

# East Beach shoreline public access walk a success



Photo courtesy of Save The Bay & Seth Holme

While working toward the passage of the lateral shoreline access bill this past June, Senator Mark McKenney (Dist. 30 – Warwick) said another legislator commented to him, “We’re the Ocean State. Why don’t we have the most access of any [other states]?” A crowd of more than 60 people agreed with nodded heads and murmurs at a recent walking tour of East Beach in Charlestown as part of the continuing education series offered by the CRMC and Rhode Island Sea Grant (RISG) aimed at informing people on issues related to shoreline access. For the last three years CRMC and RISG have hosted webinars and free events,

including this walking tour on September 21, 2023. McKenney, Janet Freedman, former CRMC coastal geologist and now of the University of Rhode Island Coastal Institute (CI), Nate Vinhateiro, assistant director of the CI, CRMC staff including Leah Feldman, coastal policy analyst and Emily Hall, coastal geologist, and Clean Ocean Access and Rhode Island Sea Grant staff talked about the elements of the new law and what it means for beachgoers and coastal property owners. More than 100 people registered for the walk, the largest show of interest in the three years of events on this topic.



CRMC Coastal Geologist Emily Hall, center, speaks

The law defines the expanded and clearer boundaries of the public’s rights and privileges of the shore outlined in the Rhode Island Constitution. Now the public may use the shore to the “recognizable high tide line,” or wrack line, the maximum height reached by a rising tide, plus 10 feet. “One way to think about which seaweed line is yours is it’s going to be the seaweed line that’s closest to the water,” Emily Hall, CRMC coastal geologist explained to the people at the event. “When you first hear that it’s a little counter intuitive but anything that’s more recent will wash that seaward line away.”

Wrack lines left by storm events or other extreme high tides do not factor into the 10-foot area, and if the 10 feet goes onto someone’s property, the law does not afford the public entitlement to use privately-owned amenities such as patios, decks, sea walls, or yards.

These talks organized by the CRMC and RISG are part of a larger effort to improve shoreline public access, awareness, and education through opportunities like the webinars and in [Learn More](#)

## Annual CRMC Right-of-Way Cleanup Day 2023

CRMC, Rhode Island Sea Grant, Save The Bay, and Clean Ocean Access are partnering in a statewide right-of-way cleanup on **Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023**.

The partners will be at different CRMC ROWs and other ROWs in Rhode Island, and participants are invited to volunteer to clean up these locations, as well as others listed below, on that day. **Parking is limited at many sites so carpool if possible!**

Locations:

- Nanaquaket Bridge CRMC ROW in Tiverton, 9-11 a.m.
- Mount Hope Boat Ramp, 118 Annawamscutt Dr., Bristol, 9-11 a.m.
- Public St and Allens Ave CRMC ROW, Providence, 9-11 a.m.
- Wilson Park CRMC ROW, North Kingstown, 9-11 a.m.
- Cliff Walk in Newport, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (Meet at the corner of Marine and Wetmore Aves.)

More information on the cleanups is available on the CRMC website —> [Learn More](#)

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