

State of the Taunton: Partnerships for Progress

October 1, 2018, 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Fall River Heritage State Park, Fall River, MA

9:00 to 10:00

Welcoming Remarks

Judith Swiff, Chair of the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program's Steering Committee, Director of the Coastal Institute and Professor of Communication Studies and Theater, URI
Alexandra Dapolito Dunn, Regional Administrator for EPA Region 1

What We Know: State of the Taunton River Watershed and its connection to Narragansett Bay

Nick Wildman, Dam Removal Practice Lead for the MA Division of Ecological Restoration (MA DER) and Vice-Chair of the NBEP Steering Committee
Millie Garcia-Serrano, Regional Director of Southeast Regional Office at Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)

Awards

10:00 to 10:15

Celebrating our Local Champions

Colleen Brown, Conservation Agent for the Town of Swansea, MA
Ed Tanner, Principal Planner and Zoning Officer for the Town of Bristol, RI
Dighton Conservation Commission

Networking

10:15 to 10:30

Coffee Break and Networking

Refreshments sponsored by Horsley Witten Group and Milone & MacBroom; with reusable water bottles provided by Fuss & O'Neill

Workshop 1

10:30 to 11:15

What's Working: Partners Improving Our Waters

Moderator: Courtney Schmidt, NBEP Staff Scientist
Volunteer water quality monitoring – what are we learning?

Steve Silva, Taunton River Watershed Association (TRWA)

How does the bay respond to changes in the watershed? From the top to the bottom

Richard Carey, MassDEP

Emily Shumchenia, E & C Enviroscene

Workshop 2

11:15 to 12:00

What's Next: Resiliency Through Partnerships

Moderator: Kate McPherson, Save The Bay
Protecting land through planning & partnerships: nature based solutions

Stefanie Covino, Massachusetts Audubon

Restoring River and Wetland Habitat Connectivity in the Taunton River Watershed

Beth Lambert, Massachusetts Department of Ecological Restoration (MADER)

Adapting today to save our coastal habitats

Wenley Ferguson, Save The Bay

Bringing it all together

12:00 to 12:15

What Can You Do?

Building Partnerships for Progress

Topher Hamblett, Save The Bay

Bill Napolitano, Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD)

Networking

12:15 to 1:00

Connect with Your Partners

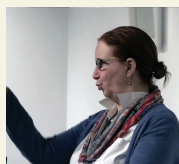
Meet local partners, learn from interesting and useful resource materials (tools, technical capacity, funding opportunities, etc), ask questions, share stories, and built your next idea through a new partnership.

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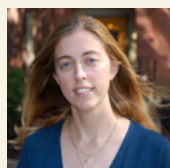
Moderators

Judith Swift serves as the director of the Coastal Institute and a Professor of Communication



Studies and Professor of Theatre at the University of Rhode Island. Her research focus is the translation of science to the public. She often employs the arts as a means to translate science for the lay public, using emotional learning as a means to stimulate interest in and "stickiness" of information. She is Chair of both the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program's Steering Committee and Executive Committee.

Courtney Schmidt is a coastal biogeochemist focused on estuarine and watershed science, particularly pollution and its effects. As the staff scientist of the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program,



Courtney develops and manages the technical projects and programs which support the NBEP's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. She collaborates with regional partners to fill data gaps,

identify research needs, and manage the implementation of projects. She provides technical expertise to local and regional committees concerned with estuaries, and state and federal agencies working on water quality, human health, climate change, and habitat restoration issues. She received both her M.S. and Ph.D. in Oceanography from the Graduate School of Oceanography at the University of Rhode Island, and a B.S. from the University of Tampa.

Kate McPherson is the Narragansett Bay Riverkeeper at Save The Bay. She joined Save The Bay in 2018 and works on river restoration and



advocacy issues, with particular focus on the Massachusetts portion of the watershed. She supports community efforts at the local level to protect and restore rivers, streams, and coastal habitats, and advocates for statewide policy changes that support watershed health. Kate holds a B.S. in Wildlife Biology and Management from the University of Rhode Island. Before joining Save The Bay, she spent fourteen years working in the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management's Office of Water Resources, Freshwater Wetlands Permitting Program where she reviewed potential impacts of proposed projects on wetland resources.

