

Mr. Jay Manning, P.E.
Rhode Island DEM
Office of Water Resources
235 Promenade Street
Providence, RI 02908

Dear Mr. Manning,

Enclosed please find an application from the Bonnet Shores Fire District for the "**2017 BAY AND WATERSHED RESTORATION GRANT**".

The Bonnet Shores Fire District (BSFD) is a quasi-municipality located within the Town of Narragansett, RI. Currently there are approximately 950 residences within the Fire District. The BSFD is a registered 501(c) 3 non-profit entity governed by a 7-member elected council.

The BSFD is seeking funding to provide for the dredging of Wesquage Pond (owned by the Audubon Society of RI and managed by BSFD), a tidal pond connected to Narragansett Bay by a natural breachway. In recent years the pond and outlet controls have become filled/buried by a large amount of sediment which now causes the pond to flood as a result of storm water runoff and rain. The flooding conditions have resulted in significant damage to adjacent roadways, residences, and to the natural ecosystem of the pond.

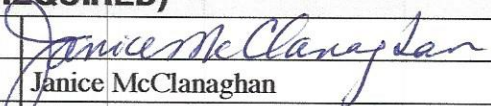
This dredging of Wesquage Pond is part of an overall larger project which includes a large investment by the Bonnet Shores Beach Club (approximately \$1 million) to get rid of their failed septic system, which is currently located on Bonnet Shores Beach, and tie into the Narragansett sewer system which is located at the northern end of the Bonnet Shores Causeway. The current septic tanks are being pumped daily and this situation is made worse by the constant flooding of the road and Bonnet Shores Beach Club parking lot. The dredging project will complement the new sewer line and road paving projects by allowing BSFD to continue to do its' maintenance dredge which keeps the water level down, hence protecting the road and the homes on the pond from future flooding which will deteriorate the road. Together these projects will benefit the health of the pond and its habitat, protect the pond front homes from flooding, provide accessibility and protect the newly paved road from flooding. This project is beneficial for the environment, public safety and the Bonnet Shores community.

The BSFD has solicited bids to dredge approximately 6,000 CY of sand from the pond and adjacent channel to allow water to flow freely. The lowest bid received was for \$150,000 which represents ½ of the Fire District's TOTAL annual operating budget. As such, we are respectfully requesting your consideration of this application for grant funding as well as a reduced match in the amount of 75/25 to allow us to address this major issue impacting the residents and environment of Bonnet Shores.

Sincerely,


Janice McClanaghan, Vice Chair
Bonnet Shores Fire District

Form A: Required Applicant and Project Information

1 Project Title					
Project Title		Westquage Pond Flood Mitigation & Pond Restoration Project			
2a Applicant Information					
Organization		Bonnet Shores Fire District (BSFD) / Audubon Society			
Contact Name		Lisa DiBello, District Manager			
E-mail		bonnet.mgr@gmail.com		Phone	(401) 789-4540
Street address		130 Bonnet Shores Road			
		Narragansett, RI 02882			
2b Signature of Applicant (REQUIRED)					
Authorized Agent Signature				Date	7/26/17
Name		Janice McClanaghan			
Title		Vice Chairman, Bonnet Shores Fire District			
3. Grant Application Category Amount Requested (fill in all that apply)					
Bay and Watershed Restoration Fund – NPS & SW- Governmental		\$			
Bay and Watershed Restoration Fund – NPS & SW- Nongovernmental		\$			
Bay and Watershed Restoration Fund – Flood Prevention & Mitigation		\$ 200,000.00			
Nonpoint Source Pollution-319		\$			
Total Grant Amount Requested		\$ 200,000.00			
4. Project Management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above (2a)					
(List the person(s) responsible for managing this project)					
Full Name		Lisa DiBello			
Title	District Manager, BSFD	Organization (if different from 2.a)	Same as above (2a)		
Email	bonnet.mgr@gmail.com	Phone	(401) 789-4540	Fax	
Street Address		130 Bonnet Shores Road			
		Narragansett, RI 02882			
5. Project Location Site specific <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Larger project area <input type="checkbox"/>					
Street address or description of project area		Bonnet Point Road adjacent to causeway.			
Name(s) of targeted waterbody/waterbodies		Westquage Pond, Kelly Beach, and Bonnet Shores Beach Club Beach.			
Targeted –Integrated Report List Status: Category 4A <input type="checkbox"/> Category 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>					
Integrated Report - Listed impairment targeted by project: Pathogen <input type="checkbox"/> Nutrient <input type="checkbox"/> Dissolved Oxygen <input type="checkbox"/>					
Impaired Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Other (List Parameter): _____					
6. Source of Match					
Applicant's Funds <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Third Party Funds <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		In-kind Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Please Attach Project Location Map See attachments.

Form B: Budget Detail

Table A: Project Tasks¹, Deliverables, Schedule, and Estimated Costs

Task #	Description and Task	Deliverables	Schedule ²	Requested Amount	Non-federal Match	Total Task Cost
1.	Dredge approximately 6,000 CY from pond.	None.	1 week	150,000.00	--	150,000.00
2.	Spread Sand.	Replenished Sand.	1 week	30,000.00	--	30,000.00
3.	Re-seeding haul road.	Natural Habitat.	Post	10,000.00	--	10,000.00
4.	Pre-dredge.	Survey results.	Prior	5,000.00	--	5,000.00
5.	Post-dredge.	Survey results.	Post	5,000.00	--	5,000.00
6.	Match (see attached)				125,351.00	
Totals				\$200,000.00	125,351.00	325,351.00

1. Tasks must include progress and final reports.
2. Please express as the month number in which the task is expected to be completed from start of project (i.e., Month 2)

Table B: Project Costs by Budget Category

Budget Category						Requested Grant Amount	Match Amount	Total Cost of Category
1. Salary and Fringe¹								
Name	Title	Salary	Percent Time Charged to Project	Fringe (as percent of salary)	Total Salary Cost			
2. Indirect Costs²								
3. Supplies³								
4. Equipment⁴								
5. Travel and Training⁵								
6. Contractual⁶								
See Table A, Numbers 4 and 5.						10,000.00		
7. Construction⁷								
Dredging project and repavement, and BSFD matches.						190,000.00	121,000.00	311,000.00
8. Other⁸								
Volunteer time.							4,351.00	
Totals						200,000.00	125,351.00	
To request reduced match, enter the reduced match in the non-federal match column in this row. (no less than 25% of total projects costs required)							75,000.00*	

*We are applying for a reduced match. This project is part of a larger environmental effort valued at approximately \$1 million to install a sewer line.

