



## RI Water Resources Board

235 Promenade Street, Third Floor, Suite 394

Providence, RI, 02908

Voice 401-222-1450 • Fax 401-222-1454

<http://www.wrb.ri.gov>

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## Big River Management Area to Begin Water Pump Test to Provide Drinking Water Quality and Quantity Information

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**Contact:** Kenneth Burke, Water Resources Board, (401) 222-1450; Amy Kempe, Governor's Office, (401) 222-8290

Governor Donald L. Carcieri announced today that the development of a new drinking water source from the Big River Management Area took another step forward with the start of an extended water pump test at two recently constructed wells. At the conclusion of the successful testing, the Water Resources Board expects to enter into a contract with a local water supplier to bring water to market.

When fully operational, the sustainable water withdrawals from the new wells in Big River are estimated at approximately four (4) million gallons per day.

“This marks a significant step forward in improving the quality and quantity of drinking water in Rhode Island,” said Governor Donald L. Carcieri. “We have known for decades of the potential of the Big River Management Area, and we are now on a path that will support sustainable and economically feasible production of water for Rhode Island. I commend the Water Resources Board and the Department of Environmental Management for the cooperation in moving this project forward in an environmentally and economically sound manner.”

Kenneth Burke, General Manager of the WRB states “Rhode Island has invested significant resources over several decades to ensure the sustainable production of water from Big River to benefit its residents. With the continued support of Governor Carcieri and our Board, WRB staff will pursue our permits and identify customers to enjoy this new water source.”

The State created the Big River Management Area in the 1960's by purchasing 8,400 acres in the Towns of West Greenwich, Coventry, Exeter and East Greenwich with the intention of building a reservoir. The Big River Reservoir plans were eventually discarded by the State in 1990 amidst concerns over potential environmental impacts.

The RI Water Resources Board (WRB) is responsible for managing the water resources of the State, including the Big River Management Area. The WRB performs scientific research of the State's water resources, cooperating with several Federal and State agencies, while also allowing some passive recreation in the Big River Management Area. At the direction of the Chairman of the WRB, Mr. William Penn, the WRB recently increased their focus to produce water from the Big River Management Area by commissioning business and groundwater models that will ensure the production of water in an economically and environmentally sustainable manner.