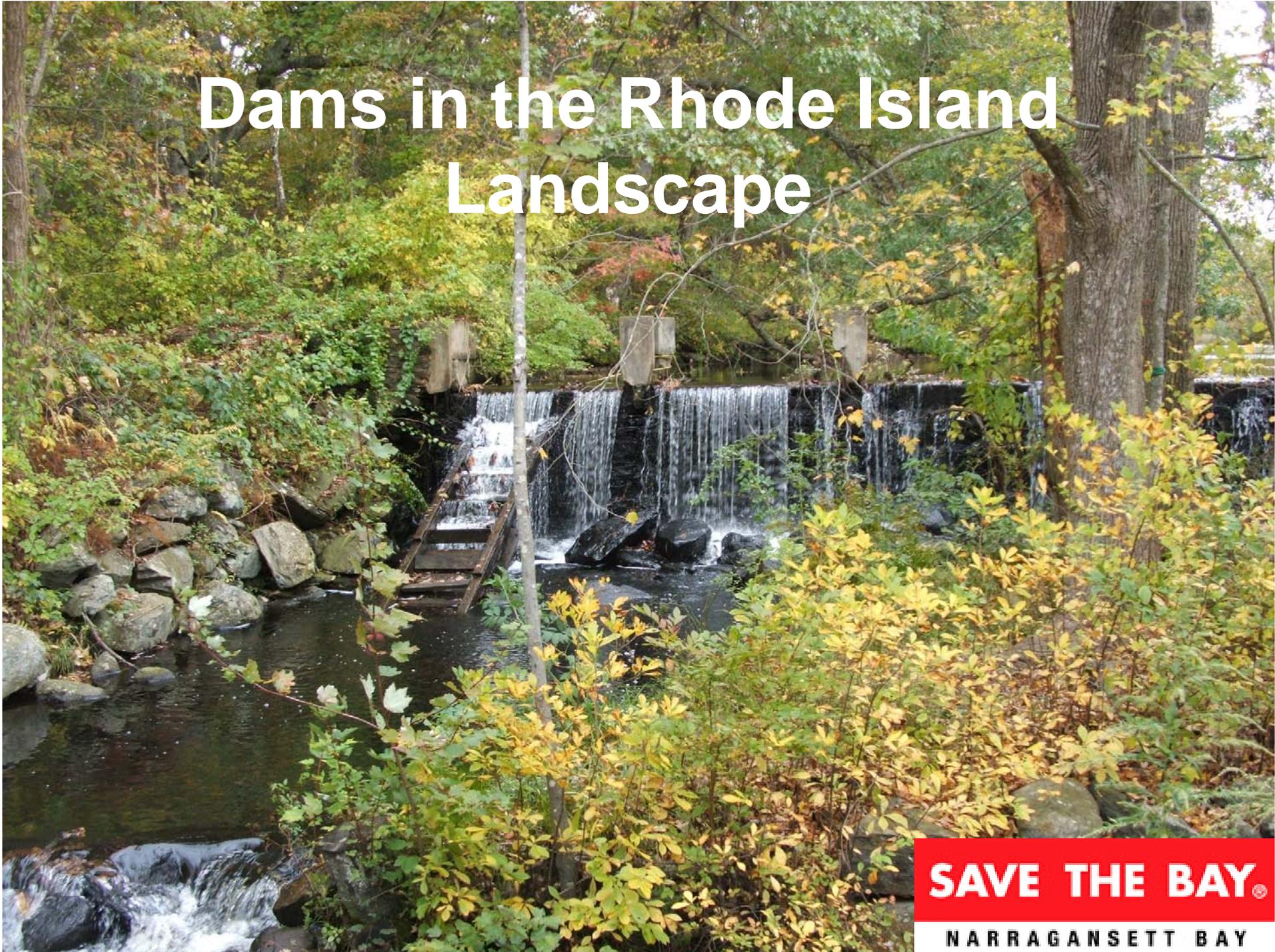
