



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
Coastal Resources Management Council
Oliver H. Stedman Government Center
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the provisions of R.I. Gen. Laws Chapter 46-23, as amended, and in accordance with the procedures set forth in the R.I. Administrative Procedures Act, R.I. Gen. Laws Chapter 42-35, the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) hereby gives notice of its intention to afford the public an opportunity to offer written comment and to request a public hearing at which oral and written comments may be offered concerning the CRMC's intention to repeal the following regulations:

[RICRMP Ocean Special Area Management Plan – Executive Summary](#)

[ERLID # 6888](#)

The CRMC has determined that small businesses should not be adversely impacted by the proposed repeal of the above regulations. The 30-day public comment period is being afforded to solicit comment on the proposed repeal of the above regulations and to allow public input from small businesses, any cities or towns, or any affected parties which may nevertheless believe that they may be adversely affected. Small businesses are requested to comment on the proposed repeal of the above regulations as to how such proposed action can be changed to minimize the impact on those small businesses affected.

All interested parties are invited to submit written comments concerning the proposed regulations by **August 16, 2018** to: Coastal Resources Management Council, Stedman Government Center, 4808 Tower Hill Road, Wakefield, RI 02879. ATTN: Grover J. Fugate, CRMC Executive Director. Email Address: cstaff1@crmc.ri.gov

The CRMC does not plan to hold a public hearing in this matter. An electronic copy of the subject regulations are available by clicking on the above link. Further information may be obtained by contacting the Coastal Resources Management Council offices at 783-3370.

Signed this 16th day of July, 2018.



Jeffrey M. Willis, Deputy Director
Coastal Resources Management Council

Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council

RICRMP Ocean Special Area Management Plan – Executive Summary

ERLID # 6888

Concise Summary of Proposed Action

The subject regulations (Executive Summary) were included as part of the Ocean Special Area Management and adopted by Council on October 19, 2010 to address renewable and offshore development activities in the offshore waters bounded by the Rhode Island Geographic Location Description and through implementation of marine spatial planning.

In 2016, the legislature passed an amendment to R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-35-5(b) that required the Secretary of State to oversee the publication of an updated uniform code of state regulations, the Rhode Island Code of Regulations (RICR). Only those portions of the Ocean SAMP that contain enforceable policies and standards can be included within the RICR. The remaining non-RICR portions of the Ocean SAMP, including the entirety of the Executive Summary, will be included as part of the CRMC's Ocean Special Area Management Plan guidance document in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 42-35-1(9) and 42-35-2.12. The Ocean SAMP guidance document will provide helpful information to assist with compliance with the RICR portions of the Ocean SAMP. The Ocean SAMP guidance document contains the findings, scientific data and other information relative to the Ocean SAMP and can be found by accessing the CRMC's guidance document index on the CRMC's webpage [www.crmc.ri.gov] or the Secretary of State's guidance document index.

On the basis of the above, the subject regulations (Executive Summary) are no longer necessary and should be repealed and expired.

Executive Summary

- ~~1. Through the Ocean Special Area Management Plan (Ocean SAMP), the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) commits itself to uphold both its obligations to preserve, protect, develop, and where possible, restore the coastal resources of the state for this and succeeding generations, and to ensure that the preservation and restoration of ecological systems shall be the primary guiding principle upon which environmental alteration of coastal resources will be measured, judged and regulated.~~
- ~~2. The waters off Rhode Island's coasts have long served as an important and highly valuable environmental, economic and cultural hub for the people living in this region. The natural beauty of these offshore waters, along with its rich historic and cultural heritage, provides aesthetic, artistic, educational, and spiritual value and is part of the appeal that draws people to live, work, and play in Rhode Island. Rhode Island's offshore waters are an ecologically unique region and host an interesting biodiversity of fish, marine mammals, birds, and sea turtles that travel throughout this region, thriving on its rich habitats, microscopic organisms, and other natural resources.~~
- ~~3. As a means to promote, protect, enhance, and honor these existing human uses and natural resources of Rhode Island, while encouraging appropriate marine-based economic development, and facilitating the coordination of state and federal decision making, the CRMC has produced the Ocean SAMP. Using the best available science and working with well-informed and committed resource users, researchers, environmental and civic organizations, and local, state and federal government agencies, the Ocean SAMP provides a comprehensive understanding of this complex and rich ecosystem as well as describes how the people living in this region have long used and depended upon these offshore resources. To fulfill the Council's regulatory responsibilities, the Ocean SAMP lays out enforceable policies and recommendations to guide CRMC in promoting a balanced and comprehensive ecosystem-based management approach for the development and protection of Rhode Island's ocean-based resources within the Ocean SAMP study area.~~
- ~~4. Since 1983 the CRMC has successfully applied marine spatial planning (MSP) to achieve ecosystem-based management along Rhode Island's coastline. CRMC's six existing SAMP's, as well as the state's water type designations, successfully apply MSP. Through the Ocean SAMP, CRMC builds on this success and applies this same MSP technique to effectively manage Rhode Island's offshore waters.~~
- ~~5. Ecologically, economically, and culturally, Rhode Island is unavoidably linked to the ocean and therefore faces a number of challenges from climate change that are specific to the coastal and marine landscape. The Ocean SAMP intends to contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, global climate change. CRMC believes that with advanced planning and coordination, the harm and costs associated with these potential impacts can be reduced and may be avoided.~~
- ~~6. There is an increased demand for the potential placement of many structures and activities, including liquefied natural gas infrastructure, aquaculture, and artificial reefs, in Rhode Island's offshore waters. However, the major driver for the development of the Ocean SAMP was the determination by the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources in~~

~~2007 that investment in offshore wind farms would be necessary to achieve Governor Donald Carcieri's mandate that offshore wind resources provide 15 percent of the state's electrical power by 2020. In response, the CRMC proposed the creation of a SAMP as a mechanism to develop a comprehensive management and regulatory tool that would proactively engage the public and provide policies and recommendations for appropriate siting of offshore renewable energy.~~

- ~~7. The process to both develop the Ocean SAMP as well as establish policies and regulations is guided by goals and principles that were developed in coordination with the Ocean SAMP researchers and stakeholder group. The Ocean SAMP Goals highlight the commitment by CRMC to: foster a properly functioning ecosystem that is both ecologically sound and economically beneficial; promote and enhance existing uses; encourage marine-based economic development that considers the aspirations of local communities and is consistent with and complementary to the state's overall economic development, social, and environmental needs and goals; and build a framework for coordinated decision-making between state and federal management agencies.~~
- ~~8. The Ocean SAMP Principles commit CRMC to: develop the Ocean SAMP in a transparent manner; involve all stakeholders; honor existing activities; base all decisions on the best available science; and establish monitoring and evaluation that supports adaptive management.~~