



Rhode Island Resource Conservation & Development Area Council, Inc.

Helping People Help the Land Since 1973

Newsletter of March 2024

ZOOM WEBINAR

Winter Tree ID

with Fern Graves

RI DEM Forest Stewardship Program Coordinator

Wednesday, March 27 at 6:00 pm

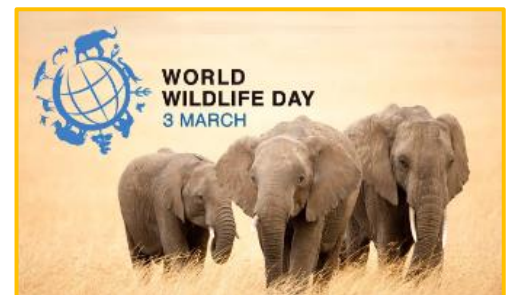
TO REGISTER FOR THIS ZOOM WEBINAR PLEASE CONTACT PAUL DOLAN

E-Mail: rircd2283@gmail.com

Phone: 401-500-0399

SPRING

Arrives on TUESDAY, 19 MARCH 2024 AT 11:06 PM



And don't forget



Daylight Saving Time begins
2 a.m. on March 10, 2024



Natural Resources Conservation Service

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Funding Available to Help Rhode Island Farmers Replace Diesel Tractors and Other Farm Equipment with Low Emitting or Electric Equipment —

EQIP APPLICATION DEADLINE 15 March 2024



In 2024 alone, USDA is making more than \$3 billion available nationally through Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act for climate-smart mitigation activities, in addition to the over \$2 billion available through the Farm Bill. This extensive funding will be used to meet demand for oversubscribed conservation programs, maximize climate benefits and to help farmers and forest landowners address their natural resource challenges.

To learn more about NRCS programs, RI farmers and forest landowners can contact their local [USDA Service Center](#). Producers can also apply for NRCS programs, manage conservation plans and contracts, and view and print conservation maps by [logging into their farmers.gov account](#). If you don’t have an account, [sign up today](#).



Additional USDA Programs

- Producers and land managers are experiencing firsthand the impacts of climate change, which is caused by the build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. With support from NRCS, farmers, ranchers and forest landowners across the nation’s working lands can contribute to climate solutions. [MORE INFO](#)
- The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides financial and technical assistance to Rhode Island agricultural producers and non-industrial forest managers to address natural resource concerns in the Ocean State. **EQIP Apply by 15 March 2024** [MORE INFO](#)

[USDA Equity Commission Releases Report](#)

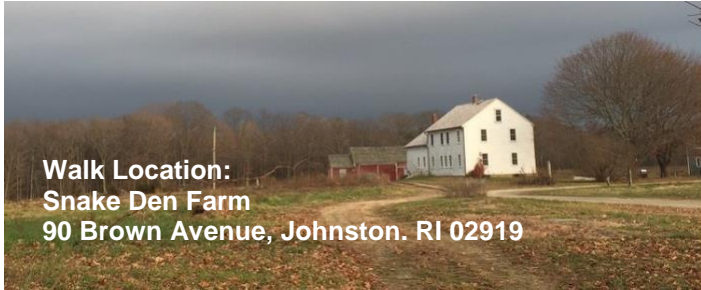


22 February 2024 — The US Department of Agriculture’s Equity Commission presented nearly 70 recommendations Thursday that the agency hopes will “further advance equity at USDA” and help resolve longstanding discriminatory practices, according to a copy of the report obtained by CNN... It is one of several actions the USDA has taken in recent years to remedy discrimination throughout the agency, including making debt relief available to thousands of farmers whose operations are financially struggling... [READ MORE](#)

[READ THE REPORT](#)

SAVE THESE DATES!

Details and Registration Information for All Events to follow soon!



In Person: Winter Tree ID

Thursday, April 4

from 10:00 am to Noon

A [Wild Plant Society First Thursday Botanizing Walk](#) led by Paul Dolan



In Person: Forestry for the Birds

Wednesday, May 8

from 2:00 to 4:00 pm

(RAIN DATE: Wednesday, May 15, 2024)

Presentation by Paul Dolan

Walk led by Jay Manning, Conservation Manager

This program is presented in partnership with the Norman Bird Sanctuary.



In Person: Ecosystem Gardening with RI Native Plants

Monday, June 24

from 6:30 to 7:30 pm

Includes a guided tour of the Community Garden after the workshop.

