

## **Helpful Websites**

RI's Climate Challenge: Waves of Change: [www.RIClimateChange.org](http://www.RIClimateChange.org)

Sea Level Rise & the Conservation of Coastal Wetlands: <http://seagrant.gso.uri.edu/climate/habitat.html>

Conservation and Climate Change: <http://seagrant.gso.uri.edu/climate/conservation.html>

## **Key Themes from SLAMM Community Meetings**

### **Education/Outreach is needed for various groups to understand the issues and help promote opportunities**

- Groups include
  - o residents (inc. seasonal)
  - o designers, engineers
  - o business community, realtors
  - o municipal officials, building officials
  - o state legislators
- Opportunities for affecting change
  - o new wetlands task force (per recent legislation)
  - o training of trainers in municipalities

### **Property acquisition/easements may provide opportunities for wetland migration as well as future inundation**

- purchase properties (inc. "end of road" lots, etc.)
- easements on properties
- transfer of Development Rights (*also a local policy/zoning issue*)
- rolling easements (*also a local policy/zoning issue*)
- funding/assistance will be needed

### **Local policy can be implemented in various ways**

- incorporate SLAMM results (maps and other info) into new hazards section of municipal comprehensive plans (along with model language and priority area recommendations for each municipality)
- consider SLAMM results during building permit process (which is based on current conditions, not projections)
- require builders to look at SLAMM results before moving forward with projects; planning board could refer to the 3' SLR scenario when talking to builders re. new construction
- focus on a 5' SLR scenario for planning because it's essentially what is already seen during storms (then could see where the best places to replace septic systems would be, etc.)
- consider new ordinances for construction (e.g., Conservation Development to shift development away from potential salt marsh areas)
- zoning overlay districts ("high flood danger overlay districts" provide an additional level of review- need a special use permit to develop there; SLR overlay (e.g., NK); wetlands overlay; overlay on undeveloped land that requires the use of green infrastructure, LID, etc.)
- include SLAMM results in reuse/development plans (e.g., Pawtucket and National Grid and remediation site)
- include SLAMM results into other plans (e.g., Providence Sustainability Plan; Tiverton Capital Improvement Plan; Little Compton work with Newport on land conservation and water resources (reservoir) planning)
- link with new wetlands task force
- maps would need to be adopted by State and/or town

### **Transportation infrastructure can be a concern and provide opportunities for mitigation**

- raise roads/causeways (e.g., Market Street in Warren, Rte. 114 in Bristol)
- enlarge culverts (e.g., North Road in Jamestown)
- relocate/modify parking lots (e.g., Colt State Park lot in Bristol)

## **Buffers and setbacks may provide options through local and state regulations**

- increase buffers
- change setback standards (for local zoning and from coastal features)
- municipal limitations on expanding state requirements re. wetlands regulations (mainly because of new legislation)
- roll of variances

## **Legal issues that were common**

- what is legally defensible? (towns should have protection from lawsuits)
- “takings” issue
- public health & safety of the town vs. personal property rights
- change in ownership with SLR and marsh migration
- are there liability issues of realtors not disclosing the info?

## **Shoreline protection may prohibit wetlands migration so alternatives may be appropriate**

- sea walls
- alternative shoreline protection

## **Wastewater/septic is an issue with sea level rise in general**

- how do they perform with increasing sea levels
- how will septic systems get permitted per the new regulations?

## **Floodproofing/retrofitting**

- elevate structures (e.g., Dead Eye Dick’s Restaurant, Block Island)

## **Property values/tax issues affect local decisions due to high tax base on the coast**

- effects on property values (high property values at stake, but a “double-edged sword”- this info might negatively affect property values, but town may be liable if risks are not adequately communicated and property is lost/damaged)
- effects on municipal tax base (losses in taxable square feet?, etc)
- need financial incentives to homeowners to allow for migration (would have to be a state (or maybe federal) tax credit)
- impacts on insurance?

## **Historic issues**

- how will historic districts be affected (e.g., Old Harbor, Block Island)
- historic parkways (e.g., Watchemoket, EP)

## **Stormwater/drainage**

- implement green infrastructure (prioritize where it should be applied based on SLAMM results), consider upper bay Stormwater Utility District feasibility study (e.g., lower Gano Street)

## **Off-site mitigation**

- mitigation banking a possibility to target and protect key wetlands systems

## **Habitat restoration**

- what are the techniques
- spray dredged material on marshes?
- funding criteria to include climate change
- when to restore and when to let drown in place

