

Western end of old Jamestown Bridge is DEM's first choice for new fishing pier

By Dotti Farrington

The state Department of Environmental Management last week named the location of the western end of the old Jamestown Bridge as its first choice for a new fishing pier to replace an old bridge section that has been used unofficially, and with some neighborhood complaints, as a fishing pier for more than a decade.

The 1,600-foot section of the old bridge is not part of the demolition contract for more than 5,000 feet of the major bridge sections that is now underway. The old bridge section has been described by state officials as too deteriorated to be salvaged for use as fishing pier.

Costs for the new pier are intended to be covered by the \$23.5 million allotted for the bridge removal, according to original funding reports. State officials said they are not sure that enough funds will be available from that amount. Some \$19.5 million is committed to the basic demolition contract, which includes provisions for some extra costs.

Specific plans about the structure's removal and its new replacement have yet to be made, state officials said. Even the finality of its selection is subject to further review, the DEM said last week. Replacing the western end of the bridge was a commitment that was made when demolition of the old bridge was first being planned.



An artist's rendering of the fishing pier proposed at the western end of the old Jamestown Bridge.

The details of the search for the best site for the pier replacement are contained in the DEM's "Public Access to Shoreline Recreational Fishing in Narragansett Bay," a two-volume report. DEM and its consultant, Gordon R. Archibald, Inc. of Pawtucket, evaluated the potential development of fishing piers and improvements at 23 sites around Narragansett Bay. The study reviewed various factors at each site, including abundance and variety of fish species, water

quality, environmental constraints, surrounding land use, and existing infrastructure.

The report is intended to provide the groundwork to expand the state's system of public fishing piers and provide improved public access to Narragansett Bay and the bay islands.

Gov. Donald Carcieri has asked the DEM to speak with local officials about their ideas and concerns regarding the potential fishing piers before any final decisions are made. DEM

Director W. Michael Sullivan said the next step would be to seek wide public input.

Top potential sites for fishing piers and improvements are the North Kingstown end of the former Jamestown Bridge and the U.S. Navy's Midway Pier at Burma Road in Middletown.

Second tier choices are Goddard Park in Warwick, Palmer River Bridge in Barrington/Warren, Fort Adams in Newport, and Stone Bridge in Tiverton.

Other sites evaluated in the study did not score as high, according to the DEM announcement.

The complete report, including last summer's fishing survey, is available at the DEM's Web site at www.dem.ri.gov. Copies are available for review weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the DEM headquarters, 235 Promenade St. in Providence.

Lussier wins Erma Bombeck writing award

Weekly columnist for the Providence Journal and Jamestown Rita Lussier has won first place in the Global/Human Interest category in the Erma Bombeck Writing Competition.

Lussier's winning essay, a Christmas story of loss and regained faith in humanity, was one of over 1,200 entries in the contest named after the celebrated author and newspaper columnist Erma Bombeck.

Missouri school honors Brownell

Barbara Brownell, a Jamestown native now living in Missouri, was recently named Teacher of the Year at Nipher Middle School in St. Louis.

Brownell is a speech-language pathologist and provides services to children with disabilities, helping them to achieve academic success. She is also the department chairwoman of the Special Education Department at Nipher school.

Brownell is a graduate of the University of Rhode Island and received her master's degree in communication disorders from Fontbonne University in Missouri. She is the daughter of Dalton and Ellen Brownell of Jamestown.

Islanders on dean's list

- Laura Christine Hamilton of Jamestown was named to the dean's list at Roanoke College in Salem, Va., for the fall 2005 semester.

- Bradford Yates was named to the dean's list at Washington University in St. Louis, Mo., for the fall 2005 semester.

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