Specify sources of match: Amount from other federal sources: \$ 0

Amount from non-federal sources: \$ 125,351.00

In-Kind

Bonnet Shores Beach Club: \$100,000 (road)

Volunteer Time

Lisa (District Manager, BSFD): 50 hours x \$24.34 = \$1,217.00

Janice: 40 hours x 24.34 = \$974.00

Matt: 20 hours x 24.34 = \$487.00

Carol: 30 hours x 24.34 = \$731.00

Laurie McCarty: 12 hours x 24.34 = \$292.00

Water Quality Analysis – Fee: \$650.00

Total Volunteer Match: \$4,351.00

Cash

Bonnet Shores Beach Club: \$21,000.00

TOTAL MATCH (In-kind, Volunteer Time, and Cash): \$125,351.00

***This project is part of a larger environmental effort valued at approximately \$1 million to install a sewer line and repave the Bonnet Shores Causeway.**

Narrative:

The Bonnet Shores Fire District (BSFD) is a quasi-municipality incorporated in 1932 consisting of 950 residences located within the Town of Narragansett. The BSFD is a registered 501(c) 3 non-profit entity governed by a 7 member elected council with an annual operating budget of approximately \$300,000. Funds are collected by a fire district tax. Responsibilities of the district include day to day oversight of trash collection, roadways, harbor, beaches, ponds and community center. It should be noted that all roadways within the district are owned by BSFD and maintained through a cooperative agreement with the Town of Narragansett.

The Bonnet Shores Beach Club (BSBC), a condominium association located within the Bonnet Shores Fire District, consists of over 925 units and 5,000+ members. The BSBC is in the process of obtaining approvals to install a seasonal sanitary sewer line connection down the causeway from BSBC to the Town's Allagash Trail Sanitary Sewer Pump Station. The installation of this new sewer line is proposed to be buried in the center of the causeway which is a major concern due to flooding. Due to the fact that BSBC is on a barrier beach, they are currently under legislative mandate to eliminate their existing septic system and replace it with the proposed sewer line. It is imperative that the pond flooding issue be remediated prior to the roadwork commencing. Applications for the sewer line project are currently in the process of being reviewed by the Town of Narragansett and CRMC for permitting. Unless the water level of the pond is reduced, the overflow will continue to deteriorate the roadway which currently is in very fragile condition. This roadway is one of only two emergency evacuation routes for the entire community.

Various agencies including the Town of Narragansett, Narragansett Emergency Services (Fire, PD), CRMC, Audubon Society (owner of Wesquage Pond), DEM, BSBC, URI Watershed and BSFD have been working collaboratively to address these issues. (Letters of support regarding this project are attached.) In addition to concerns relative to the roadway, the overflow of the pond is also a major concern for homeowners whose properties experience flooding issues. In addition there are concerns relative to water quality, habitat and ecosystem of the pond.

Existing Conditions:

Wesquage Pond is a tidal pond, connected to Narragansett Bay by a natural breachway just east of the BSBC. There is an elevation control structure at the outlet from the breachway that is intended in part to maintain the levels of Wesquage Pond below the elevation of the causeway; however, in recent years the pond side of the breachway and the outlet control structure have been filled/buried by a significant volume of sediment, mostly from the deposit of sand carried by tidal movement through the breachway. As a result, during even moderate storm events, water levels in the pond rise high enough to overtop and submerge the causeway, resulting in road closures and accelerated deterioration of the roadway structure.

Over the course of the last several years, BSBC has obtained CRMC maintenance assents /permits to dredge portions of an existing channel which functions as a drainage outlet and tidal inlet for Wesquage Pond via a cross culvert installed beneath Bonnet Point Road. Our maintenance activities include the periodic removal of sediment from that portion of the channel which runs north from Bonnet Point Road toward Wesquage Pond and also sediment removal and channel cutting of that portion of the outlet which flows southward from Bonnet Point Road across the Bonnet Shores barrier beach to Block Island Sound. Sediment is removed from the channel as necessary to maintain appropriate drainage and tidal flow patterns. Over the last 28 years, BSFD has spent \$69,612 to remove sediment, and \$58,562 of this has been spent in the last 10 years alone.

The flow of water through this inlet is directly related to the amount of water retained in the pond. In addition to rain water, there is a substantial amount of water which is deposited into the pond from the up lying areas such as Colonel John Gardner Road and Boston Neck Road. If the water level does not flow properly it results in the causeway flooding as well as homes around the perimeter of the pond ultimately making the causeway dangerous and impassable. (See photos). As a result of Hurricane Sandy and other coastal events large amounts of sand have been deposited into the pond causing water levels to rise. In the past, BSFD has dredged a channel approximately 300-feet to the left of the mouth of the pond as an effort to alleviate our flooding problems. Recovered sand was returned to the beach which allowed for migration of fish species to and from the sea which has been a common practice. BSFD has been advised by our contractor that this endeavor is now only a temporary fix which is no longer feasible due to the large amounts of sand built up. Accordingly, BSFD retained the services of a licensed engineer to provide options for a longer-term solution. Subsequently, BSFD obtained excavation bids for sand removal from (3) contractors, the lowest of which was \$150,000 plus additional services required totally approximately \$200,000. The BSFD has met with CRMC to review the proposed project and have been advised that according to CRMC, the project has permits and is "shovel ready" (see letter attached). Only minor changes to the existing maintenance assent order may be necessary but can be done if/when funding is received.

The Causeway was constructed in the early 1920's over dumped/placed fill material across Wesquage Pond. It runs for 1,850 feet between the Bonnet Shores Beach Club (BSBC) driveway to the south and Allagash Trail to the north, and carries Bonnet Point Road, an existing 21-foot wide bituminous concrete roadway that provides access to the Bonnet Shores Beach Club and the Bonnet Point section of Bonnet Shores further to the east. The causeway has two concrete culverts that connect the eastern and western sections of Wesquage Pond; they are intended to equalize the water elevations between both sections of the pond. The level of the pond is in direct correlation to the runoff which results from surrounding areas such as Boston Neck Road, Colonel John Road and other upland locations as identified in the Town of Narragansett Hazzard Mitigation plan (2008).

