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Contact Us

USDA NRCS
 60 Quaker Lane, Suite 46
 Warwick, RI 02835
 Ph: 401.828.1300
 Fax: 401.828.0433
www.ri.nrcs.usda.gov



Message from State Conservationist Roylene Rides at the Door

The Natural Resources Conservation Service in Rhode Island received its allocation for conservation programs for fiscal year 2007. Below is a list of programs and allocations received.

Programs	Allocations
Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)	\$2,794,778.
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)	2,587,686.
Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)	3,526,767.
Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)	\$659,962.
TOTAL	\$9,569,193.

In FY2007, the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) program and the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) ended. There will be no funds this year for the Conservation Security Program. All in all, for the above programs we did get a total increase of \$147,532 from last years funding.

This second year in Rhode Island, NRCS has received applications for EQIP aquaculturists. Agricultural producers may voluntarily apply to the program to help them improve environmental quality together with agricultural production on their farms.

The conservation dollars for Rhode Island will help accomplish our goals on private land such as fighting erosion, improving air and water quality and quantity, restoring eelgrass beds, enhancing wildlife habitat, and many other conservation projects.

USDA is committed to providing conservation tools and resources to help Rhode Island farmers ensure that their land remains healthy and productive.

I hope you enjoy Rhode Island NRCS's activity report. If you have any questions or need further information, please let me know.

ROYLENE RIDES AT THE DOOR
 State Conservationist

Field Staff Happenings/State-wide Upper Narragansett Bay

Jacob's Point Salt Marsh Restoration Project

by John Richard, Soil Conservationist



The majority of this project is located in the town of Warren, owned by the Warren Land Conservation Trust, with a small portion located in Bristol, owned by Audubon Society of Rhode Island. Jacob's Point was identified as a potential restoration site through Save The Bay's Narragansett Bay salt marsh evaluations done in 1996. There are many partners involved with this restoration project including Warren Land Conservation Trust, Audubon Society of R.I., Save The Bay, NOAA, URI, CRMC, and RIDEM. In 2005, Jacob's Point salt marsh restoration project was selected for funding under NRCS's Wetland Reserve Program. Jacob's Point is roughly a 50 acre salt marsh comprised of both high marsh (*Spartina patens*) and low marsh (*Spartina alterniflora*) vegetation. In the early 1900's the salt marsh was bisected into two cells by filling in the wetland with a dirt road for access to the water. Tidal flow to the southern cell of the marsh has been severely restricted due to the constructed road and the southern cell has been heavily invaded with *Phragmites australis* (Common reed). Water quality data collected has illustrated that the salinity of the southern cell is relatively zero, while the northern (unrestricted) cell of the marsh showed a high salinity gradient from the open water through the tidal ditches. The restoration goals include restoring tidal flow to the restricted area in order to reestablish classical salt marsh vegetation to help protect and save this endangered estuarine habitat. Tidal channels are planned to be resized and/or created to restore the tidal flow. Also, three existing stone culverts will be resized to facilitate the flow of salt water from tidal channels to reach the southern cell. NRCS and project partners have already begun the permitting process, and construction is currently planned for fall/winter 2007.



