

Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
Division of Planning & Development
Annual Report - FY 2015



Volvo Ocean Race, Fort Adams State Park, 2015

State of Rhode Island *Gina M. Raimondo, Governor*
Department of Environmental Management *Janet L. Coit, Director*

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND LAND CONSERVATION
COMMISSIONS & 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, Division of Agriculture

Kevin Nelson, Supervising Planner, RI Statewide Planning Program

Everett Stuart, Public Member

David Wallace, Public Member

William Wright, Public Member (former)

Martha Neale, Public Member

Fay Strongin, Public Member (former)

Jon Reiner, Public Member

Natural Heritage Preservation Commission Advisory Board

Jonathan Stevens, Governor's Office (former)

Jared Rhodes, Chief, Division of Statewide Planning, RI Department of Administration

Janet Coit, Director, RI Department of Environmental Management

Planning & Development Staff

Andres Aveledo - Conservation Engineer

Robert Bailey - Principal Civil Engineer

John Callan - Eng. Tech. IV

Gregg Cassidy - Senior Environmental Planner

Lauren Farley - Real Estate / Engineer Assistant

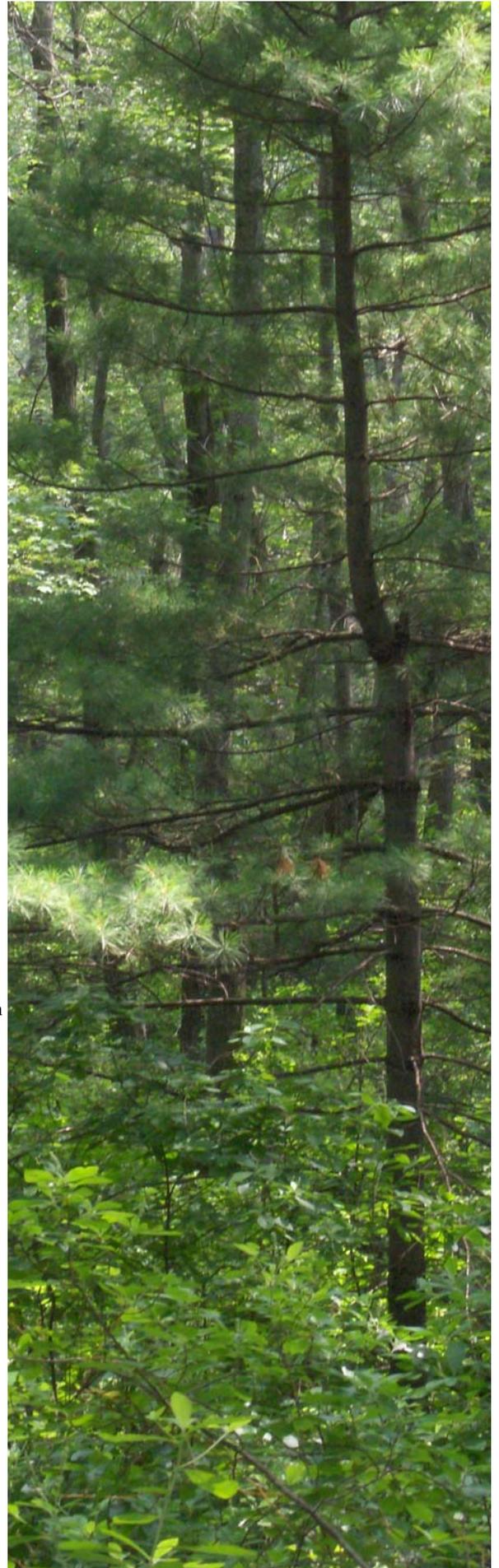
Paul Jordan - Supervising GIS Specialist

Lisa Lawless - Principal Civil Engineer

James McGinn - Supervising Engineer

Lisa Primiano - Chief

Michelle Sheehan - Land Conservation Program Manager



DIVISION OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Division of Planning and Development is responsible for the following activities:

We design and build award winning State Park & Management Area facilities including boat ramps and piers, beach pavilions, bike paths, public restrooms, fish ladders and more.