Program presented by Karen Asher

Master Gardener and Native Plant Specialist

Program presented in collaboration with the North Scituate Public Library.

Register through N. Scituate Library by phone 401-647-5133 or email leah@scituatelibrary.org



Zoom Webinar

With Robert Thorson, author of "Stone by Stone"

Monday, August 26

from 6:00 to 7:30 pm

Registration informationa TBA



In Person: Tree ID Walk

Monday, September 24

from 5:00 to 6:00 pm

Registration information TBA



RHODE ISLAND **Envirothon**

Developing Environmentally Aware Leaders of Tomorrow

Rhode Island [Envirothon](#) is an exciting environmental program, perfect for middle and high school students who love the outdoors, animals, and plants, or who are just curious about the world we live in.

Throughout the year, Envirothon students attend hands-on workshops that inspire learning about our natural environment, and instills in them an appreciation of nature and the delicate environmental balances that make life possible. After studying with experts on all aspects of the environment, the program culminates each May in a one-day—

Battle of the Environmental Minds!

Working in teams, students use the skills and knowledge they have gained to solve real-world environmental problems.



Rhode Island Envirothon Team Champion 2023— Wheeler School!

**Wheeler School, went on to Place 15th
In the 2023 International Competition held in New Brunswick, Canada!**

Envirothon is not just an educational program. The environmental appreciation and team-building skills the students learn are real-world experiences that they will carry throughout their lives as they become the leaders of tomorrow because

Envirothon is teaching them HOW to think, not WHAT to think.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ENVIROTHON CONTACT

VISIT THE RI
ENVIROTHON
[WEBSITE](#)

Paul Dolan
Call 401-500-0399
Email president@rienvirothon.org

WATCH THE
[ENVIROTHON](#)
[VIDEO](#)

Smithsonian
MAGAZINE



[38,000 Sandhill Cranes Flock to Nebraska in a Record-Breaking Start to Spring Migration](#)

February 22, 2024— Wildlife biologists counted the birds— likely lured by the region’s mild winter temperatures— during their first aerial survey of the season. Each spring, hundreds of thousands of the tall, long-legged birds begin making their journey north to breeding grounds in Alaska, Canada and eastern Siberia. Out of all the world’s Sandhill Cranes, 80 percent use Nebraska’s Platte River as a pit stop, where they fatten up on corn kernels left over from the previous fall’s harvest. [READ MORE](#)

[Tube of Ancient Red Lipstick Unearthed](#)

According to a study published this month in the journal Scientific Reports, the nearly 4,000-year-old cosmetic may be among the oldest discoveries of its kind. The team thinks the vial could have come from the Marḡaši, which, according to Mesopotamian texts, was a powerful civilization that occupied what’s now eastern Iran. Scientists write that the pigment’s advanced age “is far from surprising, considering the long-standing, well-known technical and aesthetic tradition in cosmetology in ancient Iran.”

[READ MORE](#)



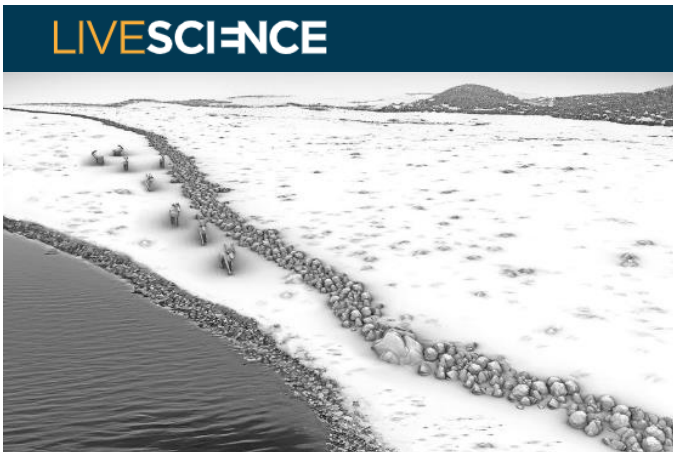
[Five Fascinating Ice Age Finds Discovered in Yukon Permafrost](#)

Zhùr, a mummified wolf pup who lived some 57,000 years ago, was found by a miner in Canada's sparsely populated Yukon Territory, where permafrost has preserved remarkable paleontological finds for millennia. What makes this find remarkable: "She's the most complete wolf mummy that's ever been found. She's basically 100% intact— all that's missing are her eyes," says study coauthor Julie Meachen, a paleontologist at Des Moines University in Iowa.