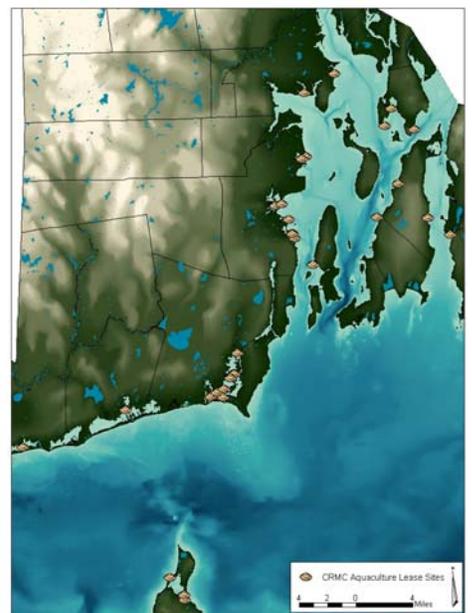
Lower Narragansett Bay

RI NRCS Shellfish Management Program Report

by Justin Tuthill, Soil Conservationist



The Rhode Island NRCS Shellfish Aquaculture Management Program turns one year old on April 24, 2007. Financial assistance to aquaculture growers, including shellfish farms, was authorized through the 2002 Farm Bill in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) final rule, stating "Livestock means animals produced for food or fiber such as dairy cattle, beef cattle, poultry, turkeys, swine, sheep, horses, fish and other animals raised by aquaculture." This voluntary component of EQIP was introduced to Rhode Island shellfish farmers for the 2006 fiscal year through a new practice standard titled "Shellfish Aquaculture Management" and since





that time the program has grown tremendously.

In the first year alone, approximately \$280,000. was obligated for conservation practices on 11 shellfish farms across Rhode Island. This represents 40% of the all the growers in the state. To date, 56% of practices planned for 2006 have been implemented or installed and by the end of April, 77% of practices planned with in the first year will have been implemented. In addition, 30% of practices scheduled for 2007 have been completed resulting in 9% of practices being implemented ahead of schedule.

The Rhode Island NRCS EQIP Shellfish Management program builds upon the highly successful Massachusetts EQIP pilot project on Cape Cod; which made cost-share assistance available to shellfish farms in 2005. NRCS in partnership with Roger Williams University & the University of Rhode Island adapted the Massachusetts program to fit the unique resource conditions and industry technology in Rhode Island waters. Components eligible for cost share under the RI "Shellfish Aquaculture Management" practice standard include Gear Waste Disposal, Outboard Engine Disposal and Replacement, Fuel/Oil Spill Prevention Kit, Gear Cycling, Grant Delineation Markers and Plant/Wildlife, Disease and Environmental Monitoring.

Currently NRCS has received 8 new applications for the RI NRCS Shellfish Management Program. Of these applications 4 have received funding under the 2006 program and 4 have never before applied for EQIP. The total requested funding for shellfish farmers now under consideration is approximately \$180,000. If the 2007 applicants are awarded funding, the EQIP program will have a bit more than 50% of all Rhode Island shellfish farmers enrolled in cost share conservation programs.



Economics - Happenings

by Reena Shaw, Economist

The modified FY 2007 cost list is currently available to the public on the Rhode Island NRCS websites for our EQIP and WHIP Farm Bill Programs.

Expect changes to the format of the cost list in FY 2008, which will be transformed into Payment Schedule. This change is taking place, in part, because, the basis of program payments has taken on additional significance in regard to World Trade Organization (WTO) green box compliance and an Internal Revenue Service ruling on the exclusion of conservation payments from gross income, both of which require payments to be based on practice or activity costs incurred, or forgone income by the producer.

NRCS is implementing this new process for a Payment Schedule, Nationwide, to simplify and streamline conservation program development while ensuring that the cost basis for payments is adequately documented so that it will be WTO green box compliant.

The State Economist is now working with cost data toward preparation of the FY 2008 cost list which will be transformed to the Payment Schedule format. The deadline for states to complete documentation for their cost data development is July 30, 2007, with the Payment Schedule being implemented for FY 2008.



Cultural Resources - Happenings

by Reena Shaw, Economist

No update.

NEPA - Environmental Assessment Flow Diagrams

by Reena Shaw, Economist

The State Economist continues to work with representatives from the other New England States and staff from the ENTSC to complete Environmental Assessment (EA) flow diagrams to meet NEPA requirements. Team members are working toward completing the final draft of the EA the first week of April.

Efforts are being made toward establishing a teleconference meeting time for the State Conservationists of all the participating states to discuss the EA and the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Once all the State Conservationists have signed the FONSI, a Notice of Application will be published in the Federal Register.

Biological Sciences - Happenings

by Andrew Lipsky, State Biologist

In December, Andrew presented at the Northeast Aquaculture Conference and Expo in Mystic, Ct. Andrew and Dale Leavitt, RWU, lead a technology transfer session that provided an overview of the RI & MA EQIP Shellfish program and information for growers in other states on how to initiate EQIP in their states.

