

The New Normal: Adapting Laws and Policies to Changing Environments

Engaging, Working With, and Educating Partners

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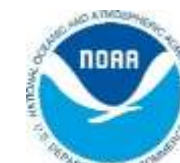
Restore America's Estuaries/The Coastal Society Summit

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Sea Grant Legal Network

- Formed in 2009
- Promotes collaboration among the different Sea Grant Legal Programs



Interaction Within and Outside Sea Grant

- Programs work with extension agents on law and/or policy components of larger research projects
- Marine advisory service
- Programs leads or co-leads original law and policy research either on its own or in partnership with other legal/policy experts
- Programs train attorneys and non-attorneys on legal issues



The Advocacy Issue

- Legal representation not provided: programs do not participate in litigation or provide legal advice to clients
- Legal programs do not take positions on issues or recommend specific actions to constituents



About the Marine Affairs Institute

◆ Housed at RWU School of Law

◆ Unique Partnership and MOU:

◆ RWU School of Law → Home Base

◆ Rhode Island Sea Grant → Law Fellow Program

◆ URI, Marine Affairs Dept. → Joint Degree



The Marine Affairs Institute educates and prepares the next generation of marine law professionals and is a national clearinghouse for marine law and policy. We achieve our goals by:

- ◆Offering excellent and rigorous maritime and marine law courses.
- ◆Providing full extracurricular opportunities to develop excellent research, writing and advocacy skills.
- ◆Convening local, regional, national and international experts in a neutral forum to address relevant maritime and marine law issues.
- ◆Leveraging unique institutional strengths and interdisciplinary approaches of our partners, Rhode Island Sea Grant and URI.

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Rhode Island Beach SAMP

- The vision of the Rhode Island Shoreline Change Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) is to provide guidance and tools for state and local decision makers to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover from, and successfully adapt to the impacts of coastal storms, erosion, and sea level rise.
 - <http://www.beachmanagement.org/>



Beach SAMP

- Focus on effects of rising sea levels and the increased frequency and severity of coastal storm events.
- Entire coastal zone of Rhode Island and all 21 coastal communities impacted by sea level rise, storm surge and tidal flooding, as well as coastal erosion.



Benefits of Incorporating Legal and Policy Research from the Start

- goal to help inform revisions to the policies and standards of the Red Book
- involving a neutral, academic, law and policy center helps create the transparent, open dialogue of the SAMP process
- additional capacity to explore some of the questions surrounding legal implications of climate change

Issues

- Property issues. What happens when a beach erodes?
- What happens when you aren't allowed to build/rebuild on your property?
- What are municipal liabilities related to climate change?



Workshop for Municipal Planners and Solicitors

- Examined liability exposure for:
 - public information
 - planning and policymaking
 - infrastructure maintenance
 - permitting





Why was this workshop important?

- Brought the decision makers into the same room
- Allowed for an open dialogue about issues that are important to municipalities and the state
- Conversation has continued, informing regulatory decisions



Thank you!

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