



FY2006 WORKPLAN

**Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
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A. NBEP Background

The Narragansett Bay Estuary Program is part of the National Estuary Program (NEP), a national network of 28 programs working for collaborative solutions for estuaries designated by Congress as of critical importance. Created in 1987 under the Clean Water Act, the NEPs are charged with protecting and restoring U.S. estuaries by engaging state and federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations and local communities in planning and management decisions and actions. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides base funding and federal oversight for each of the NEPs, but program management is typically the responsibility of an estuary stakeholder-based management committee.

In 1993, the Governor of Rhode Island and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency affixed their signatures to the Narragansett Bay CCMP, committing both entities, with other partners who developed the plan's recommendations, to implementation of the Bay plan. Concurrently, the CCMP was accepted as part of the R.I. State Guide Plan, requiring that State agency and municipal plans are consistent with the CCMP. The plan specifically recognizes that it should be a living and dynamic plan and should be periodically reviewed and revised to address current needs and issues.

In keeping with Congress' mandate, since 1993 the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program has been implementing the CCMP by coordinating planning, policy, technical assistance, science and outreach pertaining to Narragansett Bay's environment.

The NBEP is affiliated with the Coastal Institute (CI) at the Graduate School of Oceanography at the University of Rhode Island, which provides program offices for its four-person staff; the R.I. Department of Environmental Management also provides some satellite office space in Providence, R.I. This institutional arrangement gives the program more flexibility to hire and oversee co-located or nonpermanent project staff and has allowed the program access to additional nonfederal match.

NBEP PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

To protect and preserve Narragansett Bay and its watershed through partnerships that conserve and restore natural resources, enhance water quality and promote community involvement.

The NBEP accomplishes this by:

- Promoting a holistic perspective of Narragansett Bay and its watershed that includes social, economic and environmental aspects.
- Coordinating actions to protect and restore coastal ecosystems;
- Initiating and managing restoration plans and projects;
- Using collaboration and partnerships to address common goals;
- Identifying information needs; acquiring, interpreting and disseminating data to support informed, science-based decision-making;
- Stimulating discussion on Bay issues and bringing expertise through public workshops, professional forums and scientific symposia and reporting on the results;
- Effectively keeping the public and policy-makers informed of Bay and watershed issues;
- Matching resources to management needs through grants and partnerships;

- Supporting local watershed organizations in restoration, protection and outreach initiatives;
- Convening and coordinating interagency technical teams and workgroups such as the Partnership for Narragansett Bay, R.I. Habitat Restoration Team and Dissolved Oxygen Strike Team;

The NBEP Role in Narragansett Bay Ecosystem Planning & Management

Like the other National Estuary Programs, the NBEP is the only planning, policy and project initiative with a specific Clean Water Act charge to work on a watershed/ecosystem basis and to do this in a highly collaborative manner, based on an articulation of stakeholder priorities for the watershed which is the foundation of a CCMP. NEPs serve as catalysts in their watersheds: working to attract and direct federal and other resources to local needs, building needed scientific and watershed information, informing the public and policy makers, convening collaborative workgroups around key issues in estuary watersheds, supporting local grassroots-level organizations to conduct implementation actions, and bringing together funding, partners and projects to implement the defined goals and objectives of estuary management plans.

The NBEP identifies areas of need where the program can have the greatest impact, filling data and action gaps. Using its skills in science, policy, management and communications, the NBEP seeks to address key issues in the Narragansett Bay watershed, through program and partnership action.

The program has taken leadership roles in several areas of Bay and watershed management including the restoration of anadromous fish to Bay rivers and streams and coastal marsh restoration, enhancing bi-state connections with stakeholders in the Massachusetts part of the watershed through grant programs and technical assistance, tackling data needs by actions such as instituting the first dissolved oxygen surveys of the Bay and creating the first baseline data sets on the status of the state's coastal habitats, increasing accountability and ability to measure environmental progress through development and use of Bay and watershed indicators, and creating a mechanism to broadcast information specific to Bay issues to the greatest possible number of watershed residents and stakeholders through the publication and distribution of the *Narragansett Bay Journal*.

Current Issues & Challenges

CCMP Update and State Planning Processes: Over the last two years, the NBEP supported and was involved in a state legislature mandated effort to produce both a interagency coordination process - the R.I. Bays, Rivers and Watersheds Coordination Team - and a new bay and watershed plan. The NBEP supported this effort as it was well-timed to integrate with the NEP requirement to revise the Narragansett Bay CCMP and the NBEP could provide something that the state-focused effort could not – a direct connection to the public, stakeholders and organizations in the Massachusetts part of the watershed who needed to be included in any attempt at watershed planning and implementation. The challenges the NBEP faces regarding this planning process are: including meaningful bi-state public and stakeholder input; ensuring that plan elements are based on sound science; facilitating coordination on both planning and implementation actions; and creating a well-supported dynamic plan and implementation framework developed on a true watershed basis addressing issues in both states.

Engaging the reconstituted NBEP Management Committee: As described in more detail in Section F, the newly reformed program Management Committee has already analyzed the program operations and policy and has made several significant recommendations for new and/or revised activities. The challenge will be to ensure that the committee remains engaged, becomes advocates for watershed coordination and the program, and helps to bring key new issues and opportunities, partnerships and projects into the NBEP workplan.

Staff Changes: In July 2006, NBEP Principal Environmental Scientist Helen Cottrell died after fighting cancer for over six months. Helen had been a valuable asset to the program since entering the implementation phase in 1993, bringing her considerable skills as both a scientist and partnership-builder to NBEP projects and initiatives. Helen was lead staff person on NBEP habitat mapping and restoration science projects as well as overseer of the NBEP Habitat Atlas series (she was in the midst of work on the new Atlas of R.I. South Shore Habitats). Helen was also the NBEP representative in collaborative efforts to monitor eelgrass and to finalize the State habitat strategy. Other staff members have been working to take on some of that work but it has been difficult to cover all staff work assignments with fewer staff. However, the NBEP is in the process of hiring a new and highly competent staff person to cover some of those tasks as well as oversee NBEP community-based projects and technical support efforts. The new staff position will be in place by November 1, 2006.

Plan Implementation and Program Funding: Though the National Estuary Program has received annual appropriations from Congress since 1987, it is a continuing challenge to ensure that the programs receive sufficient funding to carry out the charge that Congress has given them – to implement the comprehensive conservation and management plans for the 28 estuaries in the NEP. In 2005, the programs in the field received about 57% of the funds Congress allocated under Section 320 of the Clean Water Act (National Estuary Program); 43% of the funds remained within EPA Headquarters and Regions. After EPA reductions, each program received close to \$500,000 for implementation of annual workplans. With increasing pressure on the federal budget, securing sufficient funding is a growing challenge, especially for programs that work where state budgets are also tight and where there is great competition for non-governmental funding opportunities. The NBEP just received a supplement of \$5,000 to develop a financial strategy that realistically assesses conditions and provides direction for the program as it seeks to bring in needed resources for both implementation and program needs.

Supporting Bay and Watershed Monitoring: The NBEP has been a leading organization in building the current capacity for Bay monitoring through its ground-breaking dissolved oxygen monitoring program, involvement in the federally funded Bay Window and National Coastal Assessment monitoring projects, and in developing bay and watershed ecological indicators. As part of the Environmental Monitoring Collaborative (EMC), the NBEP supported a proposal from the collaborative that the state provide \$1.3 million to support key bay and watershed monitoring actions. In June 2006, the R.I. Legislature approved an appropriation of \$250,000 for environmental monitoring which will address a limited amount of the actions recommended by the EMC. While this is a step in the right direction, it will be a challenge to create and support an effective ecological monitoring program for the bay and watershed.

Supporting Grassroots and Community Action: The NBEP has supported, through its BayWAG grant program and other funding, capacity building and organizational development assistance for local watershed councils in both states. These groups have proven to be effective implementers and have the ability to engage citizens in many ways yet funding and technical assistance support for them has been inconsistent. The NBEP will work to provide needed support for these key partners.

