

ROCKY POINT FISHING PIER (from page 1)



Director Coit

“Expanding shoreline and fishing access is core to our mission at DEM and we’re thrilled that the new pier will enable anglers, regardless of their physical abilities, to experience the joy and bounty of fishing on Narragansett Bay,” said **DEM Director Janet Coit**. “I hope that the public will benefit from this recreational investment and asset for decades to come.”

“Rocky Point is a crown jewel of Warwick and Rhode Island and it’s been wonderful to see so many people enjoying the park once again,” said Mayor Solomon. “As Council President, I was proud to work cooperatively with DEM to make sure the pier would be reconstructed. It’s a terrific addition to all the improvements that have been made at Rocky Point. It will stand as a symbol of the rich history of the park and our maritime heritage while offering people another way to access our beautiful Bay.”

The new fishing pier will feature a 280-foot-long, T-shaped pier with a shade structure, benches, railings, and solar lighting. Railing heights will vary to allow people of all ages and abilities to enjoy access to Narragansett Bay.

The completed project will provide saltwater fishing access less than 10 miles from Downtown Providence, advancing a key element of this coastal public park.

The fishing pier will complement a variety of recreational opportunities at Rocky Point State Park, including walking, bird-watching, rock climbing, the **RI Saltwater Anglers Association’s Youth Fishing Camp (slated for June 25-27 this year)**,

DEM’s popular “Come Clam With Me” workshops, and open spaces for picnics as well as family-focused events like Food Truck Nights and Movie Nights run by the City and other gatherings.

Located along Warwick Neck and overlooking Narragansett Bay, the 124-acre Rocky Point State Park property is one of Rhode Island’s most beloved natural assets and has a 150+ year



3-Day Youth Fishing Camp exposes 50 children to all aspects of fishing



The old fishing pier as it currently looks is in an area that always looks “fishy” with its “Rocky” Point shoreline. (new version below)



history of being a popular summer attraction for Rhode Islanders and visitors.

Over the decades, attractions at Rocky Point have come and gone – nature trails, a ferry pier, the end of a trolley line running from Providence through Buttonwoods and Oakland Beach, an observation tower, hotels, clambakes, restaurants, swimming pool, rides, games, and concerts – but the attraction of publicly accessible land so close to Providence has been a consistent draw since 1850.

In March 2013, DEM acquired 83 acres at the site of the former Rocky Point amusement park, creating Rhode Island’s newest state park. The state’s parcel was integrated with the 41 acres of shoreline at Rocky Point that was bought by the City of Warwick with the help of state and federal funding in 2007.

The now-dilapidated pier at the site once served as a means of bringing people to the former amusement park by boat. Photographers frequently capture images of the pier remnants against backdrops of sunrises or sea smoke.

After a competitive bidding process, **ACK Marine & General Contracting LLC** of Quincy, MA, was awarded the construction contract. The project is another example of Governor Raimondo’s and DEM’s commitment to invest in Rhode Island’s system of parks and beaches – which, [according to a recent study](#), rank 1st in visits per park acre, but 47th in state spending per visit. DEM is leading the Governor’s multi-year initiative to increase staffing at state parks and beaches,

offer new amenities to users, adopt best practices, engage further with partners, and do more to realize the opportunities afforded by this magnificent system.

Rhode Island’s natural and public assets are magnets, attracting more than 9 million Rhode Islanders and tourists a year. They’re also an engine that adds an estimated \$315 million to the economy, generating nearly \$40 million in state and local taxes and supporting nearly 4,000 jobs a year. However, more visitors (a 37% increase in beach visitation from 2010 to 2017), far fewer employees (**full-time staffing in DEM’s Parks and Recreation Division has dropped by 67%, to 42 FTEs from 123, since 1989**), longer seasons, and aging facilities are hindering DEM’s ability to meet some park users’ expectations.

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