Speakers

Alexandra Dapolito Dunn serves as the Regional Administrator for EPA Region 1. Her responsibilities include overseeing the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New



Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, and ten tribal nations. Prior to joining EPA Region 1, Ms. Dunn served as executive director and general counsel for the Environmental Council of States (ECOS), a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization committed to helping state agencies improve environmental outcomes for all Americans. Since 2014, Ms. Dunn has helped state governments improve water infrastructure, air pollution control, site cleanup, chemical management, and economic development. Prior to joining ECOS, Ms. Dunn served as executive director and general counsel for the Association of Clean Water Administrators.

Nick Wildman is a Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner and the Dam Removal Practice Leader for the Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration. Nick joined the DER



in 2007 after having been involved in river and wetland projects in New York, New England, and New Orleans. He is currently the Division's lead on eight restoration projects across Massachusetts. He also leads the Division's work examining the economic effects of restoration and serves as the Vice-Chair of the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program's Steering Committee. Nick has a Master of Environmental Management degree from Duke University and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Maine.

Millie Garcia-Serrano has been the Regional Director of the Southeast Regional Office at Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection since December 2015.



Ms. Garcia-Serrano previously served as SERO's Acting Regional Director, and before that, she was the Deputy Regional Director for the Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup. Since joining MassDEP in 1998, she has been an important part of SERO's senior staff, where she worked on a number of important site cleanup projects and high profile issues that included assessment and remediation of polluted land, ground water and coastal resources. She has also served as a MassDEP representative on many internal and stakeholder workgroups, advisory committees, and support teams. She has earned a

Masters of Public Health-Environmental Health degree from the Boston University School of Medicine and a B.S. in Biology from the University of South Alabama College of Arts and Sciences.

Steve Silva manages the volunteer water quality monitoring program and serves on the Board of Directors of the Taunton River Watershed Alliance (TRWA). For 30 years, TRWA has been a



voice for the Taunton River, and advocate for environmental protection, sustainable development, and responsible stewardship of our precious water resources. Prior to becoming a TRWA volunteer, Steve worked at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 1 with all six New England states for 40 years. Steve's last EPA position was Chief of the Water Quality Branch, which manages the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), Impaired Waters List, and Water Quality Standards programs. He has a B.S. in Civil/Environmental

Engineering from the University of Massachusetts in Dartmouth and an M.S. in Civil/Environmental Engineering from Northeastern University.

Richard Carey is an Environmental Analyst in the Watershed Planning Program, Division of Watershed Management, at the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.



Richard coordinates with EPA to revise the Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards; manages projects with federal agencies, state agencies, and other partners conducting scientific investigations relevant to water quality criteria; utilizes bioavailability models to derive acute and chronic toxicity thresholds; and analyzes physical, chemical, and biological data to enhance the sustainability of water resources. Richard is currently involved with multiple projects in the Narragansett Bay Watershed and is a member of the Science Advisory Committee for the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program.

Richard has a Ph.D. degree in Interdisciplinary Ecology from the University of Florida.

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Local Champions

The local champions were selected by the event committee based on the following criteria:

- lasting change
- worked in partnership
- leveraged funding
- interstate cooperation
- long term commitment

Edward M. Tanner has proactively identified and implemented successful stormwater infiltration projects throughout the community of Bristol, RI. Ed is collaborating with NGOs and the state of Rhode Island on future coastal adaptation projects to increase the municipal infrastructure and manage stormwater simultaneously. Ed has worked in Warren, RI in the Kickemuit River to incorporate stormwater management at the ends of roads that abut the river. He is the Principal Planner and Zoning Officer for the Town of Bristol, Rhode Island; a position he has held for the past 13 years. Ed is responsible for building and development plan reviews; is the Town's Phase II stormwater coordinator; and manages grant funding for numerous drainage, stormwater improvement, open space, and infrastructure projects.

Colleen Brown has worked tirelessly in the Taunton and in the Narragansett Bay itself, in her capacity as the Conservation Agent for the Town of Swansea, Massachusetts, and in partnership with others. The Swansea Conservation Commission uses Community Preservation Act funds to outright purchase or buy development rights of property which are significant to the environment, and they work with developers to encourage conservation subdivisions which can promote open space. In the Taunton, Colleen helped lead the multi-year effort to preserve the historic Baker farm (Raymond Wood Farm), an area important to the natural and working landscape. In the adjacent Palmer River, Colleen worked with partners from Save The Bay on several projects. She also worked with the Wildlands Trust and Blount Fine Foods (of Fall River), in a tremendous partnership effort to acquire the Silveira property, which helped create an approximately 100-acre contiguous marsh preservation and propagation opportunity.