[READ MORE](#)



LIVESCIENCE



[11,000-year-old submerged stone wall once used to trap reindeer](#)

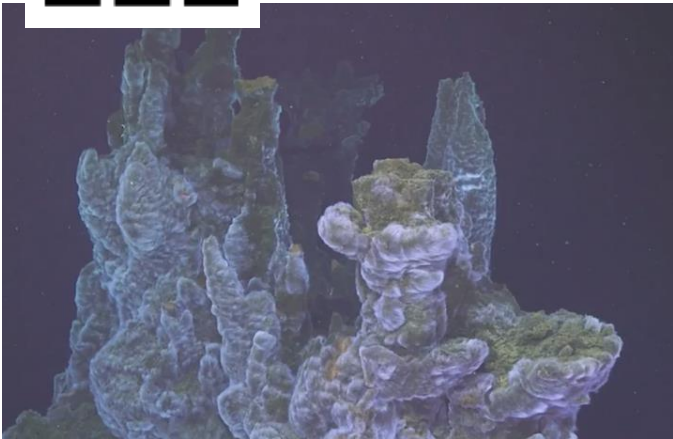
The wall may be the largest of its kind from the early Holocene (11,700 years ago to present) in Europe, the researchers said in the study. Based on similar prehistoric walls — including the ancient "[desert kites](#)" found in the Middle East — the authors propose that it was built on dry land by hunter-gatherers to drive wild animal herds into corrals where they could be killed. [READ MORE](#)



[How to Improve Your Sense of Direction](#)

Some people can strike off on any journey with no guide except their 'pigeon senses'. How do they do it? And can this ability be learned? People who grew up outside cities, or in more spatially complex cities (think Prague rather than Chicago), also appear to be better able to navigate as adults. This is related to the distances travelled and the variety of areas traversed.

However, while an orienteer in Norway and a forager in the Republic of Congo might have different ways of getting around their environments, the good news is that they – and you – can continue to hone these skills over a lifetime. [READ MORE](#)

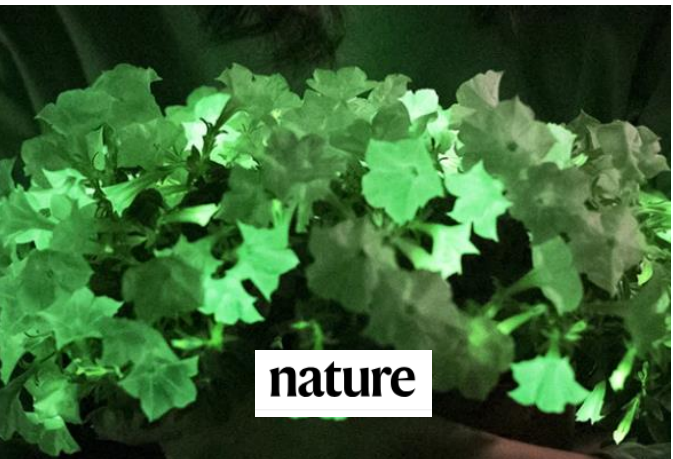


[Mesmerizing Life in the Deep Sea](#)

It was once believed that life cannot exist without sunlight and oxygen. But in 1977, researchers found a geological feature that supports life on volcanic energy through hydrothermal vents.

What kind of life do these geological structures support?

[WATCH](#)



[Bioluminescent Houseplant Hits US Market for First Time](#)

9 February 2024 — The plant was approved by the US Department of Agriculture in September... Light Bio chose petunias because they're used widely as ornamental plants in the United States. It also chose them to minimize risk. This type of petunia is not native to North America, and is not considered an invasive species. So the chances of the modified genes spreading into native plants and disrupting ecosystems should be minimal.

