

# ERMD News

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Environment & Resource Management Division, SLA

Spring 2015

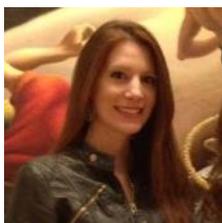


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## Chair's Column

By Abbey Gerken, ERMD Chair  
[gerken.abbey@epa.gov](mailto:gerken.abbey@epa.gov)



ERMD, are you all ready for this year's annual conference in Boston? We've been hard at work planning for two sessions this year, in addition to our division meetings. I'd like to encourage our membership to make it a priority to attend the board and business meetings this year. Your input during these meetings is invaluable to our success as a division!

ERMD's planned activities for the SLA 2015 Annual Conference are as follows (All locations TBD. Consult the online planner for updates: <http://www.sla.org/attend/2015-annual-conference/2015-online-planner/>):

**ERMD Business Meeting** – Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 8:00am – 9:00am

**ERMD Board Meeting** – Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2:30pm – 3:30pm

**Green Building Standards** – Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 11:45am – 1:15pm

**Cultivating Seed Libraries** – Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1:30pm – 3:00pm

Finally, we are in immediate need of a new Chair-Elect, as our Chair-Elect, Madison Bolls, needed to resign due to a conflict of interest with her new employer. The Chair-Elect will serve as the main planner for ERMD's activities at the SLA 2016 Annual Conference. Prior involvement with SLA or ERMD is **not** a prerequisite for this position. Anyone interested in the open Chair-Elect position, or any ERMD board positions for the coming year, should email me at [gerken.abbey@epa.gov](mailto:gerken.abbey@epa.gov). See you in Boston!

## ACRL/Choice publication seeks peer reviewers - Environmental Studies

By Anne Doherty, [adoherty@ala-choice.org](mailto:adoherty@ala-choice.org)

Resources for College Libraries (RCL) is currently seeking librarians with collection development experience in Environmental Studies to participate as peer reviewers. RCL is an online database recommending over 85,000 essential titles across 61 subjects for academic libraries and is co-published by the Association of College & Research Libraries' *Choice* magazine together with ProQuest.

Referees will be responsible for comprehensively evaluating the RCL subject's core bibliographic selections, along with its taxonomic organization. This is a one-time professional service opportunity and all referee work is scheduled for completion by August 15, 2015. For more information or to volunteer as a reviewer, contact Anne Doherty, [adoherty@ala-choice.org](mailto:adoherty@ala-choice.org), RCL Project Editor. Learn more about RCL at <http://www.proquest.com/products-services/Resources-for-College-Libraries.html>.

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## Editor's Note

by Bobbi Weaver, [baw@cwsl.edu](mailto:baw@cwsl.edu)

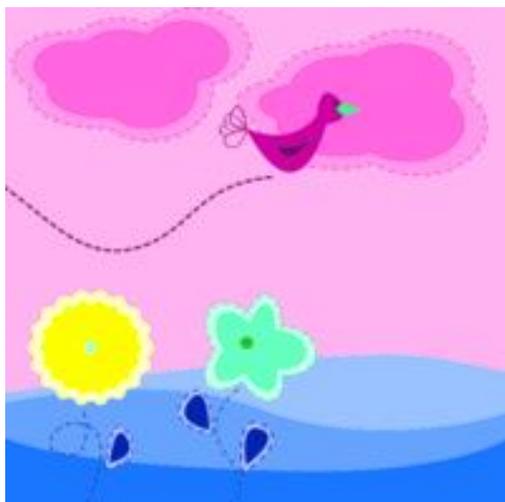
Its that time of year again when some of us prepare to attend the annual SLA conference. This year, we're heading to Boston.

In this issue, Abbey Gerken has summarized the ERMD programs at the conference in her chair's column. Sabrina Holley-Williams has written an article on tips while visiting Boston. There is also a book review and a DVD review on items relevant to environmental issues in the Boston area.

