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REF, DEM, Senator Reed Celebrate Wind Turbine at Salty Brine Beach

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The Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation's Renewable Energy Fund joined the Department of Environmental Management and Senator Jack Reed to mark the beginning of a construction project at Salty Brine State Beach in Narragansett. The beach's 37-year-old public bath house is being replaced with a handicap-accessible, LEED Silver-certified energy efficient facility.



All of the energy the new bath house uses for needs such as lighting, exhaust and circulation fans, and hot water for showers and flushing toilets will be provided on-site by a small, residential-scale wind turbine and solar hot water heaters on the roof of the building. The building has been designed to maximize energy efficiency with its R30 building shell, energy efficient lighting fixtures, lighting controls, faucets, and low energy hand dryers. Other measures, such as heating only half of the building for early spring and fall public use and maximizing the use of daylight, will enhance energy efficiency at the facility.

"The new bath house at Salty Brine State Beach will be a sustainable, energy-efficient facility," noted DEM Director W. Michael Sullivan, PhD. "In addition to constructing a modern, accessible bath house, we are creating an educational tool for the public. This new building illustrates DEM's commitment to energy conservation and sustainability, and we look forward to welcoming visitors to the site so they can learn and see for themselves how wind power can be put to beneficial use."

The new, 2,478 square foot, two-level bath house will provide public bathrooms, showers, outdoor rinsing showers and a foot-wash. The facility will also include a snack bar with utilities for possible hot food concessions, adequate mechanical, storage and janitorial spaces, and a life guard station on the upper level. The bath house deck with ramp, and a new shade structure and observation decks on the stone jetty that are connected by a boardwalk along the parking lot edge, will enhance public access and use of the facility. Bike racks and additional parking spaces will also be provided.

RIEDC, through its Renewable Energy Fund, provided a \$32,175 grant for funding of the wind turbine. "The Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, through the Renewable Energy Fund, is pleased to be a partner in powering the new bathhouse with renewable, efficient energy," said J. Michael Saul, interim executive director of the RIEDC. "This partnership is just one of the many ways in which RIEDC is working to promote the use of clean, renewable energy in Rhode Island."

"People come here to enjoy the beach and the view. Now their experience will be enhanced by upgraded facilities including a new, green building powered by wind and solar energy," said Reed, a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior, which oversees federal spending of National Park Service programs. "I commend DEM for its work in moving this project forward, and I am pleased the federal government is investing in upgrading Salty Brine's facilities, preserving our beaches, and making our state more energy efficient."

Salty Brine State Beach will remain open this summer and will be staffed with lifeguards and a park ranger. Restroom facilities will be provided via port-a-johns, but patrons will not have access to changing facilities or showers. Depending on construction needs, there may be a limited number of parking spaces available at the beach during the summer season. On a busy summer weekend day, Salty Brine State Beach typically attracts between 300 and 400 beachgoers.

The state acquired the 1.1 acre beach parcel in the mid-1950s. Formerly known as Galilee State Beach, the facility was dedicated in 1990 to Rhode Island's most widely recognized radio personality, Salty Brine. The Galilee pier and surrounding areas have always been heavily utilized by recreational and commercial fishermen, and by the public as a place to watch the boats, including the Block Island Ferry, come and go throughout the breach way.

BH & A of Boston designed the facility and is overseeing construction. Iron Construction Group,

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LLC of Providence has been awarded the construction contract. Funding for the \$1.8 million project includes \$900,000 from the National Park Service Land and Water Conservation Fund and \$900,000 from RI capital funds. The project is expected to be completed by Memorial Day 2010.

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