B. NBEP FY2006 Goals

Priority Area 1: Analyze, synthesize, and interpret monitoring and other data in order to communicate timely, meaningful information on the condition of the Bay and its associated watersheds, including habitats, water quality, and institutional efforts

- Objective 1.A: Synthesize, analyze and interpret Bay ecosystem data; support use of NBEP-developed Bay ecosystem indicators
- Objective 1.B: Communicate timely, meaningful information on the condition of the Bay and its associated watersheds, including habitats, water quality, and institutional efforts

Priority Area 2: Serve as regional leader for establishing a watershed-based framework that reflects key management issues that can be addressed and acted on in both RI and Massachusetts

- Production of new State of the Bay & Watershed Report
- Revision of CCMP
- Coordination/Collaboration with related efforts

Priority Area 3: Focus program activities on key restoration and protection goals that secure broad public and stakeholder support

- Implement collaborative habitat restoration projects
- Provide technical assistance to community and watershed organizations to develop projects for implementation

Program Priority 4: Efficient, responsive and accountable program and committee management

- Enhance role of reconstituted Management Committee
- Continue work of the Narragansett Bay Journal Editorial Board
- Develop financial and organizational effectiveness strategies
- Improve program administration processes

C. FY2006 Workplan

(Sept. 2006 – August 2007)

The 1992 Narragansett Bay CCMP contained a set of overall goals developed through a consensus-based stakeholder process. These broad goals are:

- *Prevent further degradation of and make improvements to water quality*
- *Protect and restore bay and watershed critical resources and habitats*
- *Restore and better manage fisheries and other living resources*
- *Rehabilitate degraded waters throughout the Bay watershed and restore water quality-dependent uses of the Bay*
- *Use partnerships, joint planning and agreements to implement the CCMP on a watershed basis and monitor progress*

Core NBEP workplan priorities have been derived from these and from input from past collaborative Bay planning processes and initiatives. At the May 26, 2006 meeting of the NBEP Management Committee, the Committee recommended three consolidated areas of concentration for the NBEP that build on program strengths, identified needs, and are consistent with the CCMP goals:

1. Analyze, synthesize, and interpret monitoring and other data in order to communicate timely, meaningful information on the condition of the Bay and its associated watersheds, including habitats, water quality, and institutional efforts
2. Serve as regional leader for establishing a watershed-based framework that reflects key management issues that can be addressed and acted on in both RI and Massachusetts
3. Focus program activities on key restoration and protection goals that bring constituencies along; e.g., beaches, fish ladders, reductions in sea lettuce; concurrently, identify emerging issues and corresponding technical and information needs related to those issues.

In the tasks below, primary NBEP staff responsible for tasks are shown in parentheses.

Priority Area 1: Analyze, synthesize, and interpret monitoring and other data in order to communicate timely, meaningful information on the condition of the Bay and its associated watersheds, including habitats, water quality, and institutional efforts

Objective 1.A: Synthesize, analyze and interpret Bay ecosystem data

Tasks:

- In collaboration with data producers, data users, and the R.I. Environmental Monitoring Collaborative, **organize and review** bay data and information with goal of tracking essential indicators of condition and synthesizing data for state of the bay status and trends report (C. Deacutis, staff)
- **Provide technical expertise** in assessing effectiveness of conventional and innovative monitoring technologies and approaches (C. Deacutis, staff)
- **Participate in developing indicators** of watershed and estuarine condition (C. Deacutis, staff)
- **Develop process for peer review** of NBEP scientific and technical products (C. Deacutis)

Outputs:

- 2006 summer dissolved oxygen targeted surveys; resulting data
- Periodic analysis of DO survey data, including maps, published on schedule TBD
- Logistical oversight of final multi-station DO survey, preparation and test of new DO and SAV surveillance methodologies
- Continued participation in the NOAA Coastal Hypoxia Research Project
- South Shore habitat inventory and maps
- Analysis of wetlands loss trends in southern coastal RI
- User-friendly restoration analysis tool
- Reports on status of Bay and watershed resources, including wetlands loss trends analysis, habitat and nutrients elements of Bay Status and Trends report
- Development of meaningful bay and watershed indicators based on comprehensive monitoring strategy and relevant to proposed CCMP goals and priorities
- Technical assistance in development and implementation of invasive species monitoring and management plan

Resources Needed and Estimated Costs:

- Survey vessel time (via RIDEM, other partners)
- Aerial overflight time (contract with aerial photography firm – cost: \$20,000)

Objective 1.B: Communicate timely, meaningful information on the condition of the Bay and its associated watersheds, including habitats, water quality, and institutional efforts

Goal of NBEP Communications: There are 2 primary goals to NBEP communications efforts. The first is to inform the public and decision-makers about key Bay and watershed issues in an effort to enhance understanding of the ecosystem and encourage public involvement in decision-making. The second is to inform about the work of the NBEP and partners in implementing environmental improvement, science, policy and communication projects. Specific steps that will be taken will be outlined in the program communication strategy that identifies key audiences, messages, and delivery mechanisms. One aspect of the strategy will be to use existing networks to disseminate information and receive feedback; these will include the R.I. Rivers Council, the RIBRWCT, and watershed networks in the Blackstone and Taunton River watersheds as well as existing governmental outreach channels, initiatives and partnerships. (Also see Priority Area 2: Establish watershed-based framework for management.) Information and feedback vehicles will include the NBEP website (and other relevant websites such as NARRBAY.org), the Narragansett Bay Journal, direct communications with interested parties and organizations, public events, and published reports, fact sheets, and other materials.

Tasks:

- Develop and **implement program communication** strategy, tools, and products (T. Ardito, R. Ribb) Staff time costs.
- **Develop** outline and detailed nutrient and habitat chapters for comprehensive **status and trends report** (NBEP staff costs; estimated production cost for Web-based report: \$14,000.)
- Produce and **publish** at least three issues of the **Narragansett Bay Journal** annually (T. Ardito) Estimated printing/production/distribution costs: \$60,000; staff time costs.
- Revise and **maintain updated program** website (T. Ardito, R. Ribb) Staff time costs.

Outputs:

- Standard formats for NBEP publications and other documents, strategy for program announcements and press releases
- Redesign of NBEP website for maximum utility
- Minimum of 3 issues of the Narragansett Bay Journal with special reports issues for wide distribution
- Inventory of NBEP publications and reports
- Draft status and trends report
- Proposal for bay and watershed regional science conference

Priority Area 2: Serve as regional leader for establishing a watershed-based framework that reflects key management issues that can be addressed and acted on in both RI and Massachusetts

Work undertaken in this priority area will build on previous NBEP and other efforts to engage stakeholders in identifying common goals and priorities, developing a watershed framework, and in setting priorities for the Bay and watershed. These efforts include the NBEP Habitat Restoration Charrette, the NBEP Denitrification Technology and Policy Forum, the Narragansett Bay Summit 2000 and the NBEP-published white papers from the Summit, the Partnership for Narragansett Bay (PNB) work on inventorying monitoring programs and developing ecological indicators for the Bay and watershed, the Chafee-HUD studies including the development of a draft vision/goals document for the Bay and watershed, the work organized under the Coordination Team Ad Hoc Group to develop a concept for a watershed plan and collaborative framework, and the Narragansett Bay Journal Bay Status and Trends Special Report.

Tasks:

- With advice and participation of Management Committee, **develop and initiate process to solicit and facilitate public involvement** and input for watershed-wide environmental priorities; coordinate with other planning initiatives (R. Ribb, staff)
- **Initiate planning** for 2007 Bay Forum (R. Ribb, staff) Estimated forum prep/materials/production/marketing costs: \$25-40,000
- Develop strategies to **secure broad buy-in and support** for Bay plan and implementation (R. Ribb, staff)

Outputs:

- Preliminary public input regarding goals and priorities for Narragansett Bay and watershed to serve as core of a revised CCMP and against which progress can be monitored
- Outline of revised CCMP
- Timeline, sponsors, and workplan for 2007 Bay Forum (needs to be coordinated with timing to publish draft status and trends)

Priority Area 3: Focus program activities on key restoration and protection goals that secure broad public and stakeholder support

Tasks:

- **Identify outreach and training needs for users of new technical tools** (e.g., restoration analysis data, SAV monitoring methodologies, community-based monitoring) (staff)
- **Co-chair RI Habitat Restoration Team** and participate in review trust fund proposals (T. Ardito, staff)
- **Oversee completion of fish passage and stormwater BMP projects** funded under the 2003 Targeted Watershed Initiative Grant (R. Ribb)
- With restoration partners, **develop strategies to prioritize habitat projects** and more efficiently access funding and resources (T. Ardito, staff)
- **Support regional watershed projects through BayWAG process** (R. Ribb)
Estimated costs: \$17-30,000 depending on available NBEP funding
- Seek opportunities to **partner on key habitat projects by providing technical assistance** (T. Ardito, R. Ribb)

Outputs:

- Restoration analysis training module for towns and watershed organizations to enable more effective site and BMP selection
- Final habitat restoration strategy, including identification of bi-state restoration opportunities
- Completion of Town Pond salt marsh restoration project (40 acre project) and restoration planning for four new projects
- Implemented BayWAG projects tied to CCMP goals
- Final reports from BayWAGs, TWG, and other supported projects (possible event for project implementers to present their results, discuss their projects)
- Provide technical support to local implementing organizations and communities; continue work on Pawtuxet River, Blackstone River, and Ten Mile River fish passage efforts
- CO-chairing of R.I. Habitat Restoration Team
- QAPP reviews as needed
- Increased opportunities to promote stewardship, provide ecological enhancements, and build capacity at the watershed level

