



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
696 VIRGINIA ROAD  
CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742-2751

July 23, 2014

Evaluation/Planning Division  
Evaluation Branch

Mr. Tom Chapman, Supervisor  
Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Ecological Services  
70 Commercial Street, Suite 300  
Concord, Massachusetts 03301-5087

Dear Mr. Chapman:

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New England District, would like to invite you and/or a member(s) of your staff to participate in a coordinated site visit for the Pawcatuck River Coastal Storm Damage Reduction (CSDR) Feasibility Study. This study is authorized in a resolution approved by the Committee on Public Works of the United States Senate, dated September 12, 1969 (also known as the Southeastern New England (SENE) resolution). Authorization and funding is also provided under investigations heading, Chapter 4, Title X, Division A of the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013, Public Law 113-2 (127 Stat. 23) enacted January 29, 2013 (hereinafter "DRAA 13"). The Secretary of the Army is authorized, at full Federal expense using funds provided in DRAA 13, to complete ongoing flood and storm damage reduction studies in areas that were impacted by Hurricane Sandy.

The New England District will prepare the Pawcatuck River CSDR decision document, including National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) information for Public and USACE review.

In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy was preceded by coastal flood warnings and mandatory evacuations for coastal towns, low lying areas and mobile homes in Rhode Island. Major evacuations from towns along Narragansett Bay and the southern Atlantic Coast included: Charlestown, Narragansett, South Kingstown, and Westerly. The storm surge destroyed houses and businesses, damaged pilings and deck supports, blew out walls on lower levels, and moved significant amounts of sand and debris into homes, businesses, streets, and adjacent coastal ponds.

In 2013, the USACE New England District conducted a focus area analysis for the coastal portion of the Pawcatuck River watershed. This analysis was part of the larger North Atlantic Coastal Comprehensive Study. The analysis concluded that there is a

Federal interest in continuing with a feasibility study to examine coastal storm damage reduction along the south coast of the state. The southern edge of the state faces the Atlantic Ocean for approximately 28 miles as shown in the enclosed figure. The study area includes the towns of Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown, and Narragansett.

The general water resource problem to be addressed is the vulnerability of coastal Rhode Island to storm damage from wave attack, storm surge and erosion. Potential fixes include structural and non-structural solutions.

A coordinated site visit for interested state and federal agencies, town officials, and non-governmental organizations will occur on Thursday, August 21, 2014. The purpose of the site visit is to view the project area (as time allows), discuss alternatives, and elicit concerns and suggestions from your office under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act and the Endangered Species Act.

If you have any comments pursuant to the coordinated site visit, please submit a letter within 30 days of the visit.

Site visit participants will meet at 11:00 a.m. at the Town Planner's Office, Westerly Town Hall, 45 Broad Street, Westerly. Please RSVP with Ms. Judith L. Johnson, of the Environmental Resources Section at (978) 318-8138. If any additional information is required please contact Ms. Johnson or Mr. Christopher Hatfield, the study manager, at (978) 318-8520.

Sincerely,

Christopher Hatfield  
Study Manager

Enclosure

**Similar letter sent:**

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