

Oil Spill Prevention, Administration and Response (OSPAR) Fund

Annual Report FY 2009



Cessna crash on the Pawcatuck River August 2, 2008

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

W. Michael Sullivan, PhD, Director

James Ball, Emergency Response Administrator,
Chief Office of Emergency Response

Introduction

The Oil Spill Prevention Administration and Response (OSPAR) Fund, RIGL Chapter 46-12.7, was created in 1996 (modifying a prior statute adopted in 1990) in the aftermath of the environmentally devastating North Cape oil spill. The fund was created, and is continually supported, by the assessment of a \$0.05 per barrel fee on petroleum products received at marine terminals in Rhode Island. The purpose of OSPAR is multi-faceted. It provides funds to promptly respond, contain and remediate oil spills. OSPAR funds are also utilized to maintain a state of emergency response readiness through responder training and equipment acquisition. The fund further provides, in the event of a significant release, funding for emergency loans to workers affected by a spill as well as damage compensation of legitimate claims that cannot otherwise be compensated by responsible parties or the federal government. The funds and the operations conducted in accordance with the statute are managed by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM).

Section 46-12.7-7 of the statute requires the DEM Director to submit an annual report to the legislature on the OSPAR Fund. This report summarizes the status and use of the fund for FY 2009.

Revenues & Expenditures – FY2009

The OSPAR account started FY 2009 with a balance forward of \$4,806,800. During FY 2009, the \$0.05 per barrel fee resulted in the collection of \$2,882,557 after the ten percent cost recovery fees. Personnel, operating and project expenditures for FY2009 totaled \$1,943,991 that included \$250,000 for the PORTS Navigational System for Narragansett Bay as well as a transfer of \$378,333 to Coastal Resource Management Council (CRMC) for the Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Trust Fund. A detailed review of expenditures is provided in the expenditure section of the report.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the OSPAR Fund revenues and expenditure activities since fiscal year 2001.

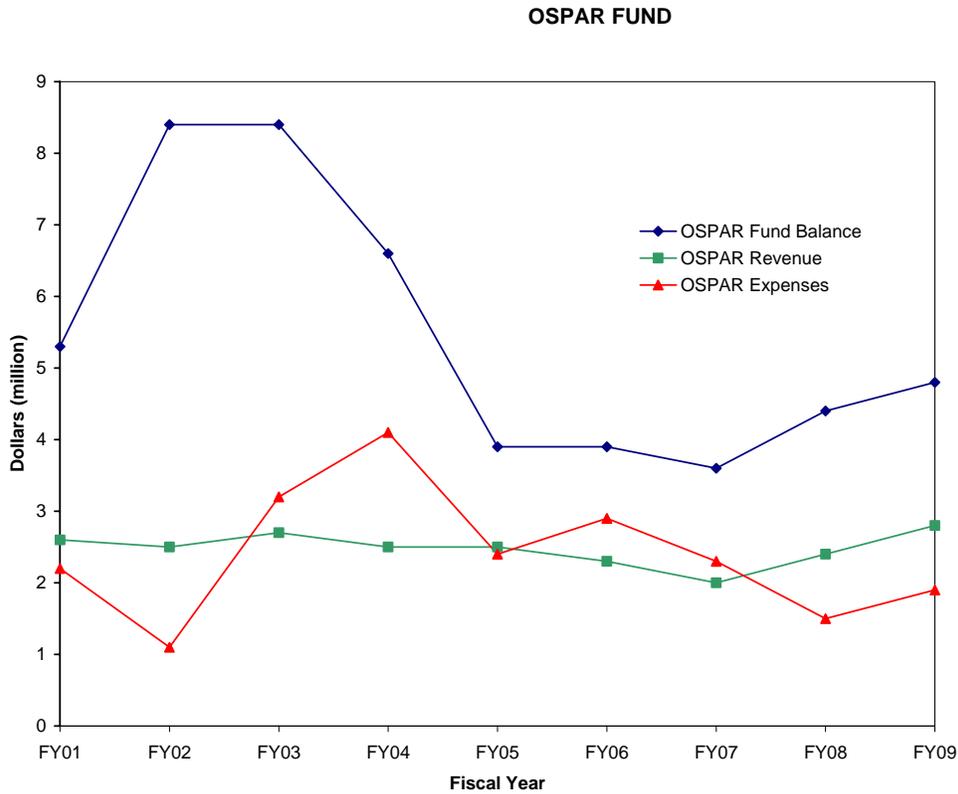


Figure 1. OSPAR Fund

The OSPAR fund reserve balance has not recovered since being utilized as state match for the Providence River dredging project in fiscal years 2003 and 2004. The project restored the shipping channel to the federally authorized dimensions of 40 foot depth and a channel width of 600 feet. Six million cubic yards of dredged material were removed during the project. The fiscal impact to OSPAR was 3.2 million dollars in FY2003 and 4.1 million dollars in FY2004.

