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STATEWIDE WATER COALITION TO PRESENT WASHINGTON COUNTY WATER SUPPLY FORUM on NOVEMBER 12

“OUR WATER FUTURE: RI AND WASHINGTON COUNTY”

The **Coalition for Water Security**, a partnership of many of the state’s leading environmental and economic groups, will join the **Washington County Regional Planning Commission** to host a special forum on water issues in South County. The forum will be held on **Wednesday, November 12 from 4:00 – 6:30 p.m. in the Corliss Auditorium on the URI Narragansett Bay Campus.**

The forum provides a look at the challenge of managing our state’s shared water supplies in a way that supports a vibrant economy and a healthy environment, with a focus on the issues facing Washington County.

Interested members of the public and local elected and planning officials are invited to hear from major users, including Quonset Development Corporation (QDC), URI and Tuckahoe Turf Farms, and to learn about the water challenges facing communities like North Kingstown, Westerly and Shannock Village. Representatives of the Water Resources Board (WRB) and the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) will present an overview of water issues from their vantage point.

Senator Susan Sosnowski, Chair of the RI Senate Committee on Environment and Agriculture with make opening remarks. Panelists discussing supply issues will be:

William Penn – RI WRB, Chairman
Alisa Richardson – RI DEM, Principal Engineer, Office of Water Resources.
Sue Licardi – North Kingstown Water Department, Director
Chris Duhamel – Westerly Town Council, Member

Panelists addressing demand issues will be:

Steven King – Quonset Development Corporation, Managing Director
J. Vernon Wyman – URI, Assistant Vice President, Business Services
Steven Donohue – Tuckahoe Turf Farms, Inc., Vice President of Operations
Geoffrey Marchant -Community Development Consortium, Director

“Rhode Island’s water belongs to all of us,” explained Sheila Dormody, the Coalition’s coordinator. “Our healthy and clean rivers and streams not only provide our drinking water, but also support fisheries, recreation, tourism and economic development. With relatively generous rainfall here in the Northeast, our water supply should be a competitive advantage for the state’s communities and businesses while still providing available and high quality water for residents.”

“The continuing availability of abundant, clean water will shape the future of the communities of Washington County” notes Jeff Broadhead, Executive Director of the Washington County Regional Planning Council.

The issue of the state’s shared water supplies, how much water the state has, and how it can be efficiently used and fairly allocated has drawn increasing public and political attention. The Coalition for Water Security has been working to insure that RI has responsible and effective water supply policies—policies which will provide a safe and reliable water supply to meet current needs, reduce waste, provide for economic growth, and protect our rivers and streams.

For more information on the forum, contact:

Jane Austin at (401) 272-3540 x123 or jaustin@savebay.org. or

Jeff Broadhead at (401) 874-6493 or jb@wcrpc.org

- The Coalition for Water Security(CWS) is composed of: Aquidneck Land Trust, Audubon Society of RI, Clean Water Action , Conservation Law Foundation , Environment Council of RI, Environment Rhode Island, Grow Smart RI, Narragansett Bay Estuary Program, Narrow river Preservation Association, RI Economic Policy Council , RI Land Trust Council, RI Natural History Survey, RI Public Expenditure Council, Sierra Club RI Chapter, Save The Bay, The Nature Conservancy , Trout Unlimited, Trust for Public Land, Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association. The Coalition is supported by The Rhode Island Foundation; the Prince Charitable Foundations; and the Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust.

*- The **Washington County Regional Planning Council (WCRPC)** was founded in 1992 to employ a coordinated approach to address issues that transcend municipal boundaries. The WCRPC is comprised of one town council member from each of the nine towns within the county, and serves as a unique forum for inter-municipal communication, coordination and cost-sharing. North Kingstown, South Kingstown, Exeter, Narragansett, Charlestown, Hopkinton, Richmond, Westerly, and New Shoreham are represented on the Council.*