RHODE ISLAND SEA GRANT

Sea Grant

February 2018

Rhode Island Sea Grant is one of 33 Sea Grant college programs and is based at the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography.

University of Rhode Island students learn the tools of the trade for shellfish aquaculture.
Credit: Rhode Island Sea Grant

Aquaculture course teaches next generation of shellfish growers

Aquaculture activities in Rhode Island have increased twenty-fold to nearly $6 million over the past couple decades. At the request of Rhode Island's Coastal Resources Management Council, Rhode Island Sea Grant collaborated with experts at Roger Williams University to facilitate interactive webinars and an online course aimed at teaching aspiring shellfish farmers and aquaculture professionals the science, techniques and tools of the trade for shellfish aquaculture. In 2016, the course received positive reviews from its 150 participants, with 106 planning to start a shellfish business as a result.

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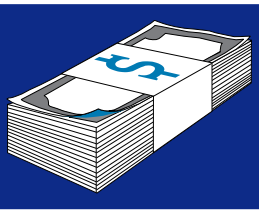
$26.7 M
Economic benefit



140
Undergraduate and graduate students supported

300
Jobs created or sustained

Metrics reported to National Sea Grant Office in June 2017 for work completed February 2016 to January 2017

RESEARCH EXTENSION EDUCATION

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Long Island offshore wind farm approved to power 50,000 homes

Rhode Island Sea Grant helped lay the groundwork for siting and permitting the nation's first offshore wind farm off Block Island. Credit: Rhode Island Sea Grant

A growing global market for clean energy and an abundance of offshore wind off the East Coast has prompted developers to seek permits to capitalize on this emerging industry. Rhode Island Sea Grant helped facilitate the Ocean Special Area Management Plan that laid the groundwork for siting and permitting the nation's first offshore wind farm off Block Island, which has been a jumping off point for the developer, Deepwater Wind, in securing new contracts. In 2016, Deepwater Wind won a $740 million contract by the state of New York to construct a 15-turbine, 90-megawatt offshore wind farm 30 miles off the coast of Montauk intended to generate enough energy to power 50,000 homes on Long Island's South Fork.

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"What separates the Block Island project from the others is that the Ocean SAMP process [facilitated by Sea Grant] identified the location ... There's a really powerful lesson there that is lost on no one in my business for sure, and I think it's a great case study."
- Jeff Grybowski, CEO of Deepwater Wind

Establishing a Fishermen-based Research Fleet

In 2016, Rhode Island Sea Grant supported a pilot project that established a research fleet with five commercial fishermen to better assess quahog populations in Narragansett Bay. This research fleet is able to sample areas not currently covered by existing surveys and builds the capacity to involve local fishermen in future coastal monitoring and marine research for stock assessments.

Developing Strategies to Reduce Marine Debris

To help address the growing problem of marine debris along New England's coastline, Rhode Island Sea Grant's legal program hosted a marine law symposium focused on marine debris. The symposium had over 100 attendees, including lawyers, policymakers and government officials, and discussed potential legal and policy strategies to reduce the negative impacts of marine debris in New England.

Sparking a National Discussion on Historic Preservation

The city of Newport, Rhode Island is home to some of the oldest buildings in the country, many of which are threatened by rising sea levels and coastal flooding. Rhode Island Sea Grant helped shape and implement one of the first national conversations on the risks posed by sea level rise to historic coastal communities that helped launch a national annual event concerning historic preservation.