Previously, net revenue, while relatively constant, had exhibited a declining trend. This is partially explained by an increase in cost recovery from 7 percent to 10 percent. In FY2009 the upward trend has continued as an increase response in revenue; however, this year expenses have risen as well. The rise in revenue appears to be a result of the increase usage of petroleum for heating and transportation.

ACTIVITIES– FY2009

Summary

With regard to pre-spill preparedness, the OSPAR Fund was used in FY2009 for personnel and operating expenses. Personnel costs assigned to the OSPAR Fund included the following: Office of Emergency Response (partial salary of Emergency Response Administrator and full salary of technical assistant) and partial salaries of five first responders; DEM GIS Supervisor (partial); staff from DEM Office of Waste

Management. These salary and benefit costs totaled \$774,647. Major operating expenses charged to the OSPAR Fund included: vehicle readiness and maintenance (\$186,252); emergency response equipment, cleanup services, maintenance and supplies (\$41,075); computer hardware, software, telecommunications and miscellaneous (\$67,700) and one emergency response vehicle (\$33,184). These operating expenses totaled \$328,211.

In FY2009 the Office of Emergency Response, which operates as an all hazard response program and incorporates the oil spill prevention and response functions of DEM, continued to be extremely active responding to oil spills, hazardous material incidents and other state emergencies. There were 816 emergency response investigations undertaken by the Office during FY2009. The incidents comprised two primary categories, hazardous material responses and oil spills. Sixty-nine percent of these responses, a total of 566 incidents, were related to oil spills.

Figure 2 tracks the number of emergency response activities for a ten year period. While there is some annual variation in the number of emergency responses, the trend of the data demonstrates an increase. Activities undertaken by the Department's emergency response team have, on average, increased since 1996, placing ever increasing pressure on the limited available response resources. The downward slide in the FY09 emergency response activities is do to the fact that seaweed related responses had not been included in the tally for the first time since it became an issue in 2003.

