

Source Water Assessment and Public Education: Coordinating the Rhode Island Home*A*Syst Program with the State's Source Water Assessment Efforts

March 2003

Summary of Program Implementation: Public education and participation by area -- October 1999 through January 2003.

Summary: Rhode Island's Large Community Public Water Supplies.

For more information about the methods and process for public education and participation, refer to the report: **A Model for Public Education and Participation.**

Public outreach and education were conducted based on areas encompassing the location of the source water protection areas and the areas served by those supplies. In many cases, several communities and public water supplies were grouped together as one area due to overlapping source water protection areas and communities being served by those supplies.

There were a total of ten areas, which covered the large community public water supplies in the state. There were a total of ten Introductory Meetings attended by at least 131 people, and eight Land Use Inventory Workshops attended by at least 115 people and resulting in 85 land use inventory volunteers. This does not include several other water supplier staff, municipal board members, and conservation agencies and organizations that provided map reviews and input outside of the formal land use inventory process. This also does not include several other individuals who made inquiries about the Program despite being unable to attend or become involved, or several interviews with newspaper reporters about this Program. It is known that at least two volunteers have since become members of municipal boards as a result of their involvement with this project.

Area 1: Outreach conducted for the Town of Burrillville. October 1999 – April 2000

The Town of Burrillville served as the pilot for this public participation and education component. URI CE was already in the process of conducting MANAGE (Method for Assessment, Nutrient-loading And Geographic Evaluation) assessments in certain areas within Burrillville as part of another project. The methods and public participation being used served as the basis for developing the Tier 1 and Tier 2 assessment process for the SWAP.

RI HEALTH Assessments

Suppliers: All public water supplies in Burrillville.

Meetings and Workshops

Introductory Meeting: Held November 16, 1999 at 6:30 PM at the Burrillville Town Hall. At least ten people attended.

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Land Use Inventory Training Workshop: Held December 28, 1999 from 7 to 9 PM at the Burrillville American Legion Hall. 15 people attended.

Land Use Inventories: There were a total of 13 volunteers assigned to 7 groups.

Area 2: Outreach conducted for the area encompassing the City of Newport and the Towns of Middletown and Portsmouth (Aquidneck Island). April – September 2000

URI CE Assessments

Suppliers: city of Newport, Water Division, which relies on surface water supplies.

RI HEALTH Assessments

Suppliers: All other public water supplies on Aquidneck Island, including the US Navy.

Meetings and Workshops

Introductory Meeting: Held April 27, 2000 at 6:30 PM at the Middletown Town Hall. At least ten people attended including water suppliers, municipal staff, navy personnel and interested citizens.

Land Use Inventory Training Workshop: Held May 17, 2000 from 7 to 9 PM at the Norman Bird Sanctuary in Middletown. At least 12 people attended.

Land Use Inventories: There were a total of 12 volunteers assigned to nine groups. Volunteers were members of URI Bay Campus Program, the US Navy, a Municipal Board, URI Watershed Watch and interested citizens.

URI CE Assessment Workshops: Three workshops were held June through August 2000 at the Portsmouth Town Hall.

Area 3: Outreach conducted for the area encompassing the city of Pawtucket, and the Towns of Cumberland and Lincoln. June – November 2000

URI CE Assessments

Suppliers: Pawtucket Water Supply Board, Cumberland Water Department, and Lincoln Water Commission. Pawtucket and Cumberland rely on surface water reservoirs and wells; Pawtucket has watershed areas that extend into neighboring MA communities. Lincoln relies on one well and purchases water from the Providence Water Supply Board.

RI HEALTH Assessments

Suppliers: All other public water supplies in Cumberland, Lincoln and Pawtucket.

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Meetings and Workshops

Preliminary Planning Meeting: Held June 23, 2000 at 9:30 AM at RI HEALTH Cannon Building in Providence. Nine people attended from State agencies, Water Resources Board, Northern RI Conservation District, water suppliers and municipal staff. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the best approach for organizing volunteers, data collection, and a process for working with these three communities whose water supplies are located within such close proximity.

Introductory Meeting: Held October 2, 2000 from 7 to 9 PM at the Cumberland Town Hall, about eight people attended including municipal staff, water supplier staff, and interested citizens.

Land Use Inventory Training Workshop: Held October 23, 2000 from 7 to 9 PM at the Cumberland Town Hall. Ten people attended.

Land Use Inventories: There were ten volunteers assigned to approximately five groups. URI CE staff completed land use inventories on two wellhead protection areas in Lincoln. Volunteers consisted of water supplier staff, high school students, conservation organization, and concerned citizens.

