

Roundtable News



DEM Enhances Environmental Ed through Partnership with NBC10

DEM began a new partnership with WJAR-TV/Channel 10 that features and promotes the environment and the work of the Department. Named *EarthWatch Rhode Island*, the segments are similar to Channel 10's Watershed Reports and Plant Pro. DEM provides story ideas, technical information and coordination. Channel 10 provides videotaping, editing, final production and air time. Meteorologist Dylan Dreyer hosts the series.

The first segment - a behind the scenes look at beach closures - aired on July 2nd. The segment followed a water sample from Scarborough State Beach to the Department of Health Laboratory. Segments so far have featured ozone and clean boating. Upcoming segments will feature mercury in dental amalgam, mosquitoes, camping locally, wastewater treatment/bio-solids, and shellfishing enforcement.

EarthWatch Rhode Island airs on Channel 10's Sunday Sunrise Newscast between 9 and 10 a.m. (unless pre-empted by other programming). Please tune in and feel free to provide feedback on the series. For more information or to suggest story ideas, please call or email Terri Bisson at 222-3434, extension 4402 or terri.bisson@dem.ri.gov.



Top left, DEM Director W. Michael Sullivan speaks with NBC 10 Meteorologist Dylan Dreyer and Producer Lisa Purcell during taping of the 1st segment of *EarthWatch Rhode Island* about beach closures. **Bottom left**, Patrick Peck of Cove Haven Marina in Barrington is interviewed for the segment on clean boating. **Below**, an NBC 10 Cameraman readies DEM Sr. Air Quality Specialist, Lenny Giuliano for an interview with Dylan about ozone.



Environmental Equity Stakeholder Group

RIDEM would like to remind Roundtable Members of the July 31 deadline to express interest or nominate someone to serve on the Environmental Equity Stakeholder Group. DEM is convening the group to help develop new or improved DEM policies, procedures, regulations, and, potentially, legislative initiatives on environmental equity. The goal is to establish a group that represents a fair cross-section of parties with an interest in the investigation, remediation, and redevelopment of contaminated sites in environmental equity areas. Possible stakeholders, include tenants, landowners, community and environmental organizations, governmental representatives, elected officials, developers, environmental consultants, and others.

The workgroup is expected to involve monthly meetings over the next 8-12 months to discuss this topic. Subcommittees may be formed to explore specific issues in more detail. All meetings will be open to the public and governed by the process outlined in the RI Open Meetings laws. A website will be developed to support the workgroup and make all meeting notices, meeting agendas, minutes, and supporting documents available to the public.

Environmental Equity: What does it Mean?

Environmental equity means that no person or particular group of persons suffers disproportionately from environmental degradation or intentional discrimination, or is denied enjoyment of a fair share of environmental improvements.

Please visit <http://www.dem.ri.gov/pubs/eequity.htm> to view the full version of DEM's Draft Environmental Equity Policy.

Letters of interest or nominations may be sent **BY JULY 31, 2006** in writing or via e-mail to: Terrence Gray, Assistant Director of Air, Waste and Compliance; RIDEM, 235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908 or eeworkgroup@dem.ri.gov.

Environmental Legislative Action in 2006

With the General Assembly session just ending in the early morning hours of June 24th and many bills still awaiting transmittal to the Governor's Office, the final fate of most environmental legislation in 2006 is still unknown. A much larger, more comprehensive legislative summary will be made available once the Governor has finalized his decision on all bills that need to come before him for his action. Here is just a small sampling of a few bills that passed the Assembly that might be of interest to roundtable members.

Clarifying State Law Regarding Disposal of Tree Stumps (S-2048Aaa & H-6828Aaa): This proposal seeks to address an anomaly associated with the RI Refuse Disposal Act (RIGL §23-18.9) whereby tree waste (leaves, branches, trunks) is regulated differently than tree stumps. It eliminates the exemption currently afforded to tree stumps under the definition of solid waste in the Refuse Disposal Act. (Signed 6/9/06.)