In addition to flooding concerns, BSFD is extremely concerned about the water quality of the pond. BSFD has been testing the pond for many years to monitor water conditions in conjunction with the URI Watershed Watch. The pond is tested on a bi-weekly basis (reference website link and attach Wesquage pond multi-year summary). Testing has shown that quality of the water has changed drastically over the years. Algae levels have shown a considerable increase in the last several years which according to the URI Watershed group may be due to reduced flushing of the pond. Water clarity is low and is a reflection of the very high algae. Phosphorus and nitrogen (the two nutrients that have the biggest effect on water quality) have shown increases in recent years as well. Years ago there was an abundance of fish and other wildlife which inhabited the pond, cat o'nine tails have totally disappeared and have been replaced with phragmites. The ecological balance and overall condition of the pond is a contributing factor to eutrophication and stagnation. It has become apparent that herring, swan and other migrating species have been impacted by the increased levels of sand which has resulted in blockage of the channels and change in the overall composition of the pond. According to the Narragansett Hazardous Mitigation Study (2008), when a waterway is divorced from its floodplain with levees and other flood control structures then natural benefits are either lost, altered, or significantly reduced. This represents the current conditions of the pond.

PROJECT OUTLINE:

It is proposed that licensed contractors be hired to dredge approximately 6,000 CY of sand from around the perimeter of the existing sand delta in the southeast corner of Wesquage Pond to a depth of 2-3 feet, as well as both channels. The hauled material would be transported across Bonnet Point Road and spread on Bonnet Shores Beach to replenish sand and support existing dunes. The specific elements of the dredge project would include:

- *Excavation of perimeter of sand delta
- *Excavation of North and South channel
- *Spread recovered sand on the beach
- *Restore haul roads
- *Pre-dredge and post-dredge surveys

The proposed dredging project is contingent upon funding and will be expedited upon award.



R. Barber Jr. Trucking

*2271 Tower Hill Rd
Saunderstown, RI 02874
Cell (401) 413-8221*

Robert H BarberJr@msn.com

July 15th, 2017

*Attn: Lisa DiBello
Bonnet Shores Fire District
130 Bonnet Shores Rd
Narragansett, RI 02882*

To Whom It May Concern:

We have been opening the causeway for over 20 years now. Due to the buildup of sand at the mouth of the channel, we can no longer maintain a level in the ponds that is adequate for road safety and for existing homes around the pond due to larger storms forcing more sand into the pond. We have tried smaller scale clean outs of the channel but this has failed due to the large amounts of sand deposited at the mouth of the channel. It is impossible in this situation to get enough pressure at the mouth of the channel to keep channel open during higher tides. In prior years, we were able to keep water below road surface at a minimum of 12". Now we can barely keep water off road surface.

The recommendation is to dredge the pond immediately.

*Thanks,
Robert H Barber Jr.*

REAGAN CONSTRUCTION CORP.

121 GREEN LANE • MIDDLETOWN RI 02842 • TELEPHONE (401) 849-9240 • FAX (401) 847-8744

July 14, 2017

Ms. Lisa DiBello, District Mgr.
Bonnet Shores Fire District
Email bonnetmgr@gmail.com

Dear Ms. DiBello:

Reagan Construction Corp. is pleased to provide an estimate of \$150,000.00 to dredge approximately 6,000 CY from Wesquage Pond and the north channel, and haul the material to the Bonnet Beach. This estimate excludes the following items:

1. South channel excavation
2. Spreading dumped piles on the beach
3. Re-seeding of haul roads
4. Pre-dredge and post-dredge surveys.

Attached is a Google Earth rendering of the proposed dredge area. We propose removing approximately 3 ft. of material from the marked area. We suggest that the permit be clarified regarding dredge limits within the pond.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an estimate for this work.

Sincerely,



Larry Ahearn



Google earth

feet
meters







July 21, 2017

Mr. Jay Manning, P.E., Principal Sanitary Engineer
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
235 Promenade St
Providence, RI 02908

Dear Mr. Manning:

I am pleased to submit this letter of support for Bonnet Shores Fire District's proposal for grant funding for its dredge project for Wesquage Pond.

Bonnet Shores Fire District has sponsored volunteer water quality monitoring in Wesquage Pond as a part of URI Watershed Watch for many years. Monitoring resumed in 2016 after a several year hiatus and continues this year.

I have attached three charts, which are more up-to-date than what is on our website at www.uri.edu/watershedwatch/.

The second graph in the first chart (multi-year summary) shows median algae levels. The median level for 2016 is the highest since monitoring began. Algae require nitrogen and phosphorus to grow. The increased levels of nitrogen and phosphorus are likely due in part to reduced flushing due to sand build-up. The second and third charts show monitoring data from 2016 and 2012. The middle graphs in each illustrate the difference in algae content between 2016 and (pre-Sandy) 2012.

I believe that these illustrate the need for this project.