Program Priority 4: Efficient, responsive and accountable program and committee management

Tasks:

- **Program fiscal and personnel management** (R. Ribb)
- **Committee process management** (R. Ribb, staff)
- **Secure federal and other grant funding** for CCMP implementation projects (NBEP staff)
- Federal and other **grant administration and reporting** (R. Ribb, staff)
- **Coordination** with state, federal and local partners and initiatives (NBEP staff)
- **Improve program administrative processes** (R. Ribb, staff)
- **Improve awareness** of NBEP accomplishments and capabilities (NBEP staff)

Outputs:

- Approved annual workplan and budget
- Committee recommendations for NBEP; decisions on workplans and program directions
- Production of reports required for submission to EPA (habitat acreage restored/protected; match to federal grant; funds leveraged)
- Annual program report
- NBEP organizational and fiscal strategy based on work with EPA-funded consultant (\$5,000 in EPA funding)
- Defined program roles and priorities to support Bay protection and restoration (based on NBEP management committee and Bay stakeholders input)

OVERALL WORKPLAN OUTCOMES:

- Identified, protected and/or restored priority coastal and watershed habitats, including eelgrass beds, shoreline buffer areas, and anadromous fish passage.
- Updated Narragansett Bay CCMP to reflect greater public input, better defined priorities, and opportunities for complementary actions with the state-mandated systems level plan for the Bay and watershed.
- Continued implementation of the long-term priority actions in the current CCMP.
- Decreased nutrient loadings to achieve a 40-50% overall nitrogen reduction to the Bay and resulting improved concentrations of dissolved oxygen.
- Leveraged resources committed to the R.I. Bays, Rivers and Watersheds Coordination Team operations, projects and monitoring over the past year.
- Increased understanding of the Bay and watershed to inform management and facilitate public involvement.

D. NBEP FY2005 Accomplishments

Publication of the NBEP State of the Bay Report – Narragansett Bay Journal: In July 2006, the NBEP published a special issue of the program newspaper, the Narragansett Bay Journal, that consisted of a public state of the bay report. Using data that measured bay and watershed indicators, the report gave readers a picture of what is happening in the bay and on the land. The report was distributed to the regular 7,500 mail subscribers, out in bulk distribution of 40,000 copies to libraries, schools, towns, agencies and commercial establishments, and as an insert into several regional newspapers across the watershed with a total of nearly 200,000 issues provided to watershed residents. Feedback on the report has been very positive. The NBEP regards this condensed public document as the first step in development of a more detailed State of the Bay report that is currently under production.

2006 Targeted Dissolved Oxygen Surveys – Upper Narragansett Bay: Using monthly boat surveys and high-tech monitoring technology, the NBEP, with assistance from the R.I. Dept. of Environmental Management, conducted targeted monitoring of Upper Narragansett Bay and one of its most sensitive embayments, Greenwich Bay. The survey methodology is an improvement on the overnight, large team surveys that the NBEP organized from 1997-2003 and provide better data using fewer resources (for survey information, maps and photos, see <http://www.geo.brown.edu/georesearch/insomniacs>). The surveys indicated that, during the selected monitoring times – neap tides, warm weather, no rain events – hypoxic and anoxic conditions were relatively common. In fact there was a moderate soft shell clam kill right after one of the surveys that had documented poor conditions.

New State Appropriation of \$250,000 for Bay and Watershed Monitoring: The NBEP has been supporting the work of the R.I. Bays, Rivers and Watersheds Coordination Team over the last two years with the NBEP director serving as both Acting Chair for a period and overseer of a multi-interest workgroup that produced Coordination Team planning and policy documents. A recent success for the Team was the appropriation of \$250,000 from the State's Oil Spill Prevention and Response (OSPAR) fund to support a limited number of priority monitoring actions as identified by the Team's Environmental Monitoring Collaborative (NBEP Chief Scientist is Vice-Chair of that group). The funds will support ongoing operations and maintenance of a network of fixed monitoring stations in the Bay, the restoration of several key stream gauges that were not longer to be supported by federal funds, and an economic monitoring action.

Reconstituted NBEP Management Committee – Workplan Review and New Directions: As identified in the most recent Implementation Review, the NBEP needed to reform and re-engage an effective Management Committee to review and approve NBEP workplans and to provide guidance and direction to the program. Over the late spring and early summer, the NBEP identified key stakeholders from agencies, NGOs, citizen groups and others and brought them together as a new NBEP Management Committee (more detailed information on this action is described in Section F). The Committee reviewed and approved the FY2006 workplan after making some key recommendations on new or revised directions for the program.

Communications Updates: In Spring 2006, the program engaged a graphics designer to create a new NBEP, using the Narragansett Bay icon, the Pell Bridge connecting Jamestown and Newport, R.I. Concurrently, the program hired the University of R.I. Web Development Group to do a comprehensive website re-design (www.nbep.org) that would add value to users, attract new viewers to the site, and provide information on Narragansett Bay and its watershed

as well as other educational materials. The site will allow viewers to subscribe to the Narragansett Bay Journal and download any of the over 125 NBEP technical and policy reports produced since the program's inception including the complete CCMP.

Town Pond Salt Pond/Salt Marsh Restoration Project under construction: The NBEP served as state contact for this major restoration project since 2001, working with the ACOE, the State, the Town of Portsmouth, R.I., the Aquidneck Island Land Trust, and local citizens to secure federal and state funding for the project and all needed permits and approvals. The total project cost is over \$3.5 million with 75% of that in federal funds. The project began construction in Fall 2005 and is currently over 50% complete.

Volunteer Marine Monitoring Project – Greenwich Bay, RI: The NBEP provided funding and technical support to the University of Rhode Island's Watershed Watch program to conduct a volunteer marine monitoring program in Greenwich Bay, one of the larger bay's most sensitive embayments and a prime shellfishing and recreational resource. A team of 10 volunteers affiliated with the Greenwich Bay Watershed Association take weekly samples at 14 locations and have documented low dissolved oxygen conditions. A final report including data will be published after the 2006 monitoring season.

Overflight for Eelgrass Trends/Monitoring: The NBEP, working in collaboration with Save The Bay and other groups, is conducting an aerial photography, ground truthing and photo-interpretation project to update the 1996 Bay eelgrass data that the NBEP collected and mapped. This information will provide a second data series to build on the baseline data and allow any changes to be documented. Funded with a \$50,000 grant from the R.I. Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Trust Fund.

R.I. Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Trust Fund Provides \$250,000 for Projects: As members of the review and selection recommendation technical group for the Habitat Restoration Trust Fund and co-chairs of the R.I. Habitat Restoration Team, the NBEP participated the selection and awarding of \$250,000 in state funds (OSPAR) to eleven restoration projects. Projects included fish passage and passage enhancement, eel passage, riparian restoration, salt marsh restoration, invasive species control, support for the R.I. Restoration Portal (a previous NBEP product) and restoration planning activities.

NBEP authorship of Bay Nutrients Chapter for R.I. Sea Grant book: Dr. Chris Deacutis, NBEP Chief Scientist, recently completed a chapter for a new R.I. Sea Grant book on nutrients in Narragansett Bay. Dr. Deacutis' chapter documents the impacts of nutrient enrichment on the Bay ecosystem.

Baseline Survey of Macroalgae in Narragansett Bay: The NBEP secured funding from the R.I. Department of Environmental Management to do some baseline macroalgae monitoring in order to test methodologies. Monitoring was done using both underwater videography and aerial photography (via helicopter). The project was developed to try to fill data gaps on extent and condition of macroalgae growth and its relation to areas with significant nutrient loading and low dissolved oxygen readings.

Maps of Bay Dissolved Oxygen: In partnership with Brown University, the NBEP has completed maps showing the concentrations of dissolved oxygen in Narragansett Bay based on the NBEP-organized dissolved oxygen surveys in Summer 2005 and the first 2 monitoring series in Summer 2006.

Increased Collaboration with the Narragansett Bay NERR: With the appointment of Robert Stankelis as the new Narragansett Bay NERR site manager, the NBEP and the NERRs program have found excellent opportunities to work together and support each other's workplans. The NBEP is represented on the NBNERR's Advisory Board and Coastal Decision Makers Steering Group and the NBNERR is represented on the NBEP Management Committee and the Narragansett Bay Journal Editorial Board (the NBNERR also provides an annual sum of \$7,500 to support the Bay Journal). Discussions have been initiated on a collaborative effort to get Narragansett Bay included in the national Estuary Live events for 2007.

Land & Water Conservation Summit Held May 2006: This summit, which attracts many watershed group members and citizen activists, as well as governmental representatives, is an annual event hosted by the R.I. Rivers Council and the R.I. Land Trust Alliance. For the second time, the NBEP provided financial support and provided training presentations to participants.

