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Governor

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EXECUTIVE ORDER

October 22, 2003

03-16

ESTABLISHING THE GOVERNOR'S NARRAGANSETT BAY
AND WATERSHED PLANNING COMMISSION

WHEREAS, Narragansett Bay is inextricably linked to the environmental and economic health of Rhode Island; and

WHEREAS, efforts to protect and enhance the Bay are most effective if focused on its entire watershed; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island's effectiveness in protecting and conserving the Bay and its watershed areas can be enhanced by strong coordination and communication among governmental and non-governmental entities; and

WHEREAS, a statewide planning and policy framework for Bay issues can improve our efforts to protect and manage the Bay and its watershed areas; and

WHEREAS, the recent fish kills, beach closings, and the continuing presence of unacceptable levels of pollution in the Bay requires the development of both immediate action and a strategic long-term plan for the Bay and its watershed areas; and

WHEREAS, governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations working on Bay and watershed issues are not sufficiently linked by a common vision, commitment, and agreed-upon set of goals; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island's leaders, including the Governor and General Assembly, will benefit from the recommendations of a coordinated and statewide stakeholder advisory process; and

WHEREAS, this advisory process will be further enhanced by the participation of representatives of the federal government and the governments of our neighboring states where a majority of the Narragansett Bay watershed areas are located.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DONALD L. CARCIERI, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations do hereby order as follows:

1. There is hereby established the Governor's Narragansett Bay and Watershed Planning Commission ("Commission") to advise and make recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly for developing a strategic long-term plan for the Bay and its watershed that will address environmental protection, restoration, sustainability, economic development, and socially equitable use of resources. The Commission shall also recommend to the Governor solutions to specific short-term problems as identified by the Governor. The Initial Charges attached as Attachment A to this Executive Order shall guide the Commission's initial work, which will be supplemented as the Governor determines.
2. The Commission shall be comprised of approximately twenty (20) members or more at the discretion of the Governor and shall be selected and appointed by the Governor. It shall be housed at the Coastal Institute at the University of Rhode Island. Membership may include representatives from the General Assembly, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, industry and business organizations, commercial and recreational fishing groups, local government, state agencies, public advocacy groups and representatives from the federal government as well as from the governments of Massachusetts and Connecticut. Members shall serve one-year terms and may be reappointed at the pleasure of the Governor.
3. The Governor shall appoint a Chairperson who will serve at the pleasure of the Governor.
4. There shall be established a Steering Committee comprised of the Commission Chairperson, the Director of the Department of Environmental Management, the Chairperson of the Coastal Resource Management Council, the Executive Director of the Economic Development Corporation, and the Executive Director of Save the Bay. The Steering Committee's function shall include:

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- a. establishing the agenda of the Commission;
 - b. providing administrative support; and
 - c. coordinating the work of the Commission and any workgroups established by the Commission.
5. The Commission shall meet at least quarterly at times designated by the Steering Committee and shall report its findings and recommendations regularly in writing to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate at times designated by the Commission or directed by the Governor.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately upon the date hereof and shall remain in effect until terminated.

So Ordered:


Donald L. Carcieri

10/22/03
Date

EXHIBIT A: Summary of Governor's Initial Charges to the Narragansett Bay and Watershed Planning Commission

SHORT TERM

- In 2004, study the feasibility and structure of a Bay and Watershed Restoration Fund bond
- By March 2004, develop a clear, realistic and unified strategic work plan for protecting the economic viability and environmental sustainability of the Bay, a shared agenda for, and efficient allocation of responsibilities among, in-state and interstate efforts by federal, state and local governments as well as private sector organizations, including academic institutions and nongovernmental organizations
- By January 2004, establish one or more Strategic Assessment Teams to identify and assess, in a proactive way, conditions that can lead to such Bay and Watershed problems as large scale fish kills and beach closures
- By January 2004, create a formalized Cooperative Fisheries Research Program with participation by state agencies, the fishing industry and academic institutions
- By January 2004, develop a business plan for a central system that collects, stores and makes publicly available pertinent Bay and watershed data, to be implemented no later than January 2005
- By January 2004, develop a final report on low oxygen levels and nutrient loading in Greenwich Bay, including targets and strategy for reducing nutrient loading
- By March 2004, a study on the feasibility of creating a Bay Island Park system that would enhance conservation, education and recreation opportunities on the islands within the Bay including Hope, Prudence, and Patience, and establishing a state transportation system to and between islands, that accommodates the needs of the underserved population in the urban areas, to enhance public access to and enjoyment of these resources.
- By March 2004, develop a strategic plan and interagency agreement for a Bay and watershed wide water quality monitoring program
- By April 2004, develop a strategic plan for reduction of nutrient loading in Narragansett Bay

MID TERM

- By 2005, develop a final master plan for dredging and management of dredge material, including a 20 year plan for maintaining navigational channels and basins
- By 2005, develop a comprehensive storm water management plans for all communities bordering the Bay and its tributaries
- By 2006, develop a strategic plan for restoration and protection of the Bay as fish habitat
- By 2006, a strategic plan for port activity and marine transportation
- By 2006, develop a strategic plan for recreational boating infrastructure

LONG TERM

Through planning and coordinated efforts, the goals shall be to:

- By 2010, reopen 25% of areas now closed to swimming
- By 2010, reduce number and frequency of beach closures by 50%
- By 2010, reduce number of days shellfish areas are closed by 50% and reopen 200 acres
- By 2010, make nutrient removal operational at all wastewater treatment facilities discharging to the Bay or its tributaries
- By 2015, make the Blackstone, Woonasquatucket and Wood-Pawcatuck rivers, and Greenwich Bay fishable and swimmable
- By 2015, restore fish passage on Blackstone, Pawtuxet, Ten Mile and Wood-Pawcatuck; open 35 river miles to anadromous fish by 2007, 100 miles by 2015
- By 2020, make the Seekonk, Moshassuck, Providence and Pawtuxet rivers, Upper Bay and Mount Hope Bay fishable and swimmable
- By 2010, protect an additional 1,500 acres of sensitive coastal resource areas, including wetlands
- Restore 100 acres of coastal wetlands by 2008, double that by 2015
- Restore 100 acres of riparian buffer by 2008, double that by 2015