

DRAFT SMP Goals

1. **Honor, promote and enhance the existing shellfish resource and uses.** Increased populations of shellfish in Rhode Island waters through commercial production and conservation activities provide ecological services, including cleaner water and nutrient removal; promote new jobs and business opportunities; meet the growing demand for seafood; and provide shoreline protection. As such, actions should honor, promote and enhance shellfish conservation, commercial and recreational uses of Rhode Island's coastal waters, while also considering the state's overall economic development, social and environmental needs and goals, including the protection, health, and enhancement of our natural resources, maritime activities, marine culture and a sense of place.
2. **Contribute to a properly functioning ecosystem that is both ecologically sound and economically beneficial.** The prosperity of the shellfish industry depends on the health of our natural systems. Contribute to restoring and maintaining the ecological capacity, integrity, and resilience of the state's coastal biophysical and socio-economic systems. Conduct research to better understand the current status of the natural resources, ecosystem conditions, and the implications of various human activities and hazards (human induced and natural disasters). Implement actions and plans to protect and where possible restore and enhance natural resources. Ensure that impacts from future activities and hazards are avoided and, if unavoidable, are minimized and mitigated to prevent large-scale disasters from occurring. Establish monitoring protocols to evaluate the consequences of decisions and adapt management accordingly.
3. **Conserve and manage marine and wildlife shellfish resources for equitable and sustainable use.** Through both scientific research and practical knowledge, better understand the existing activities taking place in Rhode Island state waters and how these uses interact with shellfish activities. Work with local individuals and organizations representing these uses, as well as individuals from around the globe working on similar issues, to identify best management practices to support shellfish activities while also minimizing these user conflicts and ensure the use of these resources are equitable for all.
4. **Build a framework for coordinated decision-making between state and federal management agencies, industry, and other interested parties.** Engage federal and state agencies and other interested parties in the development and implementation of the shellfish management plan to ensure that all appropriate requirements and opportunities are integrated into the process. Ensure that neighboring states of New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts are informed of all major actions. This coordination will allow for the sharing of technical information across all sectors, enhance management of this important resource and streamline the permitting process where and if appropriate.

DRAFT SMP Objectives

1. Document and increase our understanding of the current status of the natural resources and ecosystem conditions to help promote the health of our natural systems and prosperity of the shellfish industry.

- a. **Economic Scope of Work** – An economic analysis of the Rhode Island shellfish market focused on the annual fluctuations in supply and demand, and the resulting fluctuations in prices paid to fishermen and by consumers, with particular consideration to the role and influence of locally harvested products versus farmed and imported products. Work will begin in April.
- b. **Eco-History of RI Shellfishing Industry (contingent on funding)**– Including interviews with Rhode Islanders involved in shellfishing, this effort will document the lives and history of people in shellfishing, similar to the CRC Greenwich Bay Eco-History.
- c. **Baird Symposium** - Two day event focused on shellfish in RI and surrounding states that will occur in the Fall.
- d. **Seminar Series** – Goal is to host regular Seminars featuring experts in the field to discuss topics that emerged as priorities during the SMP Stakeholder Scoping Sessions. Next will be RI Sea Grant’s Coastal States Forum, March 28, 4-6pm, University Club at URI Main Campus, featuring Scott Lindell, Director of Scientific Aquaculture Lab at MBL in Woods Hole and Marta Gomez-Chiarri from URI. They will discuss growing shellfish in closed waters and managing disease. April seminar will look at ocean acidification. All details will be posted soon on www.rismp.org
- e. **RI Sea Grant 2014-2016 Research Omnibus** – All pre-proposals have been submitted and are under review. Full proposals are due **June 3**. Accepted proposals would begin research Feb.1, 2014 and continue until 2016.
- f. **Research Agenda** – Document that identifies research needs and studies to address those needs. Outline for future projects as funding opportunities arise.

2. Clarify legal roles and responsibilities and identify mechanisms to facilitate improved coordination among federal and state decision-making.

- a. **DEM legal document compilation**
- b. **Legal Scope of Work** – Draft completed by RWU Law in early summer

3. Identify the existing commercial, recreational, conservation uses of our state waters to minimize use conflicts.

- a. **Use Maps** – We’ve made copies of CRMC and RWU use maps; Input Session March 14 in Bristol, with contributions to maps by Salt Ponds Coalition, west and east bay fishermen. Next Input Session will be soon. Coordinated by Monique LaFrance. Questions/concerns to smp@etal.uri.edu

4. Explain and communicate current management decisions and processes.

- a. **Website** – Launched and available on www.rismp.org. Please submit any comments/resources to smp@etal.uri.edu
- b. **Seminar Series**
- c. **Baird Symposium**
- d. **Ongoing discussions** – Continue to meet with stakeholders to understand their concerns and insights.

5. Improve stock assessment.

- a. **Ongoing research** – Occurring in conjunction to the SMP by several groups, including RWU and RI DEM. Seminar Series in the future will describe research related to this issue.
- b. **RI Sea Grant 2014-2016 Research Omnibus**
- c. **SMP Research Agenda**

6. Maintain a healthy and safe industry, while increasing marketing opportunities.

- a. **Seminar Series** - Food safety and sanitation requirements
- b. **Stakeholder Scoping Sessions** – ongoing discussions
- c. **Economic Scope of Work**
- d. **Continue to explore opportunities**

7. Implement actions to complete management plan.

- a. **Draft SMP by October 2013** – A draft SMP will be presented for public review in the Fall of 2013