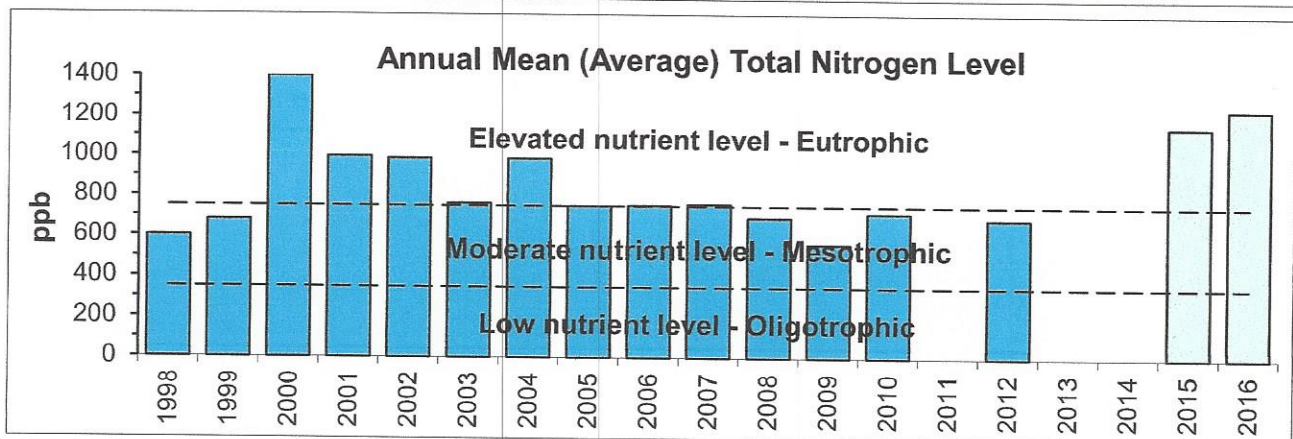
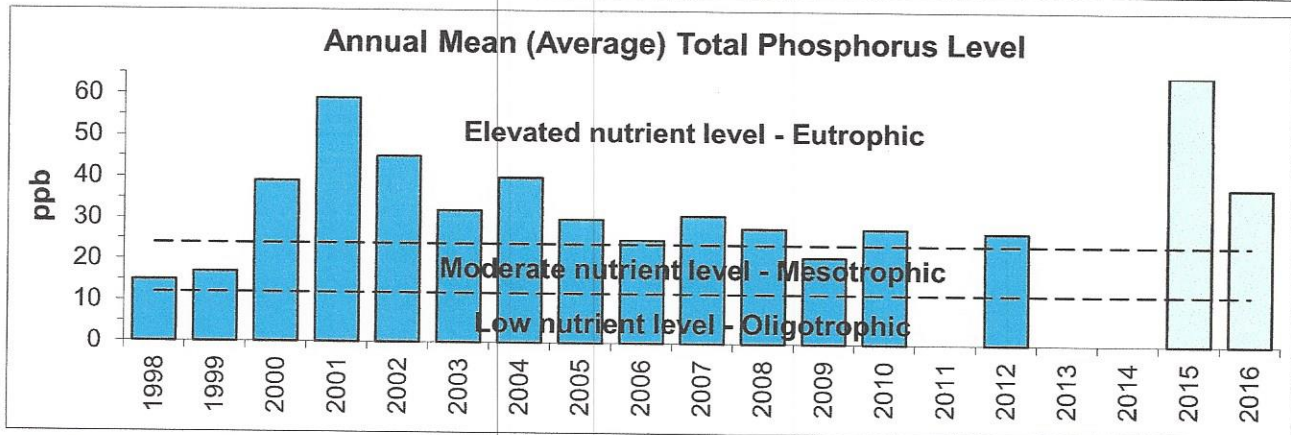
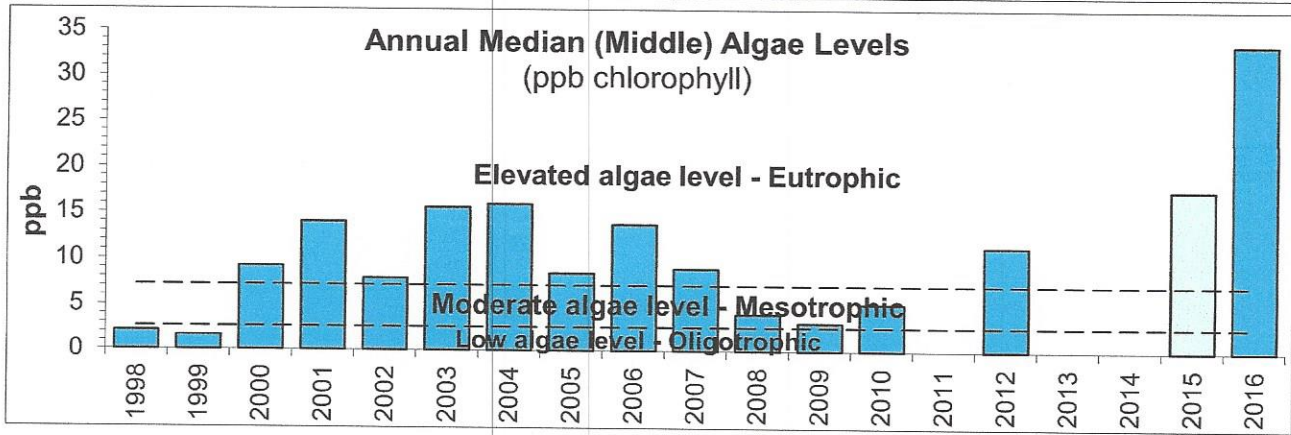
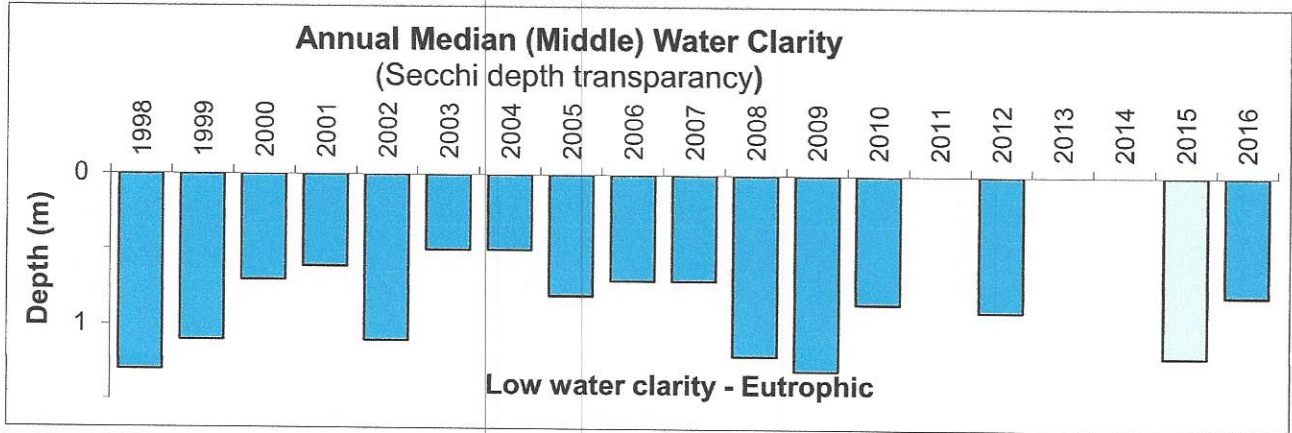
Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

