



RHODE ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

DIVISION OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
ANNUAL REPORT
FY 2016

SETTING THE STAGE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
GINA M. RAIMONDO, GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT
JANET L. COIT, DIRECTOR



Division of Planning and Development

As a division, Planning and Development seeks to increase public engagement with our world-class beaches, rich farmland, and beautiful natural resources and preserve them for generations to come. The division designs and builds award winning State Park & Management Area Facilities including boat ramps, beach pavilions, bike paths, fish ladders, and more to improve public access. Planning and Development oversees a number of grant programs that distribute state and federal dollars to municipalities and NGO's for local park and trail development and land conservation work. We also acquire land or easements to expand our park system, conserve wildlife habitat and protect farmland for the benefit of future generations.

Division Programs

Capital Development

State Land Conservation

Agricultural Land Preservation

Open Space Grants

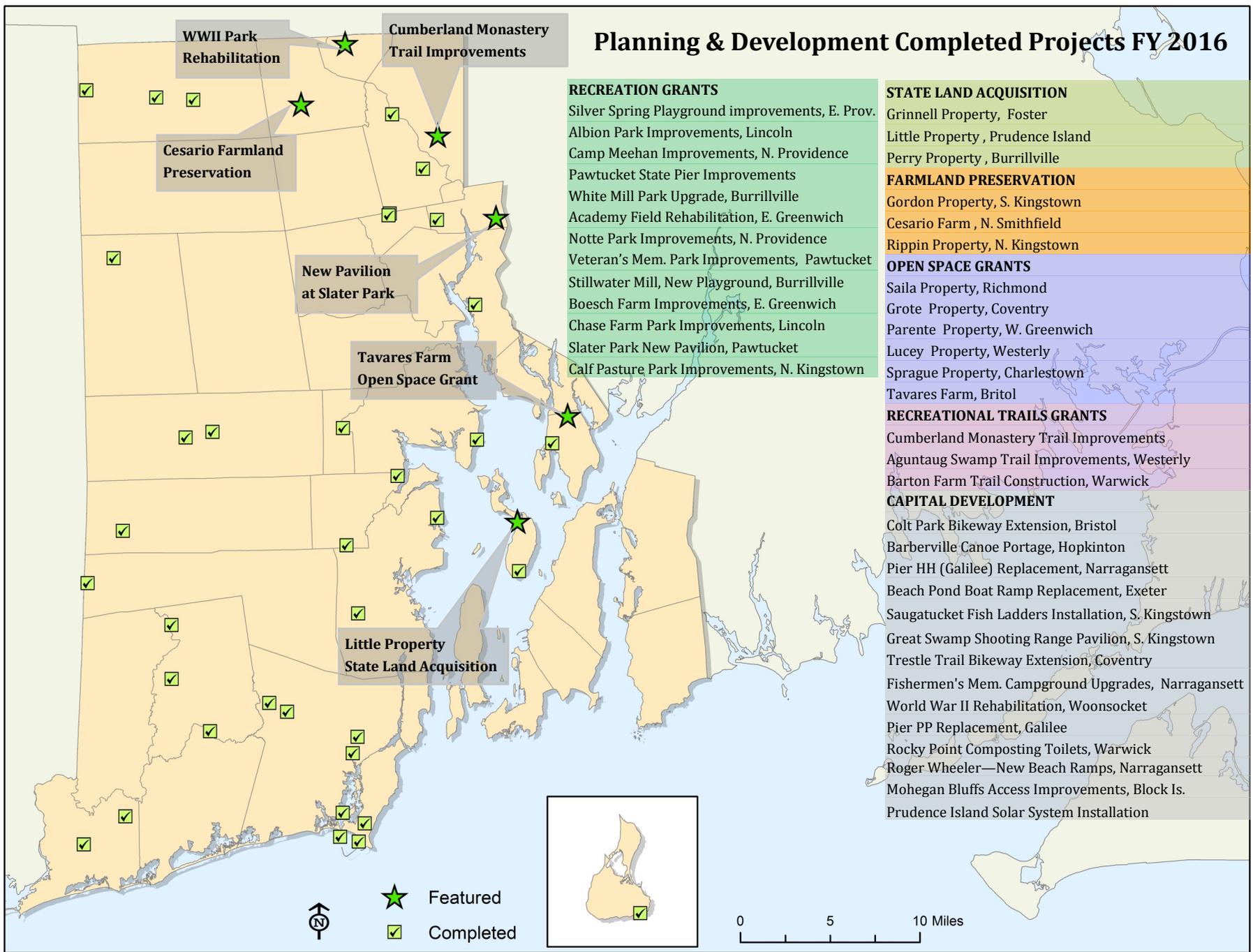
Recreation Grants

Recreational Trails Grants



A group of senior citizens embarking on a boat ride at the newly improved Pawtucket State Pier on the Blackstone River.

Planning & Development Completed Projects FY 2016



- RECREATION GRANTS**
- Silver Spring Playground improvements, E. Prov.
 - Albion Park Improvements, Lincoln
 - Camp Meehan Improvements, N. Providence
 - Pawtucket State Pier Improvements
 - White Mill Park Upgrade, Burrillville
 - Academy Field Rehabilitation, E. Greenwich
 - Notte Park Improvements, N. Providence
 - Veteran's Mem. Park Improvements, Pawtucket
 - Stillwater Mill, New Playground, Burrillville
 - Boesch Farm Improvements, E. Greenwich
 - Chase Farm Park Improvements, Lincoln
 - Slater Park New Pavilion, Pawtucket
 - Calf Pasture Park Improvements, N. Kingstown

- STATE LAND ACQUISITION**
- Grinnell Property, Foster
 - Little Property, Prudence Island
 - Perry Property, Burrillville

- FARMLAND PRESERVATION**
- Gordon Property, S. Kingstown
 - Cesario Farm, N. Smithfield
 - Rippin Property, N. Kingstown

- OPEN SPACE GRANTS**