Third National Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration, Forging the National Imperative.

On December 9-13, 2006, the habitat restoration community met for the 3rd National Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration to share their work, spirit and energy in pursuing coastal restoration as a national imperative. The 5-day Conference offered over 82 sessions exploring the latest advances in all aspects of habitat restoration. USDA NRCS was one of the ten lead sponsors for this historic conference, set in the heart of hurricane devastated New Orleans. The Conference drew 1400 participants from throughout the United States and the world - including China, Belgium, The Netherlands, Vietnam, New Zealand, Nigeria, England, Canada, and Cote-d'Ivoire - to learn about the challenges facing our coasts and estuaries. These participants represented all segments of the restoration community, including businesses and corporations, governments at all levels, tribes, non-profit organizations, and scientific and academic professionals. Andrew was selected to give an oral presentation entitled "The 2002 Farm Bill, Its effect and potential in restoring coastal and estuarine ecosystems." Farm Bill program funded projects that have resulted in estuary and coastal restoration throughout the U.S were presented along with guidance on how to take advantage of the Farm Bill along our nation's coasts and bays.



Ecological Sciences - Update

by J. Eric Scherer, State Resource Conservationist
Field Office Technical Guide

Implementation information was gathered for the interim practice standard, 789 - Transition to Organic Production, and the practice was evaluated by all the New England States. An annual report was compiled by Alice Begin, Resource Conservationist from Maine.

Engineering - Update

by Frank Vogel, Assistant State Engineer
Pocasset Floodplain Management Study (FPMS)

Final review comments from the National Water Management Center are being incorporated into both the popular and technical reports of the Floodplain Management Study.

Engineering Services:

No additional information since the last update.

Grazing Land Conservation Initiative (GLCI)

by Michael Merrill, GLCI Coordinator

Rhode Island was represented at the Third National Conference on Continue discussions of an agreement with RC&D to provide some GLCI services. Regional GLCI coordinators for NRCS chose to not meet for the Forage Suitability Group meeting in Amherst, MA due to budget constraints. Further discussion on grazing planning software to be used. Nationally, GSAT is being suggested, but New England states may be considering other approaches (e.g. C-Graze, VT tools, etc.).

Earth Team Volunteer Program - Update

by Jeanne Comerford, State Volunteer Program Coordinator

Rhode Island Volunteer Improves Trout Habitat, *by Meagan Shaffer, Biologist and Chris Modisette, RC&D Coordinator*



Lawson Cary is a native of western Rhode Island and is a devoted naturalist, outdoorsman, and fly fisherman. He has a strong interest and passion in restoring native brook trout habitat for the protection and preservation of this fish species. In Rhode Island one threat to native brook trout are road and stream intersections. These intersections disrupt

the continuity of river and stream ecosystems, thereby inhibiting upstream and downstream fish passage. As a result, native brook trout habitat is being degraded and brook trout populations are being reduced. As an observant naturalist, Lawson noted these problems and approached the Rhode Island Resource Conservation and Development Area Council (RI RC&D) and the USDA-NRCS with the idea to inventory





road and stream crossings and to assess fish passage. With Lawson's enthusiasm and motivation, the RI River and Stream Continuity Project came into existence.

Lawson Cary has been a dedicated Earth Team Volunteer, inventorying stream and road crossings since November 2005. For the past 1 1/2 years, Lawson has lead volunteer groups from the Trout Unlimited-Narragansett Chapter (TU), the Wood Pawcatuck Watershed Association, and the USDA-NRCS in the inventory of stream crossings in both the Upper and Lower Wood River watersheds of Rhode Island. Lawson and his teams have field checked over 290 road and stream crossings which entails collecting data and field measurements and documenting the crossings with upstream and downstream photos. In this effort Lawson and his TU volunteer crew alone have logged approximately 670 volunteer hours!