We oversee grant programs distributing State and Federal dollars to Municipalities & NGO's for local park development & land conservation work.

We acquire land or easements to expand our park system, conserve wildlife habitat and protect farmland for the benefit of future generations.

We manage the DEM's Geographic Information System. Our work includes processing and analysis of spatial environmental data, and the production of conventional and digital cartographic products.

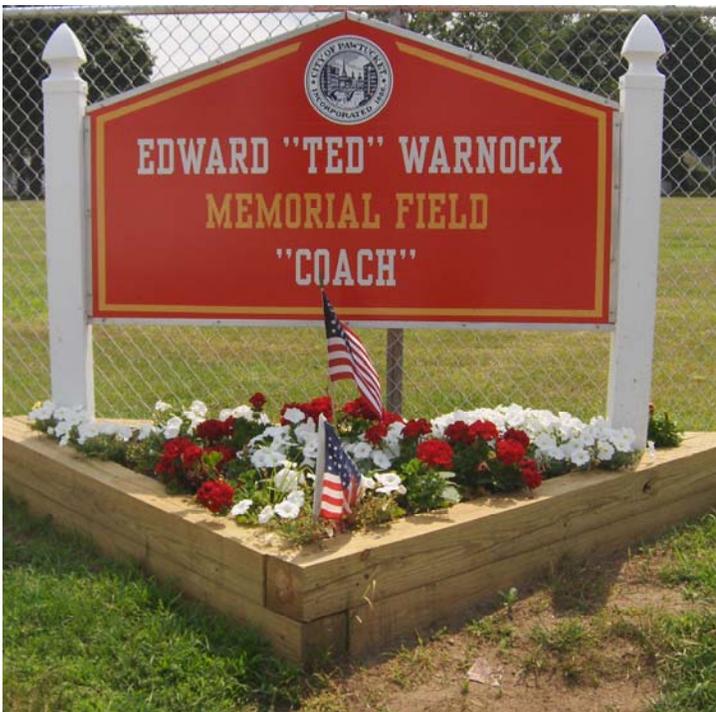


STATE LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM

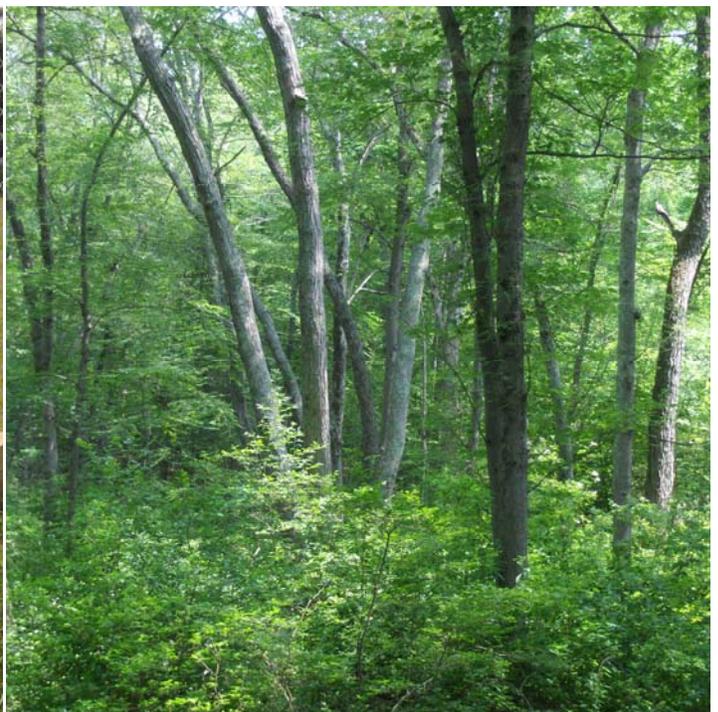
This program is guided by the DEM Land Acquisition Committee, which makes recommendations to the Director regarding real estate transactions that will enhance DEM's Management Areas, Parks and Forest Lands. Funding for these real estate acquisitions is provided by State Open Space bonds, with contributions from municipalities and land trusts, from local partners such as The Nature Conservancy and The Champlin Foundations, and from various federal programs including the U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy program, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, and the National Park Service Land and Water Conservation Fund. In addition, this program combines its funding with the Local Open Space Grants Program and the Agricultural Land Preservation Program to complement its conservation projects.