BUD/Beneficial Reuse Determination (7257Aaa and S-2701aa): This proposal creates a kind of statewide recycling program for solid waste materials that are not generally recognized as recyclable,

but which are generally inert and thus may be capable of a more productive use than being discarded in a landfill. A BUD law was adopted by the General Assembly in 2005, but it was limited to just BUD projects in the City of Cranston. This 2006 law makes RI's BUD law applicable in all RI cities and towns. *(Awaiting final action by the Governor.)*

Dam Safety (S-2510A & H-7609A): Requires the development of emergency action plans (EAPs) specific to all significant & high hazard dams, and provides DEM with the authority to carry out the mandate of a DEM Director's order to repair or fix a dam with which the owner did not comply, when a clear and present danger to public safety exists. *(Introduced at the request of the Governor and signed 6/9/06.)*

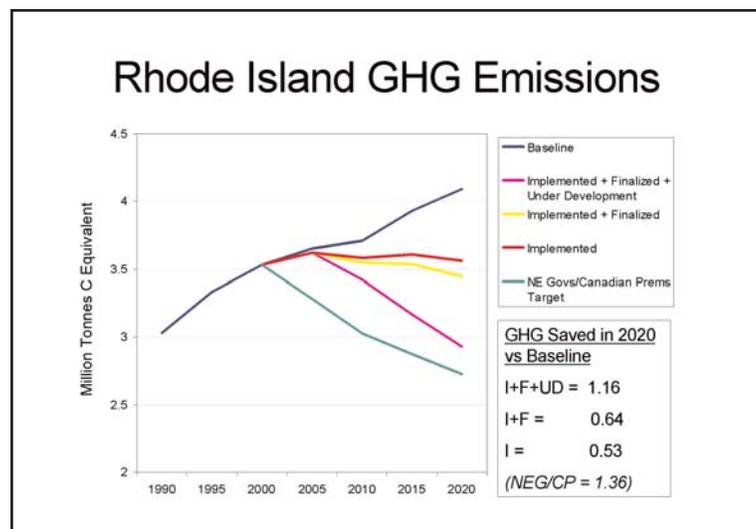


Amendments to RI's Brownfield's Law (S-3113 and H-8239): This proposal would streamline RI's brownfields law by minimizing the administrative complexities associated with negotiating a liability agreement with DEM. In addition, the proposal would address a high priority concern regarding municipal development of brownfields sites by requiring a new public participation process for sensitive reuse scenarios (e.g. schools, playgrounds, parks, athletic fields). *(Awaiting final action by the Governor.)*

House Commission to Study Arsenic (H-8005A): Creates a 9-member special legislative commission to study the requirements for the remediation of naturally occurring arsenic in soil. DEM is designated as one of the nine members of the special commission. *(Passed by the House on 6/21/06.)*

Greenhouse Gas Stakeholders Continue Efforts

The meeting of the Greenhouse Gas Stakeholder Process held on June 15, 2006, marked its five-year anniversary and its tremendous progress towards greenhouse gas reductions in Rhode Island. Presently, with all of the laws, programs, and policies that have been implemented in Rhode Island, it is projected that these alone are enough to offset the business-as-usual greenhouse gas emission growth baseline through 2020. With the Greenhouse Gas Stakeholders already affecting such tangible progress, Dr. Jonathan Rabb reported that Rhode Island is approximately halfway to meeting its 2020 goal of reducing its greenhouse gas emissions to 10% below 1990 levels. This goal will be met with the implementation of additional emission reduction programs currently under development. The graph (at right) illustrates this point.



Two initiatives responsible for setting Rhode Island on track for meeting its reduction targets include adoption of California's Pavely vehicle standards and the Renewable Energy Standards law.

Beginning in model year 2009, the Pavely standards will require new cars and light trucks to achieve maximum feasible and cost effective reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and some air conditioning refrigerants). When fully implemented, the regulations will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by an estimated one million tons annually by 2020, a reduction of more than 31% and over two times larger than the largest options in the 2002 RI GHG Action Plan. The auto industry has filed lawsuits challenging the Pavley regulations in several states, including Rhode Island.

The Renewable Energy Standard law, adopted in 2005, begins in 2007, requiring that 3% of total retail sales come from renewables, and escalates to a 16% requirement by 2019 and after. When fully implemented, the regulations will reduce carbon emissions by an estimated 170,000 tons by 2020.

For more information about the stakeholder process and additional programs stakeholders are pursuing, please visit the RIGHG website at <http://www.righg.raabassociates.org/>.

Free Brownfields Conference

Now in its 11th year, the National Brownfields Conference will be held on November 13th - 15th, 2006 at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center.

Reuse and redevelopment of brownfields is both a challenge and an opportunity. Putting these sites back into productive use can serve as a catalyst for local economic revitalization. Complex financial, legal and environmental risks are some of the biggest barriers to owners and developers. The National Brownfields Conference educates on how contaminated and unwanted properties - be they urban, suburban, rural, waterfront, tribal, or international - might be transformed from a liability and expense for one organization to an asset for another.