- Saila Property, Richmond
 - Grote Property, Coventry
 - Parente Property, W. Greenwich
 - Lucey Property, Westerly
 - Sprague Property, Charlestown
 - Tavares Farm, Britol

- RECREATIONAL TRAILS GRANTS**
- Cumberland Monastery Trail Improvements
 - Aguntaug Swamp Trail Improvements, Westerly
 - Barton Farm Trail Construction, Warwick

- CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT**
- Colt Park Bikeway Extension, Bristol
 - Barberville Canoe Portage, Hopkinton
 - Pier HH (Galilee) Replacement, Narragansett
 - Beach Pond Boat Ramp Replacement, Exeter
 - Saugatucket Fish Ladders Installation, S. Kingstown
 - Great Swamp Shooting Range Pavilion, S. Kingstown
 - Trestle Trail Bikeway Extension, Coventry
 - Fishermen's Mem. Campground Upgrades, Narragansett
 - World War II Rehabilitation, Woonsocket
 - Pier PP Replacement, Galilee
 - Rocky Point Composting Toilets, Warwick
 - Roger Wheeler—New Beach Ramps, Narragansett
 - Mohegan Bluffs Access Improvements, Block Is.
 - Prudence Island Solar System Installation

DEM PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT FY 2016

42 PROJECTS COMPLETED in FY 2016

3 NEW ADA COMPLIANT RECREATIONAL ACCESS PROJECTS

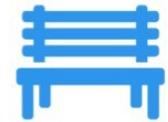


\$8.7 million STATE FUNDS INVESTED IN RI RECREATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

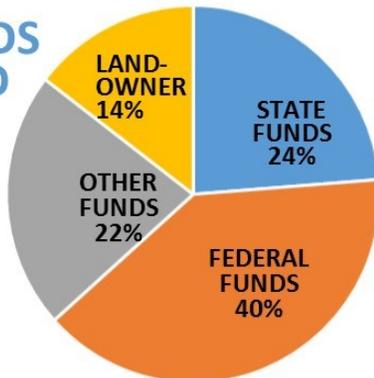
\$3.2 MILLION STATE FUNDS INVESTED IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES*

 **93** acres

added to the **NARRAGANSETT BAY NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESERVE** for research and education

21  RECREATIONAL FACILITY UPGRADES

STATE FUNDS LEVERAGED for DEM Land Projects FY 2016



5 NEW RECREATIONAL FACILITIES 

 **983** ACRES OF LAND preserved

8 SHORELINE and waterway access projects 

5 Miles of NEW BIKE TRAILS 

*Underserved communities as defined by HUD include Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick, Woonsocket

Capital Development

The Capital Development Program plans, designs and supervises construction of new state park and beach facilities, bikeways, commercial fishing pier improvements, boat ramps, fish hatcheries and other DEM managed facilities. All construction work is planned and executed with an eye towards sustainable design and well-functioning public facilities.