URI CE Assessment Workshops: The first meeting was held in November 2000. One water supplier attended. The remaining two workshops were cancelled due to lack of attendance.

Area 4: Outreach conducted for the area encompassing the Towns of South Kingstown, Charlestown, and Narragansett. December 2000 to April 2001

URI CE Assessments

Suppliers: The town of South Kingstown, Kingston Water District, United Water (Wakefield Water Co.), and the University of Rhode Island. All of these public suppliers rely on wells.

URI CE also studied the town of South Kingstown aquifer overlay district, the Green Hill Pond Watershed and the northeastern portion of the Ninigret Pond Watershed located within the Towns of South Kingstown and Charlestown. Some small community and noncommunity wellhead protection areas lie within these areas. These areas were already being studied as part of an EPA National Wastewater Demonstration Project and will be summarized within the SWAP Report.

RI HEALTH Assessments

Suppliers: All other public supplies in the towns of South Kingstown, Charlestown, and Narragansett

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Meetings and Workshops

Introductory Meeting: Held January 5, 2001 at 1:30 PM at the South Kingstown Town Hall. There were at least 20 attendees consisting of municipal staff and officials, water suppliers, state agencies, local conservation organizations, and concerned citizens.

Land Use Inventory Training Workshop: Held January 29, 2001 from 7 to 9 PM at the Cross Mills Public Library in Charlestown. Twenty-two people and a Brown University Class (one professor and 14 students) in environmental studies attended.

Land Use Inventories: There were a total of 18 volunteers assigned to eight groups. Six groups were assigned to URI CE study areas, and two groups were assigned to RI HEALTH study areas. The Brown University Class also worked independently with RI HEALTH on many of the public supplies in the town of Charlestown. Volunteers were members of URI Master Gardener Association, URI Watershed Watch, Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association, water supplier manager, town of Charlestown Conservation Commission and Wastewater Management Commission, and concerned citizens. It is known that at least one volunteer became a municipal conservation commission member as a result of this program.

URI CE Assessment Workshops: Held February 6, March 27 and April 24, 2001 from 4 to 6 PM at the Cross Mills Public Library in Charlestown.

Area 5: Outreach conducted for the area encompassing the Towns of North Kingstown, Exeter, Jamestown, East Greenwich, West Greenwich, Coventry, Warwick, and West Warwick.

February 2001 to July 2001

URI CE Assessments

Suppliers: North Kingstown Water Department, Jamestown Water Department, Kent County Water Authority, and the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (serving Quonset Point). These public suppliers rely on wells except as noted: The town of Jamestown relies on a surface water reservoir in addition to a well; the Kent County Water Authority purchases water from the Providence Water Supply Board in addition to relying on wells.

URI CE had already been conducting MANAGE assessments for other areas in Jamestown as part of a wastewater management study. These areas will be summarized within the SWAP Report.

RI HEALTH Assessments

Suppliers: All other public supplies in the towns of North Kingstown, Exeter, Jamestown, East Greenwich, West Greenwich, Coventry, Warwick, and West Warwick.

Meetings and Workshops

Introductory Meeting: Held March 9, 2001 at 2 PM at the North Kingstown Town Hall. There were at least 11 attendees consisting of municipal staff and officials, water suppliers, state agencies, and local watershed associations.

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Land Use Inventory Training Workshop: Held April 2, 2001 from 7 to 9 PM at the Rocky Hill Grange in East Greenwich. Sixteen people attended including two students from the CCRI Biology Club.

Land Use Inventories: There were a total of 14 volunteers assigned to nine groups (some working independently). Six groups were assigned to URI CE study areas, and four groups were assigned to RI HEALTH study areas (one group doing a combination of both). The CCRI Biology Club and town of Coventry Planning Commission worked independently with RI HEALTH on many of the public supplies in the towns of Coventry and Exeter. Volunteers were members of URI Master Gardener Association, URI Watershed Watch, town of North Kingstown Groundwater Committee, and concerned citizens.

URI CE Assessment Workshops: Held April 11, May 30, and June 27, 2001 from 4 to 6 PM at the North Kingstown Public Library.

Area 6: Outreach conducted for the area encompassing the Towns of Tiverton and Little Compton. May 2001 to December 2001

URI CE Assessments

Suppliers: Stone Bridge Fire District (Stafford Pond), and city of Newport, Water Division (Nonquit Pond and Watson Reservoir).