Attendees range from developers, finance specialists, community advocates and attorneys to real estate professionals, local and state government employees, academics, nonprofit organizations, and environmental engineers and consultants. At the local and regional level, the issues affected by brownfields redevelopment can include affordable housing, economic development, job creation, environmental health, infrastructure improvements, smart growth, and community revitalization.

Anyone interested in issues such as these are welcome to attend this **FREE** national conference on brownfields. To register and view more information, visit www.brownfields2006.org.

Other Notable GHG Reduction Actions

- The **Energy and Consumer Savings Act** of 2005, was amended this year to add five types of appliances to the thirteen in the original bill.
- In December 2005, a contract was signed to provide 100% of the energy used in the **State House** from renewable sources.
- The **Federal Energy Policy Act** of 2005 (EPAct) provides new tax incentives for a number of solar and energy efficiency measures for the first time since 1992. Among them are:
 - Tax credits for residential solar photovoltaic and hot water heating systems
 - Improvements to existing homes including high-efficiency air conditioners and equipment
 - Residential fuel cell systems
 - Highly-efficient new homes
 - Fuel cell and microturbines used in a business.
 - Tax deductions for highly efficient commercial buildings.

Improved Fishing Access For Narragansett Bay

DEM recently evaluated the potential development of fishing piers and improvements at 23 sites throughout Narragansett Bay. The study, *Public Access to Shoreline Recreational Fishing in Narragansett Bay*, investigated a host of factors associated with each site, including the abundance and variety of fish species, water quality, environmental constraints, surrounding land use, and existing infrastructure.

The report recommends the construction of two major fishing piers, one at the former Jamestown Bridge location in North Kingstown, and one on Midway Pier/Burma Road in Middletown. Goddard Park in Warwick, Palmer River Bridge in Barrington/Warren, Fort Adams in Newport, and Stone Bridge in Tiverton also ranked high in potential sites evaluated by the study. The next step in the process is to seek public input from the general public, local officials, neighborhood representatives, fishing groups, and DOT.

In addition, for the last several years, DEM has been upgrading public boat ramps and boating access sites throughout the state. The Department is presently designing major repairs to the Prudence Island T Wharf for improved public fishing and boating access opportunities and is working with the Department of Transportation to develop the former Stone Bridge Pier in Portsmouth as a public fishing pier.

The entire report, along with site photos is available on DEM's website, www.dem.ri.gov by clicking "Programs" then "Planning and Development".

Earth Day 2006 an Overwhelming Success

Earth Day 2006 drew over 34,000 children and adults to Roger Williams Park Zoo in Providence for Conservation Week and thousands of people to the Earth Day Festival at the Warwick Mall on Saturday, April 22. All who attended enjoyed music, fun, and environmental education exhibits. The festival featured the Ponaganset High School Band Protium, the World's first hydrogen fuel cell powered band. There were also appearances by the Big Nazo Characters, Woodsy the Owl, and MaxMan.

Throughout the month of April, an estimated 7000 volunteers joined forces and participated in over 90 cleanups around the state. DEM awarded 48 organizations mini grants of \$200 each to help enhance their clean ups and provided gloves and bags to the volunteers.

Earth Day Rhode Island is considering plans for Earth Day 2007. If you would like to join the Earth Day Committee or become a corporate sponsor, please call or email Earth Day Rhode Island Chair Jeff Fornaro at 949-2187 or jefjr@cox.net.



EPA's popular touch tank at the 2006 Rhode Island Earth Day Festival

Environmental Education Advocate Honored

Michael Ferry, a science teacher at Woonsocket High School and an avid environmental education advocate, was presented with the Department of Environmental Management's Alfred L. Hawkes Environmental Achievement Award at a luncheon in his honor at Evelyn's Villa in West Warwick.

The Alfred L. Hawkes Award for Conservation and Environmental Accomplishment acknowledges those who have "with uncommon effort, immeasurably advanced the preservation, protection, and enhancement of the natural resources of our state." Ferry is the 14th recipient of the annual award.

DEM Director W. Michael Sullivan, Ph.D. said that Ferry's "dedication and commitment to teaching students and educators alike about the importance of preserving, protecting and enhancing the natural resources of our state makes him a truly exceptional candidate for the Alfred L. Hawkes Award."

Through active involvement with the community, Ferry has demonstrated a marked interest in the improvement and preservation of Rhode Island's natural environment. Particularly were his energetic efforts to involve young people, through educational activities, in the preservation of the Blackstone River. Ferry initiated a Blackstone Rivers project curriculum in the Blackstone River Valley that educates teachers on using the river as a classroom. In the past five years, over 225 teachers have taken this five-day summer course that stimulates educators to use local resources.

