

Rhode Island Environmental Monitoring Collaborative (RIEMC)
Statement of Purpose and Core Principles

Version: 1/8/05

Purpose:

The RIEMC will provide:

1. Coordination of environmental monitoring activities by state, federal, and non-governmental organizations.
2. Review and comment on new and existing monitoring programs.
3. Leadership in identifying future monitoring needs.
4. Assistance in disseminating monitoring data and results.

Principles:

1. The composition and detailed scope work for the RIEMC are defined in RIGL 46-23.2 and RIGL 46-31-9 (e). The RIEMC reports to the RI Bays, Rivers, and Watersheds Coordinating Team.
2. The geographic scope of the RIEMC is Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island Sound, Block Island Sound, Little Narragansett Bay, and the watersheds of these coastal and estuarine systems. When possible and appropriate, monitoring activities shall include watershed regions in Connecticut and Massachusetts.
3. The RIEMC focuses on programs to monitor status and trends in air, water (fresh and marine), land, physical, and biological components of environmental systems. It does not address programs to monitor status and trends in social or economic systems; this is the purview of the RI Economic Monitoring Collaborative. The initial priority monitoring indicators are listed in RIGL 46-31-9 (e).
4. Monitoring programs must have a clearly stated goal and objectives. Priority themes for RIEMC initiatives include monitoring to:
 - a. support natural resource management,
 - b. ensure public health and safety, and
 - c. track ecosystem changes to natural (e.g., extreme weather, climate change) or human-induced perturbations (e.g., nutrient reduction programs, commercial harvest of renewable resources).
5. Monitoring programs shall use accepted methods, protocols, and quality assurance procedures, and these used must be clearly stated in the description of the monitoring program.

6. Data obtained in monitoring programs must be made available after quality assurance procedures have been applied. Data shall be posted on the Internet as soon as possible and practical.
7. Monitoring programs must include interpretation of data in a timely manner. Interpretation and synthesis of monitoring data shall be made public over the Internet and by other means of communication, including technical reports and articles, public presentations, and the popular broadcast and printed media.
8. New monitoring initiatives shall be submitted to the RIEMC for review. Descriptions of the programs must include:
 - a. The goal of the initiative. Explanation of why this is important and relevant. How will the monitoring be coordinated with potential users of the data.
 - b. The measurable objectives of the program.
 - c. The methods and protocols followed, including indicators measured and QA procedures followed.
 - d. Explanation of how the data will be interpreted including assessment of critical thresholds, measurement error, and temporal and spatial variation.
 - e. Explanation how and when the results of the interpretation will be made public
 - f. Explanation of how and when raw and summarized data will made available.
 - g. Description of resources (monetary, personnel, equipment, supplies) required to conduct monitoring.