Lawson's eagerness and enthusiasm are contagious and he is always willing to teach and share his knowledge of the natural world. Spend a day in the field with Lawson and he will tell you numerous stories of the changing RI landscape and of course, plenty of fly fishing stories! Show him a picture of a stream crossing and it is guaranteed he will be able to identify the stream and road name. He is a wealth of information and has been an advisor and mentor to countless volunteers on this project; guiding, teaching, and inspiring them with his wisdom and knowledge of the brook trout's life history traits and habitat requirements.

Lawson's commitment to restoring a stable brook trout population in Rhode Island is evident from his volunteer hours and his passion for the protection and preservation of native brook trout habitat. With a deep respect for nature, Lawson's motivation for his volunteer work comes from his mission to maintain a healthy native population of brook trout for future generations of Rhode Islanders to enjoy and observe. Lawson is the motivation and the solid foundation for the RI River and Stream Continuity Project. It is through his inspiration and his knowledge of native brook trout that the project continues to move forward. Lawson, the NRCS, RI RC&D and the native brook trout greatly appreciate your efforts! edition

Farm Bill Programs - Update

by Mike Moorman. Assistant State Conservationist for Programs

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

NRCS Rhode Island received \$3,526,767 for FY 2007 EQIP projects. This reflects a 7% increase over last year's budget.

The deadline for approving applications and entering them into the Protracts contracting system was extended from March 15, 2007 to April 15, 2007. Our office received A total of 84 applications for a variety of projects throughout the state. Of these applications, 70 met the minimum eligibility requirements and will be ranked by NRCS for funding. All contracts that score high enough in the ranking will be pre-approved or approved in the Protracts contracting system by April 15, 2007. All funds will be obligated in Protracts by June 1, 2007.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

All planners are busy developing information and creating conservation plans for the upcoming ranking to be completed on February 15, 2007. All projects will be pre-approved by March 15 2007. All pre-approved applicants will work with their planners to develop the final conservation plans and conservation contracts. All contracts will need to be signed and approved by June 1, 2007.

Wetland Reserve Program

NRCS is working on a strategy to utilize the Wetland Reserve Program funding in Rhode Island. We are developing a *"WRP Riparian Area Action Plan"*. Current WRP rules allow NRCS to use WRP to purchase easements areas that fall under the following:

Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program

The FY 2007 budget for FRPP was announced on March 15th. Rhode Island has \$2,794,778.

There are several changes to the FRPP program this year. The National NRCS office is implementing some changes to the application requirements. The first is a stricter enforcement of the 18 months time frame for completing the purchase of easements. This time frame can only be extended by the Deputy Chief for Programs, only for individual parcels, and only if extenuating circumstances exist. The Program is returning to the one-year life of appraisals this year with the effective date being when the appraiser says the appraisal is effective.

The biggest change will be the addition of an Attachment B that will list the parcels from which we can replace the funded parcels on Attachment A. If the cooperating entities do not identify alternative parcels on Attachment B and the parcels on Attachment A withdraw, we will not be able to add new parcels to the agreement.

In order to facilitate meeting the 18 month deadline for closing easements, the National office is implementing new requirements that have been issues leading to delays in the conservation easement deed review and approval process.

Wetland acreage and forested acreage must be provided at the time of application.

Submittal of documentation that a property is listed on a federal, tribal, or state register (as applicable) must be provided with the application and a description of their values must be included in the conservation easement. The cooperating entities need to indicate that they have the ability to enforce the provisions of the conservation easement deed that applies to historic properties.

An indication of the landowner's desire to subdivide, build additional residences, or apply for an impervious surface limitation waiver, and A declaration of ownership of third party mineral rights (as applicable) needs to be included with the application.

To ensure that the closing of easements will occur within the 18 month time frame, the Rhode Island State office is considering implementing



additional measures for applications such as requiring applicants to have already secured 75% of the non-federal funds needed to purchase the easement and have a pre-appraisal completed.