NBEP Hosts Fall 2005 EPA/NEP Conference with Ecosystem-based Management Theme: The NBEP welcomed its NEP colleagues from the programs and EPA when it hosted the Fall 2005 EPA/NEP meeting in Newport, R.I. There were special sessions that looked at the NEP brand of ecosystem-based management and the directions that could be taken in addition to sessions on administrative issues and outreach successes.

E. Status of Current NBEP Projects in Progress

Status & Trends/Bay Ecosystem Science projects

Narragansett Bay Coastal Wetlands Loss Trends CD: One of the other habitat projects that was being overseen by Helen Cottrell, all photo-interpretation, comparison of wetlands condition and extent over the 1950-1996 period, digital maps and CD design and artwork are complete; the only remaining work is the production of the actual CD-ROM and distribution. Completion by November 2006.

Southern R.I. Coastal Habitat Inventory: By securing funding from a variety of sources, the NBEP, in partnership with the URI Environmental Data Center and RIDEM, completed production of GIS data layers and maps based on photo-interpretation of habitats by the Natural Resources Assessment Group at the University of Massachusetts. These data layers – various marsh types, coastal features and SAVB beds - provided the basis for the new Atlas of South Shore Coastal Habitats that is currently in production.

NBEP Atlas of South Shore Coastal Habitats: This project is intended to be the second of two reports that cover the entire state of Rhode Island. All photo-interpretation, GIS mapping and graphic design for the report are completed; remaining work includes completion of the report text, printing, and distribution. With new NBEP staff coming on board in November 2006, it is anticipated that the report can be completed by January 2007.

SAV Trends Analysis 1996-2006: Aerial photography acquired August 2006 (delayed from 2005 due to poor weather conditions coinciding with suitable time periods based on time of day, wind, weather, and tide). Once initial analysis has taken place, ground-truthing of selected areas will occur.

Assistance to U.S. Army Corps Southern R.I. Coastal Wetland Restoration Analysis: This project builds on earlier habitat work done and protocols developed by the NBEP. NBEP staff participated in project steering committee; \$14,725 funding from the R.I. Estuary Habitat Trust Fund.

Greenwich Bay Volunteer Marine Monitoring Project: In the FY2004 workplan, the NBEP provided funding and technical assistance to the University of Rhode Island Watershed Watch program to conduct a pilot volunteer monitoring project in this sensitive embayment, working with the Greenwich Bay Watershed Association. Additional funding was added in the FY 2004 workplan bringing the total to \$19,100. In Summer 2005, monitoring equipment was purchased and training occurred; this summer, 10 volunteers sampled at 14 stations and will continue until October 2006.

R.I. Environmental Monitoring Collaborative (EMC) – Bay & Watershed Monitoring: The NBEP worked with the EMC to identify key monitoring actions needed and to prioritize those actions and bring those priorities to the state legislature in order to secure funding. The EMC requested \$1.3 million to fund these actions; the state legislature appropriated \$250,000 to support a few of the highest priority monitoring actions, including \$30,000 for an economic monitoring element. As part of this work, the NBEP assisted R.I. Dept. of Environmental Management with the marine component of the statewide monitoring strategy that the agency was required to submit to U.S. EPA.

Baseline Survey/Testing of Technology – Macroalgae Distributions in Narragansett Bay:

The NBEP was able to secure funding from the NOAA Bay Window monitoring project to initiate an effort to quantify and identify locations of high macroalgae concentrations. This data is considered valuable in assessing the impacts of significant nitrogen reductions that are and will be occurring at major wastewater treatment plants along the bay. State of the art underwater video equipment was used and the Rhode Island Airport Corporation, a state entity, provided a helicopter and pilot to the NBEP and EPA Atlantic Ecology Lab for 2 series of overflights to acquire digital images of bay areas showing significant macroalgae growth.

R.I. Sea Grant Nutrients book – Impacts of Nutrients Chapter: In August 2006, NBEP Chief Scientist Dr. Christopher Deacutis completed a final draft chapter documenting nutrient impacts on the Upper Bay for inclusion in a Sea Grant book publication.

Assistance to EPA Atlantic Ecology Lab and Massachusetts CZM agency on development of salt marsh indicators:

Staff scientist Helen Cottrell was NBEP representative on this multi-party effort, led by EPA Region 1, to develop effective indicators of salt marsh health. EPA is continuing work on this effort and Dr. Deacutis will represent the NBEP in this work.

Continued participation on Bay Window Monitoring Project Steering Committee: The NBEP has helped guide this NOAA-funded project since its inception and will continue for the 5-year life of the project. This project has received an annual average of \$700,000 in NOAA funds.

NOAA Coastal Hypoxia Project: Dr. Deacutis is one of the principal investigators, along with researchers from the University of Rhode Island, Brown University, University of Connecticut and Virginia Institute of Marine Science, in a 5-year project designed to develop a predictive hypoxia model and linked ecological model that will be verified by field measurements. The project relies on the NBEP dissolved oxygen survey data.

Communications Projects

Publication of the Narragansett Bay Journal: The Narragansett Bay Journal is entering its fifth year of publication by the NBEP. The mail subscriber base continues to grow, it has attracted both governmental and nongovernmental funding, and the special issues and newspaper inserts are well-received and reach nearly 200,000 readers. Supported by a talented and engaged Editorial Board, drawn from agencies, NGOs and citizens, the NBJ continues to provide news and perspectives on issues related to the Bay and watershed.

Technical Assistance Projects

BayWAG Grants: The NBEP has conducted two rounds of the NBEP Bay Watershed Action Grant program, attracting many good proposals and funding environmental projects in both Rhode Island and Massachusetts. For this budget year, the program had limited funds that could be allocated to a small grant program; the NBEP has decided to support one or two strong projects that target program priorities with the funds and put off the competitive BayWAG until such time as more funds are available to create a more viable grant program. Developing a major RFP process and selection process is not cost-effective unless the program is able to provide a sufficient level of funds.

Town Pond Restoration Project, Portsmouth R.I.: While a significant portion of the excavation and grading work associated with the 40-acre salt pond/salt marsh restoration

project has been completed since Spring 2006, final site grading, vegetation planting and construction of a public parking area are not yet complete. One unanticipated factor that must be addressed is the fact that the original site sediment sampling indicated certain soil conditions; it turns out that the soil conditions in reality call for some different construction equipment. This requires a modification to the project scope of work and will add additional costs to the project. The NBEP is working with the State to secure the additional match (potentially about \$80,000) that will be needed. Even with that change, it is anticipated that the project will be completely finished by June 2007.

Pawtuxet River Fish Passage: The NBEP has been involved with the Pawtuxet project over the last three years, assisting with securing funding from a variety of state, federal and local sources. In May 2006, the NBEP and partners held a well-attended public meeting to gain input on preferred alternatives. It was clear that many local residents and businesses are concerned with the visual impact of the project on the dam and river landscape. Additional surveying and modeling by contractor Malone & McBroom will help refine the options for fish passage. An RFP is currently being developed to allow the additional design and engineering work.

Wood-Pawcatuck Assessment for Fish Passage and Dam Removal: The NBEP is providing technical assistance to the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association and partners to develop a feasibility study for fish passage over 3 dams on the upper Pawcatuck River that will open up one of Rhode Island's largest fresh waterbodies, Worden Pond, providing 1,043 acres of fish habitat. The project has received \$50,000 in nonfederal funding from the R.I. Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration Trust Fund and additional NOAA funds are being dedicated to the project. The feasibility study will produce preliminary passage designs.

Blackstone River Fish Passage: The NBEP has supported and worked with the Blackstone River Watershed Association to hold several stakeholder meetings to discuss ways to move fish passage – particularly over the first four dams – on the Blackstone River. A meeting was held at the office of Sen. Lincoln Chafee with representatives of state agencies, the NBEP, Army Corps, US Fish & Wildlife and the Blackstone River to better articulate how the federal and state agencies could make this a reality. The Blackstone River Watershed Association has secured \$10,000 from two Blackstone Valley municipalities and the R.I. DEM committed \$75,000 as state match for a new feasibility study with design and engineering included. The partners have been negotiating an agreement with the owner of the Main St. Dam (first on the river) that would provide a financial contribution from the dam owner (a FERC license holder) while trying to ensure that owner's hydro operations are not negatively affected.

Ten Mile River Fish Passage: This project will provide fish passage over three dams on the Ten Mile River, opening up over 700 acres of fish habitat including Turner's Reservoir. The NBEP helped secure nonfederal funding for the recently completed ACOE feasibility study. Construction and final engineering by the Army Corps of Engineers are now underway.

Saw Mill Pond/Sand Hill Brook: The NBEP is providing technical assistance to the Town of North Kingstown, R.I., in investigating fish passage, habitat enhancement and water quality improvements in the upper part of this system and potential dam removal opportunities in the lower part. Project initiated in July 2006.

