

**Ocean SAMP Stakeholder Meeting #11  
Notes, January 5, 2010, 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.  
Hazard Rooms A and B, URI Bay Campus**

**Purpose of the Meeting:**

1. Provide stakeholders with a general understanding of the physical oceanography of the Ocean SAMP study area.
2. Present the latest historic and archeological findings from the Ocean SAMP research.
3. Update Stakeholders on Ocean SAMP research, outreach and policy activities.

**Welcome – Ken Payne**

Payne indicated he is now employed as Administrator of the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources, and he asked the group of approximately 60 attendees if they thought this is a conflict of interest considering his role as Stakeholder Group moderator. He said if there are concerns, he would step down from the moderator role. Several stakeholders indicated they thought Payne has been fair as moderator and he should continue in the role. Nobody in attendance said Payne should step down. Payne also said that if people felt uncomfortable speaking in front of the group, they could either talk with him directly or talk to SAMP Outreach Leader Jennifer McCann with concerns.

**New Ocean SAMP Developments – Grover Fugate, CRMC**

Fugate told the group that many of the Ocean SAMP research projects are still ongoing, explaining that in order to capture accurate data, studies need to take place in different seasons – for example, it is important for the bird study that spring migratory patterns are considered for the SAMP. He said the bird study makes Rhode Island one of the few to be seeking such a wide breadth of data, and indicated that this is the case with other SAMP research projects too.

He also pointed out that as he continues to compare the Rhode Island and Massachusetts marine spatial planning processes, it is becoming clear that the states have very different approaches to ocean planning. He said that in terms of the federal Request For Interest (RFI) being put out by the U.S. Minerals Management Service (MMS) so that states can offer leasing blocks for renewable energy resources purposes, Rhode Island is studying the issues first before getting to the RFI process, while Massachusetts is choosing to offer 200 blocks quickly and let the RFI process sort out the issues. Fugate said he is confident that Rhode Island's plan of taking the time to do the SAMP properly is the right course to take.

### **Update on Ocean SAMP Chapters – Jennifer McCann, URI**

McCann spoke about the Ocean SAMP public review process, and said that the feedback from the public has been very helpful. She said the process provides as much time as possible for people to review the chapters. Fugate also said the process is on track and that the August 2010 adoption date remains viable.

### **Physical Oceanography of the Ocean SAMP – Dan Codiga, URI**

Codiga provided a presentation focused on characterizing the physical oceanography of coastal waters off Rhode Island. He said physical oceanography is about understanding the processes that shape characteristics of water properties (particularly temperature, salinity, density) and currents. The role of physical oceanography in the SAMP process is looking at how water properties define habitat and at how currents determine flushing rates, with the SAMP aiming to assess potential alterations due to human activities and climate change. He said that the first step in this process to develop a baseline characterization of SAMP region physical oceanography characteristics. In the presentation, Codiga described SAMP water properties, hydrographic climatology, temperature, salinity, density and stratification, and sensitivity of stratification to offshore structures. In the event that a windfarm is built offshore, data thus far – the project will not be complete until summer – indicates that the “wake mixing” caused by the structure being in the water is unlikely to cause a major change in stratification of ocean water. He also talked about the different kinds of tests being done in the waters, and the tools used to collect data.

### **Historic and Archeological aspects of the Ocean SAMP – Rod Mather, URI**

Mather’s presentation illustrated how Rhode Island waters, including the SAMP area, host numerous shipwrecks, a kind of cultural resource. He said Rhode Island has a shipping history dating back to the 1600s and that early on the shipping channels in these waters became an integral component in energy transportation and distribution, although energy transport used to focus on coal, rather than offshore renewable energy resources such as windfarms. He said many key shipwrecks have been mapped but that there are still missing ships that have not been located or investigated. He said the shipwrecks in Rhode Island ocean waters can be important for ocean habitat, and that the SAMP is an opportunity to explore this further.

**Next Meeting – Legal Framework Chapter and Air Quality information for the SAMP, February 2, 2010, Coastal Institute, URI Bay Campus**