LOCAL OPEN SPACE GRANT PROGRAM

Rhode Island Open Space Grants support cities and towns, land trusts, and non-profit organizations in their protection of natural areas that are deemed conservation priorities on the municipal level. DEM provides up to 50% funding to successful applicants and adds a layer of protection to the conserved parcels to ensure they remain undeveloped in perpetuity. All grant applications are reviewed and scored by the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Preservation Commission Advisory Committee according to the following criteria: habitat protection, greenway or regional linkage, planning consistency, resource protection and water resource protection, and multi-community application. Final awards are determined by the Natural Heritage Preservation Commission. The State's share of funding is provided by State Open Space Bonds.



Pleasant View Park, Pawtucket



Vacca Property, Johnston

AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

The Agricultural Land Preservation Commission (ALPC), with staff assistance from DEM, preserves agricultural lands through the purchase of farmland development rights. Purchasing development rights from farmers enables them to retain property ownership while protecting their lands for agricultural use. It provides farmers with a financially competitive alternative to development. The State's farming industry, which contributes \$170 million annually to the local economy, is dependent on access to productive farmland. This program helps to ensure that farming remains viable in the state. Since 1985 over 100 farms, representing close to 6,900 acres of agricultural land, have been protected.

All program applications are reviewed and scored by the ALPC according to parcel size; soil quality; agricultural operation and viability; protection of water supplies and quality; open space, cultural and scenic features; flood protection; relative development pressure; and consistency with state and local plans.

Funding for this program is obtained through the State Open Space Bond; The Nature Conservancy, through grants from the Champlin Foundations; the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Conservation Easement Program; and through the leveraging of land trust and municipal funds.

ENGINEERING AND CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Engineering and 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.

The Engineering and Capital Development Program ensures that the protection and enhancement of the natural environment is prioritized in the design and construction of capital projects. Staff work to communicate and coordinate with local communities, regulatory agencies and other stakeholders in the design process to ensure plans are compatible with the anticipated public use, state and community needs. There is an ongoing emphasis on completing quality projects in a timely, cost-effective manner, using competitive bidding and talented design professionals.