The deadline for submitting an application is April 27, 2007

Operations

by Jackie Pashnik, Management Analyst

Personnel Actions

- Suzanne Enser, intermittent Biologist, resigned effective March 26 as she is moving out of state.
- Meaghan Shaffer, intermittent Biologist, resigned effective May 1 to accept a permanent job outside the agency.
- Jesse Bateman, was hired under the Student Career Experience Program as a Biological Science Student Trainee, effective April 2. Jesse is a student at Brown University.
- Joel Schmidt, Hydraulic Engineer, resigned effective May 12 to accept a job with another agency.
- Ron Lewis was promoted to a GS-10 Civil Engineering Technician effective April 15
- Brenda Venable was promoted to a GS-7 Accounting Technician effective April 15

Performance Update

by Jackie Pashnik, Management Analyst

Performance Measures	Program	Goal
Conservation plans written, acres	CTA	5,000
	CTA-GLCI	400
Watershed or area-wide conservation plans developed, number	CTA	2
	RC&D	4
Soil surveys mapped or updated, acres	SOILS	1,000
Cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality, acres	AMA	28
	CTA	150
	EQIP	450
Land with conservation applied to improve water quality, acres	CTA	100
	CTA-GLCI	100
	CRP	10
	EQIP	500
CNMP written, number	EQIP	9
CNMP applied, number	EQIP	7
Land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency, acres	AMA	20
	CTA	100
	EQIP	150
Grazing and forest land with conservation applied to	CTA	100





protect and improve the resource base, acres	CTA-GLCI	200
	EQIP	300
Non-federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality, acres	CTA	200
	EQIP	500
	WHIP	1,000
Wetlands created, restored or enhanced, acres	CTA	100
	WRP	30
Farmland, forestland, and grazing lands protected by conservation easements, acres	FRPP	219
	GRP	12
Prime, unique, or important farmland protected by conservation easements, acres	FRPP	109
Land and water resources benefited by RC&D projects, acres	RC&D	2000
Local businesses created in rural communities, number	RC&D	2



Training, Conferences, and Meetings - update

by Jackie Pashnik, Management Analyst

- Co-sponsor of Land and Water Summit, URI, March 24
- Co-sponsor of Rhode Island Natural History Conference, Invasive Species: A Threat to Rhode Island's Biodiversity.
- Tim Pindell attended Certified Crop Advisor training in Portsmouth, NH, receiving continuing education units to maintain NRCS Planner Specialist designations for CNMP, and pest management.
- J. Eric Scherer and Tim Pindell attended NRCS training in Bangor, Maine to learn about recent updates to the Food Security Act - Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance, and Appeals information. As a result of this training, a request for technical assistance was made to assist the New England states develop a wetland functional assessment process.
- Jeanne Comerford, Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) attended the CFC Awards Luncheon in Newport, March 20, 2007. A platinum award was presented to NRCS.



Outreach and Communications-Happenings

by Jeanne Comerford, State Public Affairs Specialist

Event	Date	Attendees
Harvest New England Conference, Sturbridge, MA.	2/28-29/07	200
Rhode Island History Survey Conference, Warwick, RI	3/22/07	199
Land & Water Conservation Summit, URI	3/24/07	250
The Promise and the Challenge of Urban Rivers, Boston, MA	3/29/07	400
Rhode Island Farm Ways, Bristol, RI	3/28/07	40

Soils Program - Happenings

by Jim Turenne, Assistant State Soil Scientist

New Soil Series Established in Rhode Island! For the first time in over 2 decades a new soil series has been established in Rhode Island. The Pishagqua, fine-silty, mixed, superactive, nonacid, mesic Typic Sulfaquents (Pishagqua series) was established as a tentative series in March 2007. The subaqueous (underwater) Pishagqua soils are mapping in low-energy basins on lagoon bottoms in the coastal lagoons of Rhode Island, they will most likely also be mapped in similar coastal locations in the northeast. The name Pishagqua is the Algonquian term for “mud” which describes the look and feel of the soil. The Pishagqua soil consists primarily of highly fluid, black colored silt loam textured soil derived from estuarine material. The soil staff is currently working on map unit descriptions, interpretive properties, and use and management of the Pishagqua soil and also plans to establish several other subaqueous soil series as part of the coastal zone soil survey.