FEATURED PROJECT

Transformation of World War II Veterans Memorial Park

Located in Woonsocket at the site of an old mill pond, this 18-acre park has served as a center of outdoor recreation for decades and is a fixture of life in Woonsocket. This year, in preparation for transferring ownership of the park to the City, DEM completely renovated the facility, transforming it into a modern splash park with a playground, playing courts and a new baseball field.



Children enjoying the new splash park at WWII Veterans Memorial Park

State Land Conservation

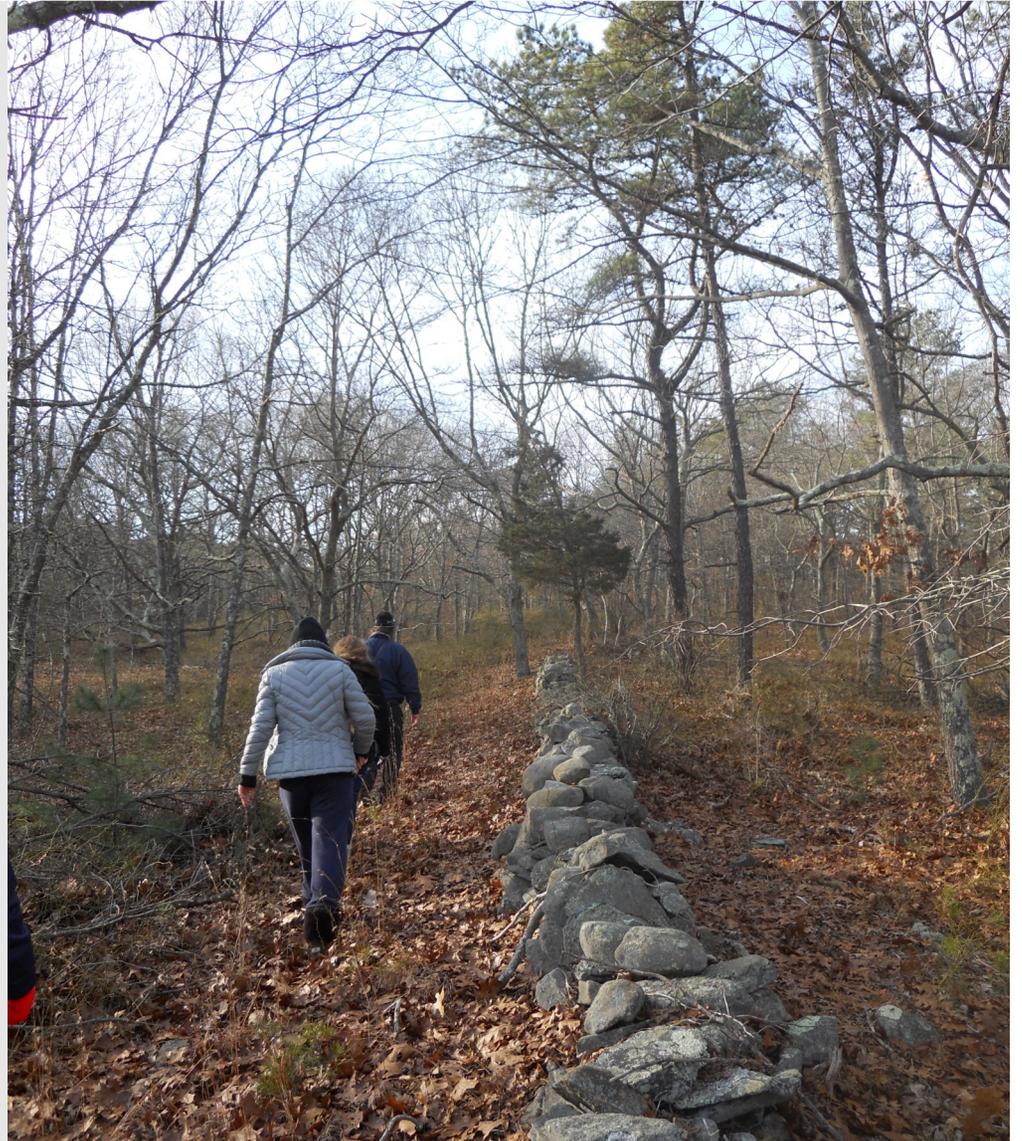
The Division of Planning & Development purchases ecologically valuable land to enhance DEM's management areas, parks and forest lands. Funding for these real estate acquisitions is provided by State Open Space Bonds, with contributions from municipalities and land trusts, from local partners such as The Nature Conservancy and The Champlin Foundations, and from various federal programs.

