

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

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**Governor's
Narragansett Bay &
Watershed Planning
Commission**

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March 29, 2004

The Honorable Donald L. Carcieri
Governor
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Governor Carcieri,

As chairman of the Governor's Narragansett Bay and Watershed Planning Commission I am very pleased to present to you the Commission's Phase I Strategic Work Plan Short-term Recommendations. This is the first step towards creating the comprehensive Bay and watershed strategic plan that you charged this Commission with developing.

The recommendations we convey here are the result of work by 10 panels of more than 120 experts in fields ranging from nutrients and bacterial pollution to finance and economic development. The panels held scores of meetings over the past four months to examine the current condition of the Bay, impacts and trends, baseline data, and how the threats and challenges could be addressed. The report comes to you with the full endorsement of the Commission.

An important strength of the Commission and its panel structure was that a number of the members also served on or advised the work done by the RI House and Senate, which allowed for information sharing across initiatives and avoided duplication of effort. The reports by the RI Senate Joint Committees on Government Oversight and Environment and Agriculture and the RI House of Representatives Bay Trust Study Commission provide a framework that is complemented by the findings in this Governor's Bay Commission report. Future movement toward the protection, restoration and improved management of the Bay and its watershed will demand collaboration, integration and coordination between the executive and legislative branches of government, as well as those in Massachusetts, if the success all parties envision is to be achieved. It is critical to seize upon the momentum now being generated politically and by the public to embrace these recommendations and act immediately to the greatest extent possible.

Implementing our recommendations will require an investment of financial and human resources. We appreciate the difficult financial times we are in, but on issues of Bay and watersheds management, your Commission and those of the House and Senate all concur—protecting Rhode Island's environment is a priority investment

Sincerely,

J. Joseph Garrahy
Commission Chair

Donald Carcieri
Governor

J. Joseph Garrahy
Commission Chair

James Boyd
Commission Staff