

Urban and Community Forestry Program

2017 Accomplishment Report – Rhode Island

State Contact¹

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Introduction

A key goal of the Rhode Island Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) Program is to restore and maintain the State's green infrastructure. The program encourages cities and towns to develop an urban and community forestry plan and to incorporate this into their city or town comprehensive plan. Program staff maintain strong partnerships with community tree groups, the Rhode Island Tree Council, and other municipal and State partners by promoting tree planting, tree inventories, and urban forestry educational events. The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RI DEM) is building an urban and community forestry constituency through alliances with the nonprofit Rhode Island Tree Council, city and town tree societies and communities, an army of tree stewards, and a well-informed Rhode Island legislature and executive branch.

Key Accomplishments

2017 Arbor Day Celebration

Arbor Day was celebrated at the Mount Pleasant High School in Providence, RI. RI DEM partnered with the Rhode Island Tree Council to hold a joint celebration with the city of Providence. Arbor Day was sponsored by Rhode Island National Grid. Partners from the State and nonprofit organizations attended the ceremony. Awards were given to America the Beautiful grantees and Tree City USA and Tree Campus USA delegates. Speakers included representatives from the Rhode Island Tree Council and RI DEM.

RI DEM Division of Forest Environment staff participated in numerous community Arbor Day celebrations to educate students and the public about the importance of trees and celebrate Arbor Day, including these:

- April 25: The Coordinator visited Wawaloam School in Exeter, RI.
- April 28: The State Forester and Woodsy attended the Newport, RI, Arbor Day Celebration.
- May 15: The Coordinator and Woodsy visited the St. Joseph Elementary School.
- May 26: The Coordinator visited the Garden City Elementary School.
- May 31: The Coordinator visited the Wawaloam School in Exeter, RI.

¹ In July 2017, the Urban Coordinator was promoted to Deputy Chief/State Forester of the RI Division of Forest Environment and is fulfilling both roles until a full-time replacement is hired.

Rhode Island Tree Stewards Class

The Rhode Island Tree Council hosted two Tree Stewards courses (fall of 2016 and spring of 2017). The classes graduated 40 individuals.

Rhode Island Fruit Tree Course

The Rhode Island Tree Council continues to enroll students and conduct classes in the first Fruit Tree Course Pilot Program with enrollees meeting two times (fall of 2016 and spring of 2017) to learn different aspects of fruit tree production and care. Thirty-three participants met during the year.

Workshops

The Rhode Island Tree Council conducted a number of workshops and outreach activities. The goal of these workshops was to enhance the public's knowledge and care of trees.

Facility	Location
Ninigret Park	Charlestown
Franciscan Missionaries of Mary	North Providence
Roger Williams Park	Providence
Jenks Park	Central Falls
City Park	Warwick
Tuckertown Park	South Kingstown
Philips Hill Sports Complex	Coventry
Academy Park	East Greenwich
Canochet Park	Narragansett
Colt State Park	Bristol
Fernwood Housing Project – Phase 1	Burrillville
Friends of Warwick Ponds	Warwick

The Rhode Island Tree Council also continued a project with the city of Cranston, RI, in 2017 where they helped the city successfully plant shade trees on 40 homeowner properties. The council's responsibilities included screening applications, selecting the trees, and inspecting planting sites as well as contracting with a landscaping company to install the saplings.

Tree City/Tree Campus USA

In 2017, Rhode Island celebrated Tree City USA with 12 communities participating in the program. Rhode Island also awarded a Tree Campus USA to Salve Regina Campus in Newport, RI.

America the Beautiful Grant Community Projects

In FY 2017, \$55,000 was granted to the Rhode Island Tree Council and \$30,000 was awarded to 10 awardees for tree planting/maintenance and urban forestry management plan development. The \$30,000 in grant money will be matched with \$45,000 for a total grant project of \$75,000. The RI Tree Council matched its \$55,000 grant dollar for dollar for a grand project total of \$185,000.

Notable Accomplishments

In FY 2017, the Coordinator continued the *RI DEM Energy-Saving Trees Program* initiative, a statewide homeowner tree planting program. The program, funded at \$110,000 each year, holds events each spring and fall to give away 1,000 trees.

The program includes a partnership with the National Arbor Day Foundation's nationwide Energy-Saving Trees Program to provide free 3-gallon trees to Rhode Island homeowners. Homeowners picked up their trees at one of four designated locations during an event season. Data recorded for each participant details

the energy-saving benefits of tree planting. This data will be used to generate a report that RI DEM will use to promote the positive benefits of tree planting and the important role trees can play in reducing energy consumption and capturing CO₂.

Statistical Highlights

Managing Communities:	17
Developing Communities:	8
Population of Participating Communities:	851,436
Volunteer Assistance Generated (hours):	3,580

