

Protecting and Restoring Natural Resources in Rhode Island

Issues

- Rhode Island contains over 500 miles of coastline bordering Narragansett Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, with important habitats and natural resources that provide recreational and economic benefits for millions of people.
- An active oil transport route exists in Narragansett Bay, with ships transporting oil to the Port of Providence through relatively narrow passages in the bay, creating the potential for oil spills to impact sensitive salt marshes, sandy beaches, shellfish in shallow waters, and rocky shoreline habitats.
- Coastal hazardous waste sites threaten fishery resources and their habitats, as well as other natural resources and recreational uses.

What we do

NOAA's Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program (DARRP) acts as a trustee for natural resources on behalf of the public. DARRP collaborates with federal, state, and tribal entities and also works with cleanup agencies (such as EPA), local organizations, the public, and those responsible for the incident to:

- protect coastal and marine natural resources;
- respond to discharges of oil and hazardous substances;
- assess risks and injuries to natural resources; and
- restore injured natural resources and related socioeconomic benefits.

How we do it

DARRP acts as a trustee for natural resources to:

- work cooperatively with those responsible for the incident;
- develop innovative approaches and techniques for remediation and restoration;
- work with the public to select restoration options to compensate for injuries to natural resources; and
- design and implement or oversee natural resource restoration projects and monitor their success.



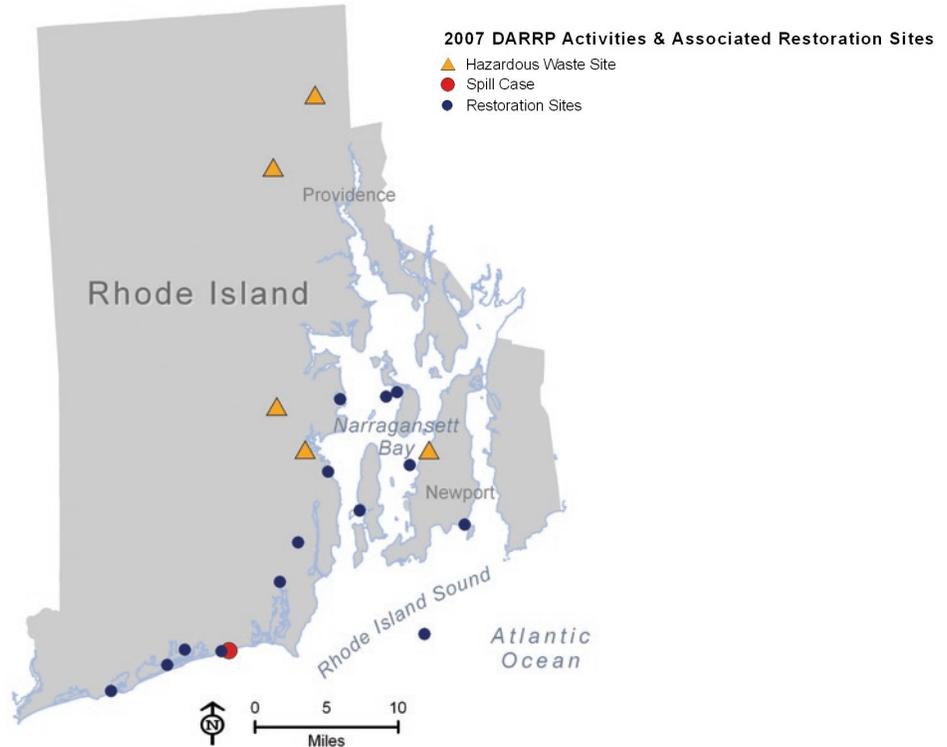
North Cape Oil Spill, Block Island Sound - see case highlights.

DARRP Accomplishments

- Restoration and/or protection of 250 acres of marine habitats and 286 acres of freshwater and terrestrial habitats in the state of Rhode Island (completed and planned activities).
- Settlements have resulted in 14 protection and restoration projects in the state of Rhode Island.
- Cleanup actions promote recovery of coastal resources and communities at 8 hazardous waste sites.



North Cape Oil Spill, Block Island Sound - see case highlights.



Historic and ongoing case highlights

- *North Cape Oil Spill, Block Island Sound* – Implemented restoration plan to address injuries from this 1996 spill of 828,000 gallons of oil into Rhode Island’s waters; released over 1.2 million v-notched adult female lobsters to increase recruitment in RI waters (*top photo on page 1*); released over 7 million shellfish into Narragansett Bay and salt ponds to restore or enhance shellfish populations (*bottom photo on page 1*); constructed a fishway to help migrating alewife gain access to spawning habitat; protected nesting habitat for over 50 pairs of piping plovers on RI beaches; secured protection of 1.5 million acres of nesting habitat for loons and eiders in Maine; and secured a conservation easement to protect lands along Ninigret Pond.
- Naval Construction and Battalion Center (NCBC), Davisville and Naval Education Training Center, Newport – Achieved protective cleanup at both facilities; and completed 3 wetland projects, including a 1.5-acre salt marsh restoration.
- Rose Hill Landfill, South Kingstown – Reached a cooperative settlement with those responsible, the terms of which secured a protective cleanup and natural resource damage funds that will be used to improve river herring passage at two dams on the Saugatucket River.
- *M/V World Prodigy, Narragansett Bay* – Transplanted adult quahogs to open waters of Narragansett Bay; restored salt marsh habitat in Middletown; created a lobster reef in Narragansett Bay to increase juvenile lobster habitat; and re-established eelgrass beds.

For further information about DARRP, please visit
<http://www.darrp.noaa.gov>