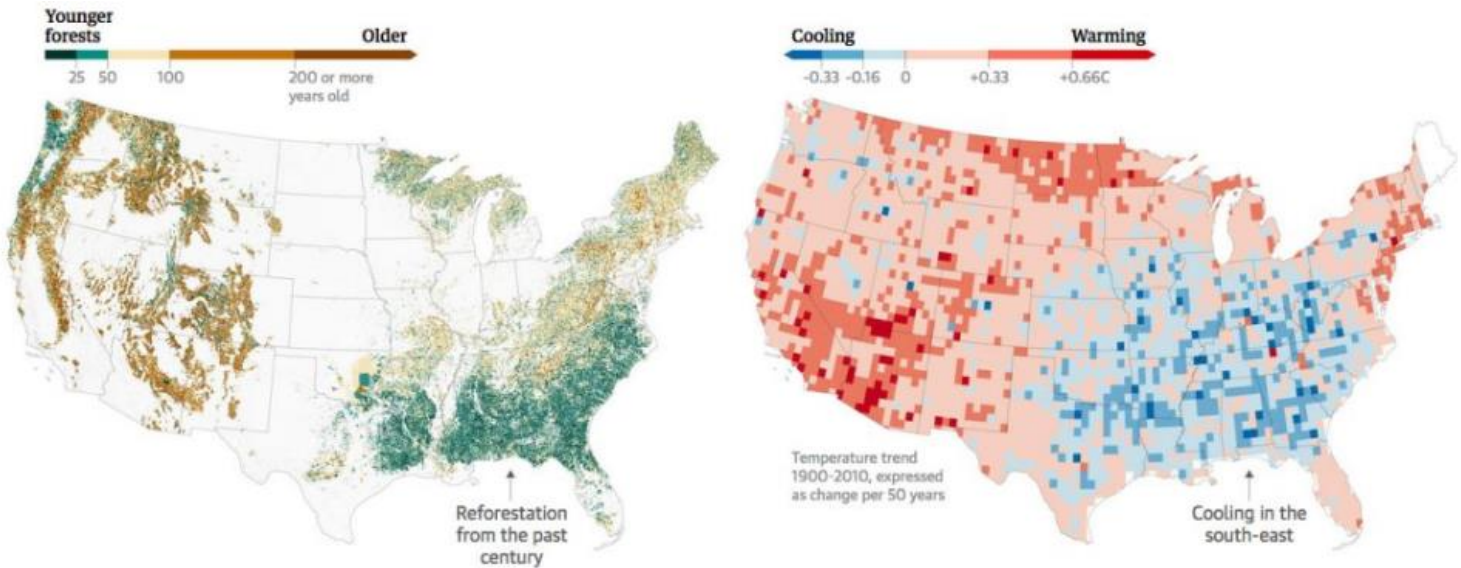
[READ MORE](#)



[Images Raise Hopes of Return of Wild Jaguars to the US](#)

Jaguars once roamed throughout the American south-west, but they were hunted to local extinction by the 1960s. In the 1990s, the elusive cat began to occasionally reappear in the rugged Sky Islands mountain ranges in New Mexico and Arizona. Now, a series of sightings in the region over the past year marks the endangered predators' tentative return, but a border wall could yet halt their progress...

[READ MORE](#)



[Very Cool: Trees Stalling Effects of Global Heating in Eastern US, Study Finds](#)

Vast reforestation is a major reason for ‘warming hole’ across parts of US where temperatures have flatlined or cooled. Trees provide innumerable benefits to the world, from food to shelter to oxygen, but researchers have now found their dramatic rebound in the eastern US has delivered a further, stunning feat – the curtailing of the soaring temperatures caused by the climate crisis... [READ MORE](#)



[Feeding the World with CRISPR: Agriculture’s Next Frontier](#)

