

02/01/2022

Good Morning Mike;

I wanted to explain why we should use the Vegetation Line as an indicator for shoreline passage and adopt Hawaii's shoreline access laws.

Here is why we should adopt Hawaii's Shoreline Access laws of using the Vegetation Line as a point of reference. First off, RI and Hawaii are more similar than at first glance. Both Hawaii and RI have an economy based on tourism and the usage of the shore. Both Hawaii and RI have a unique coastline, not found in many other states. Rocky, rock and sand, sand, and hard slate rock, they have lava rock...we have glacier deposits....but essentially unique to both locations. Using the vegetation line cannot be gamed, raked, or altered very well. It is literally where the ocean says...."nothing is going to grow here". It's a qualitative description of an ever changing dynamic shoreline and will change with sea level rise. Both Hawaii and RI have large waves and wild weather. Last week our waves were 20foot.....this is more common than you would think. Hawaiian natives and Narragansett natives both have historic ancestral rights to use the shore. Both Hawaii and RI have had a huge influx of investors buying up the shore and both states are addressing the issues that come with it. Using the seaweed line may incentify the building of hard structures. This would be the worst case scenario. CRMC has a GREENWAY program for public access. This creates access in urban areas along the shore as they become redeveloped. This Greenway program should be adopted on our south coast as well. As hard structures continue to be built in the cover of darkness, thus removing lateral shoreline access. The vegetation line would still be above any structure and would ebb and flow with the dynamic changes of our coast. RI is the second most densely populated state in the country, if we do not plan for future generations, our coast will be lost to those looking to privatize our state's greatest natural asset.

Thanks.

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