

# Partnering for Protection

*Wetlands Workshop for Municipal Officials*

May 22, 2008



**Please Note:** This presentation is for a workshop only and is not meant to be a substitute for the Freshwater Wetlands Act or the *Rules and Regulations Governing the Administration and Enforcement of the Freshwater Wetlands Act*.



# Getting Started

**Carolyn Murphy**

*Principal Environmental Scientist*

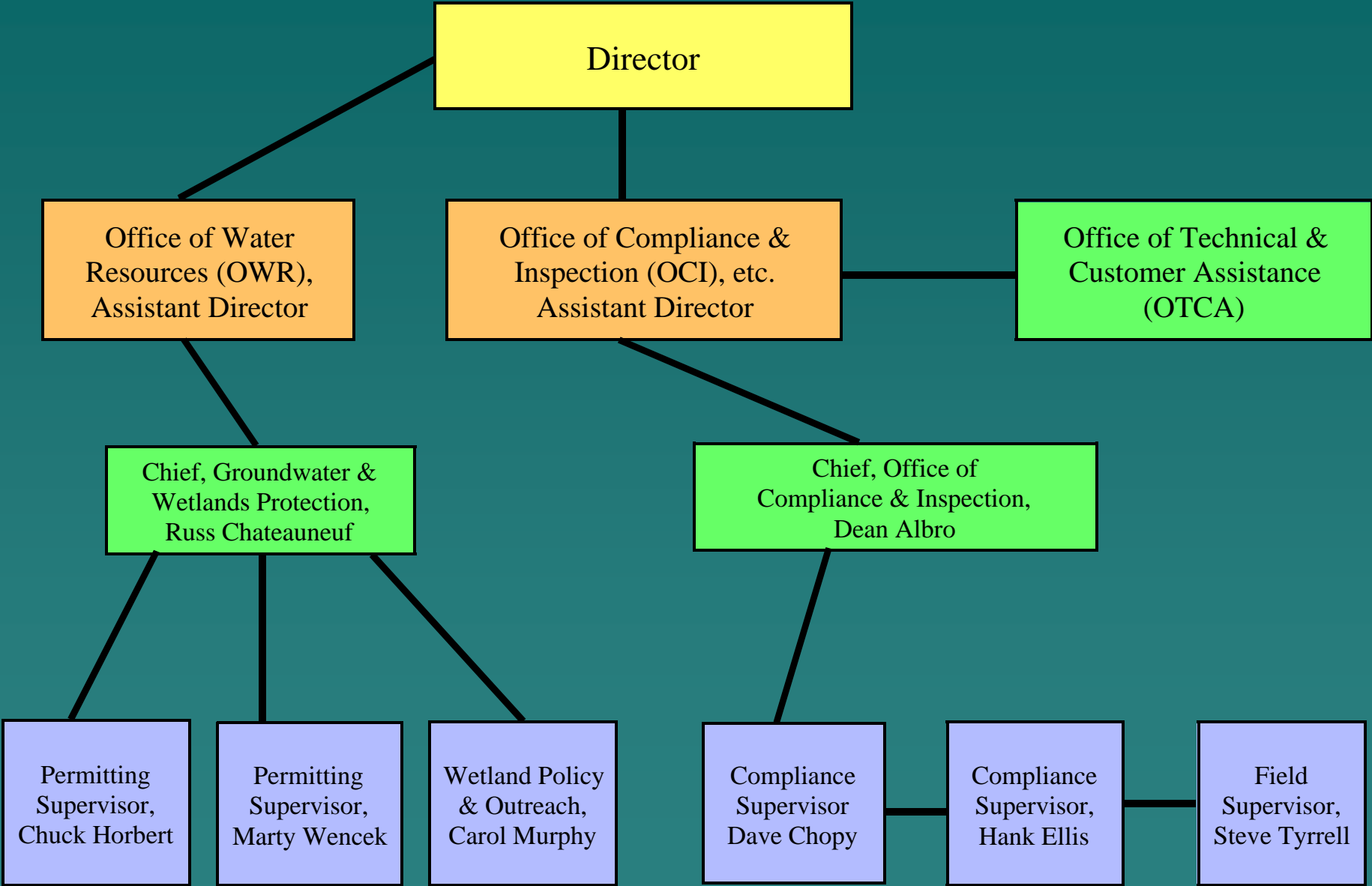
*DEM Office of Water Resources*

# Participants

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- **Several disciplines here today**
- **All levels of experience – entry to program managers**
- **Some ‘getting started’ w/ wetlands & many starting w/ new wetland Rules effective June 1, 2007**
- **Wetland protection takes teamwork and partnerships!**