RI HEALTH Assessments

Suppliers: All other public supplies in the Towns of Tiverton and Little Compton.

Meetings and Workshops

Introductory Meeting: Held June 13, 2001 at 4 PM at the Eastern Rhode Island Conservation District office in Tiverton. There were at least ten attendees consisting of Eastern Rhode Island Conservation District members, town council, municipal land trust and open space commission, water suppliers, state agencies, local water works association and interested citizens.

Land Use Inventory Training Workshop: It was decided that this portion of the program was not needed due to extensive studies, data, and education programs already existing for these areas. Attendees at the introductory meeting and assessment workshops provided reviews of land use and other maps. Outreach and land use inventories were originally conducted for the city of Newport, Water Division (Area 2) Nonquit Pond and Watson Reservoir (supplemental supplies) starting in April 2000. Much work and study had also been conducted for Stafford Pond as part of a TMDL study and local efforts to address water quality issues.

Land Use Inventories: Input provided by Introductory Meeting and Assessment Workshop Attendees; two volunteers had originally conducted a land use inventory for Nonquit Pond and Watson Reservoir under Area 2.

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URI CE Assessment Workshops: Held October 25 and December 6, 2001 from 4 to 6 PM at the Eastern Rhode Island Conservation District office in Tiverton.

Area 7: Outreach conducted for the area encompassing the towns of Bristol, Warren and Barrington. November 2001 to April 2002

URI CE Assessments

Suppliers: The Bristol County Water Authority, which relies on wells and surface water reservoirs located within Rhode Island and neighboring MA communities. They also purchase and distribute water from the Providence Water Supply Board.

RI HEALTH Assessments

Suppliers: All other public supplies in the towns of Bristol, Warren and Barrington.

Meetings and Workshops

Introductory Meeting: Held December 12, 2001 at 5:15 PM at the Barrington Senior Center. There were at least ten attendees consisting of water supplier staff and board members, municipal staff and boards, state representative, state agency, conservation organization, a Massachusetts official and a concerned citizen. A list of concerns and information were generated by the group due to factors such as a lack of land use controls within Massachusetts watershed areas and existing water quality concerns.

Land Use Inventory Training Workshop: Held January 22, 2002 from 7 to 9 PM at the Barrington Public Library. Nine people attended the workshop and two additional people signed up as volunteers although unable to attend this workshop.

Land Use Inventories: There were a total of seven volunteers assigned to four groups. All groups were assigned to URI CE study areas, and some contacts were referred to RI HEALTH to work directly on a specific study area. Volunteers were members of Municipal Boards, Homeowner Association, URI Master Gardener Association, water supplier staff, and conservation organization. President of local Watershed Council attended workshop and facilitated contacts and information exchange.

URI CE Assessment Workshops: Held March 20 and April 24, 2002 from 4:30 to 6:30 PM at the Barrington Public Library.

Area 8: Outreach conducted for the area encompassing the towns of Westerly, Hopkinton and Richmond. February 2002 to July 2002

URI CE Assessments

Suppliers: The town of Westerly Water Department, which relies on wells. Wellhead Protection Areas extend into a neighboring Connecticut community.

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RI HEALTH Assessments

Suppliers: All other public supplies in the towns of Westerly, Hopkinton, and Richmond.

Meetings and Workshops

Introductory Meeting: Held April 4, 2002 at 3:30 PM at the Westerly Town Hall. There were at least eight attendees consisting of water supplier staff, municipal staff and board members, town council, watershed association, land trust, and concerned citizens.

Land Use Inventory Training Workshop: Held April 22, 2002 from 6:30 to 8:30 PM at the Westerly Public Library. Eleven people attended the workshop and one reporter from the Westerly Sun.

Land Use Inventories: There were a total of nine volunteers assigned to five groups. Three groups were assigned to URI CE study areas, and two groups worked directly with RI HEALTH on public water supplies located in the towns of Richmond and Hopkinton. Volunteers were members of Municipal Boards, URI Master Gardener Association, URI Watershed Watch, town Council, local watershed association, and a concerned citizen. It is known that at least one volunteer became a new municipal conservation commission member as a result of this program.

URI CE Assessment Workshops: Held June 18 and July 16, 2002 from 4 to 6 PM at the Westerly Public Library.

Area 9: Outreach conducted for the area encompassing the city of Woonsocket and the towns of Smithfield and North Smithfield. May 2002 to October 2002

URI CE Assessments

Suppliers: The city of Woonsocket Water Division, which relies on surface water reservoirs. One reservoir and watershed area lies in neighboring Massachusetts's communities.

