

## **RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

### **I. FY2002 WORK PLAN DIVISION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT**

#### **Program name and description: Division of Law Enforcement**

This Division patrols the upland areas of the state and the waters of the state and is mandated by statute to insure compliance with laws and regulations relating to fresh water fishing, hunting, boating, commercial and recreational shellfishing, commercial and recreation marine fishing, forestry, agriculture, hazardous waste, coastal resources management council, solid and hazardous waste, fresh water wetlands and dams. In addition the division is the primary contact for violations of any state law in parks and other areas managed by DEM.

The Division accomplishes this mandate through law enforcement actions and education. In the law enforcement function individuals are summoned to court to answer for the violations of regulation or law that they have committed. In the educational function several techniques are used. Violators are issued written warnings for violations which insures that they become familiar with regulation/law that they have broken. Officers teach state boating laws and hunting laws in classes to familiarize constituents with the appropriate laws. The division conducts outreach programs to reach target groups and educate them in regard to laws and safety issues.

- II. **Mission of Division:** To insure compliance of all user groups with all environmental conservation laws through law enforcement and public education in order to protect the natural resources of the state. The division also seeks to insure the public health and public safety through enforcement of all state laws on DEM properties, shellfishing laws, boating safety laws, and conducting search and rescue activities on the waters and in the forests of the state

### **III. Program Highlights**

We are attempting to enhance our educational efforts by preparing and supporting legislation requiring completion of an approved boating education course prior to operating a vessel on Rhode Island waters and we have positively reinforced children who wear life jackets and have provided them with boating safety educational materials and lifesavers with a department logo.

We have maintained a high level of BUI patrols and intend to continue our increased level of patrol and monitor the effect of increased patrol on the number of cases. We are starting to encounter fewer BUI cases which we feel is due to increased levels of patrol.

We have partnered with Parks and Recreation to increase officer presence in the parks to meet the public safety needs in the parks.

In both the recreational hunting and fishing fields and the commercial fisheries violators will always attempt to over bag or take prohibited species which results in depletion of the species. We are continuing our patrol level to insure compliance with relevant rules, regulations and laws.

Our officers have enhanced our 7 language fisheries abstract as a result of our 2000 workplan which they developed to provide a culture friendly explanation of conservation laws, littering, and a “good neighbor” ethic to new Americans. Hopefully this will lead to fewer violations, better acceptance of these ethnic groups by locals and a decreased public health threat to the immigrant community. In addition this year we are incorporating a safe boating message for LEP individuals.

#### **New Initiatives not Requiring Additional Resources:**

We are reaching out to watershed groups to explore the possibility of partnering to enhance our educational efforts in the watersheds which will curb violations.

We are supporting a legislative initiative which would require completion of a boating education course to operate a vessel on Rhode Island waters.

#### **New Initiatives Requiring Additional Resources:**

We have identified funding to hire an assistant to work at our Wickford Marine Base to assist in the maintenance of our vessels/vehicles. We need an additional FTE to hire this individual. We have an extensive backlog of maintenance tasks which needs to be eliminated.

<b>OBJECTIVE 1:</b> Insure public safety in boating, hunting, and on DEM properties through patrol and education.		<b>Environmental Indicators:</b> Safe, and enjoyable boating and recreational environment
<b>STRATEGIES*</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
Provide a safer boating environment	We are updating our resource book used in boating education classes and are investigating making our boating course available online	Have books updated by 1-1-02 and feasibility of online course determined
	Distribute division logo lifesavers and boating safety packets to children found wearing life jackets during boating checks	Continue successful program
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue increased level of BUI patrols to insure safe boating</li> <li>▪ Determine effect of increased level of patrol on number of cases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain level of 20 directed boating patrols</li> <li>▪ Insure that all breathalyzer operators are certified</li> </ul>
	Partner with Parks and Recreation to attempt to more successfully meet the public safety needs in the parks	Continue parks patrols
	Prepare and support mandatory boating education bill if current one doesn't pass.	Have draft legislation ready by 10-31-01

Partners: Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, Power Squadron, Parks and Recreation

<b>OBJECTIVE 2:</b> To insure that public health is protected by patrols attempting to detect and arrest violators taking shellfish from polluted areas		<b>ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS:</b> Preserve, protect, and enhance the management of recreational, economic and cultural assets of Narragansett Bay and the coastal environment.
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
Provide adequate patrols and maintain and replace equipment as needed to insure our shellfish patrol document continues to meet USFDA standards	Approval of shellfish patrol document by USFDA, insure that shellfish areas are patrolled daily, shellfishermen are checked frequently, shellfish houses checked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue quarterly inspection program</li> <li>▪ Insure increase in inspections of shellfish facilities continues</li> </ul>
	Identify FTE to hire assistant boat/vehicle maintenance worker for Wickford Marine Base	Work with Associate Director and Human Resources to identify FTE
	Partner with Health Department to insure compliance with ISSC requirements for shellfishing boats	Start issuance of warnings to educate shellfishermen in regard to new requirements

\*See attached definitions

Partners: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

<b>OBJECTIVE 3:</b> To protect fish and game resources through adequate patrol and enforcement of relevant laws and regulations and education outreach to insure a sustainable level of resource.		<b>Environmental Indicators:</b> Fish and game resources enhanced and maintained at a sustainable level.
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
Encourage the development of an environmental ethic based on watersheds	Reach out to watershed groups to determine how we might partner to further their goals and our enforcement efforts through educational efforts	Work with Strategic Planning to identify manner for this division to participate
Greater compliance with fisheries regulations by inner city residents, better acceptance by locals of “new Americans” and reduce threat of environmental pollution to immigrant community to ensure environmental equity.	Distribute enhanced 7 language marine fisheries abstract to educate foreign speaking user groups in marine fisheries regulations and the reason for the regulations with an enhanced abstract with culture friendly explanation of conservation laws, littering, “good neighbor” ethic	Continue distribution and extend to recreational boaters with new “boating safety” message.
Review for effectiveness of deer damage program with farmers and Agriculture and Fish and Wildlife	Continue to work with Agriculture to enhance deer damage regulations and continue inspections for jacklighting permits	Maintain quick turnaround for permit process

Partners: Woonasquatucket Watershed, Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed, farmers

<b>OBJECTIVE 4:</b> Insure public safety in boating, hunting, and on DEM properties through patrol and education.		<b>Environmental Indicators:</b> Provide a safe and enjoyable recreational environment.
<b>STRATEGIES*</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
	Continue increase in time charged to boating cost centers by officers to more effectively access available boating funds.	Perform quarterly checks to insure compliance
	If mandatory education bill passes, hire seasonal to enter data into database of individuals who have taken course.	Have database updated by 10-31-01
	Conduct “post mortem” on parks law enforcement initiative of 2001, determine effectiveness.	10-1-01 –determine how to proceed and take appropriate actions
	Enhance statewide radio coverage to eliminate deadspots.	Have equipment for system enhancements installed by 12-31-01

Partners: Parks and Recreation