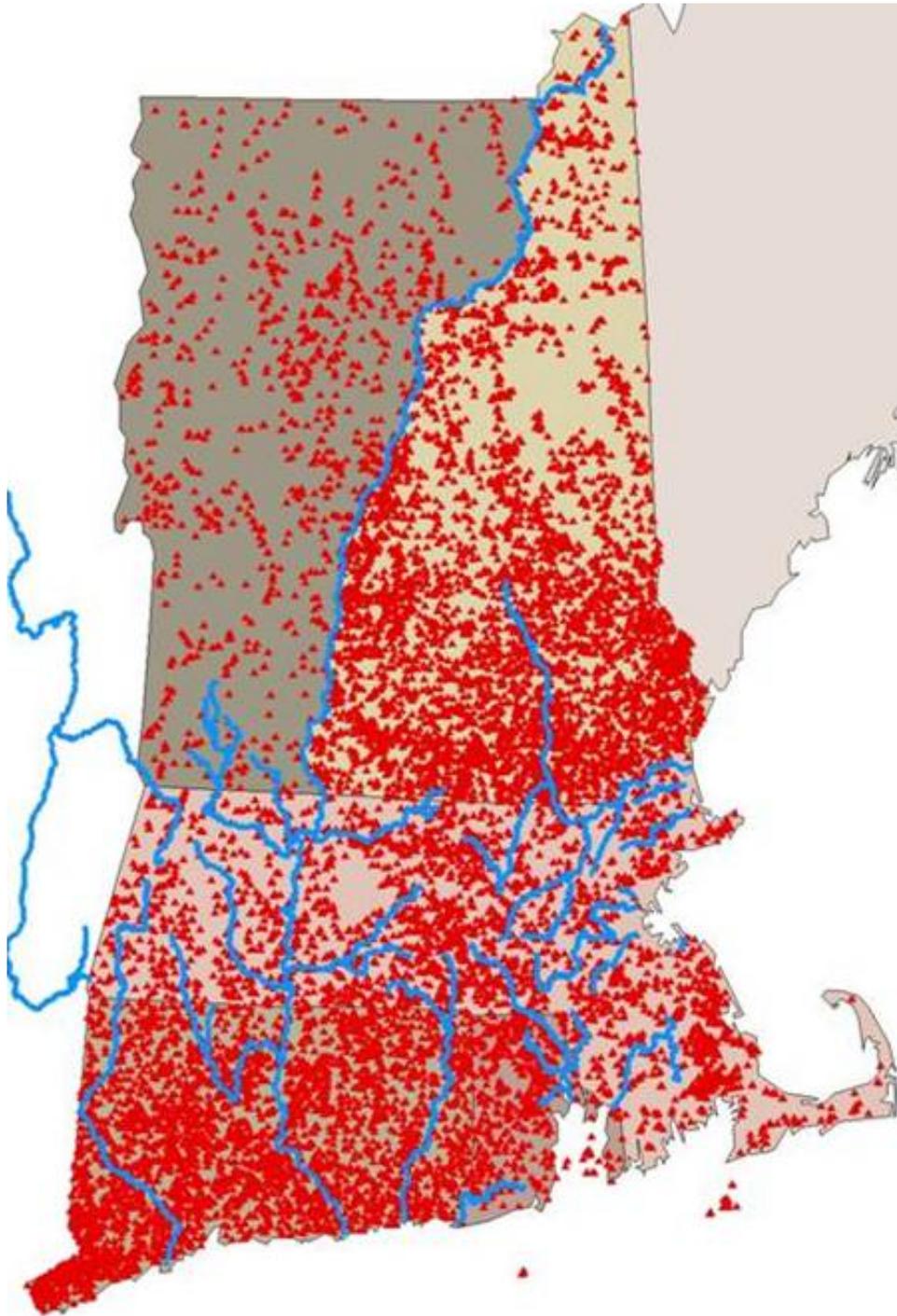


