

ADOPTING THE SAMP: CREATING A NEW TOOL FOR PROTECTING GREENWICH BAY

The Greenwich Bay Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) is a tool to protect Greenwich Bay—an estuary where saltwater and freshwater mix—for all users. Greenwich Bay is part of a larger watershed—the land area draining into the bay—that encompasses Warwick, East Greenwich, and West Warwick. In recent years, pollution has caused closures of Greenwich Bay shellfish beds and swimming beaches, and shoreline development has brought with it user conflicts and loss of fish and wildlife habitat. The Greenwich Bay SAMP focuses on improving management of the bay's habitat, water quality, recreational uses, economic assets, cultural

and historical resources, and natural hazard risks.

The SAMP was developed by the R.I. Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) in cooperation with other state and federal agencies, the affected municipalities, technical experts, and concerned citizens. Building on existing laws, the SAMP details the current condition and character of the bay and its watershed and includes regulations

and recommendations to restore and preserve vital elements of the bay and watershed, guide future development, and balance uses of the bay's waters, shoreline, and resources



Upper Warwick Cove

A VISION FOR GREENWICH BAY

Residents cherish Greenwich Bay for its beauty and for a high quality of life that is tied to a thriving bay-based economy, clean water, a strong sense of heritage, and abundant, safe recreational opportunities.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Develop leaders and stewards to coordinate and implement actions that protect the unique resources of Greenwich Bay
- Improve Greenwich Bay's water quality so that it is a safe place to fish and swim
- Maintain high quality fish and wildlife habitat in the Greenwich Bay watershed
- Improve recreational opportunities on Greenwich Bay and its shoreline
- Enhance water-dependent economic development on Greenwich Bay and its shoreline to maintain the area's unique sense of place

NEXT STEPS

Following two years of research and public input, CRMC now moves into the adoption phase for the SAMP. A CRMC policy subcommittee reviewed the plan on March 15, 2005, and the full council has begun rule-making and has opened an extended public comment period, with a public hearing and final vote scheduled for May 10, 2005. If adopted by CRMC, the plan advances to the R.I. Statewide Planning Council for approval as an element to the State Guide Plan, and will then be provided to Warwick, East Greenwich, and West Warwick for incorporation into their municipal comprehensive plans. The plan will also be recognized by federal agencies that administer coastal regulations.

YOU CAN HELP

Public comment on the SAMP is vital. Comments and letters will help determine whether the SAMP is adopted. Letters should be sent prior to the May 10, 2005 public hearing date to:

Grover J. Fugate
Executive Director
Coastal Resources Management Council
Oliver Stedman Government Center
4808 Tower Hill Road
Wakefield, RI 02879

Contact (401) 874-6107 if you would like to schedule a presentation about the Greenwich Bay SAMP for your community group.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the web site at http://seagrant.gso.uri.edu/G_Bay/Management/SAMP/ or contact Megan Higgins at CRMC at (401) 783-3370.

