

**REGULATING MARINAS IN RHODE ISLAND
TO SERVE THE PUBLIC INTEREST**

by

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Thesis

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ABSTRACT

According to the Rhode Island Constitution's statement of the public trust doctrine, the Narragansett Bay is held in trust by the state for the people of Rhode Island. It is the government's stated goal to "provide the maximum benefit for society" from coastal resources. (General Laws of Rhode Island, 46-23-1) This implies an intention to protect the public's interests in the Bay, which include public access and environmental preservation. In order to meet this objective, each coastal use, including marinas, should be regulated in the public interest. The state should consider what quantity of marinas best advances the public good. In addition, marinas should be required to mitigate their environmental impacts. Finally, the state should require marinas to compensate for their physical occupation of the publicly owned Bay by providing public access to the marina property. These new regulations on marinas may be the first step in altering the state's control of all development along the coast in order to better protect the public's interests in Narragansett Bay.