# Dams in the Rhode Island Landscape



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NARRAGANSETT BAY

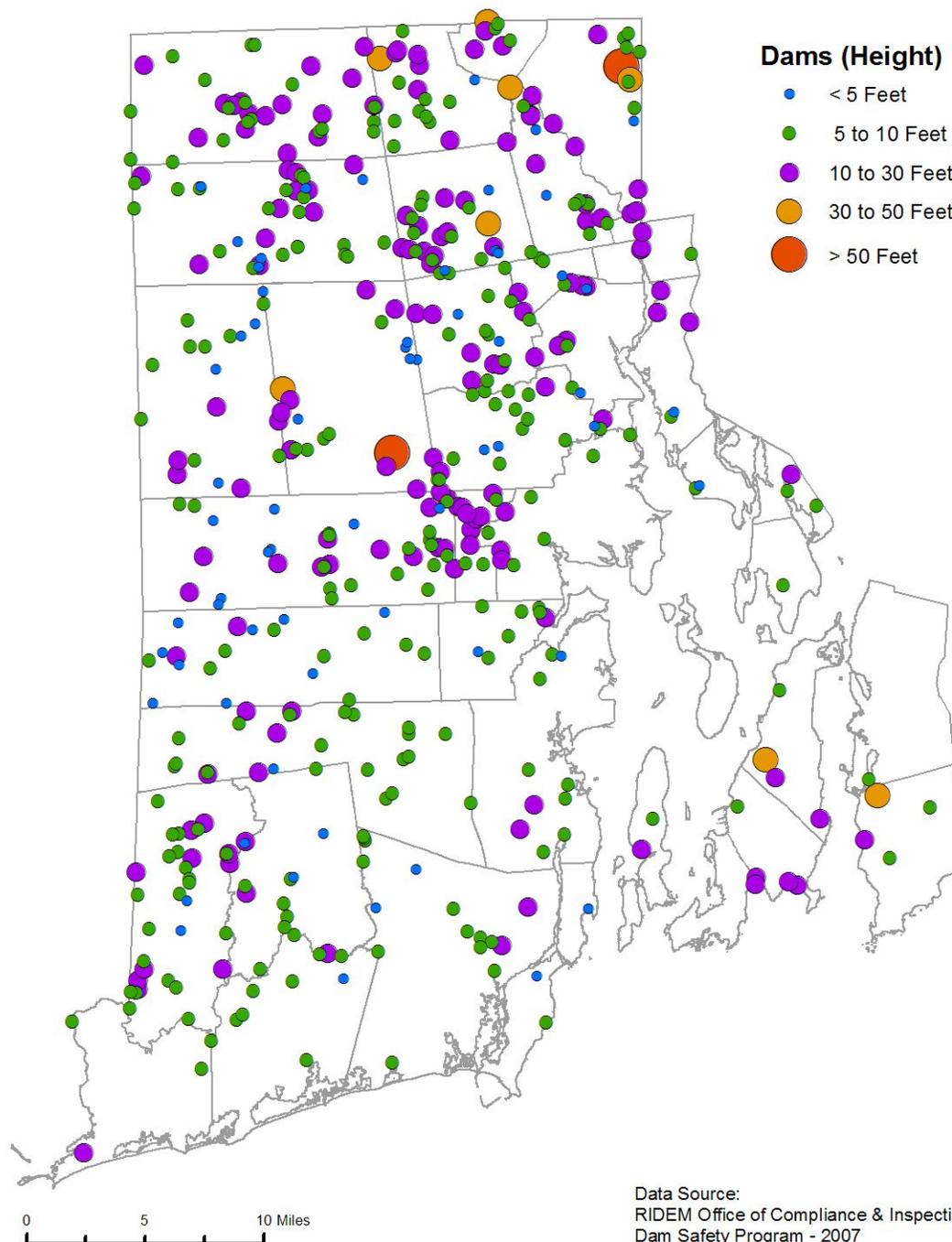


# Dams in New England

- 13,126 Dams in CT, RI, MA, VT, NH (databases)
- Majority not serving original purpose