# DEM Organizational Chart



# Wetlands Permitting

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- **2 supervisory scientists**
- **8 biologists**
- **3 engineers**
- **~700 applications/year**
- **~650 decisions w/**
- **~350 permits/year**

# Permits Granted 2004 & 2005

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- **> 90% for “insignificant alterations”**
- **Majority in perimeter & riverbank wetlands**
- **Granted 42 “permits to alter” and 5 emergency alterations permits**
- **59% of total for residential development (38% for single family lots)**
- **26% of total for infrastructure & growth**

# Wetlands Compliance

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- **2 supervisory scientists**
- **3 biologists**
- **Primarily investigate telephone complaints regarding possible unauthorized alterations**
- **Average 501 complaints per year in 2001-2005**

# Actions in 2004 & 2005

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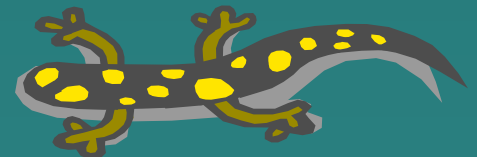
- Total of 984 complaints received
- Average 33% were unfounded & 23% were minor
- Total of 84 informal actions
- Total of 29 formal actions
- \$ 78,940 penalties collected



# What about the Wetlands?

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- ~2 acres permitted loss of wetland/year
- No data permitted loss of buffers
- 4 acres unauthorized wetland alteration
- 10 acres unauthorized buffer & floodplain alteration
- 43 acres enforcement restoration



# How Do We Protect Wetlands?

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- The *Public Policy* of the RI Wetlands Act (RIGL 2-1-19) ... preserve and protect the purity and integrity of all freshwater wetlands
- Rules and Regulations Governing Administration & Enforcement of the Act (June 1, 2007!)



# Rule 2.00:

## Protects Functions and Values

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- Wildlife and wildlife habitat
- Recreation and aesthetics
- Flood protection
- Surface and groundwater supplies
- Water quality protection and maintenance



# Rule 3.02 & 3.03: DEM & CRMC

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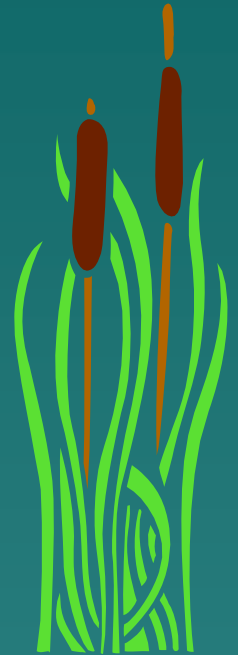
Photography by  
Susan Ely, formerly NEIWPC

**Interagency Meeting at DEM**

# Rules 4.00 – 12.00

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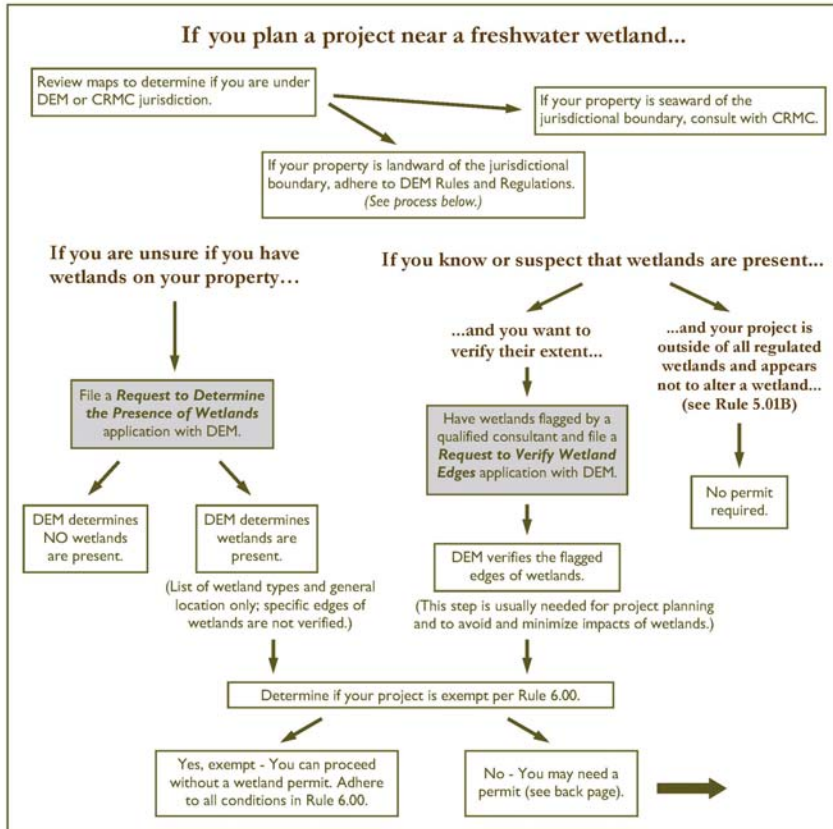
- 4.00 – Definitions
- 5.00 – Umbrella Rule
- 6.00 – Exempt Activities
- 7.00 – General Requirements
- 8.00 - 11.00 – Application Types
- 12.00 – Enforcement





