

Urban and Community Forestry Program

2016 Accomplishment Report – Rhode Island

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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

2016 Arbor Day Celebration

Arbor Day was celebrated at the Rhode Island State House in Providence, RI. RI DEM partnered with the Rhode Island Tree Council to hold a joint celebration honoring the council's 25th anniversary; the 40th Anniversary of Tree City USA; and the designation of Newport, RI, as a Citywide Arboretum. Arbor Day was sponsored by Rhode Island National Grid. Arbor Day was celebrated with Rhode Island Senator Jack Reed and speakers from sponsoring organizations. The State planted two tulip trees on the State House grounds.

RI DEM Division of Forest Environment staff participated in numerous community Arbor Day celebrations, including these:

- April 1: The Coordinator and Woodsy visited and assisted the city of Central Falls with their Arbor Day Planting with Calcutt Middle School.
- April 14: The Coordinator and Woodsy attended the Kindercare Daycare Center to educate their children on the importance of trees and celebrate Arbor Day.
- April 20: The Coordinator and Woodsy attended the Metcalf School in Exeter to educate their children on the importance of trees and celebrate Arbor Day.
- April 22: The Coordinator attended and spoke at the Arbor Day Celebration in Newport, RI.

- April 23: The Coordinator and Woodsy attended the Newport Public Library to assist with ArborWeek activities and celebrate Arbor Day.
- April 26 and 28: The Coordinator and Woodsy attended the Mercymount Country Day School in Cumberland to educate their children on the importance of trees and celebrate Arbor Day.
- April 29: The Coordinator and Woodsy attended the Bristol Arbor Day Celebration.
- May 4: The Coordinator and Woodsy attended the Hathaway and Mellville Elementary Schools in Jamestown to educate their children on the importance of trees and celebrate Arbor Day.
- May 5: The Coordinator and Woodsy attended the Children’s Workshop in Smithfield to educate their children on the importance of trees and celebrate Arbor Day.
- May 6: The Coordinator attended the Woodbridge Elementary School in Cranston to educate their children on the importance of trees and celebrate Arbor Day.



Rhode Island UCF Program Coordinator Tee Jay Boudreau celebrates Arbor Day with elementary school students.

Rhode Island Tree Stewards Class

The Rhode Island Tree Council hosted two Tree Stewards Courses in FY 2016. A new partnership with Roger Williams University has opened up an opportunity for college students to be trained as Stewards. The classes graduated 57 individuals – an increase that more than doubled over last year.

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 throughout FY 2016 to learn different aspects of fruit tree production and care. Twenty-three participants have met during the year in the program thus far.

Workshops

The Rhode Island Tree Council conducted eight workshops and outreach activities in FY 2016. The goal of these workshops was to enhance the public’s knowledge and care of trees.

Date	Location	Topic
9/29/15	Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, North Prov., RI	Tree Identification Education
10/6/15	Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, North Prov., RI	Tree Identification Education
10/13/15	Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, North Prov., RI	Tree Identification Education
11/12/15	Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, North Prov., RI	Pruning Workshop
11/14/15	Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, North Prov., RI	Pruning Workshop
4/14/16	Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, North Prov., RI	Tree Care Workshop
4/20/16	Univ. of RI-Kingston, RI-Master Gardeners	Tree Care Workshop
8/1/16	DaVinci Community Center, Providence, RI	Pest ID Workshop

The Rhode Island Tree Council also continued a project with the city of Cranston, RI, in 2016 where they helped the city successfully plant shade trees in 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.

Woodsy Owl

Apart from the Woodsy Owl appearances during Arbor Day, the Coordinator and Woodsy Owl visited multiple locations in FY 2016 to educate young Rhode Islanders about trees. These include Wawaloam Elementary School in Exeter, RI, on November 2, 2015, and the Central Falls Summer Camp Kick-Off on June 27, 2016.

Tree City/Tree Campus USA

In 2016 Rhode Island celebrated Tree USA with 12 communities participating in the program, including two new communities celebrating Tree City that year. Rhode Island also awarded its first Tree Campus USA to Salve Regina Campus in Newport, RI.

American the Beautiful Grant Community Projects

In FY 2016, \$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 \$45,000 for a total grant project of \$75,000.

Notable Accomplishments

In FY 2016, the Coordinator launched a new program initiative for RI DEM— *RI DEM Energy-Saving Trees Program*, a statewide homeowner tree planting program. The UCF Program was given \$250,000 per year in funding for 3 years to formulate a proof-of-concept for the program. Events will be held each spring and fall from 2015 to fall 2017. Each event will give away 1,000 trees in a series of giveaways each season. Three giveaways were run in FY 2016 (fall 2015, spring 2016, and fall 2016, which was still underway as of the writing of this report).

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 that hosted a giveaway event in 2015 and 2016. Data will be recorded for each participant detailing the energy-saving benefits of tree planting. RI DEM will use this information 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:	16
Developing Communities:	12
Population of Participating Communities:	917,308
Volunteer Assistance Generated (hours):	2,979
Tree City USA:	12
Tree Campus USA:	1