Woonasquatucket River Fish Passage: The NBEP has been assisting the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council in working on a comprehensive fish passage strategy initially focusing on fish passage at the redeveloped Rising Sun mill complex in the river's urban segment.

Adding to funding from the NRCS, the NBEP helped secure U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service funds (\$30,000) for this project and will continue to provide additional technical assistance.

Bay Planning and CCMP Revision

Proposal to Coordination Team: In March 2006, the NBEP proposed to the R.I. Bays, Rivers & Watersheds Coordination Team (CT) that the Team and the NBEP join forces to produce a major revision to the Narragansett Bay CCMP that also meets the new legislative requirement for a systems level plan for R.I. watersheds that drain to the Bay. The NBEP director has been involved in the work of the CT and its predecessor entities for over the last 3 years, drafting the systems level plan outline that was approved by the CT. By using this approach, the NBEP can bring federal resources to support state watershed planning while meeting the NEP federal mandate regarding CCMPs. The NBEP identified three significant areas of common work: the plan development/revision; holding a public Bay forum; and development of a new Status and Trends report for the Bay and watershed. The proposal was well-received by the CT and they agreed that this was the approach that should be taken. The NBEP is currently discussing how this can operate with the recently appointed CT Chair.

Organizational Development & Administration

EPA grant supplement for financial/organizational planning: The NBEP received a supplemental grant of \$5,000 from EPA Coastal Management Branch to conduct financial and strategic planning for the program, in particular to identify ways to sufficiently fund CCMP implementation work as well as to possibly increase such funding from a variety of federal, state, local and private sector sources. This work will build on strategic planning exercises the program conducted internally in Fall 2005. The NBEP has engaged in discussions with a contractor and intends to execute a contract in early Fall 2006 to initiate the project.

Fall 2005 Program Strategic Planning Exercise: As mentioned above, the NBEP conducted a internal strategic planning exercise in November 2005 to better focus the program's work, to examine the program's multiple roles in watershed management, to identify challenges and to create action steps to address those challenges. The process was used to refine ecosystem and program implementation immediate and long term goals and to construct a draft of the FY2006 workplan. This planning work was used to refocus the program's work and to craft the FY2006 workplan which was later reviewed and approved – with modification – by the NBEP Management Committee. See Section H., page 24, for more detail.

Participation on Barnegat Bay IR: The NBEP director participated in the 2006 Implementation Review of the Barnegat Bay NEP. He also attended the EPA IR Site Visit in early June at the program site in Tom's River, N.J., and provided perspective and suggestions to be incorporated into the final review document.

F. NBEP Management Committee

One of the program's key goals has been the reconstitution of the NBEP Management Committee into an effective panel that is engaged in the program's work and provides feedback and direction to NBEP implementation actions. Having worked with both highly formal and informal committees in the past with varying results, the decision was made to seek out those Bay and watershed organizations and people who are truly making environmental improvements happen. This meant engaging people who may not be agency directors or political appointees but those who effectively create projects, partnerships and initiatives that are results-oriented.

Once identified, the NBEP invited this select group (see invitation letter on page 19) to join the Management Committee and to make a commitment to fully participate. One of the tasks for the current eleven members is to determine if there are other interests who should be represented on the committee. An initial meeting of the new committee was held in May 2006 which resulted in some very constructive feedback on NBEP operations and a charge to take on some slightly different roles – one being a synthesizer of ecosystem data – that meet a priority watershed need and are well-matched to the program's capabilities. New directions provided by the Committee are reflected in the FY2006 workplan.

Current Management Committee membership:

Member	Affiliation
Dr. Peter August	Univ. of Rhode Island – Coastal Institute
Jane Austin	Save The Bay, Inc.
James Boyd	R.I. Coastal Resources Management Council
Rachel Calabro	Massachusetts Riverways Program/Taunton River Stewardship Alliance
Mel Cote	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 1
David Gregg	R.I. Natural History Survey
Meg Kerr	R.I. Rivers Council
Susan Kiernan	R.I. Department of Environmental Management
Roylene Rides at the Door	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Robert Stankelis	Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
Donna Williams	Blackstone River Coalition



March 22, 2006

Title
Address
Zip

Dear _____,

This letter follows up on our recent discussion inviting you to become a member of the NBEP Management Committee. I have attached some background information on the program as well as a committee membership agreement. These documents should help clarify why you are being asked to participate and what will be expected of you as a committee member. More importantly, I hope they persuade you of the critical role you can play in the future of the Bay and its watershed.

We have reached a crossroads in working together to protect and restore Narragansett Bay and its watershed (in R.I. and Massachusetts). As you may be aware, the State of R.I., through legislative action, created the R.I. Bays, Rivers and Watersheds Coordination Team with the intention of supporting a watershed-based planning and implementation framework. The legislation included a requirement for key state agencies to develop a bay and watershed plan based on jointly identified issues, problems and solutions. This effort was, in large part, based on the National Estuary Program model that takes a collaborative, science-driven approach to ecosystem management. The comprehensive nature of the systems level plan as described in the legislation also reflects the NEP approach. The Team has been working to secure funding to meet its charge but sufficient funding is by no means guaranteed especially in these difficult budget times.

In 1993, the State of Rhode Island and the U.S. EPA signed the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for Narragansett Bay – a watershed-based plan that addressed a wide range of issues including nutrient enrichment, pathogens, management of special ecological areas, nonpoint source pollution, contaminated sediments, water resource management, living resources management, bay and watershed governance, and monitoring. Under the guidance of various management committees, the NBEP has worked on plan implementation over the last dozen years. But insufficient buy-in for the 1993 CCMP, combined with responsibility given to a program buried deep within an agency setting has limited collaboration until now and slowed progress on implementing the plan. Things were improved by the transition of the program to the URI Coastal Institute in 2003 but we still need an engaged

and thoughtful oversight body to advocate with us for better management of the Bay and its resources.

The NBEP is required by EPA to update the CCMP in order to account for progress, newly identified issues and changing circumstances. Much has changed from 1993 to now – new management techniques have been employed, a stronger role for stakeholders in management has developed, and we have new scientific data about the bay and watershed that can help us chart new paths to environmental progress.

As program director, I see that the NBEP charge to update the CCMP converges with Rhode Island's requirement for development of the systems level plan. At the same time, there are new watershed planning efforts in the Blackstone and Taunton River watersheds that clearly need our attention and participation if we are to take a needed holistic approach to protecting and restoring the Bay and watershed. It is clear that the time is right to connect these efforts, identify common goals and objectives, and pool resources to accomplish those charges before us. The Coordination Team recently gave a favorable reception to an NBEP proposal to take a new collaborative approach to creating a Bay and watershed plan (proposal attached) and we are holding discussions with the Team on how this can be best accomplished. This is a very important and immediate role for the management committee.

So becoming a member of the NBEP management committee goes beyond overseeing a small watershed program – it means being in the thick of all of these efforts and helping to guide governmental and nongovernmental efforts for the Bay and watershed. It means helping to craft a collective voice for the region that will resonate with our Congressional representatives as they seek additional resources for the Bay. It means looking across state lines to open discussion and solve watershed problems. And it means building a strong collaborative network to achieve our common goals.

Please review the committee membership agreement attached. My hope is that you will sign it and will join us in moving protection and restoration of the Bay and watershed to the top of the public agenda.

Sincerely,

Richard Ribb, Director
Narragansett Bay Estuary Program

G. PROPOSAL FOR COORDINATION TEAM & NBEP COLLABORATION

The Narragansett Bay Estuary Program (NBEP) proposes that the R.I. Bays, Rivers and Watersheds Coordination Team and the NBEP work in long-term collaboration to work on jointly determined projects that support the broader goals and objectives for both initiatives. The NBEP can bring federal resources to join with state and stakeholder resources to accomplish work that will respond to the requirements of both state legislation regarding the Systems Level Plan development and federal mandates such as the NBEP operates under. This arrangement would allow for more efficient use of state and federal resources, and, if implemented and supported, could build an effective and sustainable planning and action framework for restoring and protecting Narragansett Bay and its watersheds.

The NBEP is required by EPA under Clean Water Act National Estuary Program section to update the comprehensive conservation and management plan for Narragansett Bay and its watershed periodically to reflect new priorities, new issues and new solutions. The NBEP, allocates staff and resources in its annual workplans to support the broad goals and objectives identified in the CCMP. Over the past year, some NBEP workplan tasks have supported complementary goals laid out in the Coordination Team's systems level plan such as:

- Monitoring dissolved oxygen in the Bay;
- Organizing and supporting projects for restoring bay and watershed habitat;
- Supporting the work of the CT EMC and Science Advisory Committee;
- Documenting change over time in coastal wetlands in Narragansett Bay; and
- Informing citizens through the Narragansett Bay Journal

Given current conditions and uncertain prospects for funding for the Team to do its work, the NBEP proposes a collaborative approach, building on work to date. The program is in the process of developing its next fiscal year workplan; this provides a good opportunity to define tasks that would result from the proposed collaboration on the areas discussed above. Listed below are three specific near term actions that could be undertaken toward that end.