To read about the Pishagqua soil visit:

<http://www2.ftw.nrcs.usda.gov/osd/dat/P/PISHAGQUA.html>

A geophysical survey was performed on Sawmill Pond located in North Kingston. A ground-penetrating radar (GPR) survey of the 8 acre pond was completed by the soils team with assistance from the Massachusetts soil survey GPR specialist. The GPR provides a continuous profile of the subsurface layers of the submerged soils occurring in the pond (more information about GPR technology can be found at: <http://nesoil.com/gpr>). Results of the GPR survey revealed the pond consists of 4 peat-filled kettle holes that had a maximum depth of 13 feet. A contour map of the pond bottom was generated from the GPR Data. The request for the GPR assistance came from the Southern Rhode Island Conservation District.

As part of a “maintenance” plan for the terrestrial soil survey of Rhode Island the soils team with assistance from Connecticut NRCS collected soil cores in swamps and bogs in various locations in southern RI. The soil cores in these wetland areas will be analyzed to determine the classification of the organic soils so they can be re-correlated to soil series that are now mapped in the region. Currently the Adrian and Carlisle soils are the two organic soils mapped in RI. These soils were established in Michigan and are no longer mapped in the glaciated northeast.

Remembering the Past: An on-going effort to convert historical soil data to electronic format has been conducted by the RI NRCS Envirothon Intern Michelle Marasco. Michelle scanned 3 soil series benchmark reports published in the 1960's for the Paxton, Bridgehampton, and Charlton soils. These are major soil series mapped throughout the northeast; copies of these documents are available on the Nesoil.com web site. Michelle also scanned 212 soil profile descriptions that were collected during the 1960-1970's when the soils were being mapped in Rhode Island.



Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D)

by Chris Modisette, RC&D Coordinator

Rhody Warm Project



- A Rhody Warm blanket was featured at the Rhode Island Department of Economic Development display booth at the American Bus Association National Meeting in Grapevine, Texas in January;
- The Rhody Warm blanket was featured at the New England Grange Leader's Conference held in Newport, RI, January 2007;
- The Rhody Warm project was the recipient of the 2006 Partners in Conservation Award from USDA-NRCS in Rhode Island;
- Final total of blankets manufactured in 2006 was 371. **ALL BLANKETS WERE SOLD AS OF MARCH 19, 2007!**
- Beyond Rhode Island blankets have been distributed to **Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, Mississippi, California, Washington, Nevada, and Vermont;**
- Article of Rhody Warm in State Ag Newsletter;
- Working with **East Bay Living Magazine** for a feature article on the project to be released in fall 2007. East Bay Living is the lifestyle magazine of the East Bay region which includes Barrington, East Providence, Warren Bristol, Tiverton, Little Compton and Seekonk, MA to Newport, and Westport, MA.;
- Have been approached by RI Alpaca growers about the feasibility of participating in the project;
- Feature article on the project in the **Providence Sunday Journal on March 18, 2007** resulted in **orders of over 80 blankets for 2007.**
- Set preliminary dates for two (2) Skirting Workshops on April 24 or 25 in South County and Saturday, May 19 at the Coggeshall Fiber Festival in Bristol;
- Set wool shearing dates for public viewing on April 7, 2007 at Maybe Tomorrow Farm in Glocester, RI; April 14th at Seldom Seen Farm in Glocester, RI; April 21st at the Ballyduff Farm in Glocester; and May 12th at Watson Farm in Jamestown, RI;
- Participating in the Coggeshall Farm Wool and Fiber Festival on Saturday, May 19, 2007;
- Set 2007 Wool Collection Day – Saturday, June 16, 2007 at the Urban Edge Farm in Cranston.
- As a group, The Rhody Warm Project Committee have participated in over 28 different meetings and a wool collection day to help move this forward and contributed in excess of 700 hours of time to the project;
- They have contributed countless hours of their own time and, in some case, their personal finances, to do all the little things that need to be done to make any project a success.
- Their work resulted in the participation of 22 sheep farmers in the project and the processing of more than 1400 pounds of local wool into blankets.

Rural Fire Protection

We received 19 applications for dry hydrants from six rural fire departments. Met with DEM-Division of Forest Environment staff to

review applications and notify applicants of funding status. When installed these hydrants will improve fire protection for an estimated 13,000 residents of these communities.

Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP)

- Provide administrative support for the FLEP program partnership between RI RC&D and RIDEM
- Since January 1, 2007 eleven (11) landowners owning a total of 932 acres received \$8,314 of cost-share assistance for the preparation of forest stewardship plans.
- Since 2003 the program has enrolled 5,343 acres of forestland involving 70 forest landowners who received \$50,324 of cost-share assistance.

Rhode Island Stream Continuity Project

- Completed survey of 290 stream crossing sites in the Upper & Lower Wood River watersheds;
- Entered all data into the UMASS Stream Crossing database;
- Prioritized the culverts within the Upper Wood River watershed in terms of being replaced or maintained;
- Prepared a draft watershed area plan assessment for the project;
- Continuing to work with NRCS to evaluate the three (3) applications for project consideration under the WHIP program for 2007;
- Scheduled a meeting with for April 18, 2007 to update partners on project progress and outline next steps;
- Gave a presentation on the project at the 2007 Land & Water Summit held at URI on March 24, 2008

Forest Legacy Program

The USDA-Forest Service announced on March 22, 2007 that it will set aside \$3 million to protect 1,100 acres of land in Coventry and West Greenwich, which will be designated a Forest Legacy Project. Known as the Shepard property, it is part of the state's North-South Corridor – one of the largest forested stretches in southern New England; the region's average wooded parcel in the region is less than 10 acres – and connects thousands of acres of existing conservation land.

The Nature Conservancy, along with local, state and federal partners, has acquired the 970-acre Phebe M. Shepard Estate property in the Pawcatuck Borderlands, a vast area of open, largely-forested land that straddles the Rhode Island and Connecticut border. The purchase is the largest single property acquired in the 20-year history of the Rhode Island Chapter of The Nature Conservancy.

The Shepard property is part of an overall 1,647-acre acquisition of forest land in the Pawcatuck Borderlands. This is the single largest conservation acquisition in the state since the transfer of federal lands in the 1930s and '40s for the Arcadia Management Area. This land was purchased from several individual landowners.

2007 Forestry & Wood Expo:

RI RC&D is partnering with the Rhode Island Forest Conservator's Organization, the RI Office of Energy Resources, RIDEM-Division of



Forest Environment, RI Rural Development Council, Southern New England Forest Consortium, Inc. and the RI Tree Farm Committee to sponsor the second Forestry & Wood Expo in 2007.

The date for this year's event is Sunday, October 14, 2007 at the Crowne Plaza in Warwick.

A Rhody Warm blanket was presented to Governor Carcieri on March 28, 2007 at the State House.



Attendance and/or presentation at a variety of organizations, associations, and industry groups to promote RI RC&D

- Prepared a presentation on the ***RI Stream Continuity Project*** for presentation at the 2007 Rhode Island Land and Water Conservation Summit on March 24, 2007.
- Prepared a presentation on the ***RHODY WARM Project*** for presentation at the 2007 Rhode Island Sheep Cooperative Annual meeting on March 24, 2007.

Requested to co-sponsor workshops, events, etc. with current partners

- RIFCO Estate Planning Workshop, March 10, 2007

New England RC&D Annual Fall Conference:

The RI RC&D Council will be hosting the ***2007 New England RC&D Councils Fall Conference*** from October 18-20, 2007 at the Village Inn in Narragansett, RI. The meetings theme is ***Conservation through Partnerships***.

Upcoming Events & Deadlines

by Jeanne Comerford, State Public Affairs Specialist



Event	Date
CPR Training	4/03/2007 9:00 am
Kickemuit Fish Ladder Media Event, Bristol County Water	4/30/2007
USDA Service Center Open House	May 3, 2007 3:30-5:30 pm
Drinking Water Week Celebration, Providence Water	May, 8, 2007 all day
Envirothon	May 17, 2007 All Day
Northern RI Conservation District Dance Fundraiser	May 18, 2007 7:00 pm
Agriculture Day, State House	May 22, 2007 All Day