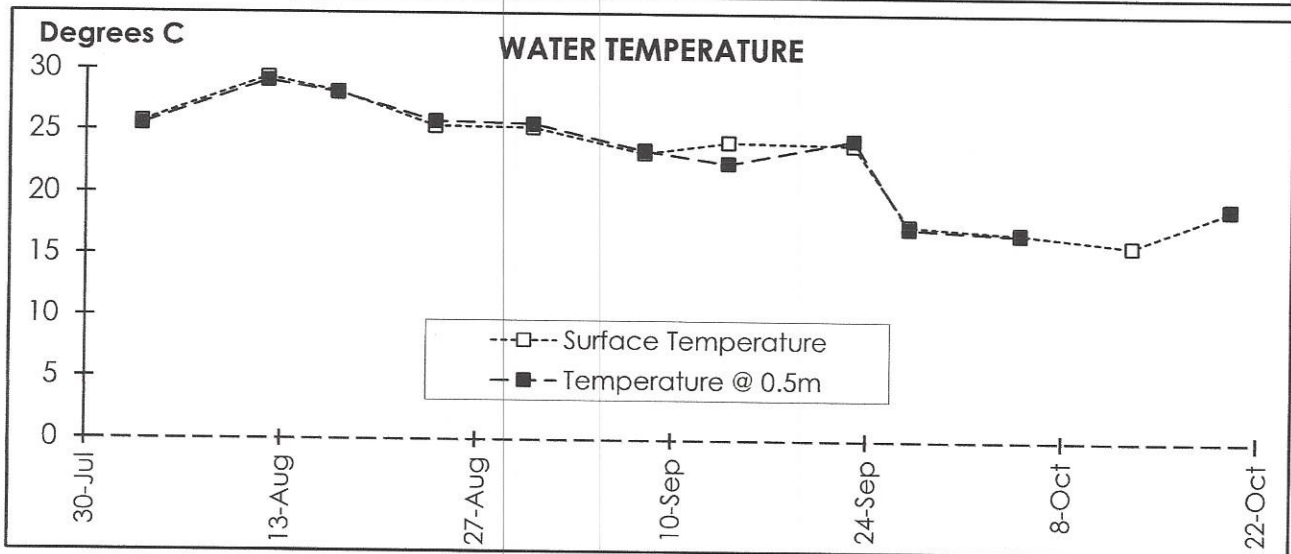
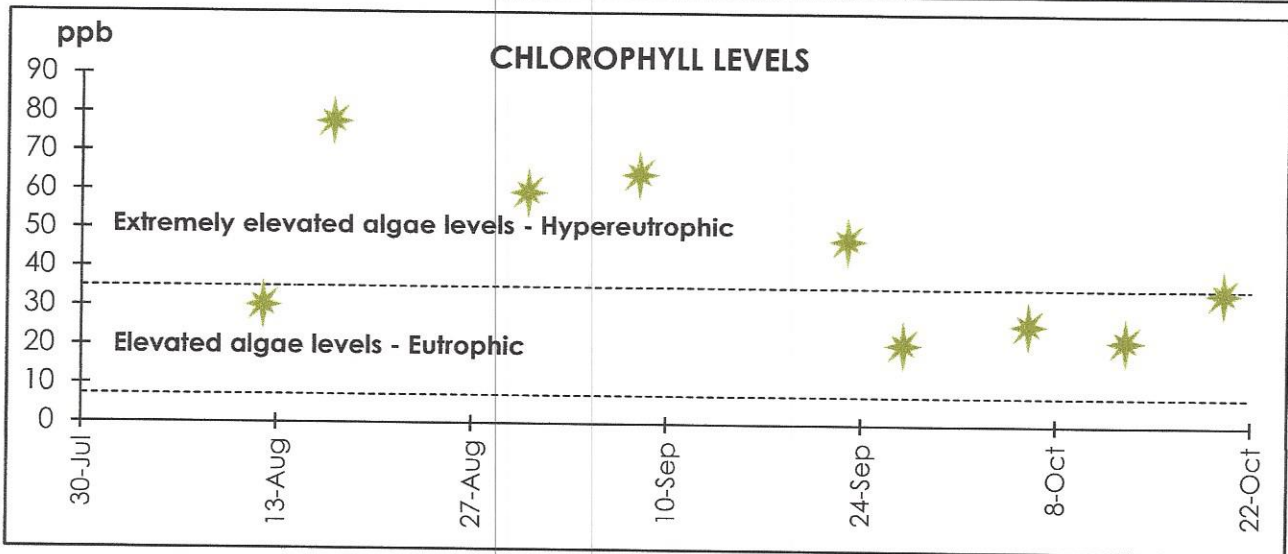
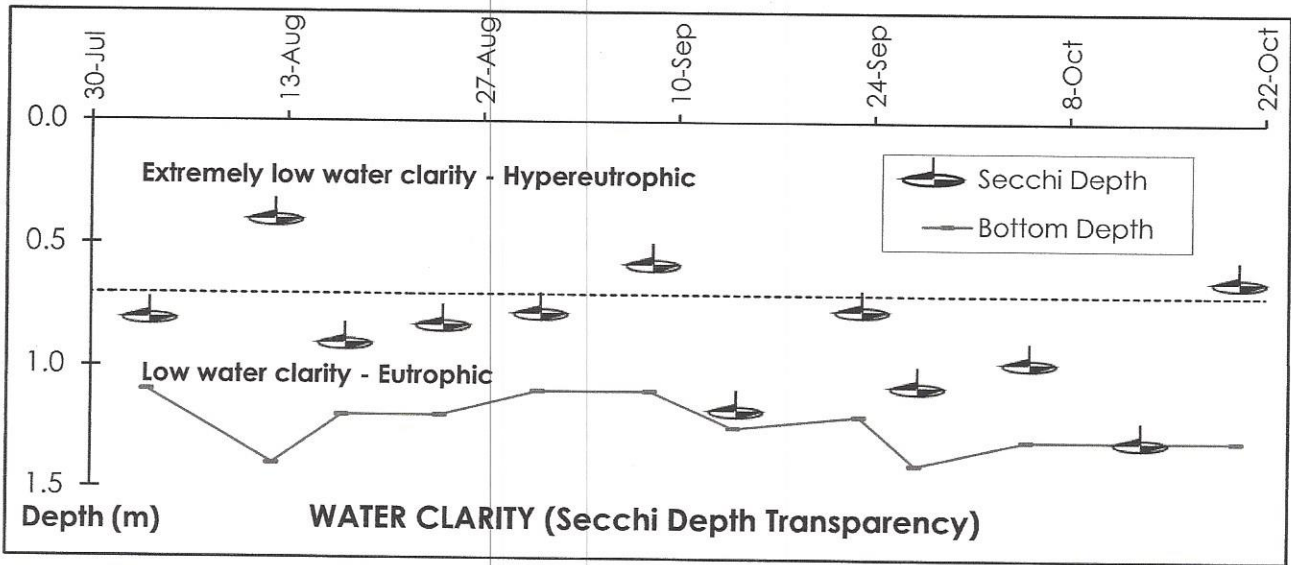