Specific Collaborative Actions:

New State of the Bay & Watershed Report

- Required by state legislation
- NBEP staff already working on Nutrients and Habitat elements
- Ecological indicators identified – NBJ indicators report Spring 2006
- Publication/Graphics/GIS contractual work will be needed
- Website development/initially may be a web-based publication
- Technical Reviews (SAC and others)

Systems Level Plan/CCMP update development

- Required by state legislation and Clean Water Act
- Organize/manage public and stakeholder processes (priority-setting; public involvement/input)
- With CT and stakeholders, finalize goals and objectives
- Plan organized into elements for future ease of updates and revisions
- Help develop and support implementation framework
- With CT and stakeholders, work on strategies development for plan

- With CT and stakeholders, develop and implement communications strategy
- Ensure update meets State Guide Plan update requirements

Bay Forum

- Public conference required by state legislation
- Follows release of State of Bay & Watershed report and is part of the related communications & education effort
- Brings in public input on priorities and directions
- Informs Bay/watershed plan – helps keep it a dynamic process

Comparison: SLP requirements and NEP/CCMP update process elements

Systems Level Plan	National Estuary Program
Requirement for watershed plan to establish overall goals, priorities and identify strategies that drive development of annual workplans	Requirement for dynamic watershed plan with overall goals, priorities and strategies that drive development of annual workplans
Requirement for state of bay report	Requirement for state of bay report
Requirement for public forum on bay and watershed (quadrennial)	Requirement to inform and educate on bay and watershed (Bay Summit 2000)
Requirement to inform the public and seek public input/involvement	Requirement to inform the public and seek public input/involvement
Participating key stakeholders = state agency reps	Participating key stakeholders = state agency reps, NGOs, universities, municipalities, business interests, public, bi-state
R.I. focus for plan	Bay and watershed focus for plan
SAC and PAC appointed by Governor	Planning and ad hoc committees more open to broader range of relevant stakeholders
Strategy development by only agencies	Strategy development reviewed/commented on by broader range of stakeholders
Organize implementation framework	Organize implementation framework
Requirement for annual workplan with defined timelines and results	Requirement for annual workplan with defined timelines and results

Benefits from collaborative approach:

- Brings together federal and state resources that are already supporting CT and CWA goals and objectives in a more coordinated way
- Avoids duplication of effort
- Enhanced bi-state coordination (and additional Congressional support)
- Enhanced ability to seek and secure grant funding
- Brings in broader stakeholder involvement and more extensive partnerships
- Provides a forum for ongoing discussion of key Bay and watershed issues
- Connects to national network of coastal watershed expertise

H. NBEP Program Strategic Planning - November 2005

Define program & upcoming workplan

- Vision of program in 3-5 years
- Major areas of program focus
- Specific task areas 3-5 years

Identify specific items to support above role

- Meeting requirements
- Who does what

Desired Outcomes

- Priorities
 - Management Committee
 - Partners
 - Draft workplan
 - Financial strategy
 - Action plan based on these outcomes
-

Revised NBEP Goals

Ecosystem Goals Identified for the Narragansett Bay Watershed:

- A. Protect and restore water quality in the Bay and watershed
- B. Protect and restore bay and watershed fish and wildlife resources
- C. Protect and restore bay and watershed habitats and their functions
- D. Promote sustainable human interaction with natural systems through stewardship and public involvement/education

Program Implementation Goals:

- A. Develop and apply science to inform policy development and management of the Bay and watershed
- B. Communicate credible information regarding Bay and watershed science, management and economic issues to increase and facilitate public involvement
- C. Provide technical assistance to support local collaborative efforts to protect and restore the Bay and watershed
- D. Identify priorities and determine goals and objectives by working with Bay and watershed stakeholders

Program Strengths/Areas of Operational Focus

- Taking the Broad Ecosystem View
- Technical Assistance
- Specific Expertise
- Partnerships
- Communication
- Identifying and connecting new science/technology/techniques to bay/watershed management
- Developing needed scientific and policy information
- Building stakeholder capacity (information (NBJ), technical assistance, public involvement)

Future of the NBEP

- Updated CCMP: Vision for Narragansett Bay – Goals & Objectives
- Seen as a key player on bay/watershed issues
- Greater focus on stakeholders
- Links to Clean Water Act goals
- Better match
- Better administrative position
- Modest growth (based on program workload)?
- Better defined staff roles & functions
- More effective communications
- Building local capacity to implement
- More interstate/cross-watershed connections
- Increased program accountability (Mgmt. Comm.)

EPA Requirements:

- Official Management Committee
- GPRA reporting
- CWA goals
- Workplan requirements
- Match/Leveraging
- Environmental Outcomes/Measurements
- Implementation Reviews

Program Focus Next 3-5 Years

Ecosystem Status & Trends (e.g., WQ, habitat)

- Analysis > Problems > Management Actions/Technology > Partnerships > Funding

Technical Assistance

- Goals: building capacity; stronger community connections and support, strengthen cross-border watershed connections

Communications

- Watershed awareness
- Public involvement
- Program visibility

Influence Policy & Management Decisions

- Provide input to public processes
- Apply science to management

CCMP Update (over next 24 months)

- Goals/priorities development
- Plan development/marketing to stakeholders
- Program requirement – EPA

Organizational Development & Administration

- Efficiency/Effectiveness/Increased Capacity
- Diversified, enhanced funding
- Meeting EPA requirements

Focus Area Tasks – Draft Workplan Concepts

Ecosystem Status & Trends

- Habitat Mapping/Restoration Analysis (S. Shore CD & Atlas, ACOE restoration analysis, training on wetlands model)
- SAV Trends project (overflight, analysis proposal)
- Monitoring (DO, Greenwich Bay volunteer, Bay Window)
- Macroalgae monitoring pilot
- National Coastal Assessment
- MAPCOAST
- Env. Monitoring Collaborative monitoring strategy development/SAC involvement
- Bay Assessment & Response Team (BART)
- Indicators Development & Reporting
 - NBJ
 - SOB Report (initial elements: nutrients, habitat)

Technical Assistance

- BayWAG grant program
- Habitat Restoration Support (largely riverine fish passage)
 - Restoration Strategy
 - Town Pond
 - Ten Mile River fish passage

- Pawtuxet River fish passage
- Blackstone River fish passage
- Taunton River (Wild & Scenic designation, action plan)
- Potter Hill
- Shannock Dam/Wood-Pawcatuck River
- Woonasquatucket River
- Saw Mill Pond
- RIHRT support
- CRMC restoration grant selection process
- Herring Workshop (proposed)
- Investigate development of watershed action plan under Sec. 319 in client watershed
- Invasive species management plan
- Water Trails initiative
- Administer EPA Targeted Watershed Initiative grants
- Blackstone River Fishable/Swimmable Campaign

Communications

- Narragansett Bay Journal
- Website
- Indicators Report
- Communications Strategy/ Media releases
- Roll out of NBEP technical reports/CDs/Atlases/publications
- NBEP Annual Report
- Implementation Review support
- New Bay Summit (organizing tasks, event date: sometime in 2006/2007)
- NBEP accomplishments/history Implementation Retrospective/Program Future

Influence Policy Decision Making

- Review/Comments to policy and management documents/initiatives

CCMP Update

- Development of goals & priorities
- Marketing to stakeholders
- Engaging partners
- Data collection

Organizational Development & Administration

- Operational Plan for NBEP
 - Workplans
 - EPA requirements
 - Financial plan
 - Fiscal management
 - Implementation Reviews
 - Grant writing/administration
- External Efforts
 - Interaction with EPA HQ & Region
 - EPA/NEP conference planning
 - ANEP participation
 - RAE and other conference planning

I. NBEP Position Descriptions

Current NBEP positions

- Program Director
 - Chief Environmental Scientist
 - Policy & Outreach Director
 - Principal Environmental Scientist
 - Interns (usually 2 on staff at any given time)
-

Program Director (Richard Ribb)

Basic Functions:

As part of the federal National Estuary Program, provides management to stakeholder-based Bay watershed planning and implementation initiative. Works to ensure that sound science is integrated into management decisions; oversees stakeholder processes related to implementation of the Narragansett Bay Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP); administers program activities and grants; oversees program staff and develops and manages collaborative actions to address priority issues. Focus on water quality assessment, protection and restoration; land/watershed and habitat protection and restoration; addressing emerging issues; and developing/reviewing resource management initiatives related to Narragansett Bay and its watershed.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Oversee and direct a wide range of projects related to the implementation of the Narragansett Bay CCMP;
- Identify short- and long-range planning, funding, and implementation goals;
- Develop and track operating budgets and expenditures to achieve grant and contract commitments;
- Facilitate partnerships, planning processes and project teams involving local, state, and federal agencies and other stakeholder organizations;
- Supervise professional staff (and graduate students, interns) and workload assignments;
- Oversee development and administration of multiple technical consulting contracts;
- Research varied policy issues to support program and project development;
- Interact with the Rhode Island Congressional delegation, the state legislature and commissions, government agencies and nongovernmental groups regarding policy, planning and project activities;
- Conceive projects and develop grant proposals;
- Develop, review and analyze state policy, regulations and legislation;
- Represent the program on governmental and academic technical committees;
- Serve as liaison to 28-program nationwide network of National Estuary Programs and to the Association of National Estuary Programs;
- Present program information and lessons learned at national and regional symposia and conferences;
- Seek out and secure additional funding sources for CCMP implementation.