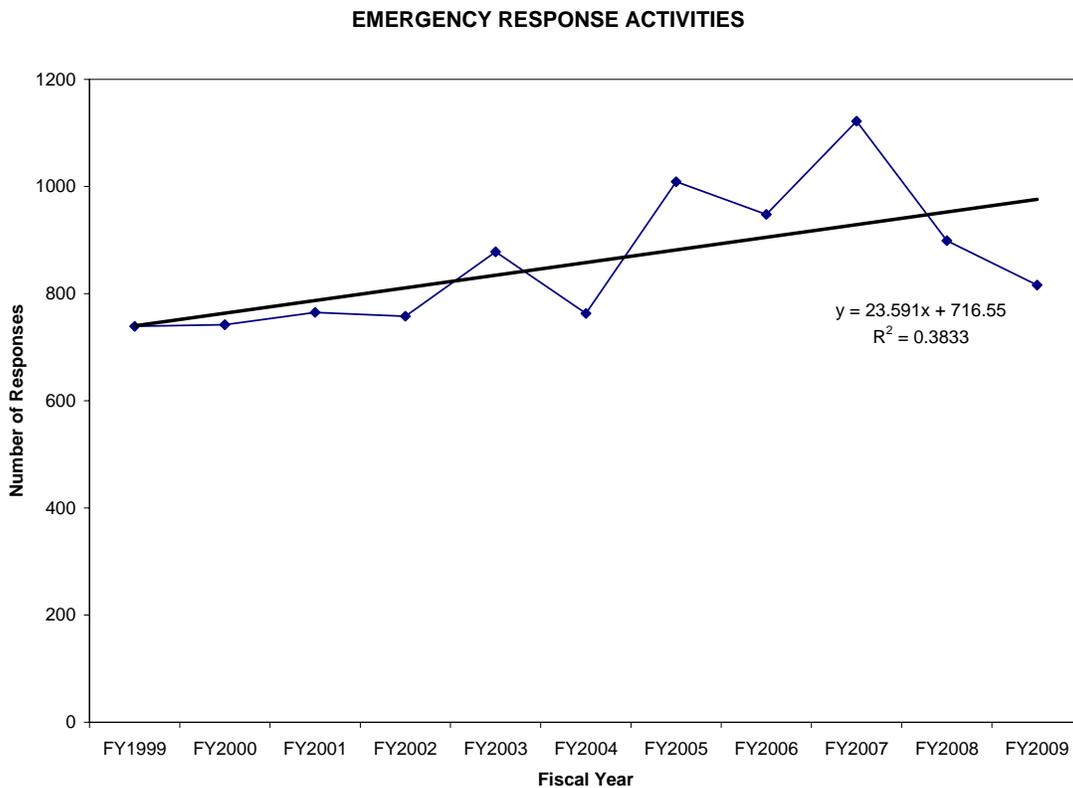


Figure 2. Response Activities

FY2009 EXPENDITURES

Personnel

- Partial salary and benefits of DEM Emergency Response Administrator
- Partial support for four other members of the DEM Emergency Response Team. All five personnel serve as first responders and are also responsible for administering the OSPAR Program both in terms of pre-spill readiness and post-spill response.
- A technical assistant is also part of the Emergency Response Office and the OSPAR program.
- Partial support of salary and benefits of DEM GIS Supervisor. This individual is responsible for maintaining a comprehensive internet mapping application for planning, assessment and response to oil spills or other environmental emergencies in RI marine waters. This individual is also responsible for developing and maintaining a complete data inventory on an internal network capable of supporting responders during an oil spill or other environmental emergency. In the event of a spill, the GIS Supervisor coordinates the collection and dissemination of locational data documenting extent of spill, fish kills, etc. In the aftermath of a spill, support is also provided for natural resource damage assessments to aid in the collection of damages from responsible parties.
- Partial salaries and benefits for personnel from DEM Office of Waste Management.

\$ 774,647

Major Operating Expenses

Vehicle Maintenance & Readiness	\$186,252
Cell phones, pagers, IT Support	\$ 11,995
Supplies: Office, Scientific, Miscellaneous	\$ 55,705
Emergency Response Vehicle Purchase/Replacement	\$ 33,184
Equipment, Repairs & Cleanup Services	\$ 41,075

\$ 328,211

Capital Projects

Narragansett Bay PORTS (annual Maintenance)	\$ 250,000
---	------------

\$ 250,000

Other Projects supported by the OSPAR Fund

Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Trust Fund	\$ 378,333
Rivers, Bays & Watershed Coordination Team	\$ 212,800

\$ 591,133

Total OSPAR Expenditures **\$1,943,991**

OIL SPILL CLEAN-UP ACTIVITIES

The DEM emergency response team responded to 566 oil spills during FY2009. The amount of oil products and oil spill debris remediated during these response activities is estimated to be 23,000 gallons of oil and 3,000 tons of oil spill debris.

The circumstances causing these releases and the environmental impacts generated were varied. The categories of oil spills and the relative percentages of each spill type are illustrated in figure 3.

