

AQUANEWS

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Ruling could change way power plants use Hudson River

By, Laura Incalcaterra and Greg Clary
The Journal News

The Environmental Protection Agency must force power plants to use the best technology available to protect aquatic life in the nation's waterways, a federal appeals court ruled.

Power plants have been allowed to use a cost-benefit analysis to determine the cheapest way to reduce fish kills rather than relying on the best technology available to meet that goal, said Hudson Riverkeeper Alex Matthiessen.

Riverkeeper, the Hackensack Riverkeeper, the Natural Resources Defense Council, Scenic Hudson, and other, including New York State, sued the EPA in 2005 to get the agency to enforce the Clean Water Act.

"Once again the judiciary has prevented EPA from rewriting the Clean Water Act at the behest of the industry," said Reed Super of Columbia Law School's Environmental Law Clinic and the lead attorney for the suit.

The lawsuit followed regulations published by the EPA in 2004 that described how power plants must protect aquatic life when they take water from the bays, rivers, lakes and oceans to cool their machinery.

The state environmental groups accused the federal government of changing the rules so that power plants could avoid costly upgrades. By some estimates, trillions of fish, plankton, larvae and eggs are killed each year when power plants draw in water.

The 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan ruled Thursday that it was improper for the EPA to let power plants circumvent environmental laws. In some cases, plants are allowed to restock fish rather than upgrade to better technology.

"It is a rejection of the EPA's refusal to adopt closed-cycle cooling as the best technology available," Matthiessen said.

About half of the nation's power plants use the closed-cycle method, which operates like a car's radiator, reusing the same water and only requiring small amounts of new water to replace what is lost to evaporation. The system uses at least 95 percent less water than once-through systems, which draw from the waterways. And expel warmed water back into these waterways.

All three power plants in the Lower Hudson Valley use once-through systems.

Indian Point in Buchanan uses Hudson River water to cool its nuclear plant operations, but those involved in the EPA court case said that the plant will not be directly affected by the ruling because its water-use permits were regulated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

The ruling's impact regarding the Mirant Corp.'s Lovett generating station in Stony Point and Bowline Point power plant in Haverstraw was also unclear yesterday. Both use the Hudson.

Mirant spokesman Lou Friscoe said company attorneys would review the decision, but adding water towers would be costly.



AQUANEWS

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE

Rockland Aquanauts Organization
2007 Dues

I guess it is that time of the year again, Membership Dues are due.
Last year all our members received much more than they gave out to the
Organization. As usual you will be receiving a tax donation for the first \$25.00. All
members who attended the Annual Dinner not only received money off their own
dinner but they also received money off theirs guests dinner. Everyone whom
attended also received prizes, some worth many times the cost of their Dues. Don't
forget the Annual Picnic as well as all the BBQ lunch's after the Lake Dives.

So please send in your \$42 dues early to;

Rockland Aquanauts Organization
c/o
Paul Galeazzi Jr.
4 Greensward Drive.
Valley Cottage New York 10989

We are currently in negotiations with the Palisades Mall to have
our meetings held there again

Anyone still interested in going to the Annual Dinner should
contact us to reserve their spot

info@rocklandaquanauts.org

Members of the Rockland Aquanauts Organization Inc.

We need articles for our newsletter! Any help is appreciated.
Contact our webmaster webmaster@rocklandaquanauts.org

Rockland Aquanauts Organization Inc.
Mission Statement:

To provide, promote, and advance environmental protection, care, and voluntary clean-up of waterways by any and all lawful means; to promote the importance and care in every manner possible by environmental awareness and otherwise; to purchase, print, publish, and circulate literature to promote the importance and care of the waterways and the work of the Corporation. To perform all acts the Corporation may deem appropriate or advisable in such operation; to establish, provide, and voluntary clean-up waterways, to encourage, support and subsidize the cleaning and protection from pollution.

Dive on *Spiegel Grove* wreck off Key Largo turns deadly for 3

sun-sentinel.com

Posted March 16 2007, 4:30 PM EDT

KEY LARGO -- Three divers died on Friday while diving on the *Spiegel Grove* ship wreck, the Monroe County Sheriff's office said.

In an e-mailed statement, Becky Herrin, spokeswoman for MSO, said the three men were part of a four-man team that was diving on the popular wreck from the commercial dive boat *Scuba-do*. All were reportedly advanced certified divers and planned a penetration dive into the sunken wreck. That's when something apparently went wrong.