For the next issue, we'll be covering programs from the conference. However, we are still interested in any professional news you may like to share. Please send news items and ideas to me at [baw@cwsl.edu](mailto:baw@cwsl.edu).

Special thanks to those who contributed to this issue:

- Abbey Gerken
- Sabrina Holley-Williams
- Bobbi Weaver



## ERMD NEWS

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Environment and Resource Management Division of the Special Libraries Association

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COPY DEADLINES:

July 11—Summer Issue

Oct. 15—Fall Issue

Jan. 15—Winter issue

Apr. 17 — Spring issue

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# Welcome to Boston



Sabrina Holley-Williams, [holley-williams.sabrina@epa.gov](mailto:holley-williams.sabrina@epa.gov)

Headed to SLA 2015? Here's a mini guide to the area around the [Boston Convention Center](#). Built in 2004, this modern glass building is located in Boston's [waterfront Innovation District](#). The area is accessible by the [MBTA](#) via either Silver Line SL1 World Trade Center Station, which is about a block away from the convention center, or South Station, which at a little over a half a mile away, is also relatively convenient if you don't mind a longer walk. Use the [MBTA Trip Planner](#) to help you get around.

While you're here, take advantage of the location and explore historic Fort Point Channel. Start your day off with a gooey sticky bun or sugar brioche at the award winning bakery and café, [Flour](#). You'll likely find yourself returning later in the day for a sandwich on their fresh baked bread and a tantalizing treat, like a homemade Pop Tart or chocolate merengue.

For a casual fun waterfront experience, check out the [Barking Crab](#). Bringing the atmosphere and feel of a true New England crab shack to the city, the Barking Crab offers a variety of fresh seafood items, from a raw bar to buckets of crab legs and fire grilled lobster, to more fine dining style entrees.

In the evening, you'll be sure to want to turn your taste buds over to the skilled bartenders at [Drink](#). Give them a few hints about what you're in the mood for and they'll create a classic prohibition era cocktail just for you.

If you're a fan of Legal Seafood, you'll definitely want to check out its flagship location, [Legal Harborside](#), offering three levels of dining, each with its own twist. The first floor offers casual dining, picnic tables, and patio seating with a view of the Fish Pier; the second floor is a more formal dining room; the third floor is a rooftop lounge and bar with retractable walls and ceiling. For a more multicultural and unique dining experience, step across the street and check out Legal Test Kitchen.

Not a fan of seafood? Check out [Miel](#), a certified Green Restaurant offering French Provence-themed dining, or try some artisan wood fired pizza at [Pastoral](#).

Looking for something fun to do within the waterfront area? Check out the Boston [Institute of Contemporary Art](#), or if you have kids in tow head over to the [Boston Children's Museum](#). Fans of roadside kitsch, be sure to check out the giant Hood milk bottle. Or take the Red Line to Park Street Station and begin your walk through history at the start of the [Freedom Trail](#).

If you find yourself with time before or after the conference, and want to check out more of the state, fun is just a train or ferry ride away. Take the MBTA Commuter Rail to historic Salem. Venture to Cape Cod via the CapeFlyer train, which offers stops in Buzzards Bay and Hyannis. From Hyannis, you can hop aboard a ferry to Nantucket or Martha's Vineyard. Boston Harbor Cruises offers a ferry directly to Provincetown, as well as trips to the Boston Harbor Islands, harbor cruises, and whale watching.

Questions? Feel free to email me and I'll be happy to help, or offer more specific suggestions to your interests. Looking forward to seeing and meeting all of you in June.

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Image produced by SLA New England Chapter.