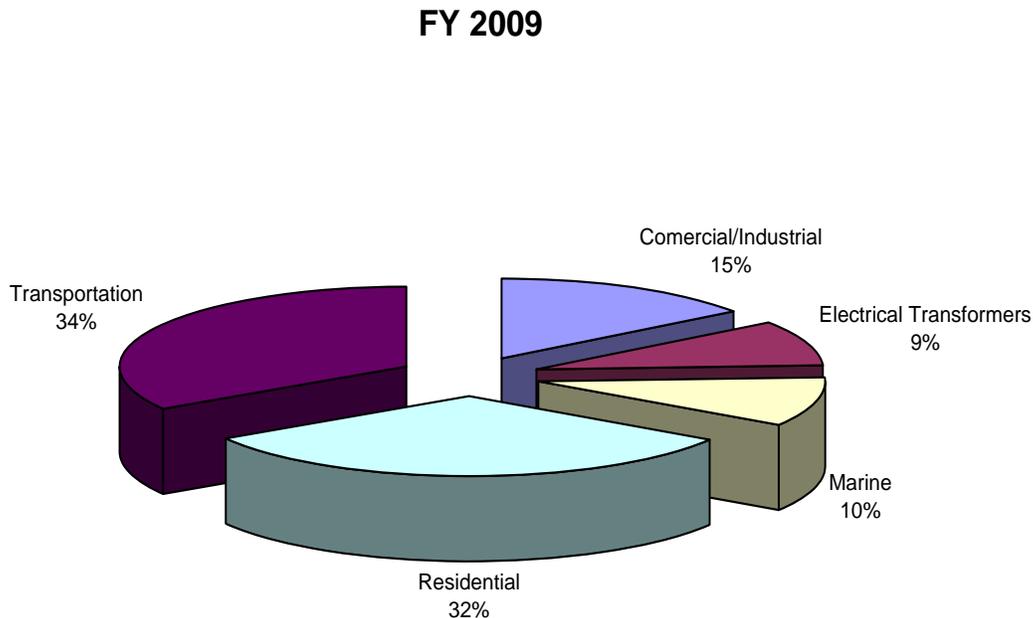


Figure 3. FY2009 Oil Spills by Category

The greatest percentage of spills, 34 percent, was related to transportation incidents. Residential oil spills comprised the next largest category accounting for 32 percent of department responses. Releases from residential heating oil tanks continue to be extremely problematic. Cleanup can be expensive (particularly if the oil migrates into the subsurface) and many homeowner insurance policies do not provide coverage. Fuel oil spills in residential areas can contaminate drinking water wells, ground water, and soil; foul septic systems, requiring their replacement; cause odor and health problems in the home; and contaminate storm water drains, sewers, drainage ditches and surface water tributaries that lead to Atlantic Ocean. The department has posted information on the Emergency Response web page regarding how to minimize the risk of a spill or release from a residential oil tank at <http://www.state.ri.us/dem/programs/director/emmerresp/prevent.htm>. DEM continues to conduct public outreach through press releases, television special reports and presentations to oil companies via insurance seminars. DEM also cooperated with the Oil Heat Institute to provide pertinent information to the oil service industry. Commercial/ Industrial spills accounted for 15 percent of the spill events in FY2009. Oil

spills in Narragansett Bay comprised 10 percent of response activities. Spills from electrical transformers comprised 9 percent of the spill events. The category and percentage of spills has remained relatively constant.

Figure 4 compares the categories and spill percentages for the last three fiscal years.

