

RHODE ISLAND STATE PLANNING COUNCIL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

In accordance with the General Laws, Section 42-11-10 and Chapter 42-35, the State Planning Council has under consideration adoption of a draft plan entitled "*Water Quality 2035*", an Element of the State Guide Plan. This draft Water Quality Management Plan focuses on the need for careful management of the water resources of the State. It sets long-range goals and policies for the protection and restoration of water quality and aquatic habitats. The Draft highlights current and emerging challenges to achieving our clean water goals. It recognizes that maintaining acceptable quality and quantities of water while balancing the needs of natural systems with human activity and development can be complex. Opportunities to improve and adapt management in response to this challenge are included.

Notice is hereby given that two public hearings will be held on the adoption of this Plan at which time the opportunity shall be given to all persons interested to be heard upon the matter. The Plan will update and replace the following existing State Guide Plans that had protection and restoration of water quality as primary purposes:

- #162 Rivers Policy and Classification Plan (2004)
- #711 Blackstone Region Water Resources Management Plan (1981)
- #715 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for Narragansett Bay (1992)
- #731 Nonpoint Source Management Plan (1995)

The date, time and locations of the hearings are:

Wednesday July 13, 2016

2:00 PM

Conference Room B, 2nd Floor
Department of Administration
One Capitol Hill
Providence, Rhode Island

Wednesday July 13, 2016

6:00 PM

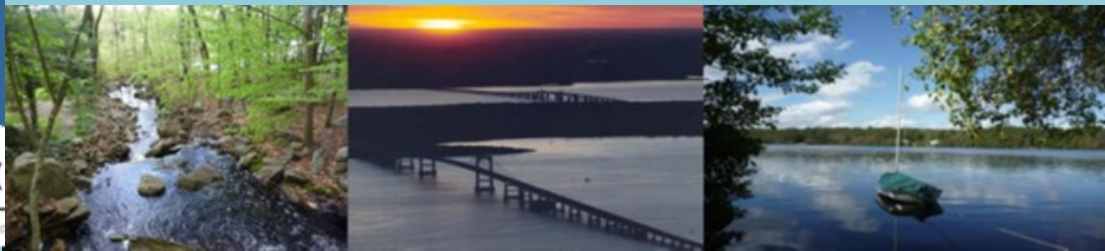
Room 300, 3rd Floor
Department of Environmental
Management
235 Promenade Street
Providence, Rhode Island

Each hearing will begin with a brief informational presentation about the draft plan followed by the opportunity for public comment. Written statements relative to any aspect of the proposed Plan, including alternative approaches, overlap, or potential economic impact, can be submitted in writing prior to, at the time of the hearing, or mailed by July 20, 2016 to: Parag Agrawal, Associate Director, Division of Planning, One Capitol Hill, Providence, Rhode Island 02908.

The draft plan may be viewed at Statewide Planning's website at: <http://www.planning.ri.gov/>
A copy of the draft plan is also available for review during business hours (8:30 AM to 4:30 PM) at the Department of Administration, Division of Planning, One Capitol Hill, 3rd Floor, Providence, Rhode Island (401-222-7901).

This meeting place is accessible to individuals with disabilities. Any individual requiring a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in this meeting should contact Thomas Mannock at 222-6395 (voice) or #711 (R.I. Relay) at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting. Any individual requiring the services of an interpreter to participate in this meeting should contact Michael Moan at 222-1236 (voice) at least five business days prior to the meeting.

Parag Agrawal, AICP
Secretary



Water Quality 2035

For more information, contact any of the following individuals:

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What is this Plan about?

Assuring that we have clean water for:

- ◆ drinking water
- ◆ recreation
- ◆ commerce needs, and
- ◆ healthy aquatic ecosystems.

Why is water quality important beyond public health reasons?

Clean waters support Rhode Island's economy through:

- ◆ Tourism & Recreation
- ◆ Manufacturing & Industry
- ◆ Commercial Fisheries
- ◆ Agriculture

What happens by adopting this Plan?

- ◆ Water Quality 2035 updates and replaces four previous State Guide Plan Elements:
 - ◆ #711 Blackstone Region Water Resources Management Plan (1981)
 - ◆ #715 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for Narragansett Bay (1992)
 - ◆ #731 Nonpoint Source Management Plan (1995)
 - ◆ #162 Rivers Policy and Classification Plan (2004)
- ◆ It provides direction for ongoing state water quality management programs.
- ◆ It facilitates coordination among entities engaged in water quality protection and restoration actions, including municipalities.
- ◆ It meets requirements for both fresh and coastal water nonpoint source management programs as required by the EPA and the NOAA for DEM and CRMC.

What are the major findings & recommendations?

- ◆ Collaborating & integrating planning activities- Use the EPA watershed approach to address implementation of existing water quality management programs across governmental levels.
- ◆ Stay the course of existing protection and prevention programs but address capacity levels - There is adequate legal authority to protect water quality in RI but it is important to adequately staff water quality protection programs.
- ◆ There are constrained programs which lack of capacity or no programs for:
 - ◆ monitoring
 - ◆ lake management
 - ◆ aquatic habitat restoration, and
 - ◆ climate change
- ◆ Sustainable Infrastructure Financing is needed- Infrastructure Bank faces potential shortfalls in needed funding for Clean Water SRF and stormwater programs.
- ◆ Assist municipalities with delegated responsibilities for:
 - ◆ stormwater management activities
 - ◆ broader adoption of "green infrastructure" approaches,
 - ◆ water quality restoration projects
 - ◆ wastewater facility planning updates
 - ◆ local on-site wastewater programs, and
 - ◆ implementing low impact development (LID).
- ◆ Specific actions for addressing 24 various aquatic habitat stressors and pollution sources.