Dighton Conservation Commission has worked for years on planning and implementing a salt marsh adaptation project on land protected by the Conservation Commission. Chairman, Bill Frenette has been instrumental in helping secure land owner support from abutters for the work to be done. The Commission is actively seeking new properties to protect that will provide important marsh migration corridors. As part of land protection projects, the Commission ensures public access is integrated protected parcels.

Speakers

Emily Shumchenia is a marine scientist with over twelve years of experience practicing science and science communication. She earned a PhD in oceanography from the Graduate School of Oceanography at URI in 2010, studying the assessment of benthic habitat quality through organism-sediment relationships. Through her company, E&C Enviroscape, Emily works with teams in government, academia, industry, and non-profit organizations on projects ranging from regional ocean planning to biocriteria development. She has been working with a team led by EPA for the last 8 years to advance a national framework for assessing estuarine health using biological assessment endpoints. Through this work, Emily assisted the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program with key elements of the 2017 *State of Narragansett Bay and Its Watershed* report.



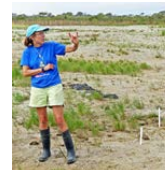
Stefanie Covino is Mass Audubon's Coordinator for the Shaping The Future of Your Community Program. She enjoys enhancing community resilience through nature-based solutions. Stefanie has a passion for creating sustainable communities through diverse, collaborative partnerships. She helps municipalities understand why and how to use smart development techniques and nature-based solutions that are cost-effective and offer multiple benefits, including climate resilience. Through customized outreach and technical assistance, the "Shaping" program informs and empowers local officials to reduce sprawl and enhance conservation in the fastest growing areas of the Commonwealth.



Beth Lambert is the Director of the Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration, part of the Department of Fish and Game. The Division of Ecological Restoration's mission is to restore and protect the Commonwealth's rivers, wetlands, and watersheds for the benefit of people and the environment. In the last 10 years, Beth and her staff have worked in partnership with federal, state, local, and non-profit organizations to remove 50+ dams and restore over 2000 acres of wetlands. Beth has 20 years of experience in community-based habitat restoration in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and on the West Coast.



Wenley Ferguson is Save The Bay's Director of Habitat Restoration. Since 1990 she has coordinated a variety of habitat and water quality restoration projects throughout Narragansett Bay and its bi-state watershed with local, state and federal partners. She spends most of her time in the field, implementing projects including restoring salt marshes, anadromous fish runs, and coastal buffers and identifying and implementing stormwater infiltration practices. In recent years, her focus has been on assessing the impacts of accelerated sea level rise on salt marshes, conducting adaptation projects to make marshes and coastal habitats more resilient to climate change and working on strategies to protect marsh migration corridors through easements and removal of barriers to migration.

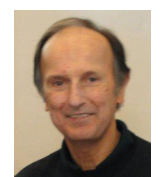


Christopher "Topher" Hamblett is Director of Advocacy for Save The Bay, whose mission is to "Protect and Improve Narragansett Bay." As a member of Save The Bay's Leadership Team,



Topher provides strategic vision for Save The Bay's advocacy work, with a focus on water pollution issues, climate change adaptation, public access and legislative campaigns. Topher has more than 20 years of experience in environmental advocacy, including as a policy researcher, lobbyist, and spokesperson. Topher manages a staff of advocates who work on policy, restoration, watchdogging and community mobilization for Narragansett Bay.

Bill Napolitano is the Environmental Program Director for the Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District (SRPEDD) has built his successful, thirty-two year environmental planning career around effective, strong, and positive partnerships with communities and organizations across the SRPEDD region. These partnerships form the backbone of his diverse efforts to steward our natural and cultural resources into the twenty-first century and beyond. Bill's signature projects include: the work that directly led to the federal designation of the Taunton River as Wild and Scenic; the Mill River Dam Removal/River Restoration Project; The Resilient Taunton Watershed Network; organizing agricultural commissions in southeastern Massachusetts and statewide; founding the Geographic Roadway Runoff Inventory Program (GRRIP) and Flood Inundation Hazard Program.



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A special thank you to our sponsors:



Workshop organizers and partners:



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