Program & Laboratory Director,
URI Watershed Watch

Wesquage Pond Multi-year Summary



2016 Wesquage Pond



2016 WESQUAGE POND DATA

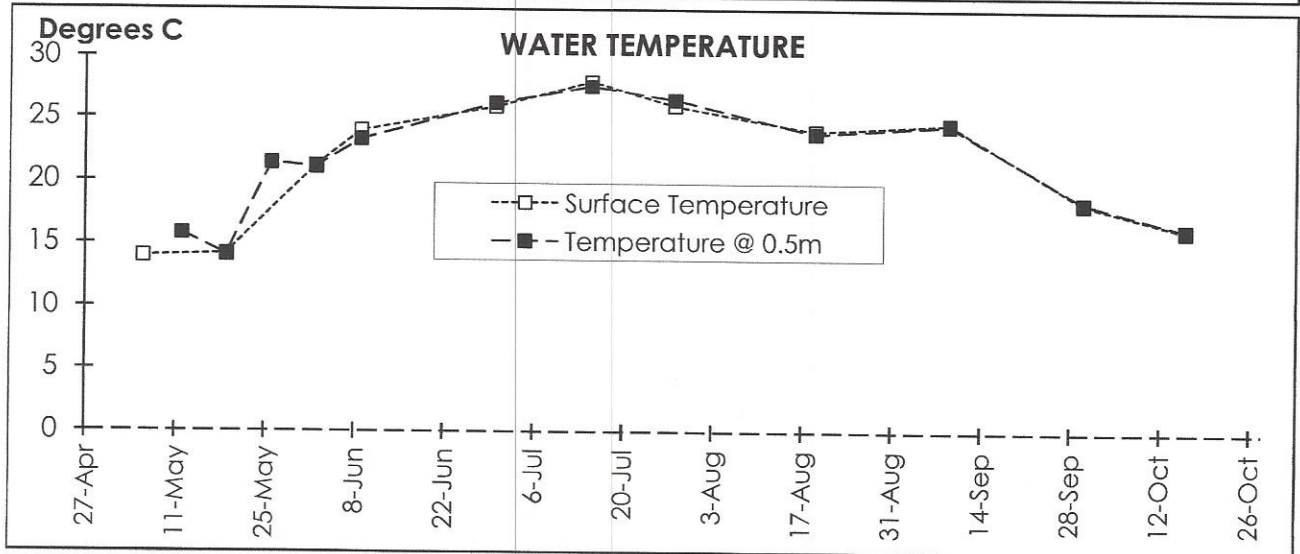
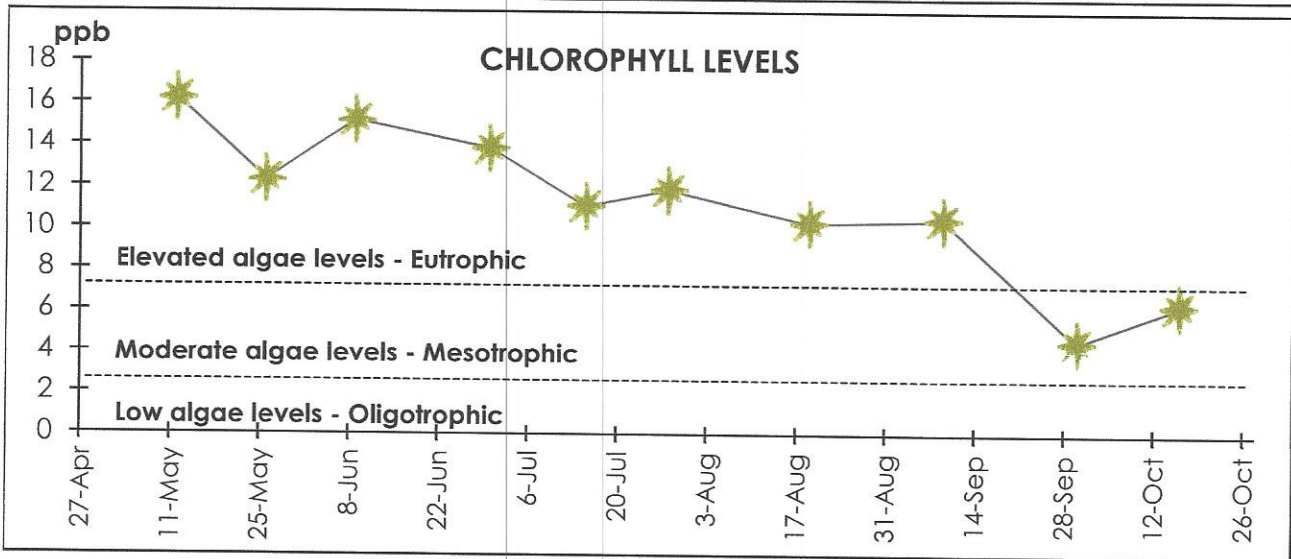
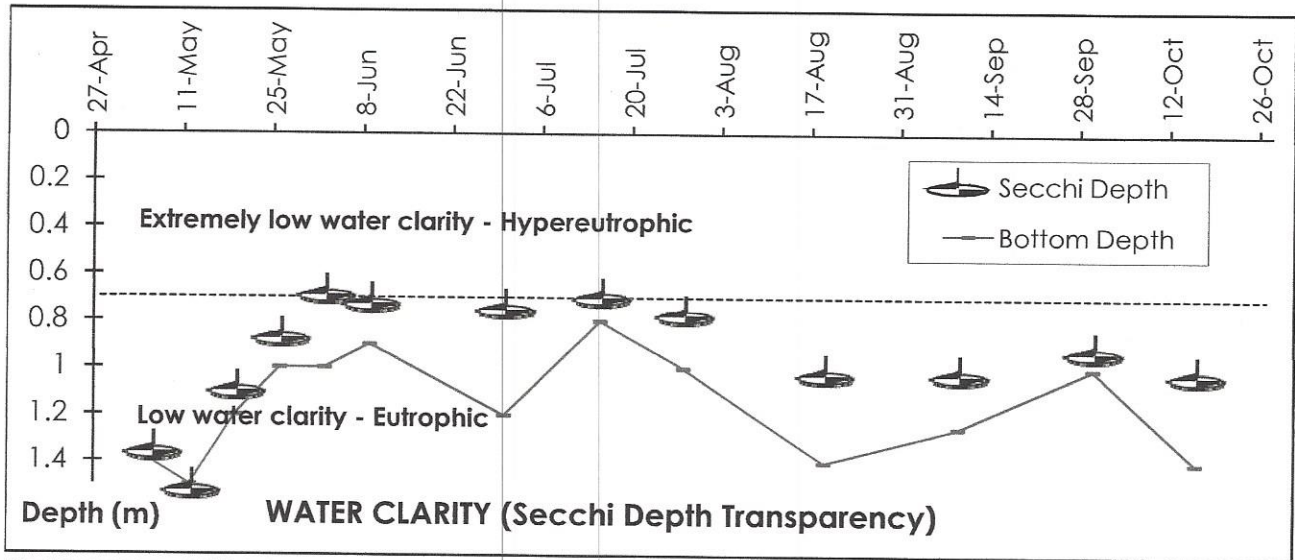
Wesquage Pond	MAY	SEPT	OCT	
	-----Total Phosphorus (ppb) -----			Mean
Wesquage Pond @ 0.5 m	-	45	31	38
	<i>RIDEM lake maximum average TP value 25 ppb CEQ recommends maximum 100 ppb TP instream</i>			
	-----Dissolved Phosphorus (ppb) -----			Mean
Wesquage Pond @ 0.5 m	-	18	8	13
	----- Total Nitrogen (ppb) -----			Mean
Wesquage Pond @ 0.5 m	-	1415	1065	1240
	<i>Rounded to 5 ppb Total nitrogen levels in lakes and ponds above 750 ppb considered elevated. US EPA recommended maximum total nitrogen levels for northeast streams = 710 ppb</i>			
	----- Nitrate-Nitrogen (ppb) -----			Mean
Wesquage Pond @ 0.5 m	-	ND	ND	<15
	<i>Rounded to 5 ppb ND = No Detect Limit of Detection = 15 ppb Mean determined with half the limit of detection (7.5 ppb) in place of ND</i>			
	----- Ammonia-Nitrogen (ppb) -----			Mean
Wesquage Pond @ 0.5 m	-	75	35	55
	<i>Rounded to 5 ppb</i>			
	----- Chlorides (ppm) -----			Mean
Wesquage Pond @ 0.5 m	-	-	-	-
	<i>Chlorides not measured because Wesquage is a brackish pond, with high chlorode levels naturally.</i>			
	----- Enterococci (per 100 mLs) -----			Maximum
Wesquage Pond @ 0.5 m	-	<10	<10	<10
	<i>RIHealth Standard for Recreational Contact: Maximum 61 Enterococci per 100 mLs</i>			
	----- pH -----			Minimum
Wesquage Pond @ 0.5 m	-	8.7	8.9	8.7
	<i>pH of 6 - 9 considered normal</i>			
	----- Alkalinity (mg/l CaCO3) -----			Minimum
Wesquage Pond @ 0.5 m	-	59.2	52.0	52.0