Golden Tassel Farm, Tiverton



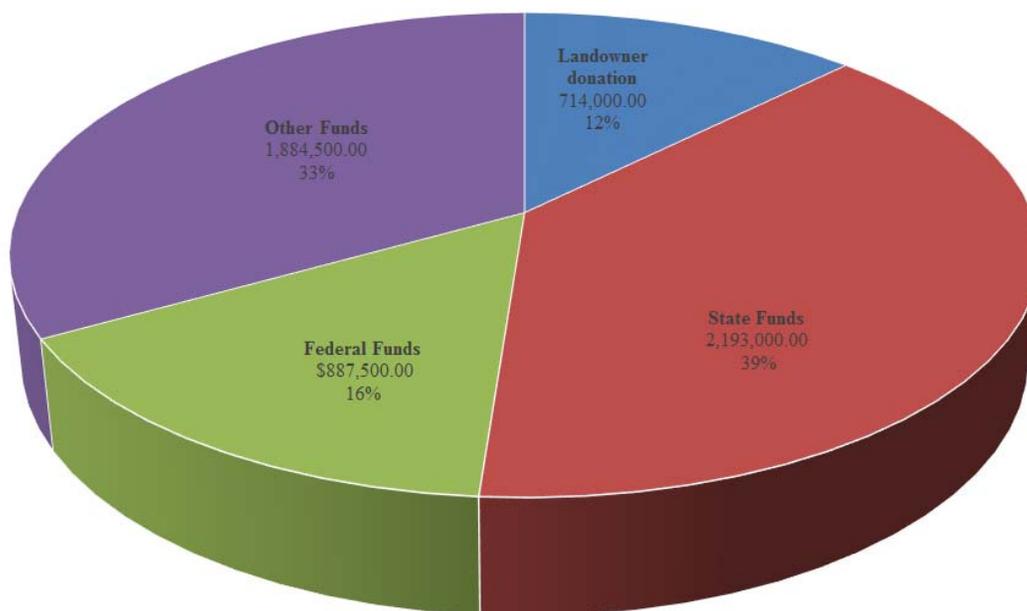
Omega Pond Fish Ladder, East Providence

FY 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS - LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

LEVERAGING FUNDS

This Fiscal Year (July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015), DEM's **Land Conservation Programs** preserved \$5,679,000 in land value and only used \$2,193,000 in state funds, leveraging 61% funding from federal and local partners.

**Funding Sources for
DEM Land Conservation Projects FY 2015**



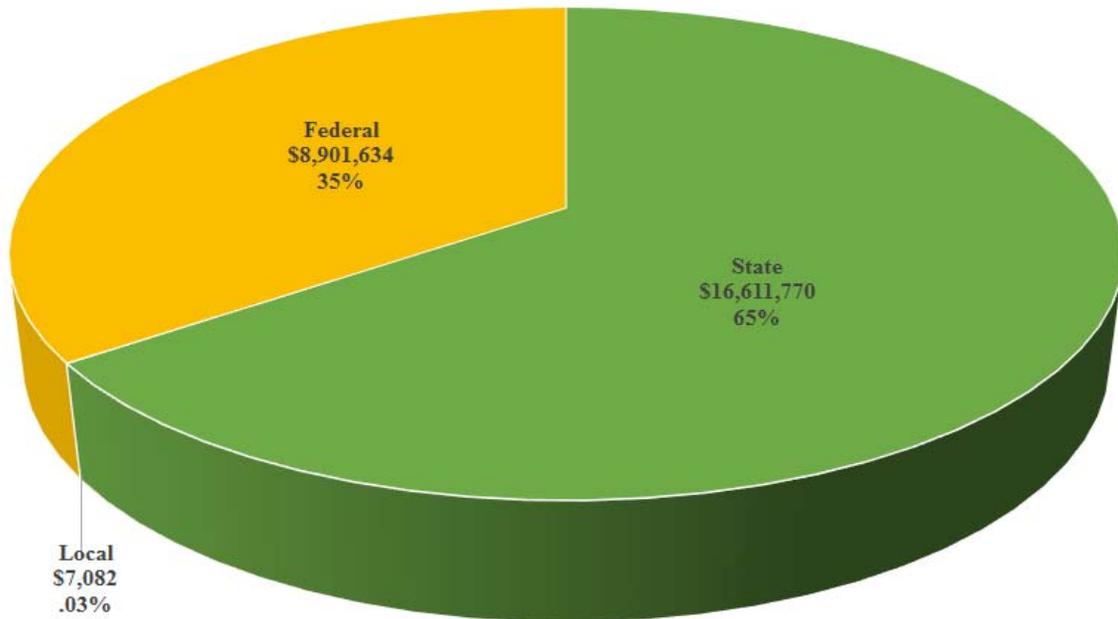
Property	City / Town	Acres	Purpose
DeCoppet Estate	Richmond	1825	Open Space
Bradford Boat Launch	Westerly	1.5	Public Access
A. Street Realty, LLC	Johnston	11.32	Conservation Easement
Pleasant View	Pawtucket	1.65	Recreation Easement
Benson - NRLT Lot	North Kingstown	42.67	Conservation Easement
Benson - Town parcel	North Kingstown	2	Conservation Easement
Brown University / Jerimoth Hill	Foster	5.58	Open Space
Strynar	West Greenwich	3.35	Open Space
Dussault	West Greenwich	2.65	Open Space
Pierce	Hopkinton	6.99	Recreation and Agricultural Easement
Lial Farm	Warren	40.5	Agricultural Development Rights
Vacca	Johnston	78.4	Conservation Easement
St. Mary's Church	Portsmouth	73.1	Agricultural Development Rights
Bettencourt/Golden Tassel Farm	Tiverton	59.76	Agricultural Development Rights
Kimball Preserve	Charlestown	28.9	Open Space
Hunt Street Park	Central Falls	1.29	Recreation Easement
Bates III	West Greenwich	12	Conservation Easement
	TOTAL	2196.7	