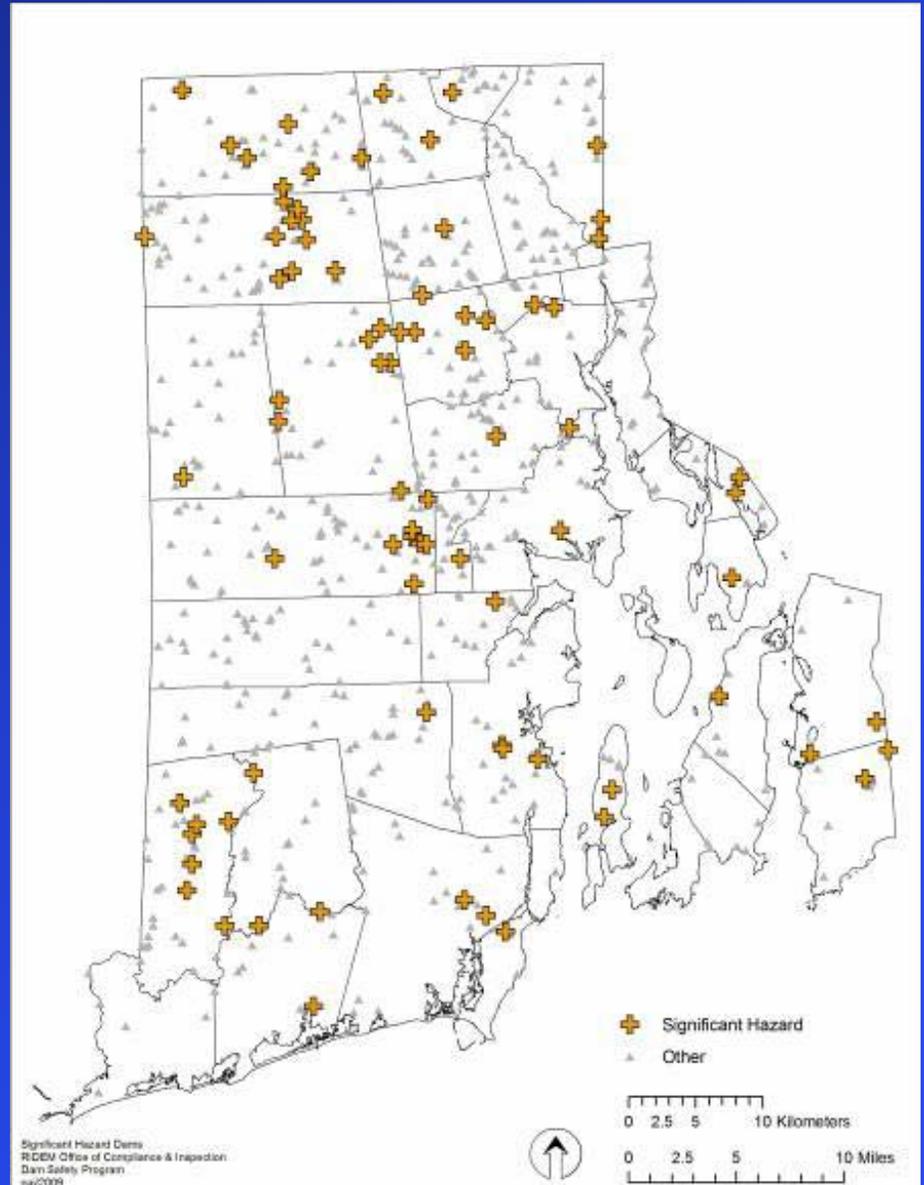
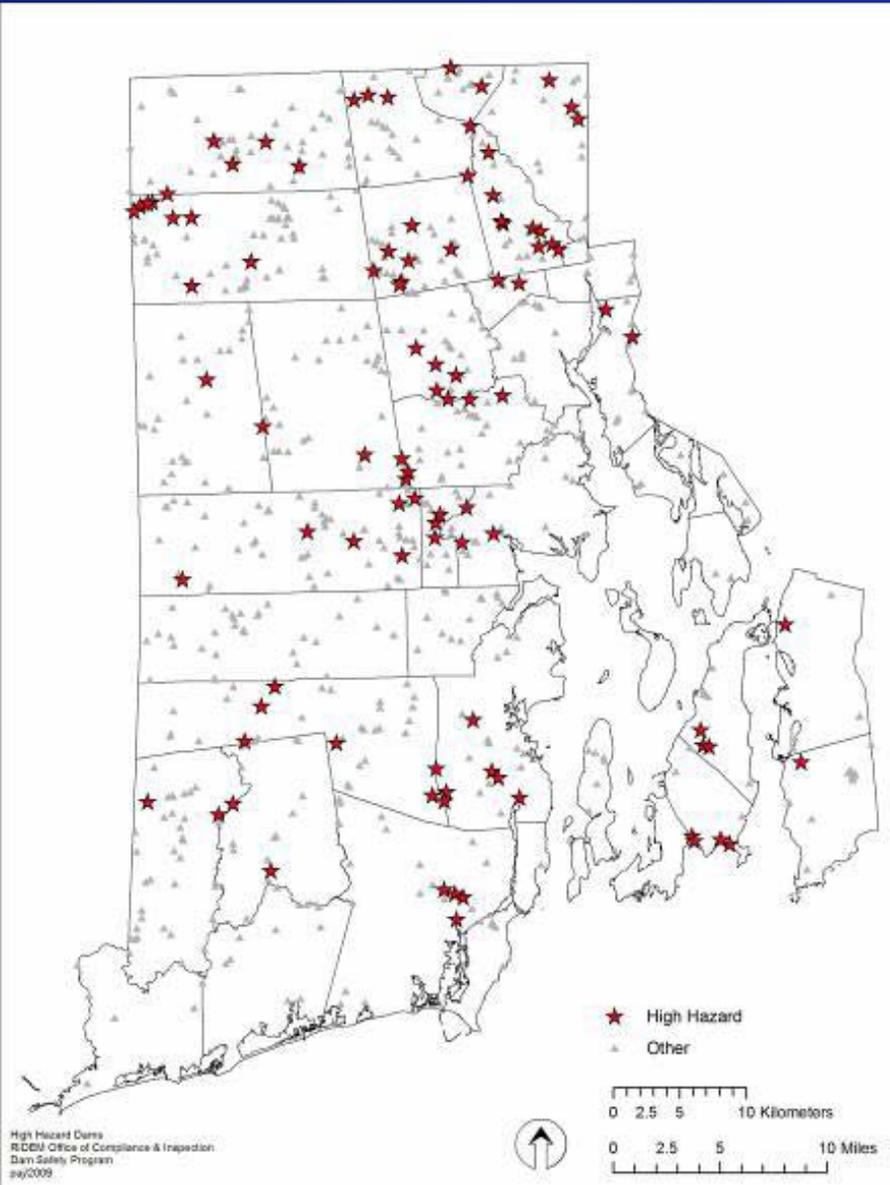