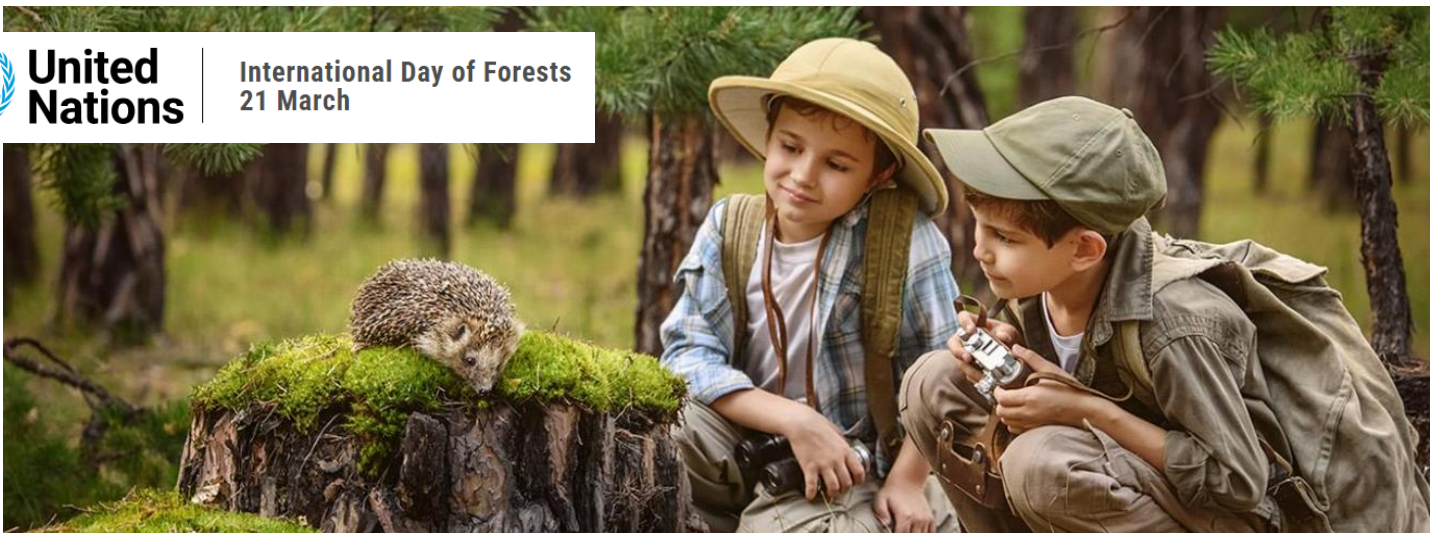
In the past year, numerous places and communities worldwide faced the devastating effects of extreme weather conditions. Frequent and severe droughts, storms, and heat waves are causing extensive harm to food production, thereby posing a significant threat to global food security.

To tackle food insecurity due to climate change, researchers are leveraging CRISPR technology to enhance staple food crops and make them more resilient to extreme environments. [.READ MORE](#)



United Nations

International Day of Forests
21 March



RHODE ISLAND RESOURCES FOR WOODLOT OWNERS



Rhode Island Association of Conservation Districts

Helping Rhode Island Conservation Districts Help Rhode Island

conserving
natural resources
for our future

2283 Hartford Avenue
Johnston, RI 02919
401-934-0840

- [Northern Rhode Island Conservation District \(NRICD\)](#) serves Providence County
- [Southern RI Conservation District \(SRICD\)](#) serves Kent and Washington Counties
- [Eastern RI Conservation District \(ERICD\)](#) serves Newport and Bristol Counties



Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



The USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service provides financial and technical assistance to address natural resource concerns through an array of conservation practices.

Contact [Rhode Island NRCS](#)

The [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (EQIP) provides financial and technical assistance to Rhode Island agricultural producers and non-industrial forest managers to address natural resource concerns in the Ocean State. This voluntary program helps farmers, ranchers and forest landowners integrate conservation into their working lands.

The **Rhode Island State Office in Warwick, RI** is the state headquarters for NRCS operations in the Ocean State. If you're a farmer or forestland owner looking for help, **please contact your local NRCS District Conservationist—**

- **Eastern RI** District Conservationist Ghyllian Alger **401-255-6210**
- **Northern RI** District Conservationist Kate Bousquet **401-255-6212**
- **Southern RI** District Conservationist Jameson Long **401-793-0230**

Rhode Island USDA Outreach & Public Affairs — Julie Wright: 401-786-3884

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT



The health and vitality of our lands, waters, and communities support our way of life and economy in Rhode Island. The Rhode Island Division of Agriculture and Forest Environment works to sustain, promote, and enhance Rhode Island's agricultural viability and preserve, manage, and promote healthy forests and community trees for today and for generations to come.

RI DEM PROGRAMS INCLUDE

[ANIMAL HEALTH PROGRAM](#)
[RI GROWN: EAT FRESH, BUY LOCAL](#)
[PRODUCE SAFETY PROGRAM](#)
[AGRICULTURE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES](#)

[LASA GRANT PROGRAM](#)
[PESTICIDES PROGRAM](#)
[URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM](#)
[FOREST HEALTH PROGRAM](#)

[WILD FIRE PROGRAM](#)
[PEST ALERTS](#)
[SPOTTED LANTERNFLY](#)
[FOREST STEWARDSHIP](#)

RHODE ISLAND RESOURCES FOR WOODLOT OWNERS



[Rhode Island Forest Health Works](#) [Regional Conservation Partnership Program](#)

The RI Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) Division of Forest Environment and ten partners will leverage over \$3.9M in 5 years under 2021 RCPP to permanently protect over 2,000 acres of critical, privately owned forest lands to combat fragmentation and improve wildlife habitat.

Funding is provided through a competitive process.

For more information about the next application cycle, please contact them.

