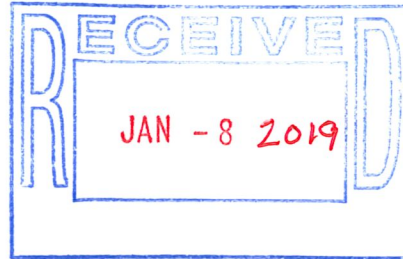




RHODE ISLAND  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908-5767

TDD 401-222-4462



December 26, 2018

Mr. Richard Rainer,  
Town Administrator  
2200 E Main Road  
Portsmouth, RI 02871

Dear Mr. Rainer,

I'm writing to you today to make you aware of an issue that is critical to the operation of the State's Research Reserve program on Prudence Island. I have been informed of some planned changes resulting in the loss of day-use parking facilities adjacent to the Prudence Ferry that may have a significant impact on how the state operates and manages its facilities and programs on Prudence Island. As you know, the Research Reserve not only conducts and supports applied coastal research to help preserve and protect Rhode Island's coastal resources, but it also serves as an important outdoor classroom for students and teachers to gain an appreciation and understanding of Narragansett Bay. Further, the Reserve serves as a unique recreation opportunity that can't be found anywhere else in the state.

The loss of year-round, day use parking in the vicinity of the ferry terminal will not only affect full-time and seasonal staff, but scientists and students coming to the Reserve. Day trips are essential for coastal research and educational programs that we offer. Loss of this necessary parking will greatly hamper efforts to maintain our programming as well as other recreational uses that the Reserve offers. We have worked with the Town of Bristol and the harbor masters office to identify parking to fulfill our direct staffing needs, but feel additional parking is needed for program participation.

With Prudence Island being located within the Town of Portsmouth, we would ask that the town consider contracting with the parking lot located across the street from Robin Rug factory to meet the needs of both visitors and residents of the island. This area will provide a convenient location for all that come to the island and allow our critical research and educational functions to continue without interruption. We greatly appreciate the working relationship with the Town of Portsmouth and hope that this can be accomplished.

If DEM can be of assistance in any way, please let us know. Additionally, if you would like more information on our specific parking needs, we can provide that as well. Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

Bob Stankelis, DEM Manager  
Narragansett Bay Research Reserve

CC: Dean Hoxsie, Acting Deputy Director, DEM