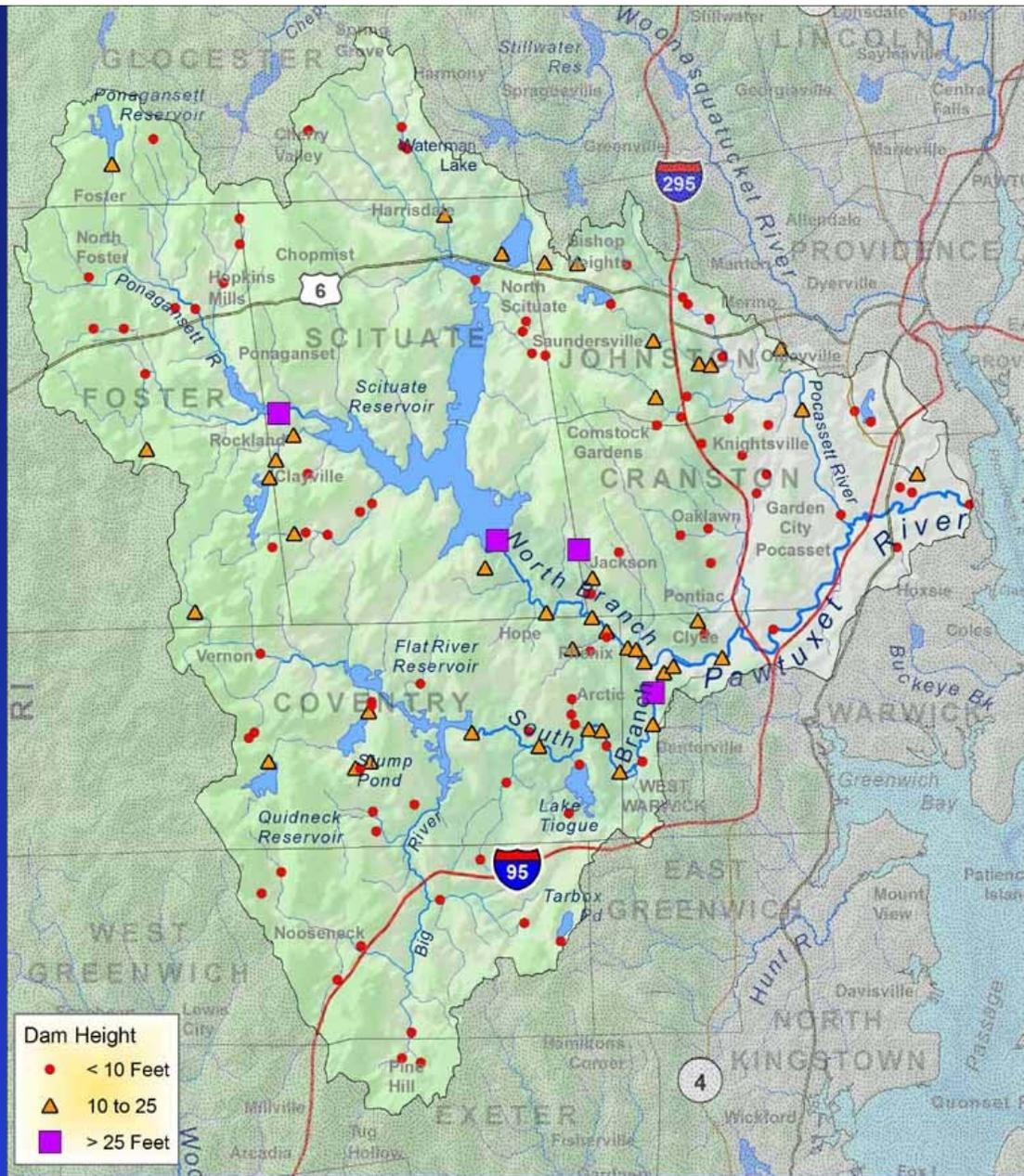
There are 671 regulated dams in Rhode Island