FEATURED PROJECT

Little (Chase Farm), Prudence Island, Portsmouth

Thanks to the conservation minded family of Barbara Chase Little, 93 acres of land on Prudence Island were added to the Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in December, 2015. Publicly accessible trails are open for birding, biking, hiking, and hunting. The ecologically diverse open space contains locally rare pine barrens.

Project partners included the DEM Open Space Bond, The Nature Conservancy and the Champlin Foundations, The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Prudence Conservancy.



Hikers walking along one of the many stone walls that dot the Little property

Agricultural Land Preservation

The Agricultural Land Preservation Commission (ALPC), with staff assistance from DEM, preserves agricultural lands through the purchase of farmland development rights. The state's farming industry, which contributes \$170 million annually to the local economy, is dependent on access to productive farmland. This program is one of many that helps ensure that farming remains viable in the state.

FEATURED PROJECT

Cesario Farm, North Smithfield

Betty Cesario's wish to always keep her land farmed was fulfilled in July of 2016 when the ALPC purchased the development rights to her rural farm. The 15-acre farm is surrounded by open space protected by the Audubon Society of RI and has been in active production since Betty's grandfather, Giovanni Cesario, purchased it in 1902. The land is currently leased to Wright's Dairy Farm where they grow corn as feed for their cows.



Open fields on Betty Cesario's farm in North Smithfield

Local Open Space Grants

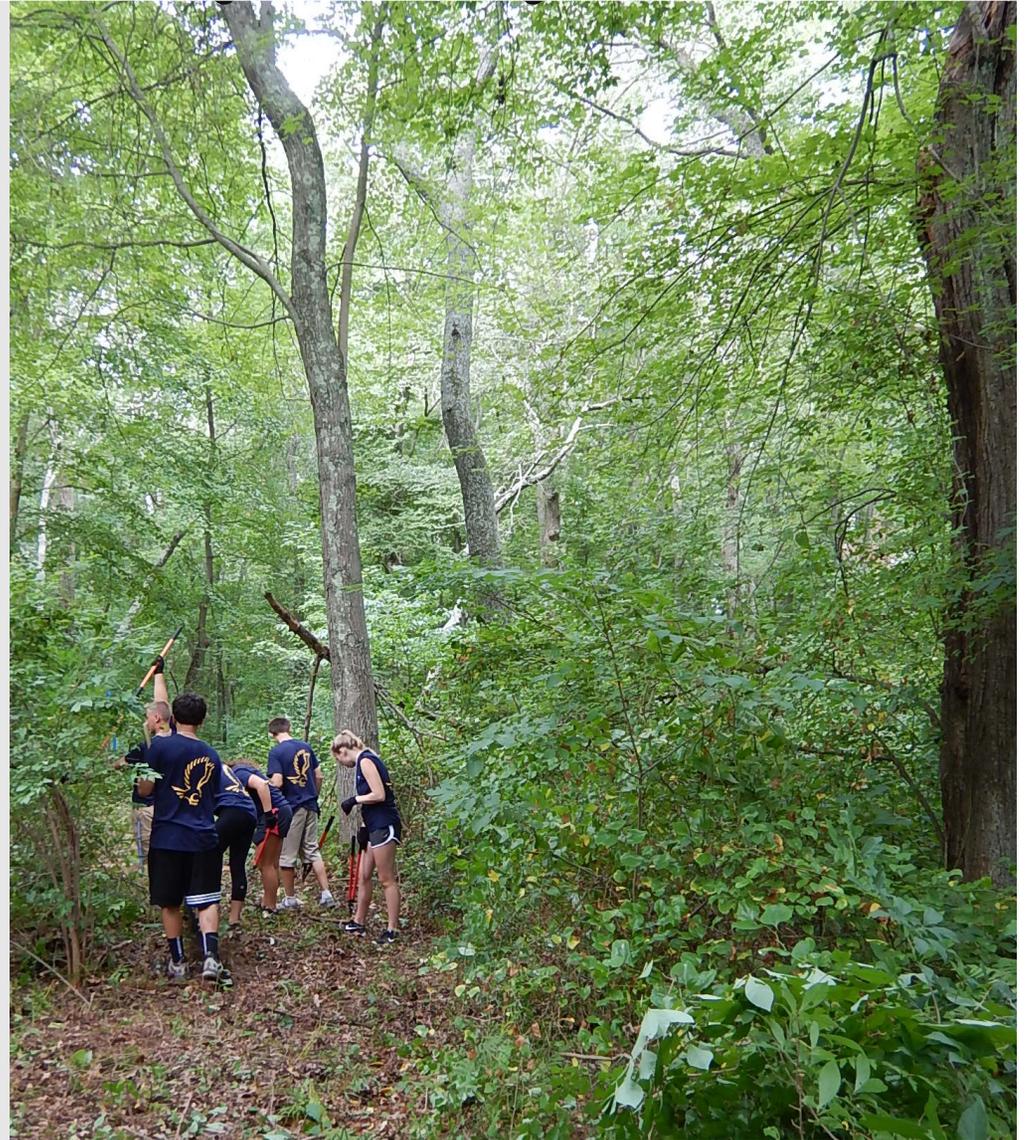
The Local Open Space Grant Program provides funding to local communities for the preservation of important conservation and public recreation lands.