Ask.USDA.gov 1-833-ONE-USDA askusda@usda.gov

Rhode Island Forest Conservators Organization

Helping to Safeguard Rhode Island's Woodlands



Rhode Island Forest Conservators Organization (RIFCO) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and wise use of Rhode Island's woodland resources.

Sign up to get the [RIFCO](#) monthly e-newsletter
"[The Forest Conservationist](#)"

OR [Join RIFCO](#) and automatically receive the newsletter.



RHODE ISLAND WOODS

Your online resource for RI woodlots information

What is Woodscaping?

Woodscaping is a term for active management of small woodland parcels (in Rhode Island a small woodland parcel is considered to be less than 10 acres) in suburban and rural areas where more and more people are living. It is land stewardship that is done in a way that respects ecological values at the same time that it meets landowner goals such as creating a walking or skiing path, watching birds, enjoying privacy, cutting firewood or timber, making maple syrup, or other activities.

Why Care About Protecting Small Tracts of Rhode Island Forestland?

Small acreage forest ownerships are on the rise. The pattern of small forest and meadow ownership magnifies pressure on public water supply, wildlife habitat and wood supply. Wise stewardship depends on the many people that own and care for their property. And existing stewardship programs are aimed at larger woodland tracts, but not smaller ones.

RIW [Woodscaping TOC](#) (Table of Contents)

has links to **Fact Sheets and Resources**

TO HELP WOODLAND OWNERS BECOME GOOD STEWARDS OF THEIR LAND.

RHODE ISLAND RESOURCES FOR WOODLOT OWNERS



The mission of the Center for Mediation is: To provide individuals, organizations, and businesses with constructive skills and processes to effectively resolve their differences.

[The Center for Mediation](#) is the provider for Rhode Island’s Agricultural Mediation Program (RIAMP). This is the official USDA-certified program for our state.

This program offers confidential assistance to help resolve agricultural-related issues in a productive environment. For more than a decade, RIAMP has provided essential mediation services for agricultural loans, farm program compliance, and other agriculture-related issues to farmers and growers throughout Rhode Island.

Call 401-273-9999 from 9am to 4pm Mon-Fri or visit our [website](#)

OTHER RESOURCES FOR WOODLOT OWNERS

The American Tree Farm Program



We grow stewardship from the roots.

[Rhode Island Tree Farm Program](#)

The American Tree Farm System is a program for woodland owners who are committed to sustainably managing their woods for wood, water, wildlife and recreation. Each state program is run by a diverse group of partners, such as state agencies, non-profit organizations, volunteers, foresters and landowners.

To learn more, please contact **Marc Tremblay**,
Phone: 401-568-3410 or Email: mstremb@cox.net



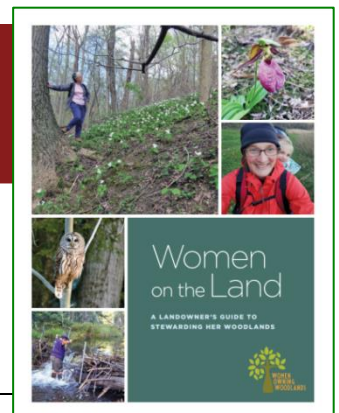
[American Forest Foundation Newsletter](#)

Sign up and receive updates from the **AFF** and/or its signature programs: the [American Tree Farm System](#) (ATFS) and [My Land Plan](#)

Unlocking the power of America's Family Forests to fight climate change.

UMassAmherst

[Women on the Land](#) intends to build a network of female landowners and stewards in Massachusetts and provide opportunities for education and connection. We host events throughout the year and encourage women to foster relationships with each other and their land.



The Newsletter of RI RC&D

The Rhode Island Resource & Development Area Council, Inc.

Disclaimer: Please Note

This newsletter's purpose is threefold. Our primary purpose is to keep our readers informed about opportunities and resources which may be available to our readership. Our second purpose is to keep our readership informed about news, events, products, opinions, and information which may directly affect our readership, either adversely or beneficially. Our third purpose is to present our readers with information that they may find enlightening or entertaining.

The opinions and political positions represented in the newsletter do not reflect the opinions or political positions of the Rhode Island Resource and Development Area Council, Inc.; nor does RI RC&D advocate or endorse any of the opinions, positions, or products mentioned in the newsletter *except where specifically stated*.

CONTACT RI RC&D

Rhode Island Resource Conservation & Development Area Council, Inc.



RIRCD.ORG

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Johnston, RI 02919

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