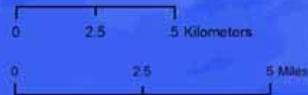
# 97 High Hazard

# 83 Significant Hazard



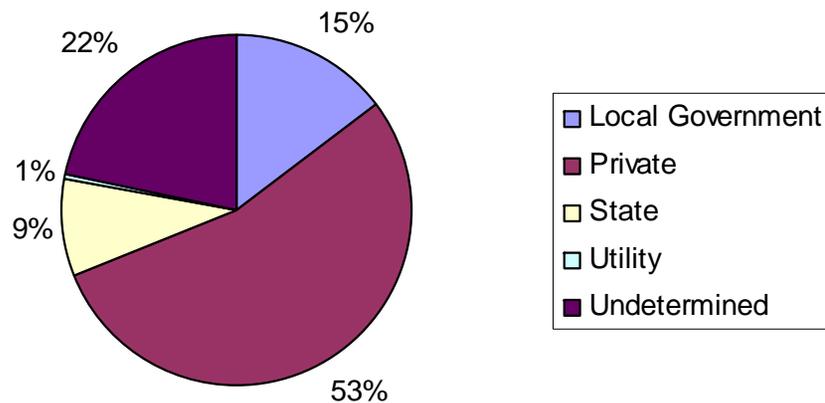


## Pawtuxet River Watershed 143 Dams

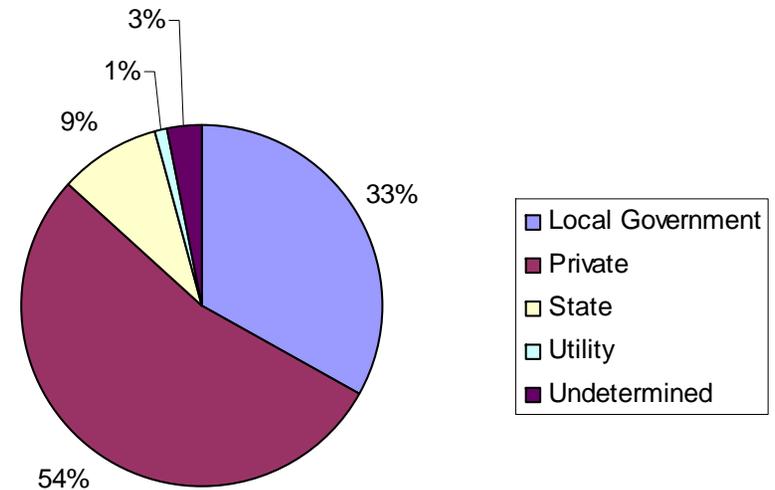


Most dams in RI are privately owned, but almost one quarter have no category and more have either wrong or no ownership information

