Public Comment Sought for Narrow River Restoration Effort

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is developing an Environmental Assessment for determining how best to enhance and restore saltmarsh habitats and estuarine functioning in the Narrow River and on the John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuge. The planning area includes the area from the Bridgetown road crossing downriver to the mouth of the river and Pettaquamscutt Cove.

Federal funding was received as part of the Hurricane Sandy recovery effort to be used in the Narrow River to enhance resiliency against future storms and to address sea level rise. Possible restoration actions may include improvement of saltmarsh drainage, use of beneficial dredge material to enhance saltmarsh resiliency, creation of eel grass beds, the use of living shoreline techniques for improvement of shoreline stability, stormwater and water quality management, and other actions.

Public comment is currently being sought regarding any issues, concerns, or opportunities the public may have regarding any habitat restoration effort. All comments received will be evaluated as part of the Environmental Assessment. The Service has identified the following issues to be addressed in the Assessment:

- How will restoration actions affect saltmarsh, tidal marsh, and upland habitats adjacent to saltmarshes?
- What effect might restoration actions have on marine and freshwater fish resources?
- How might restoration actions effect recreational uses of the river?

The public is invited to submit any additional issues, concerns, or opportunities which they feel the Service should evaluate and address during the process. To be considered, comments must be received by March 25, 2014.
Comments can be submitted to:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Narrow River Restoration
50 Bend Road
Charlestown, RI 02813

Or comments can be submitted from the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex website at http://www.fws.gov/ninigret/complex/ and clicking on the “Contact us” link.

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