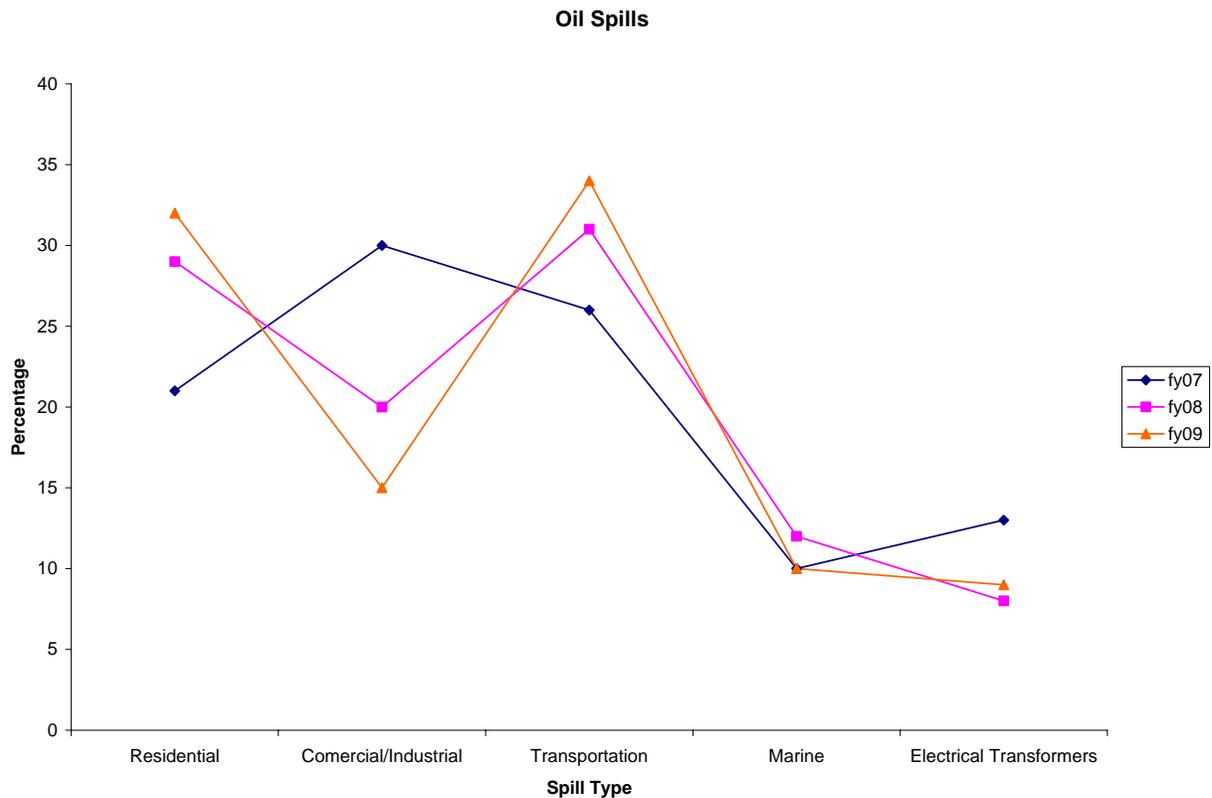


Figure 4. Comparison of Oil Spills FY2007, FY2008 and FY2009

Cessna Airplane crashes on Pawcatuck River near buoy 14 in Westerly

On August 2, 2008 at approximately 11:30 a.m. DEM Emergency Response personnel were transported from the dock at Frank Hall Boat Yard to the Cessna by a DEM Enforcement Officer. While on scene DEM personnel met with Westerly PD and USCG and Safe Sea (salvage contractor). The Cessna was upside down resting on the bottom just east of buoy 14. Prior to the pilot being transported to the hospital he indicated that the airplane contained 50 gallons of aviation fuel. The responsible party hired Gwenmor Marine Contracting to salvage the airplane with a crane barge. DEM required that an environmental contractor be hired for the installation of hard boom around the Cessna and the removal of fuel released during the salvage operation. A diver was hired by the salvage company to inspect and rig the aircraft so that it could be lifted from the water onto the barge.



Figure 5. The Cessna being lifted from the bottom of the Pawcatuck River

Later that evening the Cessna was raised from the water and secured to the barge without the release of fuel. The Cessna was then transported to a storage facility in Connecticut where it was examined by National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Aviation Inspectors to determine the cause of the crash.

Erin Renee Sinking at Promet Marine Services (Promet)

On July 27, 2008 the Erin Renee sank along the dock at Promet Marine Services. The vessel contained 4,000 gallons of diesel fuel/water in the bilge and 550 gallons of lube oil. The 95 foot long metal hull fishing boat was operated by Atlantic Cape Fishery and owned by Manaquan Inlet Realty. Promet deployed curtain boom around the vessel and contacted Clean Harbors to conduct the cleanup.



Figure 6. Erin Renee sunken at Port of Providence

The USCG and the DEM required that Promet develop a salvage plan for the vessel recovery and removal of the remaining petroleum on board. The RP hired Clean Harbors for pollution removal and the salvage plan was developed by Marine Safety Consultants, Incorporated. DonJon was contracted to salvage the vessel with the Chesapeake 1000, a one hundred ton crane barge from New York. Pull cables were attached by divers to the bow and stern so they could raise the vessel to the surface and pump the seawater from the cabin into the boomed area. The boom was left in place throughout the procedure to capture hydraulic fluid released during the process. Approximately 4,000 gallons of oil and water and 550 gallons of lube oil were removed for proper disposal. Promet determined that the engine room sea chest cover was left open allowing seawater to enter the compartment through the intake valve and causing the boat to sink. When the project was complete the vessel was secured to the pier and later piloted to Cape May, New Jersey for rehab.



Figure 7. Oil being released from the Erin Renee as it was refloated.

The OSPAR Fund was not utilized but it allowed DEM to conduct essential work for the protection of the environment until the RP was identified. It was later determined that Promet was guilty of not securing the sea chest door and as a result they took full responsibility for the cleanup and reimbursement of all DEM's expenditures.

2008 Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts Oil Spill Exercise

The Functional Exercise (FE) was co-sponsored by the United States Coast Guard (USCG), the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MA DEP), the Rhode Island DEM and several industrial partners. The exercise was required as part of the United States Coast Guard (USCG) National Preparedness Response Exercise Program (PREP) to test the Area Contingency Plan (ACP) as well as State and Industry spill response plans. The FE took place on September 11 at the Simulation Center on the Mass Military Reservation in Cape Cod. The FE required a Unified Command based response organization comprised of responders from local, state, federal and industry response organizations, as well as community representatives and other stakeholders. The following scenario was provided to the participants: The double hulled barge Liberty pulled by the tug Vernon C collided with the fishing vessel No Hope Exercise, damaging the barge and spilling oil into Buzzards Bay. The fishing vessel sank releasing 3000 gallons of diesel and 500 gallons of lube oil.

The drill was designed to test local, state, federal and industry response plans. Specifically the drill focused on the following objectives: 1) Test the notifications procedures identified in the ACP and the responsible party response plan. 2) Establish a unified command staff to meet the initial and long term challenges required to mitigate the incident; establish a Resource Tracking Unit; Financial & Documentation Units and Site Safety. 3) Activate initial pollution response activities including deployment of the Vessel of Opportunity Skimming System (VOSS); control the source of pollution; minimize the volume released and maximize surface oil spill recovery. 4) Consider alternative technologies to support efforts. 5) Initiate shoreline assessment and protection. 6) Identify threatened species and resources to recover and rehabilitate injured wildlife. 7) Conduct damage/stability assessment; develop and implement a salvage plan. 8) Immediately develop a plan to effectively contain, cleanup, recover, transport and dispose of, or reuse, spilled or recovered product. 9) Develop a transit and berth plan for the Liberty in accordance with the ACP Places of Refuge Policy. 10) Establish a Joint Information Center to keep the public, stakeholders and media informed of response efforts.