**Book Review: Eric Jay Dolin, *Political Waters: The Long, Dirty, Contentious, Incredibly Expensive but Eventually Triumphant History of Boston Harbor—A Unique Environmental Success Story* (c2004) [ISBN: 1558494456]**

Reviewed by Bobbi Weaver, [baw@cwsl.edu](mailto:baw@cwsl.edu)



This book traces the problem of sewage disposal from the time Boston was settled in the 1600s. Before sewage disposal systems were created, the early Bostonians disposed of their wastes in privy vaults or leaching cesspools. The privy vaults were customarily emptied at night, while the cesspools leached through beds of crushed stone.

As the city grew in population, the air in Boston became increasingly unpleasant. The author estimates that the first sewer was built in Boston sometime in the 1600s. The design ideas for the early sewage systems came from those in large European cities.

Those in the medical field began to show a connection between sewage disposal and disease. These findings prompted lawmakers to propose better sewage systems. During the late 1800s, more sophisticated sewage systems were planned and constructed for Boston. The city's main drainage system was constructed between 1877 and 1885. However, this system was not adequate to meet the sewage disposal needs of the growing city. The state legislature intervened and recommended the construction of additional sewage systems. In 1919, the legislature created the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) to oversee the sewage systems for the area.

Still, the problem of sewage disposal and its effect on the Boston Harbor and water quality continued into the 20th Century and the modern day. In the 1960s and 1970s, there were major revisions to federal water pollution legislation. In 1968, the Federal Water Pollution Control Administration (FWPCA) held a conference regarding the water quality of the Boston Harbor area. One of the attendees from the FWPCA asserted that the greatest pollutant in the harbor was from raw and partially-treated sewage amounting to 460 million gallons. In 1971, the Environmental Protection

Agency was formed to regulate, among other things, the control of water pollution. The EPA required publically-owned treatment plants to secondarily treat sewage, but these requirements could be waived if the sewage was discharged through ocean outfall in open ocean waters, provided the discharge would not adversely impact the open ocean or shore environments. Water authorities in Boston thought the city's system qualified for the waiver while EPA officials indicated secondary treatment of sewage in Boston would likely be required.

The Clean Water Act was significantly amended in 1972. New regulations regarding the waiver were issued by the EPA later that decade. The EPA tried to work with MDC to improve the sewage system, but found it necessary to issue an administrative order for compliance on August 8, 1980.

The abundance of untreated sewage discharged into the Boston Harbor began to wash ashore in the area. One Quincy politician personally encountered some and later filed a lawsuit on behalf of Quincy against the MDC. The result was in favor of Quincy, but it still took time for the harbor to be remedied.

On December 19, 1984, state legislation was passed to address the sewage problem in Boston. The MDC was replaced by the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA). During the following month on January 31, 1985, the EPA filed suit against the MDC, its successor MWRA, and the state for violations of the Clean Water Act. The lawsuit was later consolidated with that of an environmental group, Conservation Law Foundation (CLF), and the city of Quincy was permitted to intervene. On September 5, 1985, the federal judge ruled in favor of the EPA and CLF, and determined that the MWRA was responsible for remedying the violations. An appeal was not pursued at that time.

**DVD Review: *Wind Over Water*. Produced & directed by Ole Tangen Jr. (Fjordlight Productions, 2004). Run time: 35 minutes. Available from The Video Project at <http://www.videoproject.com/win-886-v.html> and Concord Media (UK) at <http://www.concordmedia.org.uk/products/wind-over-water-3001/>.**



Though this film was produced 11 years ago, the controversy surrounding the proposed construction of a wind turbine facility offshore in Nantucket Sound continues today. The project was proposed by Cape Wind in 2002, and involves the construction of an offshore facility to include 130 wind turbines spread out in a 24 square mile space in Horseshoe Shoals, an area 5 miles off the coast of Cape Cod.

It was the first offshore wind facility to be proposed in America. However, as noted later, it was not the first one to start construction. Beginning in October 2002, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers held a number of public meetings to hear concerns regarding the proposed construction of the facility. It along with other federal agencies developed an environmental impact statement for the project. (See, <http://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Program/Studies/Cape-Wind-FEIS.aspx>),

Proponents of the project argued that the placement for the facility is ideal because the winds are stronger and more consistent offshore. Many used similar projects in Denmark and other European countries as examples of past success. Supporters also argued that the plan could supply 3/4 of the energy needs of the community.