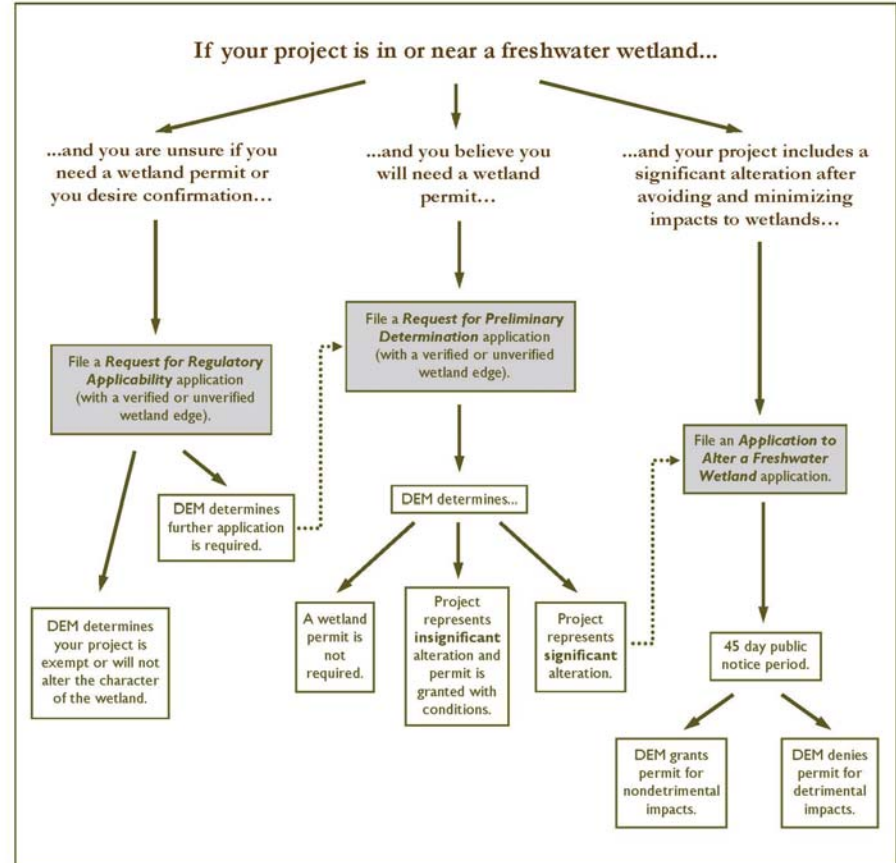
# FACT SHEET

## WETLAND APPLICATION PROCESS



See back →

## WETLAND APPLICATION PROCESS, continued



A complete copy of DEM's *Rules and Regulations Governing the Administration and Enforcement of the Freshwater Wetlands Act* can be obtained from DEM's Office of Technical and Customer Assistance located at the Foundry Office Complex at 235 Promenade Street, Providence (401-222-6822). They may also be found on the DEM website at [www.dem.ri.gov](http://www.dem.ri.gov).

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# Other Ways We Protect Wetlands

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- Clean Water Act 104 (b) 3 grant funded projects ongoing
- Historic compliance
- Vernal pool mapping
- Outreach and training
- Monitoring & assessment