This year, we closed out 5 grants from the 2014 grant round. With just a few remaining grants left in this round, and no additional available funding, we are looking to voter approval of the Green Economy Bond in November of 2016 to ensure this popular program continues.

FEATURED PROJECT

Tavares Farm, Bristol

Over the past several decades the Town of Bristol has slowly amassed a significant open space recreation area for its residents in the north-central part of town, close to the East Bay Bike Path. The 13-acre Tavares Farm, which received a Local Open Space Grant award from DEM of \$112,500, is a critical addition to this area. The Bristol Conservation Commission is currently working with local community groups to improve public access to this conservation area.



Roger Williams University students clearing a trail at Tavares Farm

Recreation Grants

The Division of Planning and Development oversees the distribution of grant funds from state bonds and the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund to communities across the state. Eligible projects include the acquisition of land and development or renovation of outdoor recreation facilities.

Projects are scored by the Recreation Resources Review Committee and high-scoring projects are issued grant funds, with final approval from the Director. Large (up to \$400K, 20% match) and small (up to \$100K, 20% match) grants are issued.

FEATURED PROJECT

Slater Park Pavilion

The newly constructed Slater Park Pavilion was funded through the DEM's recreation grant program in partnership with the City of Pawtucket. It replaces the former pavilion which was destroyed by fire in 2012. The pavilion includes office space for local summer camps and a beautiful sheltered area with picnic tables. There is a stage at one end for performances and events. The space is heavily used by visitors to the park and recreation programs alike.