**Dam Ownership by Category**



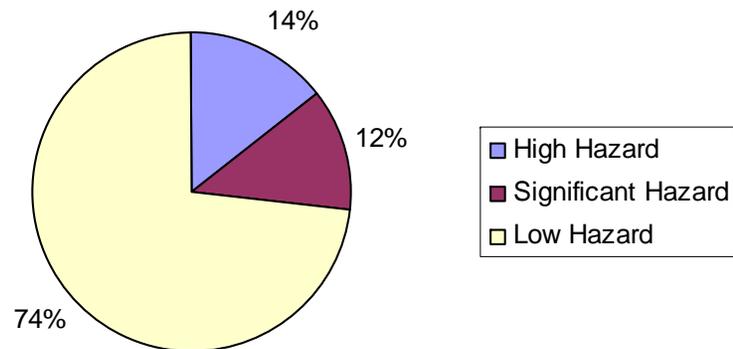
**High Hazard Dams by Ownership Category**



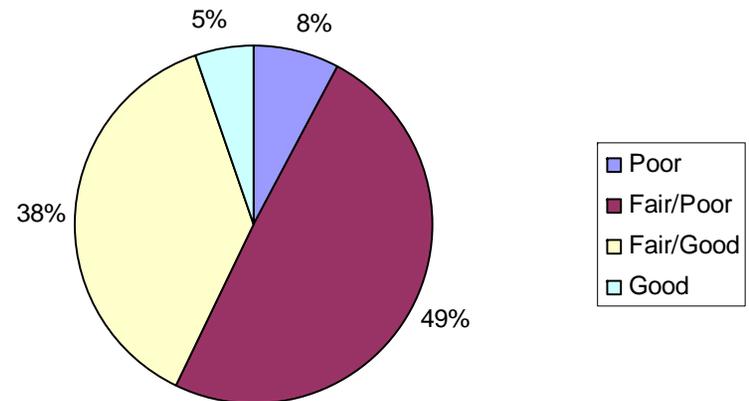
More than 150 dams have questionable ownership...

97 dams are listed as High Hazard, 43 of which are in poor/fair condition

**Hazard Classification**



**Condition of High Hazard Dams**





# Are These Dams Safe?

- Very few dams are inspected on an annual basis.
- Most of those are high hazard dams known to be in poor condition.
- Inspections are visual and do not include an engineering analysis.
- Not much is known about the condition of significant and low hazard dams.

# Whittenton Pond Dam, Taunton MA



- Significant Hazard
- Poor condition
- October 2005 high rains caused 2,000 people to be evacuated



# Forge Pond Dam, Freetown MA

- High rains the week of Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> caused dam to breach endangering downstream homes, dam and bridges



Photo: Boston Globe



- A dozen homes evacuated
- Traffic rerouted at downstream bridges

# Dam Safety

- Dams can be a liability
- Owners need to understand responsibilities
- Infrastructure that needs maintenance



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## Officials still fear dam collapse

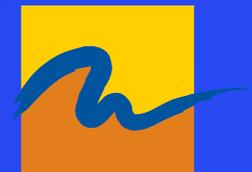
**Break in Massachusetts could leave town under 8 feet of water**

TAUNTON, Massachusetts (CNN) -- Water pouring through a 173-year-old wooden dam protecting Taunton has placed increasing strain on the structure, and officials said Tuesday they fear it could collapse.

"If the dam were to break ... we will see rising floodwaters in downtown Taunton," Mayor Robert Nunes told reporters. "We are monitoring the situation minute-by-minute."

