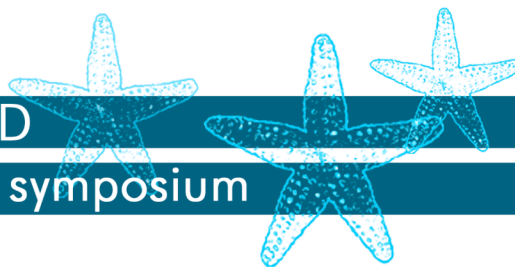




RONALD C. BAIRD sea grant science symposium



7th Annual Ronald C. Baird Sea Grant Science Symposium October 19 to 21, 2008

Sound Connections: The Science of Rhode Island and Block Island Sounds

Purpose

During the 3rd Annual Sea Grant Science Symposium, the most current scientific research findings were brought to bear on the Narragansett Bay ecosystem. Outcomes from that symposium showed that a better understanding about the oceanography and ecology of connecting water bodies—Rhode Island and Block Island Sounds—their interactions with each other and with Narragansett Bay, was paramount.

The 7th Annual Ronald C. Baird Sea Grant Science Symposium is developed to meet that challenge and help provide the science needed to move forward in ecosystem-based management efforts for the southern New England region.

The meeting will focus on Block Island Sound and Rhode Island Sound and their interfaces with waters to their north, south, east, and west. The symposium will explore the physical oceanography and living marine environments of the Sounds region, ecological trends, ocean-atmosphere interactions, and the geological landscape of the area. Both observational and model results will be included.

Circulation Dynamics

- Connectivity and Transport Patterns
- Vertical Mixing and Stratification
- Circulation Modeling

Geology and Climatic Trends

- Sediment Transport Dynamics
- Mapping Benthic Habitats
- Storm Impacts
- Air-Sea Interactions

Biology and Ecological Trends

- Plankton/Productivity Shifts
- Benthic Interactions
- Larval Transport
- Trends in Protected Species
- Trends in Highly Migratory Fishes

Fisheries and the Sounds

- Fisheries Trends
- Fisheries Interactions (Recreational/Commercial)

The overall purpose of the symposium will be to develop a conceptual framework on how these coastal ecosystems work, including various drivers and forcing functions, rates of ecological change, human impacts, and vital linkages among the sounds and their neighboring ecosystems, and discuss research gaps and needs for the future.

Logistics

The 7th Annual Baird Symposium will be held October 19 to 21, 2008, at the Hotel Manisses on Block Island. The conference will begin the evening of October 19 and end at 4 p.m. on October 21. We are expecting 30 to 40 people to attend. Due to the nature of the symposium, and the limited availability of accommodations, participation is by invitation only.

Outcomes

We plan to publish proceedings of the conference through Rhode Island Sea Grant. In addition, if sponsorship funding allows, we anticipate issuing a Request for Proposals to address some of the research priorities identified at the symposium.