The new Slater Park pavilion

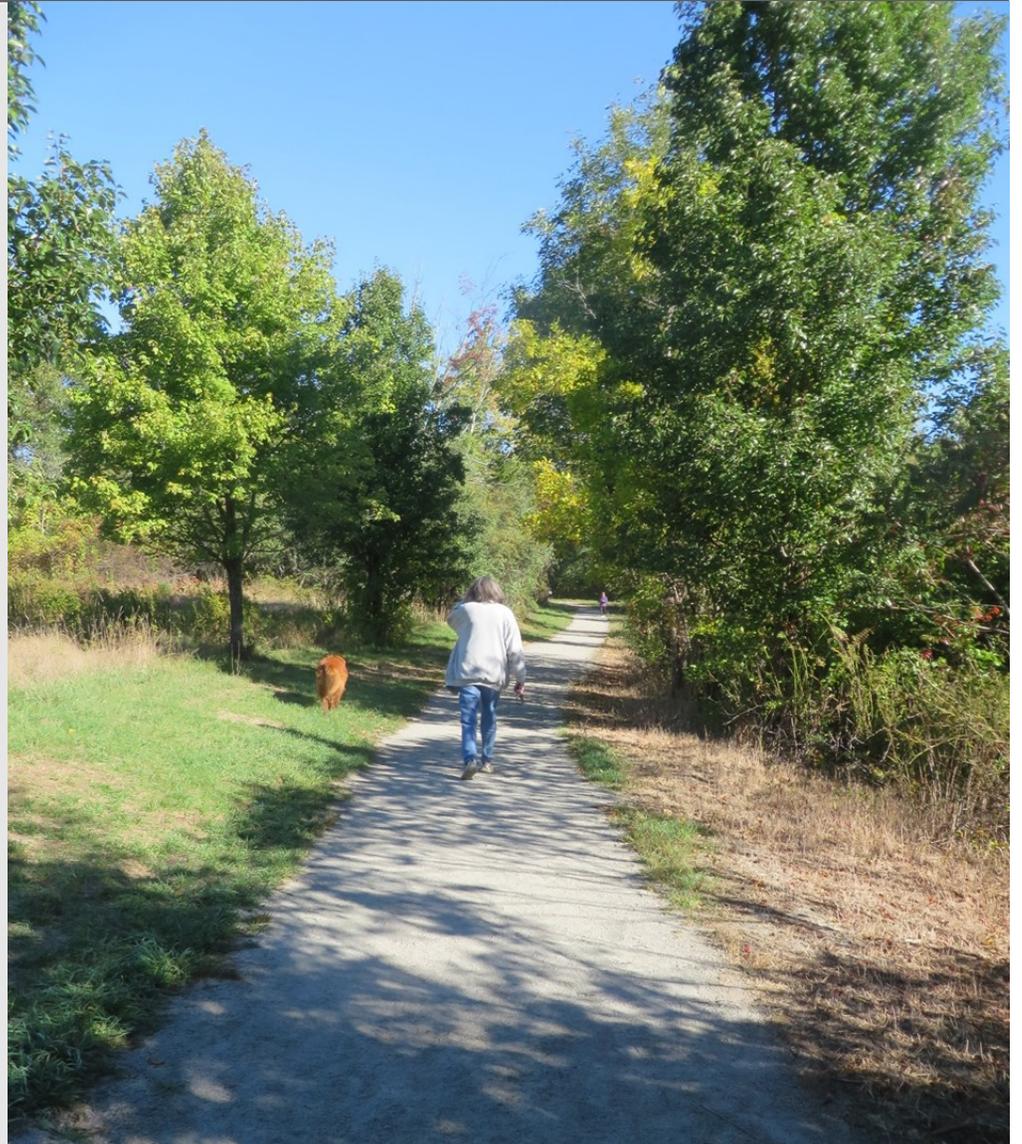
Recreational Trails Grants

This program, facilitated by DEM and DOT and funded by the Federal Highway Administration, provides funding to State & Local Governments, Indian Tribes, and nonprofit organizations to encourage the development and maintenance of recreation trails and trail related projects. Funding can be used to construct new trails, to maintain or restore existing trails, to develop or rehabilitate ancillary trail facilities, to purchase or lease trail construction and maintenance equipment, and for operation of educational programs promoting safety and environmental protection along recreational trails.

FEATURED PROJECT

Cumberland Monastery Trails

The popular network of nature trails on the town-owned Cumberland Monastery property get a huge amount of public use. This 550 acre tract of open space that surrounds the public library and senior center provides a great outdoor recreational resource to the community. Improvements to the trails, funded through a Recreational Trails Grant, will substantially improve the public's experience and extend the life of this important resource.