## Expensive

- Maintenance costs
- Inspection costs
- Repair costs
- Repeated repairs



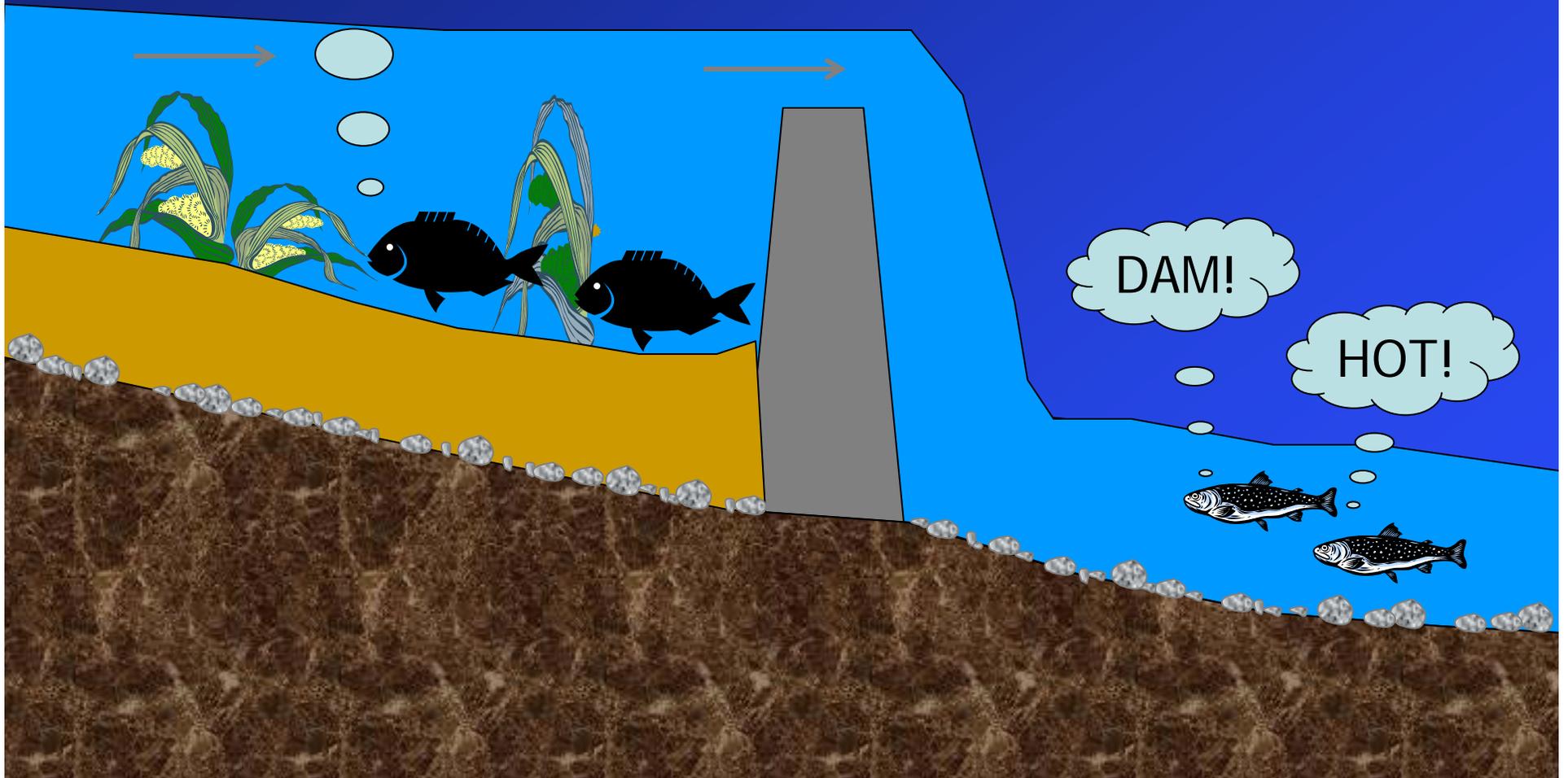
# What happens when dams are removed in an emergency...



The stream is not restored and fish continue to die.

# Ecological Impacts of Dams

HOT  
DIGGETY  
DAM!



DAM!

HOT!

# Benefits of Dam Removal

- River habitat restored
- Improved water quality
- Fisheries restored
- Recreation
- Eliminates maintenance costs
- Safety



Photo by  
Tim Watts



# Projects in Rhode Island

- Pawcatuck River – Shannock and Kenyon Mills
- Pawtuxet River – Pawtuxet Falls
- Woonasquatucket River



# Recommendations for Rhode Island

- Rivers are ecological systems
- Aquatic habitat restoration should be an explicit goal for Rhode Island
- More dams should be inspected
- Dams should be inspected by dam owners
- Projects need to be less cost prohibitive
- Streamlined permitting process
- Sediment standards
- Incentives for dam owners