Other Duties and Responsibilities:

Perform additional duties as required.

Qualifications:

Graduate degree in environmental science, policy or planning or closely related field and a minimum of 10 years professional experience in coastal ecosystem science, management and policy issues. Experience in synthesizing complex ecological issues into information for decision-makers and the public. Strong skill set in writing, public speaking, facilitation and building consensus. Working knowledge of estuarine science, habitat restoration, water quality protection and restoration, public outreach, legislative processes (state and national), watershed management techniques, and data collection and analysis. Ability to build and manage stakeholder-based decision-making processes. Ability to develop and implement collaborative solutions to priority watershed and bay problems. Experience with state and federal grant processes and the proven ability to develop successful grant applications for governmental and non-governmental grant processes. Familiarity with U.S. EPA (especially the National Estuary Program and Office of Water programs), NOAA, and other coastal and environmental programs. Ability to develop and implement collaborative solutions addressing estuarine and watershed problems. Knowledge of ecosystem and management issues in other U.S. coastal systems.

Supervision:

Works under the administrative direction of the Coastal Institute Director and in accordance with NBEP annual workplans and program directions approved by the NBEP Management Committee with the considerable latitude for the exercise of independent judgment and initiative. Work is subject to review based on progress and consistency with program goals and principles by the U.S.EPA and the NBEP Management Committee.

Chief Environmental Scientist (Dr. Christopher F. Deacutis)

Basic Functions:

As part of the federal National Estuary Program and in conjunction with the Program Director, the Chief Environmental Scientist will serve as scientific director responsible for prioritizing and coordinating applied science studies, field work, and focused scientific reviews and white papers directly or indirectly supported by the NBEP, as well as directly participate, and in some cases, lead the work to be completed. In addition, the Chief Environmental Scientist will interact with science advisory committees and the academic research community, including active participation as co-Principal Investigator in collaborative grant applications and collaborative projects where suitable to address priority science-linked issues associated with the CCMP goals and objectives. This position will address priority technical / scientific workplan tasks, including writing of technical documents, synthesis of technical information, and development of management recommendations based on such analyses, including presenting this information to both technical and general public audiences at a technical detail level appropriate to the targeted audience.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Oversee wide range of science-based projects related to the implementation of the Narragansett Bay CCMP
- In conjunction with the Program Director, prioritize and coordinate responses of the NBEP to science-linked tasks addressing CCMP priority issues
- Provide the Program Director and other state policy and decision-makers with technical advice on issues related to priority environmental management topics associated with NBEP workplans, and actively participate in technical advisory committees when requested
- Write or oversee the writing of white papers and technical reviews necessary to clarify the state of the art knowledge of specific science-linked topics
- Oversee program monitoring efforts to fill important data gaps to meet management and applied scientific research needs.
- Develop technical recommendation on, coordinate, or in some cases perform tasks related to critical monitoring needs to fill data gaps not addressed by current state monitoring programs for Narragansett Bay
- Where feasible, collaborate and co-author grant proposals to obtain funds to address critical scientific issues related to better understanding the response of the Narragansett Bay ecosystem to anthropogenic pollutant loads in priority management areas (e.g., nutrient impacts).
- Where feasible, actively participate in scientific studies of the response of the Narragansett Bay ecosystem to anthropogenic pollutant loads in priority management areas such as excess nutrients, changes / trends in the distribution of pollutants, studies of the response of important ecosystem components such as macro algae to changes in anthropogenic loads such as excess nutrients along pollution gradients within the Bay.
- Participate in program planning, administration, budget development, and reporting
- Represent the NBEP at technical conferences and symposia, presenting work associated with the program when appropriate.

Other Duties and Responsibilities:

Perform additional duties as required.

Qualifications:

Minimum qualifications: Graduate degree in marine / estuarine environmental science, biological oceanography, or marine biology and extensive applied research and monitoring experience in estuarine environments; preferred, PhD in the above with a minimum of 10 years professional experience in coastal ecosystem science and management issues. Experience in synthesizing complex environmental issues into information for decision-makers and citizens. Working knowledge of GIS, habitat restoration, watershed management, public outreach and data collection and analysis. Ability to develop and implement collaborative solutions addressing estuarine and watershed problems. Knowledge and experience with state and federal grant processes as well as ability to develop successful grant applications for governmental and nongovernmental grant programs. Knowledge of ecosystem and management issues in other U.S. coastal systems. Familiarity with U.S. EPA, NOAA and U.S. F&W coastal programs.

Supervision:

Works under the direction of the NBEP Program Director and in accordance with NBEP annual workplans approved by the NBEP Management Committee with the considerable latitude for the exercise of independent judgment and initiative. Work is subject to review based on progress and consistency with program goals and principles by the Program Director, the U.S.EPA and the NBEP Management Committee.

Policy & Outreach Director (Thomas Ardito)

Basic Function:

The Policy & Outreach Director oversees program communications and stakeholder relations for the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program. The position develops and distributes outreach and communications products to NBEP constituents and oversees planning for communications directions and initiatives. This staff person will also manage funding needs related to communications component of program, working to secure external resources where possible. The position has an additional role in assisting the Program Director and staff in setting program priorities and directions, organizing work assignments, and forecasting program needs. This position will provide targeted technical assistance to stakeholders and organizations in organizing and developing habitat and ecosystem improvement projects.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Edit and publish *Narragansett Bay Journal*. Chair editorial board; serve as lead reporter, writer, and editor; oversee production and distribution; and supervise staff and interns.
- Write, edit and produce a wide range of communications products for NBEP: program reports, outreach brochures, op-ed pieces, press releases, talking points, speeches, PowerPoint presentations, briefing packets, website materials, technical documents, broadcasts, videos, etc.
- Organize and manage press events, media campaigns, and public events.
- Assist Director in managing state and federal legislative affairs: advocate legislative action; develop and deliver testimony; assist in writing bills; organize meetings and site visits with members and staff on Capitol Hill and in the region.
- Organize, lead and manage broad-based teams of stakeholders, as appropriate, to accomplish results in watershed conservation and restoration.
- Co-chair and coordinate R.I. Habitat Restoration Team.
- Provide technical assistance to local governments, community groups and other stakeholders regarding watershed stewardship and conservation.
- Supervise and manage staff, interns, contracts and grants as required.
- Initiate and co-manage ecological restoration projects and partnerships as appropriate.
- Assist the Program Director in setting program priorities and directions.
- Assist the Program Director in fiscal and organizational management of the NBEP.
- Participate in program planning, administration, budget development, and reporting.

Other duties and responsibilities:

Perform additional duties as required.

Qualifications:

Graduate degree or equivalent in environmental science, policy, planning or related field. Experience in synthesizing complex environmental issues into information for decision-makers and citizens. Experience in conservation policy, planning and management; ability to use communications and stakeholder relations to promote sound natural resource policy and science. Record of success in leveraging program resources and maximizing the effectiveness of new and traditional media. Ability to organize and lead collaborative partnerships to achieve tangible results, working closely with non-profit, governmental, private sector, academic and lay stakeholders. Skill at writing, editing, and publications management. Accomplished at public speaking and stakeholder relations. Knowledge of desktop publishing and website design. Knowledge and experience with state and federal grant processes as well as ability to develop successful grant applications for governmental and nongovernmental grant programs. Knowledge of ecosystem and management issues in other U.S. coastal systems. Familiarity with U.S. EPA, NOAA and U.S. F&W coastal programs.

Other Duties and Responsibilities:

Perform additional duties as required.

Supervision:

Works under the direction of the NBEP Program Director and in accordance with NBEP annual workplans approved by the NBEP Management Committee with the considerable latitude for the exercise of independent judgment and initiative. Work is subject to review based on progress and consistency with program goals and principles by the Program Director, the U.S.EPA and the NBEP Management Committee.