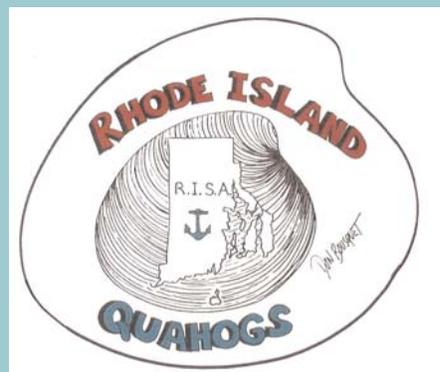
Ferry has coordinated the Clean Water Festival, a two-day educational fair at Rhode Island College, to teach high school students about the importance of clean water. In addition, he has also coordinated the Blackstone River Fish Release Celebration for Woonsocket third-grade students. In May, 625 third graders from Woonsocket public schools came to River Island Park along the Blackstone River to take part in river educational activities and a picnic, and ended the day by releasing a trout into the river. He also created the after-school River Club which allows students to get involved in hands-on river activities such as water-quality testing, canoeing the Blackstone, and Earth Day activities. All participating students sign up as volunteers with the National Park Service, and receive community service credit that is counted towards graduation.



Michael Ferry (right) with Alfred L. Hawkes (center) and DEM Director, W. Michael Sullivan.

New Logo for Rhode Island Quahogs

The Rhode Island Shellfishermen's Association has a new logo for quahogs harvested from Narragansett Bay and adjacent waters. When you buy quahogs with this label you can be sure that you are getting local quahogs. The logo was developed by Rhode Island Cartoonist Don Bousquet. USDA Rural Development, RI DEM and the RI Shellfishermen's Association provided funding to develop the logo and for the shellfish bags printed with the logo. Governor Carcieri unveiled the logo at ceremonies for RI Agriculture Day at the State House on May 17.



Farmers' Markets at State Parks Open

Four farmers' markets located in Rhode Island state parks are now open on a weekly basis. Farmers' markets and hours of operation are:

- **Fishermens' Memorial State Park**, Sundays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- **Haines Memorial State Park**, Wednesdays, 2-6 p.m.
- **Goddard Memorial State Park**, Fridays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- **Colt State Park**, Fridays, 2-6 p.m.

A new market will open on Tuesdays from 2-6 p.m., starting July 25 at the **Blackstone River State Park Visitor Center** on Route 295 in Lincoln.



Produce found at the various farmers markets in RI.

All DEM Farmers' Markets accepts farmers' market checks from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) as well as coupons from the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program distributed through senior centers.



Upcoming Events/Meetings

July 22

Narragansett Bay Research Reserve Summer Science Series, "Seagrass Beds: Refuge and Resource." Noon to 2 p.m. at Sandy Beach, Prudence Island. For information, call Kristin Van Wagner at 683-1478.

July 22

RI Greenways, Connect the Paths, an 80 mile tour of all state bike paths, contact john.r@verizon.net or 258-8828 for more information.

July 24

Boating Safety Exam, 6 P.M., DEM Headquarters, 235 Promenade Street, Providence

July 26

Public Hearing on Proposed Cleanup Plan for the West Kingston/URI Disposal Area Superfund Site. 7 P.M., URI's Kingston campus, 210 Flagg Road. For information, call Gary Jablonski at 222-4700 ext. 7148.

July 29

30th Annual Citizens Bank/Save The Bay Swim. 7 A.M registration, 1.7 mile swim from Newport to Jamestown. For more information visit www.savebay.org/news_swim.

July 30

Governor's Bay Day. Free state beaches and many activities. Visit www.ri.gov/GOVERNOR/view.php?id=2274 for a complete listing of activities

August 1

Edible Plant Walk, 4 P.M, Blackstone Bikeway, Lincoln. Pre-registration is required, contact 453-3777

August 8

Earth Day RI monthly meeting, 5:30 P.M., DEM Headquarters, 235 Promenade St., Providence. Call Jef Fornaro at 949-2187 for more information.

September 12

Earth Day RI monthly meeting, 5:30 P.M., DEM Headquarters, 235 Promenade St., Providence. Call Jef Fornaro at 949-2187 for more information.

September 14

Business Roundtable Meeting, 3:30 P.M., DEM Headquarters, 235 Promenade St., Providence

September 28

Environmental Roundtable Meeting, 3:00 P.M., DEM Headquarters, 235 Promenade St., Providence