal Wetlands		C
30		Narragansett Bay		\$57,603	\$50,000	Eelgrass Beds		C
31	Kickemuit Reservior Fish Ladder	Warren		\$261,000	\$40,187	Fish Passage	26	C
32	Town Pond (Boyd's Marsh) Salt Marsh Restoration	Portsmouth		\$3,405,912	\$80,088	Salt Marsh	20	C
Totals, Year 2				\$4,091,415	\$250,000		61	

Year 1: Projects Approved by CRMC for FY2003 (2002-2003)

	Project Name	City/Town	Total Project Costs	Match Secured	Amount Awarded	Habitat Type	Acres Restored	Project Status
33	Lonsdale Drive-In Wetlands Restoration	Lincoln, RI	\$2,700,000	\$30,000	\$152,963	Salt Marsh	20	C
34	Explore the Bay/Field's Point Marsh Restoration	Providence, RI	\$408,658	\$383,658	\$24,323	Salt Marsh	1.5	C
35	Narragansett Bay Seagrass Restoration	Narragansett Bay	\$302,054	\$120,554	\$29,096	Eelgrass		O
36	Stillhouse Cove Salt Marsh Restoration	Cranston, RI	\$19,038	\$14,279	\$7,323	Salt Marsh		C
37	Palmer Avenue Salt Marsh Restoration	Warren, RI	\$40,000	\$16,451	\$14,323	Salt Marsh	4	C
38	Mussachuck Creek Salt Marsh and Anadromous Fish Habitat Restoration	Barrington, RI	\$100,000	\$95,000	\$9,323	Salt Marsh, Fish Passage		C
39	Napatree Dunes Restoration	Westerly, RI	\$7,000		\$6,323	Dunes		C
40	Issue (#6) of Narragansett Bay Journal	Statewide			\$6,323	n/a		C
	Totals, Year 1		\$3,576,750	\$659,942	\$250,000		25.5	
	Totals To Date:		\$15,913,701	\$10,776,023	\$1,200,000		614	

***Project Status:**

- IP = in progress
- C = completed
- D = delayed
- O = ongoing

More than 600 acres of coastal and estuarine habitat have been restored with assistance from the Trust Fund. This includes more than 400 acres of anadromous fish habitat, which meets the Governor's Bay Commission restoration goal for 2008. Over 190 acres of coastal wetland have been restored, exceeding the Commission's goal of 100 acres by 2008. As of 2006, over 45 acres of eelgrass habitat had been restored, approaching the Governor's Bay Commission restoration goal of 50 acres by 2008.

Trust Fund awards to date total \$1,200,000. These funds have leveraged over \$10,776,000 in additional funding from federal, state, municipal and non profit sources, meaning nearly nine dollars leveraged for every Trust Fund dollar spent. While there are no specific match requirements for projects receiving Trust Fund awards, funded projects typically have a high level of match, and often exemplify cooperative partnerships among federal, state, local and non-profit entities. For a more detailed description of funded projects that includes project partners, see the individual Trust Fund annual reports at www.crmc.ri.gov/projects/habitats.html.

4. Additional Habitat Restoration Funding Sources

Though there is no specific match requirement for Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Fund awards, the level of matching funds secured is weighed heavily as part of the project proposal evaluation process. The majority of funded projects have had some level of state, federal or non governmental match. The following is a list of state, federal and non-governmental sources for habitat restoration funding.

4.1 State Sources

May/June –Riparian Restoration Grants (RIDEM)

Funding for these grants is provided by the Narragansett Bay and Watershed Restoration Bond to restore and protect the water quality, enhance the economic viability and environmental sustainability of Narragansett Bay and the State's watersheds.

- *Eligible Organizations:* state, local and regional government agencies as well as nonprofit agencies and private individuals with appropriate administrative capacity
- *Fundable Activities:* re-establishment of native species or other improvement projects that restore riparian habitat to a natural condition for the purpose of water quality improvement/protection
- *Matching Requirements:* 50% total cost share

Ongoing - R.I. State Revolving Fund through the R.I. Clean Water Finance Agency (CWFA) and the Department of Environmental Management (DEM)

Contact - Anthony Simeone - 401-453-4430 (CWFA) or Jay Manning 222-4700 x7254 (DEM)

- *Eligible Organizations:* Local government entities
- *Fundable Activities:* Restoration projects with direct benefit to water quality
- *Matching Requirements:* Unknown

4.2 Federal Sources

February - [Five Star Restoration Challenge Grants](#) funding through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Contact - John Pai (EPA) - 202-260-8076 or Tom Kelsch - 202-857-5662

- *Eligible Organizations:* Public and private project sponsors
- *Fundable Activities:* Community-based restoration initiatives in watersheds
- *Matching Requirements:* None

March 15 to May 15 - Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) funding through the Natural Resources Conservation Service

Contact - Joseph Bachand - 401-822-8818

- *Eligible Organizations:* Private landowners, state agencies, and non-governmental organizations
- *Fundable Activities:* Ecosystem restoration
- *Matching Requirements:* Up to 75% cost share

May - Community-Based Restoration Program funding through NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service

Contact - Robin Bruckner or Chris Doley - 301-713-0174

- *Eligible Organizations:* Public and private project sponsors
- *Fundable Activities:* Small-scale locally driven habitat restoration projects
- *Matching Requirements:* 1:1 cash and in-kind

June - National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program funding through the US Fish and Wildlife Service

Contact:

Dan Leahy
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
300 Westgate Center Drive
Hadley, MA 01035 -9589
Phone: 413-253-8687
Email: Dan_Leahy@fws.gov

Eligible Organizations: State agencies

Fundable Activities: Acquisition, restoration, management or enhancement of coastal wetlands

Matching Requirements: 50% cost share

September - Wildlife Conservation and Appreciation Grant funding through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Contact - 703-358-1852

- *Eligible Organizations:* State fish and wildlife agencies (*Private organizations and individuals must work with their state agency)
- *Fundable Activities:* Restoration of habitat as part of broader conservation plan
- *Matching Requirements:* N/A

(Ongoing) US Army Corps of Engineers

Partner with local sponsors (state agencies) to provide technical assistance and funding for large-scale projects involving environmental remediation and restoration, natural resource management, stream bank and shoreline protection, and navigation maintenance and improvement.