RI HEALTH Assessments

Suppliers: All other public supplies in the city of Woonsocket and the towns of Smithfield and North Smithfield. Some water systems purchase all of their water from the Providence Water Supply Board, which is covered under Area 10.

Meetings and Workshops

Introductory Meeting: Held June 5, 2002 at 2:00 PM at the Woonsocket City Hall. There were at least 15 attendees consisting of water supplier staff, municipal staff and board members, town council, clergy, National Heritage Corridor, local interest group, and concerned citizens.

Land Use Inventory Training Workshop: Held June 24, 2002 from 6:30 to 8:30 PM at the Woonsocket Harris Public Library. Four people attended the workshop. There was a great deal of interest at the Introductory Meeting held three weeks earlier. Many people were unable to attend this scheduled meeting. Part of the poor turnout was also attributed to the time of year

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and beautiful weather that evening. The Introductory Meeting and Land Use Inventory Workshop were originally scheduled for the Fall 2001 and were postponed due to the events of Sept. 11, 2001.

Land Use Inventories: There were two volunteers each assigned to work independently on the watershed areas in Rhode Island. The Woonsocket Water Division staff provided a review and major updates for the Massachusetts watershed area. Volunteers belonged to the URI Master Gardener Association. A staff person from the Blackstone River Heritage Corridor who attended the workshop also supplied information.

URI CE Assessment Workshops: Held September 10 and October 8, 2002 from 4 to 6 PM at the Woonsocket Harris Public Library.

Area 10: Outreach conducted for the area encompassing the cities of Providence and Cranston, and the towns of Scituate, Foster, Glocester, Johnston, East Providence, and North Providence. Outreach was also made to all water suppliers who purchase water from the Providence Water Supply Board.

August 2002 to January 2003

URI CE Assessments

Suppliers: The Providence Water Supply Board, Scituate Reservoir System, series of six interconnected surface water reservoirs, largest public water supplier serving approximately 60% of Rhode Island.

RI HEALTH Assessments

Suppliers: All other public supplies in the city of Cranston and the towns of Johnston, Scituate, Foster, and Glocester.

Meetings and Workshops

Preliminary Planning Meeting: Held August 7, 2002 between RI HEALTH, URI CE, and Providence Water Supply Board staff at the Holton Treatment Plant in Scituate. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the SWAP process, to determine what data and studies already exist—including past MANAGE assessments for many areas in Glocester and Scituate, and the best approach for public participation. Due to the PWSB having Geographic Information System capability, and the size of the watershed (just over 59,000 acres) with limited public access, it was determined that the usual land use inventory phase of the Program would be inefficient and difficult to manage. The majority of the watershed is also located in the towns of Scituate, Foster and Glocester, which are not served by the PWSB. It was determined that PWSB staff would review maps prepared by URI CE for the assessment process and that these maps would also be made available for public review and comment at upcoming meetings.

Introductory Meeting: Held October 21, 2002 from 4 to 6 PM at the North Scituate Community House. There were 29 attendees consisting of water supplier staff, municipal staff and board members, Conservation District, Watershed Council, federal and state agencies, conservation

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organization, land trust, Clean Water Action, clergy, and concerned citizens. This meeting contained presentations by PWSB staff, RI HEALTH and URI CE including the informational slide show and groundwater model presentation that is usually presented during the Land Use Inventory Training Workshop. Meeting attendees then had an opportunity to identify concerns and review maps that were prepared for the assessment process.

Land Use Inventory Training Workshop: Informational slide show presented during the Introductory Meeting.

Land Use Inventories: Conducted by PWSB staff. Meeting participants had opportunities to review maps and comment, one watershed resident who works with RI DEM Office of Solid Waste presented a summary of leaking underground storage tanks, Superfund sites, CERCLA sites, etc.

URI CE Assessment Workshops: Held December 12, 2002 and January 13, 2003 from 4 to 6 PM at the North Scituate Community House.

Town of New Shoreham

URI CE and other professional groups and agencies have been working with the town of New Shoreham for several years on evaluating the quality and quantity of drinking water on the Island, as well as the development of a model wastewater management ordinance as part of an EPA National Demonstration Grant Project. Due to the level of study, data, and public press and outreach surrounding these on-going projects -- including detailed MANAGE assessments over much of the Island -- it was determined that URI CE will develop one Source Water Assessment Report for all of the public water supplies in the town of New Shoreham.