

State Guide Plan Update: Water Quality 2035 Preliminary Draft May 2016

What is this Plan about? Assuring that we have clean water for:

- drinking water
- recreation
- commerce needs, and
- healthy aquatic ecosystems.

Why is water quality important beyond public health reasons?

- CLEAN WATERS SUPPORT RI'S ECONOMY
 - **Tourism & Recreation**
 - **Manufacturing & Industry**
 - **Commercial Fisheries**
 - **Agriculture**

What happens by adopting this Plan?

- Water Quality 2035 updates and replaces four previous State Guide Plan Elements:
 - #711 Blackstone Region Water Resources Management Plan (1981)
 - #715 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for Narragansett Bay (1992)
 - #731 Nonpoint Source Management Plan (1995)
 - #162 Rivers Policy and Classification Plan (2004)
- It provides direction for ongoing state water quality management programs.
- It facilitates coordination among entities engaged in water quality protection and restoration actions, including municipalities.
- It meets requirements for both fresh and coastal water nonpoint source management programs as required by the EPA and the NOAA for DEM and CRMC.

What are the major findings & recommendations?

- Collaborating & integrating planning activities- Use the EPA watershed approach to address implementation of existing water quality management programs across governmental levels.
- Stay the course of existing protection and prevention programs but address capacity levels - There is adequate legal authority to protect water quality in RI but it is important to adequately staff water quality protection programs.
- There are constrained programs which lack of capacity or no programs for:
 - monitoring
 - lake management
 - aquatic habitat restoration, and
 - climate change
- Sustainable Infrastructure Financing is needed- Infrastructure Bank faces potential shortfalls in needed funding for Clean Water SRF and stormwater programs.
- Assist municipalities with delegated responsibilities for:
 - stormwater management activities
 - broader adoption of "green infrastructure" approaches,
 - water quality restoration projects
 - wastewater facility planning updates
 - local on-site wastewater programs, and
 - implementing low impact development (LID).
- Specific actions for addressing 24 various aquatic habitat stressors and pollution sources.