``These wrecks can be very confusing inside," Herrin said. ``There's a lot of places to go wrong.

None of the four divers were immediately identified but Herrin said all were from New Jersey. They were not related, but were friends traveling together.

Herrin said the four divers dove on the *Spiegel Grove* wreck the day before. They did a penetration dive at that time as well, she said.

Here's what Herrin said happened on Friday:

One of the divers was stationed at the entrance of the and the other three went inside. The release did not say how deep the divers were. The ship was sunk about 5 miles off Key Largo in the Atlantic.

The diver left outside the wreck began to run out of air, according to detectives. He surfaced safely.

Two divers from another boat went down to look for the others. They surfaced with one diver who was in distress. That diver was taken on board a Coast Guard vessel where CPR was performed. Paramedics met the boat at shore and transported the victim to Mariner's Hospital where he was pronounced dead.

The two other divers did not surface and initial searches of the wreck failed to locate them.

Just after 2 p.m., a dive team from Key Largo Fire Rescue that was searching the wreck located their bodies inside. According to detectives, the bodies are so deep inside, it will be difficult to recover them. More divers from that team will be deployed to the wreck on Saturday and will make another attempt at recovery.

Names of the divers were not released pending notification of next of kin.

The USS *Spiegel Grove* was a Navy Landing Ship Dock that was sunk to create an artificial reef off Key Largo in 2002. The vessel is 510 feet in length and 84 feet wide. When it was sunk it went down on its side. In 2005, underwater currents caused by Hurricane Dennis shifted the ship upright into its present underwater berth. The highest point of the ship now sits 40 to 60 feet below the surface.



Island Ferries Take on Role of Research Vessels Collecting Data about Nantucket Sound

By Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution FALMOUTH, Mass.

Ferries that connect Cape Cod and the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket are taking on another role - research vessels. Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) biologist Scott Gallagher and colleagues have installed a package of sensors on the 235-foot freight ferry Katama to measure water quality and to photograph plankton as the ferry crisscrosses the western side of Nantucket Sound year-round, several times daily. "Hitchhiking science on a ferry provides a terrific opportunity for us to better understand how water quality and ocean life change over time," Gallagher said.

The measurements for the Nantucket Sound Ferry Scientific Environmental Monitoring System began in May. With the interest and cooperation of the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority, which operates the ferry service between Cape Cod and the islands, Gallagher and colleagues developed a sensor package to measure water temperature, salinity, oxygen, chlorophyll, and water clarity, and take images of plankton living in the water column.

Real-time data from the sensors travel over a wireless connection to Gallagher's shore-based lab, where he and WHOI colleagues Steve Lerner, Emily Miller, Andrew Girard, Andy Maffei, and collaborator Kevin Fall from Intel Corporation make them available to scientists and the public on the project Web site, <http://4dgeo.who.edu/ferries>. The WHOI team will be installing another instrument package on the Steamship Authority ferry Eagle, which runs between Hyannis and Nantucket on the eastern side of Nantucket Sound.

Their objective is to build up a detailed, continuous portrait of changing water conditions and plankton communities in Nantucket Sound over long time scales. Nantucket Sound is a triangular area of coastal ocean between Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket and is known for its changing water conditions and diverse marine life. The cold south-flowing Labrador Current nearby collides with warm water in the relatively shallow Nantucket Sound, creating a perpetual front just inside the eastern Sound. As water shifts with the wind and the tides, warm-water and cold-water species are thrust into the same space. Waters loaded with nutrients, from septic systems and runoff along the developed Cape Cod coastline, also mingle in the Sound with North Atlantic waters that have far fewer nutrients.

Gallagher studies plankton, the tiny and abundant swimming animals that serve as food for coastal fish and marine mammals. The numbers and proportions of different plankton in coastal oceans change with the seasons and ocean conditions, and Gallagher is interested in the processes and their time scales that control those changes. The availability of plankton can make the difference between healthy and undernourished stocks of commercial finfish and shellfish. Storms, nutrient runoff from coastal development, and the warming of coastal ocean waters could drastically alter the types of plankton that flourish in Nantucket Sound, and therefore the quantity and quality of food for fish, marine mammals, and ultimately people.

"A long-term archive of how conditions change in Nantucket Sound could provide an early warning about the health and function of coastal regions important to our economy and our quality of life," Gallagher said. The Nantucket Sound Ferry Scientific Environmental Monitoring System project is supported by the Woods Hole Sea Grant program.