Greenpeace USA is one environmental group who has spoken in support of the project. The organization's position is that wind power is a way to offset the pollution caused by fossil fuel use.

Union and marine trade organizations have also supported the proposed project. Their reason for support is that the project would produce more, good-paying jobs.

There are many opponents to the project for various reasons. The Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound (<http://www.saveoursound.org/>) has argued that the wind power facility would adversely affect the ecosystem of

the sound and the economy of the community. Three Bays Preservation (<http://www.3bays.org/>) has likewise argued that the project poses a direct threat to wildlife in the sound.

The commercial fishermen in Cape Code have also expressed opposition to the project. Their concern is that the project will negatively impact the ecosystem and damage the fishing industry in the area.

Finally, tourism is a large part of the economy in the Cape Code area. One motel owner explained that her customers would get a view of multiple wind turbines rather than the natural view of the open ocean.

So, did the project ever come to fruition? The answer is no. However, very recently, a similar project did begin construction off the shore of Rhode Island. (Katie Valentine, "First Offshore Wind Farm in U.S. Kicks Off Construction," Think Progress, Apr. 28, 2015, at <http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2015/04/28/3651715/deepwater-wind-project-construction-starts/>.)

Despite recent setbacks (See, Jim O'Sullivan, "Two Utilities Opt Out of Cape Wind," Boston Globe, Jan. 7, 2015, at <http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2015/01/06/major-setback-for-cape-wind-project/kgqnYeAXRj03PyfIUn2iIM/story.html>), the project is still in existence. It still maintains a web site at <http://www.capewind.org/> and has a presence on Twitter® and Facebook®.



## **Book Review: *Political Waters***

*[continued from page 4]*

The parties began negotiations on the cleanup of Boston Harbor in October 1985. The federal judge ordered the parties to develop a schedule for remedies by December 2, 1985. The MWRA, EPA and MWRA met the deadline, but there were discrepancies in the plans for long-term remedies. On December 23, 1985, the judge decided upon an interim schedule for cleanup that accelerated some of the deadlines for the MWRA. The judge then ordered the parties to report on their progress on February 17, 1986.

The parties did not come to an agreement by the February meeting. They continued to negotiate during the next few months. On May 1 and 2, 1986, the judge held evidentiary hearings on the matter of long-term cleanup plans. On May 8, 1986, the judge issued a Long Term Scheduling Order.

In his order, the judge adopted some of the

MWRA's proposals, including construction of a new primary treatment plant to begin by December 1990 and a new secondary treatment plant to begin by 1995.

The long term schedule became known as the Boston Harbor Project (See, <http://www.mwra.state.ma.us/01news/2008/bhpenyironentalsuccess/bhpenvsuccess.htm> for more details.) The official end to the Boston Harbor Project was on September 6, 2000. The gates to the old facility were shut. Instead of being discharged directly into the Boston Harbor, most of the city's sewage was treated and flowing through a new outfall pipe that took it to the Massachusetts Bay.

In the conclusion to the book, the author mentions that there is still some controversy with respect to combined sewer outflows (CSOs). More information on CSOs can be found on the MWRA's page at <http://www.mwra.state.ma.us/03sewer/html/sewco.htm>.

### **Webinar on SLA 2015**

**Thurs., May 14, 2015, 3 pm, EST**

**Get ready to be revolutionary in Boston!**



Reserve a spot at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7287930671946797826>

**Questions?** Contact Laura Leavitt [[leavitt9@mail.lib.msu.edu](mailto:leavitt9@mail.lib.msu.edu)] or Tony Landolt ([tlandolt@reprintsdesk.com](mailto:tlandolt@reprintsdesk.com)).

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