

State Uses North Kingstown Pilot Project to Plan for Sea Level Rise



WITH A 3- TO 5-FOOT RISE IN SEA LEVEL anticipated for the state by 2100, Rhode Island coastal communities are at risk of increased flooding, erosion, infrastructure and property damage, drinking water contamination through salinization, and displacement of coastal residents in coming decades.

To offset some of the potential damages associated with sea level rise, North Kingstown has been the center of a pilot project to assess impacts from various sea level rise scenarios using high-resolution maps. These maps incorporate data on local property and building values to quantify potential impacts and to identify vulnerable assets such as homes, commercial infrastructure, and coastal wetlands, which buffer coastal areas.

Areas at particular risk in North Kingstown include Quonset Point and Wickford.

Additional concerns for towns include flood insurance for homeowners, protection of water lines, and access to emergency routes to prevent disasters such as those experienced when the Pawtuxet River flooded homes, shopping centers, and essential facilities such as sewage treatment plants.

The next phase in the pilot project will be to ground-truth and refine the maps and plan for adaptation by prioritizing areas in need of retrofit, capital improvement, policy changes, and long-term management.



Tidal flooding in Narragansett

Notes from

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Statewide Sea Level Rise Maps Available

North Kingstown residents can envision future scenarios of sea level inundation by viewing maps available at sea-grant.gso.uri.edu/coast/slr_tools.html. The site also offers a statewide map to aid other municipalities (click on map icon).

Note: Sea level rise scenarios indicated on the maps do not account for storm surges, which could increase sea level ranges as much as 10 feet, as in the 1938 hurricane. Maps are for planning purposes only. ■

Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut Homeowners: We Need Your Help for Our Research!



Ready for big weather, floods & wind damage? Go to seagrant.gso.uri.edu to take our 30-minute survey and enter to win a \$500, \$75, or \$25 gift card to Home Depot.

We are inviting 400 Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Massachusetts homeowners ages 18 and older to participate in a survey to develop a better understanding of progress towards taking action to reduce your risk from increased storminess to help develop an Internet-based program.

This online survey will ask about your demographic information, history of impact from climate events, awareness of increased storminess, and attitudes toward adapting to increased storminess.

For more information contact:

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Results will be posted on seagrant.gso.uri.edu/coast/collaborative.html.



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