A walker enjoying the newly improved Cumberland Monastery trail

RI Land Conservation Commissions and Committees

DEM Land Acquisition Committee

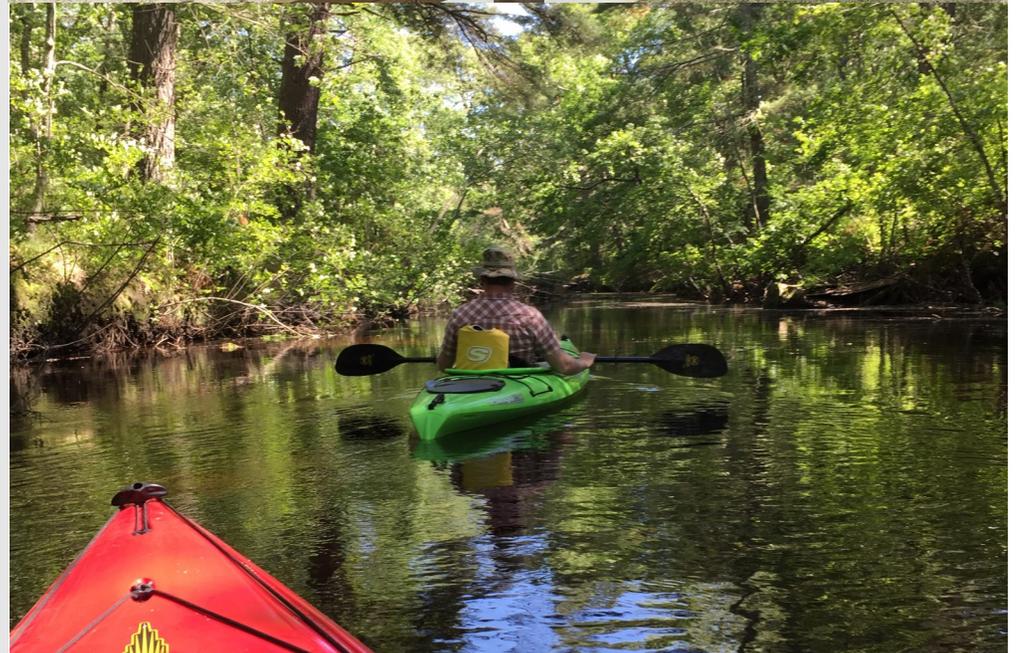
- Janet Coit, Director
- Lisa Primiano, Chair, Chief, Planning and Development
- Kenneth Ayars, Chief, Division of Agriculture
- Larry Mouradjian, Associate Director of Natural Resources
- Robert Paquette, Chief, Parks and Recreation
- Catherine Sparks, Assistant Director

Agricultural Land Preservation Commission

- George Mason, Chair
- Kenneth Ayars, DEM Director's Designee, Chief, Agriculture
- Diane Lynch, Public Member
- Kevin Nelson, RI Division of Planning (DOA)
- Everett Stuart, Public Member
- David Wallace, Public Member
- Martha Neale, Public Member
- Jon Reiner, Public Member

Natural Heritage Preservation Commission Advisory Board

- Governor's Office of Intergovernmental Relations
- Jared Rhodes, Chief, RI Division of Planning (DOA)
- Janet Coit, Director, DEM



The Great Swamp Shooting Range Pavilion (above) and Paddlers taking advantage of the new portage at Barbrville (below)

Our 2016 Partners

Unique opportunities exist for valuable partnerships at the national, state and local level to reach our outdoor recreation and resource conservation goals. Without partnerships across state agencies, federal and municipal governments and our non-profit partners, the job would not be possible. We would like to thank our 2016 partners:

Our Partners

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| The Nature Conservancy | Town of Portsmouth |
| The Champlin Foundations | Town of South Kingstown |
| US Fish & Wildlife Service | City of Central Falls |
| USDA NRCS | Federal Highway Administration |
| RI Department of Transportation | City of Warwick |
| Town of North Kingstown | Prudence Conservancy |
| Rhode Island Energy Office | The Army Corps of Engineers |
| Federal Highway Administration | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration |
| | Town of New Shoreham |



Completed portage at the Barberville Dam on the Pawcatuck River (above) and The Maria Pinheiro Memorial (Silver Spring) Playground in East Providence town (below)