USEPA Alkalinity Classification:

ACIDIFIED: (< 1 ppm with pH < 5.0)
 CRITICAL: (< 2 ppm)
 ENDANGERED (2-5 ppm)

HIGHLY SENSITIVE: (5-10 ppm)
 SENSITIVE: (10-20 ppm)
 NOT SENSITIVE (>20 ppm)

2012 Wesquage Pond





Over 100 Years of Education, Conservation & Advocacy

Audubon Society of Rhode Island

July 21, 2017

Mr. Jay Manning, P.E., Principal Sanitary Engineer
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
235 Promenade St.
Providence, RI 02908

Dear Mr. Manning:

The Audubon Society of Rhode Island supports the dredge project proposed by the Bonnet Shores Fire District for Wesquage Pond. Audubon owns the larger east Wesquage Pond and we hold it for wildlife purposes. We understand that the roads adjacent to the Pond flood regularly and agree that the dredging project will help alleviate the immediate flooding problems. We also recognize that the pond is in the 100 year flood zone and know that the flooding will worsen as climate change continues to increase sea levels.

According to data from Watershed Watch, high concentrations of nitrogen and phosphorus contribute to excess algae in the Pond. The proposed dredging project will increase the flow in and out of the Pond and may improve water quality conditions and in-pond habitats.

Please let me know if you have any questions about our position on this project.

Sincerely,

Lawrence J. F. Taft
Executive Director



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
Coastal Resources Management Council
Oliver H. Stedman Government Center
4808 Tower Hill Road, Suite 3
Wakefield, RI 02879-1900

(401) 783-3370
Fax (401) 783-2069

July 21, 2017

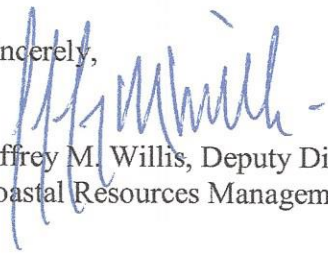
To Whom It May Concern:

Regarding the Bonnet Shores Fire District's application for funding from the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management's 2017 Bay and Watershed Restoration Grants program, please know that the Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) has issued an Assent (#2015-09-060, attached) for work to maintain the Wesquage Pond breachway through the flood tidal delta. The authorization is valid through October 2025. This work addresses critical needs for the maintenance of the Pond regarding flood control and sediment management and is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Bay and Watershed Restoration Grants program.

Further, to better accomplish the goals of the Bonnet Shores Fire District's management of Wesquage Pond vis-à-vis the objectives of the Bay and Watershed Restoration Grant program, the CRMC met with the Bonnet Shores Fire District and assured it that the current Assent meets the needs of the District and the grant program and that minor modifications of the Assent will be undertaken that specifically address further management of the Pond should the District be successful in its watershed restoration application.

The CRMC through its issuance of Assent 2015-09-060 believes that the Bonnet Shores Fire District's Watershed Restoration Grant application will therefore further the sound management of the pond for the benefit of the state.

Sincerely,


Jeffrey M. Willis, Deputy Director
Coastal Resources Management Council

/lat

cc: Grover J. Fugate, CRMC
Rep. Carol Hagen McEntee



Bonnet Shores Beach Club Condominium Association

P.O. Box 238, Saunderstown, RI 02874

Phone: (401) 783-2832 · Fax (401) 783-2488

July 22, 2017

Janice McClanaghan
Bonnet Shores Fire District
130 Bonnet Shores Road
Narragansett, RI 02882

Dear Ms McClanaghan,

As you may know, the Bonnet Shores Beach Club Condominium Association is currently in the permitting process of a project which will ultimately connect the Bonnet Shores Beach Club to the existing Town of Narragansett Sewer System. This project, with an uncertain estimated price tag but clearly in excess of \$1million, will bring the sewer pipe down the middle of the causeway in a northerly direction from the entrance of the Beach Club to the pumping station on Allagash Trail. Pursuant to completion of this sewer connection project, the BSBCCA will undertake repaving of the causeway as previously agreed with the Fire District at an estimated cost of \$100,000.