Figure 8. Vessel of Opportunity Skimming System (VOSS)

One of the most critical challenges, exercised for the first time, dealt with Places of Refuge for ships in need of assistance. Locating Places of Refuge for stricken vessels has been a significant issue for Area Committees, Regional Response Teams (RRTs), and the National Response Team (NRT). As a result, this initiative was included as one

of the ten objectives. The three locations selected for review as Places of Refuge were the Jamestown Anchorage “A1”, the Cape Cod Canal and the New Bedford Inner Harbor. The difficulty with this effort was the concern with a vessel in distress being brought to a State’s Place of Refuge fully knowing that it could potentially release 80,000 barrels of oil. However, the group realized that not allowing distressed vessels access to safe refuge for repairs can ultimately result in significant adverse environmental and economic consequences if the vessel breaks apart releasing millions of gallons of oil. The group of federal, state and local representatives evaluated each Place of Refuge and ultimately came to a unanimous decision that New Bedford Inner Harbor best fit the requirements for this specific incident. The significance of the group’s determination was not lost on the fact that it was only drill. Hopefully a determination on a Place of Refuge will never be necessitated. However, if a Place of Refuge was required the command staff walked away with the confidence of knowing they were capable of making vital decisions that could potentially prevent a major oil release impacting both states.



Figure 9. State, local and federal responders were well represented in the exercise.

PORTS Program

OSPAR continues to support the Narragansett Bay Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS) that began operation in June 2000. PORTS, which is operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), is comprised of five monitoring stations located in Narragansett Bay that monitor stage of the tide, currents, and weather. This data is reported every six minutes to a central receiving computer, which processes the information. Real-time information regarding tides, current and weather can be accessed by telephone at 401-849-8236 and 1-888-301-9983 or on the internet at, <http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/nbports/nbports.shtml?port=nb>. NOAA continuously monitors the in-water sensors and conducts data validation. This 24/7 quality control allows NOAA to guarantee the accuracy of the data. As a result, the state-licensed pilots who guide the largest vessels into port in Narragansett Bay are able to make decisions on vessel movements with real-time information. Over the last few years the host agencies for PORTS including RIDEM have formed a coalition to petition the Federal Government to include the maintenance of the PORTS system as part of the NOAA budget. NOAA has not taken over the maintenance expenditures but is still reviewing the possibility.

Training Activities

The Emergency Response team continued to improve its response capabilities through training. During FY2009 team members continued to build on the all hazard model. Members of the Emergency Response team participated in courses, training and exercises that included:

- 8-Hour Hazardous Material Full Scale Exercise with the West Warwick/Coventry
- 8-Hour chemical field instrumentation training
- 8-Hour NIMS ICS-408
- 8-Hour CT/RI Cross-boarder Exercise Series (CRICES) Table Top Exercise
- 4-Hours Metering/Monitoring training with field instruments
- 16-Hours Regional Response Team Training with EPA & USCG
- 4-Hour RI Bridge & Turnpike Drill
- 24-Hour Risk Response to Radiological Emergencies
- 16-Hour Level A Hazardous Material Drill with EPA
- 24-Hour WMD Threat & Risk Assessment
- 3-Day Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP) Training
- 4-Hour Level A Training DEM
- 8-Hour WMD Full Scale Exercise with Woonsocket Haz/Mat Team
- 8-Hour HAZWOPER Refresher
- 8-Hour USCG, EPA MA DEP, and RI DEM Table Top Exercise
- 8-Hour HAZWOPER Refresher
- 8-Hour Chemical Identification training
- 10-Hour Large Scale Exercise at Iron Man Triathlon
- 4-Hour Prevention & Response to Suicide Bombing Incidents
- 4-Hour Incident Response to Terrorist Bombings

3-Day Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Team (SCAT) Training for oil spills (For more information on Shoreline Contamination Assessments see <http://response.restoration.noaa.gov>.)

The DEM Emergency Response program also continued to provide training. The training provided included *Hazardous Materials & Criminal Investigation* for the State Police Training Academy, *Homeowner Oil Spill Handling* for oil companies, *Chemical Safe Schools* for educators, *Hazardous Materials Recognition & Identification Refresher* for RI DOT and *Environmental Health & Pesticide Safety Education* for the University of Rhode Island.