4.3 Non-Governmental Sources

June 1/October 15 - [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grants](#) funding through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Contact - [Karen Hester](#) - 401-222-2023

- *Eligible Organizations:* States, federal agencies, non profits, universities and local governments
- *Fundable Activities:* On the ground restoration and conservation work
- *Matching Requirements:* Varies

December—[Embrace-A-Stream program](#), Trout Unlimited

Embrace-A-Stream (EAS) is a matching grant program administered by the National Office of Trout Unlimited (TU) that awards funds to TU chapters and councils for coldwater fisheries conservation. Since its inception in 1975, EAS has funded 884 individual projects for a total of more than \$3.5 million in direct cash grants. Local TU Chapters and Councils contributed an additional \$6.5 million in cash and in-kind services to EAS funded projects for a total investment of more than \$10 million. Partners include the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Costa del Mar Sunglasses, and the FishAmerica Foundation. In 2007, the average grant award was \$5,800. Projects were located in 18 states and were consistent with TU's national conservation priorities concerning water quality, instream flows, Pacific and Atlantic salmon restoration, and native and wild trout conservation.

Projects will be evaluated based on the following criteria: Conservation Impact, Strengthening TU Impact, Public Education and Outreach, and Technical Merit. Throughout the history of the EAS program, it has been our experience that the most effective and successful projects have included these elements and have focused on a more holistic approach to coldwater conservation.

5. Criteria for Project Evaluation

Factors to be taken into account by the Technical Advisory Committee for the purposes of granting monies for estuary and coastal habitat restoration activities, determining the eligibility of an estuary and coastal habitat restoration projects for financial assistance, and in prioritizing the selection of estuary and coastal habitat restoration projects by the Technical Advisory Committee (Rhode Island Habitat Restoration Team) shall include, but need not be limited to:

- (1) consistency with the state estuary and coastal habitat restoration strategy, the Narragansett Bay comprehensive conservation and management plan, the state coastal nonpoint pollution control plan, the coastal resources management program, the department of environmental management regulations, the anadromous fish restoration plan, and pertinent elements of the state guide plan;
- (2) the proposed timeline of the project (projects slated to begin sooner rather than later will be given greater preference);
- (3) the ability of the applicant to provide adequate personnel funding, and authority to carry out and properly maintain the estuary and coastal habitat restoration activity;
- (4) the proposed monitoring plan to ensure that short-term and long-term restoration goals are achieved; a final report given back to the TAC outlining project accomplishments;
- (5) the effectiveness of any nonpoint source pollution management efforts upstream and the likelihood of re-impairment;
- (6) whether the estuary and coastal habitat restoration activity can be shown to improve or replace habitat losses that benefit fish and wildlife resources;
- (7) potential water quality improvements;
- (8) potential improvements to or replacements of fish and wildlife habitats for species which are identified as rare or endangered by the Rhode Island Natural History Survey or the federal Endangered Species Act;
- (9) the level and extent of collaboration by partners (e.g., municipality, nongovernmental organization, watershed council, federal agency, etc.);
- (10) potential direct economic and educational benefits to a community or the state; and
- (11) ability of applicant to secure matching funds, whether the funds be NGO, state or federal dollars.

To view a copy of the technical advisory committee's proposal evaluation form, go to:
<http://www.crmc.ri.gov/projects/habitats.html>

6. Application Process

Interested eligible applicants must submit a pre-proposal outlining the purpose and goals of the restoration project. Those applicants who are notified that their pre-proposal has been accepted must submit a full project proposal for consideration by the Technical Advisory Committee.

The program is administered by the R.I. Coastal Resources Management Council with technical support from the R.I. Habitat Restoration Trust Fund Technical Advisory Committee.

Eligible entities: Cities and towns; committees, boards, or commissions chartered by a city or town; nonprofit organizations; civic groups; educational institutions; and state agencies. Projects must be located in the state of Rhode Island.

Funding levels: Funding for projects is from an annual account totaling \$250,000. Individual awards generally range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 per year. Awards are made for periods of up to two years, pending availability of funds. Longer-term projects may reapply in subsequent years.

Match requirements: There is no specific match requirement; however, proposals that can demonstrate matching funds or in-kind services will have an advantage in the evaluation process. Applicants are therefore encouraged to detail all federal and non-federal resources contributing toward completion of the project, whether cash or in-kind.

Step 1: Pre-proposals

A request for pre-proposals for the current state fiscal year is issued in September. Completed proposals are generally due the second week in October:

Caitlin Chaffee, Coastal Policy Analyst
RI Coastal Resources Management Council
Oliver Stedman Government Center
4808 Tower Hill Road, Suite 3
Wakefield, RI 02879

View the most recent CRMC request for pre-proposals here:
www.crmc.ri.gov/projects/habitats.html

To download a pre-proposal form, go to: www.crmc.ri.gov/projects/habitats.html

Step 2: Final Proposals

After the technical advisory committee has evaluated submitted project pre-proposals, it will notify those applicants whose projects will be considered for funding. The notified applicant must then submit a full project proposal to CRMC by the applicable deadline.

To download a full-proposal form, go to: www.crmc.ri.gov/projects/habitats.html