While our planned sewer connection project is completely separate and distinct from the Bonnet Shores Fire District's proposal to dredge Wesquage Pond, we understand that there are several benefits to such a dredging project:

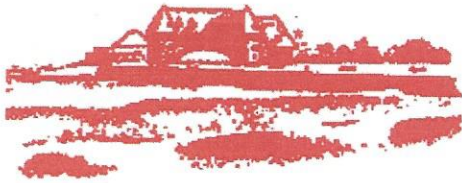
1. It would reduce the water level of the pond
2. It would reduce the repeated flooding of the causeway
3. It would reduce the frequency with which the causeway must be closed due to flooding
4. It would reduce the public safety issues which the closing of the causeway creates vis-a-vis the Narragansett Police and Fire Departments

Please be advised that the Bonnet Shores Beach Club would look favorably upon the ability to use sand reclaimed as a result of the dredging if, and only if, said sand be deemed un-contaminated.

Lastly, be advised that it is for the above-mentioned reasons that the Bonnet Shores Beach Club Condominium Association endorses the proposal of the Bonnet Shores Fire District to dredge Wesquage Pond.

Sincerely,

Kevin Lynch, President Board of Directors
Bonnet Shores Beach Club Condominium Association



TOWN OF NARRAGANSETT

Fire Department, 40 Caswell Street, Narragansett, RI 02882-3393
Tel. 789-1000

**Chief of Department
Scott M. Partington**

**Fire Marshal
David Arnold**

From: Fire Chief, EMA Director Scott Partington
RE: Wesquage Pond Inundation & Bonnet Shore Causeway
Date: July 21, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

It has come to my attention that the Bonnet Shores Fire District is actively pursuing funding through the Narragansett Bay and Watershed Restoration Fund – within the Flood Prevention and Mitigation grant category. I understand the purpose of their request is to help mitigate the ongoing concerns with inundation into Wesquage Pond due to persistent stormwater runoff, erosion, and flooding which in turn has undermined the integrity of the Bonnet Shores Causeway - a vital route into and out of Bonnet Shores.

The preservation of Wesquage Pond and Bonnet Shores Causeway are projects which I fully support and which were brought to the attention of the RIEMA Director, Peter Gaynor – who toured this site with me in December of 2015 and was subsequently placed on our town's high priority list which was recently submitted to the RIDOT Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Two major areas of public safety currently exist that I believe are directly linked to the inundation occurring in Wesquage Pond:

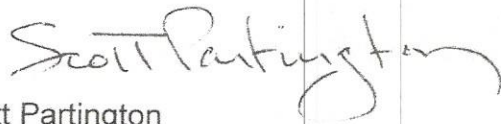
1. Emergency response
2. Evacuation routes

This roadway serves as one of only two immediate and direct routes for emergency response vehicles into and out of the Bonnet Shores District. The Bonnet Shores causeway serviced via Bonnet Point Road is a key piece in the primary road loop that serves Bonnet Shores' 2,000 + residents. Fire, EMS, & Police response is often diverted around this flooded-closed causeway resulting in delayed on-scene emergency services and extended EMS patient transports to the hospital.

Due to persistent flooding and/or ice coverage, there are numerous times throughout the year when this roadway is closed to vehicular traffic. As a result of its current unreliable condition, this roadway cannot be designated as a local evacuation route and residents must seek a much slower alternate route around the pond. The proposed dredging of Wesquage Pond in conjunction with enhanced stormwater management, and erosion control as presented within the project's scope are aimed at alleviating the overflow and preservation of the pond. These mitigation efforts could potentially have a significant impact towards improving and preserving the roadway conditions around the causeway, thereby dramatically enhancing not only emergency response times, but also the evacuation routes for the residents of Bonnet Shores.

I hope that you will consider the merits of this project not only from a public safety standpoint but also on the potential to prevent or mitigate the impacts of the flooding on the ecological functioning of the pond's natural ecosystems.

Sincerely,



7-21-2017

Chief Scott Partington



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPRESENTATIVE CAROL HAGAN MCENTEE, *District 33*

Committee on Judiciary

Committee on Labor

Committee on Municipal Government

July 25, 2017

Jay Manning, P.E., Principal Sanitary Engineer
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
235 Promenade Street
Providence, RI 02908

Dear Mr. Manning,

As the State Representative of District 33, which includes the Bonnet Fire District (BSFD), I write this letter in support of the Bonnet Shores Fire District's grant application to fund the Wesquage Pond Flood Mitigation and Pond Restoration Project.

The dredging of Wesquage Pond is part of a larger environmental effort which includes a large investment by the BSBC, valued at approximately \$1 million, to get rid of its failed septic system which is made worse by the constant flooding. The dredging project will complement the new sewer line and road paving projects by protecting the road from further saturation and flooding which deteriorates the integrity of the road. Removing the septic tanks from the beach is beneficial for the environment of Bonnet Shores and the Town of Narragansett. The flooding of the causeway causes problems for the residents of BSFD and the BSBC and the Town of Narragansett. There are two access roads in and out of Bonnet Shores. One is the causeway on Bonnet Point Road and the other is Bonnet Shores Road. The BSFD has been responsible for keeping the water level down in Wesquage Pond so that the homes on the pond don't flood, to keep the causeway from flooding, and to keep road access open for travel and emergencies.

In light of the fact that the BSBC is installing the sewer line and replacing the road, it makes sense to address the water level problem that has been caused by multiple storms pushing sand into the pond. By dredging the 6,000 cubic yards of sand from the pond this will allow BSFD to continue with its maintenance dredging of the southern breachway. This maintenance dredge has been successful for many years, however, only in the past several years has it become problematic due to too much sand build up in the pond. Without the big dredge the smaller maintenance dredge is futile. The more flow and exchange of water from pond to ocean the better the water quality and the overall health of the pond and its habitat. The URI Watershed Watch says there is too much nitrogen and phosphorus in the pond causing overgrowth of algae. This could be helped by this project.

As you can see in the application from the BSFD, we have multi agency support. These are private organizations trying to help alleviate a state wide coastal problem. They need your help with funding. I believe this project meets all the criteria for this grant, and I respectfully ask that you give serious consideration to this project. Helping our community overcome this problem would be most appreciated and beneficial to our community and the great state of Rhode Island.

Very Truly Yours,

Representative Carol Hagan McEntee
District 33 – Narragansett and South Kingstown

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