HABITAT RESTORATION PROGRAM

Subsidy from the OSPAR fund is transferred to CRMC in accordance with RIGL § 46-23.1-3. The financial support is for the Rhode Island Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Trust Fund. Since the inception of the Trust Fund CRMC has awarded \$1.4 million for 48 projects, which has leveraged more than \$13 million in matching funds. This years funding leveraged more than \$2.8 million. The following short project descriptions are taken from the CRMC web site. Additional information can be found at <http://www.crmc.state.ri.us/>

Lower Pawtuxet River Restoration, Warwick

Award: \$50,000

Lead Organization: Narragansett Bay Estuary Program

Partners: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Restore America's Estuaries (RAE), Save the Bay, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Rhode Island Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership (CWRP), American Rivers

The goal of this project is to restore over seven linear miles of anadromous fish habitat by breaching or partially removing Pawtuxet Falls Dam in Warwick and Cranston. Historically, the Pawtuxet River supported large annual runs of migratory fish. The construction of the dam in 1924 and deteriorating water quality due to discharges from mills and wastewater treatment facilities once made the lower Pawtuxet River unsuitable as anadromous fish habitat. Water quality in the river has since drastically improved, and breaching the dam will restore passage and habitat for several fish species including American shad and river herring, as well as restoring a wide range of additional riverine ecosystem functions. The awarded funds will be used as match for federal funding of project construction activities in 2009.

Blackstone River Fish Passage Restoration, Pawtucket**Award:** \$50,000**Lead Organization:** Blackstone River Watershed Council and Friends of the Blackstone**Partners:** USDA NRCS, Pawtucket Hydro, LLC., City of Pawtucket

The purpose of this project is to restore anadromous fish passage across the first four dams on the lower Blackstone River. The goal is to restore the Blackstone anadromous fish runs that have been obstructed for nearly 200 years. This project will improve the riverine ecosystem, increase recreational opportunities for activities such as fishing, canoeing, kayaking, and historic tours, and provide economic benefits for four towns in the project area. The awarded funds will provide non-federal match for construction of fish passage facilities on the first two dams on the lower Blackstone, Main Street Dam and Slater Mill Dam, both in Pawtucket, R.I.

Silver Creek Salt Marsh Restoration, Bristol**Award:** \$9,879**Partners:** USDA NRCS, RI DEM (Historic Parks Grant Program)

Silver Creek is a thirteen acre, tidal estuary on the eastern shore of Bristol Harbor. The creek is tidally restricted by a former railroad bridge (the East Bay bike path), the Route 114 bridge, and a town-owned foot bridge which have restricted tidal flow into the marsh. These restrictions have impounded freshwater, diminished connectivity with Narragansett Bay, and have allowed for the expansion of *Phragmites australis* in the salt marsh.

The goals of this restoration project are to improve the tidal flushing to the creek, reduce the amount of *Phragmites australis* in the upper marsh, restore the native salt marsh plant community, reduce the impounded water in the marsh, reduce mosquito breeding habitat and reestablish vegetation on mud flats in the lower marsh. The awarded funds will be used to match NRCS Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) funds secured by the Town of Bristol to excavate existing creeks in the upper portion of the salt marsh and treat and mulch the *Phragmites australis*. Restoring the tidal hydrology to this 13 acre marsh will result in reestablished characteristic high and low salt marsh plant communities, decreased density, height, and vigor of the invasive plant, *Phragmites australis*, and increased density and diversity of recreational and commercially important fish species.

Shannock Falls Fish Passage Restoration, Richmond**Award:** \$50,000**Partners:** USDA-NRCS, NOAA-RAE

The goal of this project is to provide passage for a range of species, including Atlantic salmon, American shad, blueback herring, alewife, sea lamprey, American eel and brook trout at the Lower Shannock Falls Dam and ultimately to provide passage for these species to the remainder of the mainstem Pawcatuck River and Wordens Pond.

Completion of the project will restore nearly 1300 acres of spawning and nursery habitat, and provide additional benefits such as restoration of riverine functions, recreational opportunities and improved safety. The awarded funds will be used towards construction activities including sediment analyses, construction oversight services, project management and bedrock removal.

Gooseneck Cove Salt Marsh Restoration, Newport

Award: \$25,000

Partners: City of Newport, Aquidneck Island Land Trust

Gooseneck Cove is a city-owned, 63 acre salt marsh and open water cove bordered by Block Island Sound in Newport, RI. The cove is tidally restricted by three structures: the Ocean Drive Causeway, a small dam, and an unimproved dirt road. These restrictions impound freshwater and restrict salt water flow in and out of the upper cove, which exhibits signs of habitat and water quality degradation. The goal of this restoration project is to restore the salt marsh plant community, to prevent future subsidence of the marsh, and to improve the cove's water quality by restoring tidal flushing of the cove. The project will also include improving public access to the northern cove area.