Reef project gives new life to an old bridge

By Sean Flynn/Daily News staff

The Newport Daily News

NEWPORT - Barges depositing big blocks of concrete into Narragansett Bay to create artificial reefs have become a common sight in area waters the past few weeks. The concrete slabs are the salvaged remnants of the demolished Jamestown Bridge.

This week, people walking on the Cliff Walk could see a bulldozer on one of the barges pushing the concrete over the side, offshore from Sheep Point. The barge was close enough to shore for pedestrians to see the men working on its deck.

That area is one of three locations where the reefs are being created, said Frank Corrao, deputy chief engineer for the state Department of Transportation.

There is another location off Gooseberry Island, northeast of Sheep Point. The third location is in Rhode Island Sound and also is visible from Newport, Corrao said.

Thirteen demolition blasts brought down the old Jamestown Bridge last year between April 18 and Nov. 29. Fay Construction of Pennsylvania, a subcontractor, has been salvaging the metal and concrete from the demolished bridge. The prime contractor for the demolition project is Cashman Equipment Corp. of Boston.

Corrao said the DOT worked with federal and state agencies to make sure all the material is recycled. The metal was brought to a recycling firm in Providence, and the 43,000 tons of concrete from the bridge are being used to create the reefs, he said.

"The crevices and caverns formed by the slabs and chunks of concrete create a habitat for fish, algae, barnacles and different types of marine life that attach themselves to rocks," Corrao said.

David McLaughlin of Newport, an avid surfer and founder of Clean Ocean Access, was concerned whether the reefs would be close enough to the surface to affect wave action in Easton Bay. That will not be a problem.

"The artificial reefs are deep underwater and won't affect any navigable waters or boating," Corrao said. The reef project began in late summer and is expected to continue until April, weather permitting.

The DOT received a \$23.2 million federal grant for the bridge-razing project. Officials expect to have about \$1.5 million remaining when the rubble removal is completed.

The money will be used to build a new fishing pier on the North Kingstown side of the bridge and a bicycle path. The bike path will connect the park-and-ride lot on Route 1A with the Jamestown-Verrazzano Bridge, which replaced the Jamestown Bridge.

Accepted Hessian Lake Dives 2007

Sunday June 3rd at 9am
 Saturday July 7th at 9am
 Sunday August 5th at 9am
 Saturday September 8th at 10am
 Sunday September 30th at 10am
 Saturday October 13th at 10am
 Sunday October 21st at 10am

Cuba Drilling Threatens Keys

Last year, the U.S. Geological Survey estimated that Cuba's northern offshore basin contains 4.6 billion barrels of oil and 9.8 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. This could provide Cuba daily production of about 300,000. Cuba already has signed deals with foreign firms to begin drilling in a region, which is down current from the Florida Key's. U.S. state and federal parks and reserves officials are concerned that the drilling could adversely affect the reef system that attracts divers and other outdoor enthusiasts.



The Rockland Aquanauts are going to have their annual Dinner on April 15th 2007. The Dinner shall be held at Arthur's Tavern at 214 Kinderkamack Road Emerson New Jersey 07630. The phone number is 1-201-265-5180.

Appetizers shall be from 4:00 pm until 5:00 pm and Dinner shall be from 5:00 pm until 8:00 pm.

There shall be door prizes as well as awards. Don't forget to get your log books over to Allan Block for bottom time rewards. The date for this has been extended until the last week in March. Contact him for more details at allanjblock@yahoo.com .

The cost of the Dinner and appetizers shall be for 17.00 for Members and 27.00 for the first Guest.

Please send your checks to the treasure as follows;

The Rockland Aquanauts
c/o Paul Galeazzi Jr.
4 Greensward Drive
Valley Cottage N.Y.
10989

Deadliest Sea Creatures

Puffer Fish or Blowfish



Jeffrey L. Rotman, Corbis

A yellow puffer fish inflates its body as it swims near the Galapagos Islands, displaying protective spines which, like most of its other tissues, contain the deadly toxin tetrodotoxin. Most puffer fish are poisonous; their toxin is 1,200 times more powerful than cyanide. Puffer fish are considered a delicacy in Japan and Korea.



Rockland Aquanauts
Post Office Box 387
New City, NY
10956

April 2007

Spiegel Grove, Cuban Drilling, Annual Dinner, Membership Dues, Reef Project

****Don't forget****

**Annual Dinner
Sunday April 15th
at
Arthurs**

(details inside)