Principal Environmental Scientist (this position was held by Helen Cottrell until July 2006; hiring of new program staff person anticipated in Fall 2006; the NBEP is currently developing a new position description for the new staff person)

Basic Functions:

The Principal Environmental Scientist will address specific environmental science tasks as assigned by the Program Director based on CCMP goals and annual workplans and will work closely with other program staff as well as with individual project partners. The position will require supervision of graduate and undergraduate student assistants to NBEP projects. Current program planning priorities require that the person in this position have extensive experience in coastal habitat protection and restoration as well as a working knowledge of general ecosystem science and management issues.

Essential Duties & Responsibilities:

- Develop science-based actions that implement recommendations of the Narragansett Bay Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) within the context of a National Estuary Program.
- Create (individually and collaboratively) and oversee watershed-based projects related to Bay science and management involving resource identification, protection and

restoration including but not exclusive to these areas: water quality, habitat, biodiversity, introduced species, land use, and environmental monitoring.

- Participate in program planning, grant development, administration, budget development, and reporting.
- Provide technical assistance to local governments, community groups and other stakeholders regarding watershed stewardship and conservation.

Other Duties and Responsibilities:

Perform additional duties as required.

Qualifications:

Graduate degree in environmental science/management or closely related field and 10 years professional experience in coastal ecosystem science and management issues. Experience in synthesizing complex environmental issues into information for decision-makers and citizens. Working knowledge of GIS, habitat restoration, watershed management, public outreach and data collection and analysis. Ability to develop and implement collaborative solutions addressing estuarine and watershed problems. Knowledge and experience with state and federal grant processes as well as ability to develop successful grant applications for governmental and nongovernmental grant programs. Knowledge of ecosystem and management issues in other U.S. coastal systems. Familiarity with U.S. EPA, NOAA and U.S. F&W coastal programs.

Supervision:

Works under the direction of the NBEP Program Director and in accordance with NBEP annual workplans approved by the NBEP Management Committee with the considerable latitude for the exercise of independent judgment and initiative. Work is subject to review based on progress and consistency with program goals and principles by the Program Director, the U.S.EPA and the NBEP Management Committee.

**Attachment 1: FY2006 Workplan
Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
Leveraging / Match Tables**

Narragansett Bay Estuary Program Leveraged Resources Report FY2005 (October 2005 - September 2006)											
Fiscal Year	Event / Activity	NEP Role (primary, significant, supporting)	Leveraged Federal		Leveraged State		Leveraged Local		Leveraged Private		Total Value
			Cash	In-kind	Cash	In-kind	Cash	In-kind	Cash	In-kind	
FY2005	RI Estuary Habitat Fund	primary			\$170,500						\$170,500
FY2005	May 2005 Land & Water Conservation Summit	significant		\$0						\$3,000	\$3,000
FY2005	USACE Allins Cove Restoration Project - State of R.I. Capital funds	significant		\$975,000	\$325,000						\$1,300,000
FY2005	Kickemuit River Fish Passage Project	primary	\$100,000			\$89,000			\$35,000	\$20,000	\$244,000
FY2005	SAV Mapping Narragansett Bay - Summer 2006	primary	\$10,000							\$29,375	\$39,375
FY2005	ACOE Coastal Wetlands Inventory	primary		\$65,000		\$32,500		\$17,775			\$115,275
FY2005	RI Bays, Rivers & Watershed Coordination Team - state staff time	primary					\$10,010				\$10,010
FY2005	RI Bays, Rivers & Watershed Coordination Team - Ad Hoc Workgroup state agency staff time	primary					\$1,500				\$1,500
FY2005	RI Bays, Rivers & Watershed Coordination Team - Ad Hoc Workgroup NGO staff time	primary						\$1,000			\$1,000
FY2005	OSPAR funding for Bay and watershed monitoring	primary			\$250,000						\$250,000
FY2005	Narragansett Bay Journal - NBNERR contribution	primary	\$7,500								\$7,500
FY2005	RI State Bond Fund - Denitrification at Major WWTFs	primary			\$2,000,000						\$2,000,000
FY2005	NOAA NMFS - Bay Window monitoring system - Narragansett Bay	primary	\$700,000								\$700,000
FY2005	NOAA Coastal Hypoxia Research Project (http://www.cop.noaa.gov/news/pr/fy2005/R499-09_10-14-2005.html)	primary	\$1,500,000								\$1,500,000
Category totals			\$2,317,500	\$65,000	\$2,745,500	\$133,010		\$18,775	\$35,000	\$52,375	
TOTAL											\$6,342,160

Narragansett Bay Estuary Program Match - FY2006 application (September 2006 - August 2007)											
Date	Event / Activity	NEP Role (primary, significant, supporting)	Person(s)	Organization	Hours	Hourly Rate	Non-pers. In-kind	Cash Match	In-kind value	Total Value	
FY 2006	Coastal Inst. Director	Primary	P. August	CI	569.44	\$76.00		\$0.00	\$43,278	\$43,278	
FY 2006	Coastal Inst. Admin. Asst	Primary	D. Morrisey	CI	484.78	\$32.00		\$0.00	\$15,513	\$15,513	
FY 2006	Coastal Institute indirect	Primary	August/Morrisey	CI	910	\$64.91		\$0.00	\$62,652	\$62,652	
FY 2006	F. Geary, Blackstone WS Assoc.	Primary	watershed group	NGO	129.2	\$20.00		\$0.00	\$2,584	\$2,584	
FY 2006	Nutrients, Response, GIS - RIDEM staff time	Primary	3 staff	RIDEM				\$0.00	\$59,069	\$59,069	
FY 2006	RIDEM indirect	Primary	indirect costs	RIDEM				\$0.00	\$9,008	\$9,008	
FY 2006	DO Survey	Primary	Use of DEM boat	RIDEM	4	216/day	boat time	\$0.00	\$108	\$108	
FY 2006	NBC Env. Monitoring Prog.	Primary	monitoring staff	NBC	5000	\$50.00		\$0.00	\$225,888	\$225,888	
FY 2006	RI Estuary Habitat Fund	Primary		RI Legislature				\$0.00	\$79,500	\$79,500	
									Subtotals		\$497,600
TOTAL											\$497,600

**Attachment 2: NBEP FY2006 Workplan
Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
Travel Report FY2005 and Proposed FY2006**

FY2005

Date	Event	Place	NBEP staff/others	Cost	Note
10/11-14/2005	EPA NEP Fall 2005 Meeting	Corpus Christi, TX	R. Ribb	181.00	
10/11-14/2005	EPA NEP Fall 2005 Meeting	Newport, RI	H. Cottrell	593.00	
10/11-14/2005	EPA NEP Fall 2005 Meeting	Newport, RI	C. Deacutis	177.00	
10/11-14/2005	EPA NEP Fall 2005 Meeting	Newport, RI	T. Ardito	175.00	
12/19/2005	Meeting new CSO director w/ R. Ribb, D. Blazer, E. Lewandowski	Washington DC	R. Ribb	261.00	
1/11-14/06	NEP directors meeting	Cocoa Beach FL	R. Ribb	755.00	
2/7/2006	EPA/NBEP/New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission meeting	Boston MA	R. Ribb	41.00	
2/27/2006	Meeting with EPA HQ staff on NEP issues	Washington DC	R. Ribb	213.00	
3/5-9/2006	March 2006 EPA/NEP meeting	Washington DC	R. Ribb	728.00	
3/5-9/2006	March 2006 EPA/NEP meeting	Washington DC	C. Deacutis	675.00	
4/18/2006	NBEP meeting with Region 1 staff	Boston MA	R. Ribb	52.00	
4/21/2006	Invasive Tunicate Conference	Woods Hole MA	C. Deacutis	257.00	
4/27-29/06	New England Estuarine Research Society Spring mtg.	Eastham MA	C. Deacutis	414.00	
6/4-6/06	Barneгат Bay NEP IR Site visit	Toms River NJ	R. Ribb	465.00	
6/27/2006	New England NEP directors meeting with EPA Region 1 Regional Administrator, Dept. Administrator and staff	Boston MA	R. Ribb	49.00	
Sept 19-22, 2006	EPA NEP Fall 2006 Meeting	San Francisco CA	R. Ribb & C. Deacutis	1,900.00	
FY2005 TOTAL				6,936.00	

FY2006

PROPOSED FY2006 TRAVEL

Date	Event	Place	NBEP staff/others	Cost	Note
Dec 9-13, 2006	RAE National Habitat Meeting	New Orleans LA	R. Ribb, T. Ardito	1,700.00	
2/1/2007	NEP Director's Meeting	TBD	R. Ribb	750.00	
March 3-6, 2007	March 2007 EPA/NEP meeting	Washington DC	R. Ribb, T. Ardito, C. Deacutis	2,200.00	
4/1/2007	New England Estuarine Research Society Spring mtg.	TBD	C. Deacutis	450.00	
6/1/2007	EPA ANEP meeting	Washington DC	R. Ribb	225.00	
July 22-26, 2007	Coastal Zone 2007	Portland OR	R. Ribb	950.00	
FY2006 TOTAL (proposed)				6,275.00	