Manton Pond Dam Fish Passage Restoration, Johnston

Award: \$29,200

Partners: USDA NRCS, USFWS

The purpose of this project is to restore fish passage to the entire length of the lower Woonasquatucket River to the prime spawning habitat of Manton Pond. Manton Pond Dam is the last of five dams in a long-term restoration strategy for the lower Woonasquatucket River. It is the last link in a project to restore spawning habitat for an estimated annual return of 40,000 adult blueback herring, alewife and shad. The focus of the project will be to plan, design and construct a fishway at Manton Dam. Awarded funds will be used for planning and design of the proposed fishway.

Brenton Cove Salt Marsh Restoration, Newport

Award: \$6,421

Partners: Brenton Cove Condo Association, City of Newport, RI Department of Environmental Management Mosquito Abatement Coordination Office

The Brenton Cove salt marsh is approximately 4 acres in size, and opens on the seaward side onto Newport Harbor. The goal of this project is to reopen existing mosquito ditches to reduce stormwater ponding in the rear portion of the salt marsh and facilitate control of the invasive species *Phragmites australis*, which has overtaken portions of the marsh. The awarded funds will go towards implementation of an open water marsh management plan as well as invasive species control, to be carried out by the RI DEM Mosquito Abatement Coordination Office and the Brenton Cove Condo Association in cooperation with the City of Newport. In addition, the City of Newport will be investigating Low Impact Development stormwater management practices to implement within the watershed that will help reduce the amount of stormwater runoff entering the marsh.

RI BAYS, RIVERS and WATERSHEDS COORDINATION TEAM PROJECTS

Fixed- Site Network in Narragansett Bay

Award: \$20,000

Other Funds: 2008 DEM federal grant funds from NOAA Bay Window Program

During FY09, the fixed-site monitoring network in Narragansett Bay was maintained by operating thirteen stations: 8 buoys and 5 land-based sites. Eight of the 14 stations are maintained under an agreement between the DEM Office of Water Resources and the University of Rhode Island - Graduate School of Oceanography (URI-GSO). The network is standardized on YSI equipment that uses sensors to measure water quality every 15 minutes, 24 hours per day. Data was reviewed weekly as part of DEM's tracking of Bay conditions during May-October. Datasets processed and posted to the web (2003-2008, 2009 pending). The data are being used by DEM to assess compliance with newer criteria for dissolved oxygen in estuarine waters and to establish a baseline from which to measure improvements. Additionally, researchers from URI-GSO and other institutions are using the data in work related to hypoxia in the Bay.

Large River Water Quality Monitoring

Award: \$\$156,600

Other Funds: USGS federal matching funds

DEM continued its cooperative agreement with the United State Geological Survey to maintain water quality monitoring on three of the State's largest rivers. Six stations were sampled monthly on the Blackstone River and its tributary the Branch River, the Pawtuxet River and the Pawcatuck River for a range of water quality parameters including nutrients and pathogens. Samples are analyzed for metals quarterly. Data undergoes federal quality assurance procedures and then is made available via USGS information system – NWIS. Data is important for evaluating long-term trends and tracking pollutant loadings into the upper Bay from the rivers. Data is used in various state water programs. One station is monitored near the MA/RI state line on the Blackstone in order to help define pollutant contributions from the Massachusetts portion of that watershed. Three others are located near the mouths of the Blackstone, Pawtuxet and Pawcatuck Rivers in order to be representative of the pollutant loadings from these tributaries into coastal waters.

Streamflow Gage Network

Award: \$36,200

Other Funds: USGS federal matching funds, state general revenues

Rhode Island continued to maintain the network of continuous streamflow gages via cooperative agreements with the United State Geological Survey (USGS). The Coordination Team supported three gages previously added to the network in the fall of 2006 and a portion of costs for other existing gages. The three newer permanent gage stations are: Blackstone River at Pawtucket, Hunt River at Davisville, and the Pawcatuck River at Kenyon. Data is made available on a real-time basis via USGS.

Data from the gages are used by multiple agencies for a number of programs including drought management, water quality restoration, water management, permitting etc.

OUTLOOK AND PROJECTIONS

OSPAR-related expenditures during FY2010 are expected to be similar to FY2009 absent any major spills and associated response needs. The functional capacity to respond will continue to be stressed by the continued reallocation of OSPAR funds. The constant fiscal pressure on the OSPAR fund will have a cumulative impact, compromising the ability of the program to perform the basic readiness and response tenants for which it was established.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information regarding this report, the activities of the emergency response team or OSPAR, contact James Ball, RIDEM Emergency Response Administrator, Chief Office of Emergency Response at 401-222-4700 extension 7129 or at james.ball@dem.ri.gov.