FY 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS - ENGINEERING AND CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

LEVERAGING FUNDS

This Fiscal Year (July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015), DEM's **Engineering and Capital Development Program** completed \$25,520,486 worth of projects with \$16,611,770 in funding from the RI Capital Plan while leveraging 35% funding from federal and local partners.

Funding Sources for Engineering and Capital Development Projects FY 2015



Project	Town	Description
Rocky Point Demolition / Restoration	Warwick	Demolition of the former Rocky Point Amusement Park and site restoration
Omega Pond Fish Passage (Ten Mile River)	East Providence	Installation of a new fish ladder at the Omega Pond Dam on the Ten Mile River to complement two existing fish ladders upstream
Fishermen's Campground Utility Upgrades Phase I	Narragansett	Phase I replacement of utilities at Fishermen's Memorial Campground
JL Curran (Upper) Dam Reconstruction	Cranston	Reconstruction of the JL Curran Upper Reservoir Dam
Galilee South Bulkhead	Narragansett	Replacement of 930 feet of steel bulkhead, pier replacement, and electrical upgrades in the Port of Galilee
Fort Adams Pier	Newport	Installation of a new fixed pier to support the Ft Adams Sailing Center
Black Rock Parking Area	New Shoreham	Public Access Improvements to public land on Block Island
Sakonnet Point Boat Ramp Replacement	Little Compton	Replacement of the Sakonnet Point Boat Ramp
Wickford Marine Base Dock Replacement	North Kingstown	Replacement of floating docks at Division of Enforcement marine base
Camp Cronin Seawall	Narragansett	Installation of a stone revetment at Camp Cronin to repair damage caused by Hurricane Sandy and prevent erosion from future storms

PARTNERSHIPS

Unique opportunities exist for valuable partnerships at the national, state and local level to encourage outdoor recreation and resource conservation goals. As our environment, our society and our economies change, so must our programs. Without partnerships across state agencies, federal and municipal governments and our non-profit partners, the job would not be possible. It is important that DEM maintain and expand these crucial partnerships; most projects come to fruition as the result of collaboration among many groups. **We would like to thank our FY 2015 partners:**

The Nature Conservancy
The Champlin Foundations
US Fish & Wildlife Service
The USDA NRCS Farm and
Ranchlands Protection Program
RI Department of Transportation
Town of North Kingstown
Narrow River Land Trust
The Aquidneck Land Trust

Town of Portsmouth
City of Pawtucket
City of Central Falls
Federal Highway Administration
Hopkinton Land Trust
Town of Johnston Land Trust
The Army Corps of Engineers
Rhode Island Energy Office
U.S. Economic Development Administration

In addition, Planning & Development receives vital internal support from many other DEM staff members. The Divisions of Management Services, Fish & Wildlife, Parks, Forest Environment, and Legal Services all provide countless hours of assistance to the program and enable it to function efficiently.



The purchase of the 45- acre Benson Property on the Narrow River in North Kingstown was possible through cooperative efforts by the Narrow River Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, the Town of North Kingstown and the Department of Environmental Management Local Open Space Grant Program.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW: FEATURED PROPERTIES



Improvements to Fort Adams Pier, Newport

Land Conservation Programs

de Coppet Estate, Richmond, 1,825 Acres

Lial Acres, Warren, 40.5 Acres

Jerimoth Hill, Foster, 5.58 Acres

Vacca, Johnston, 83 Acres

Hunt Street Park, Central Falls 1.29 Acres

Engineering and Capital Development

Omega Pond Fish Passage, East Providence

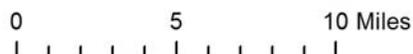
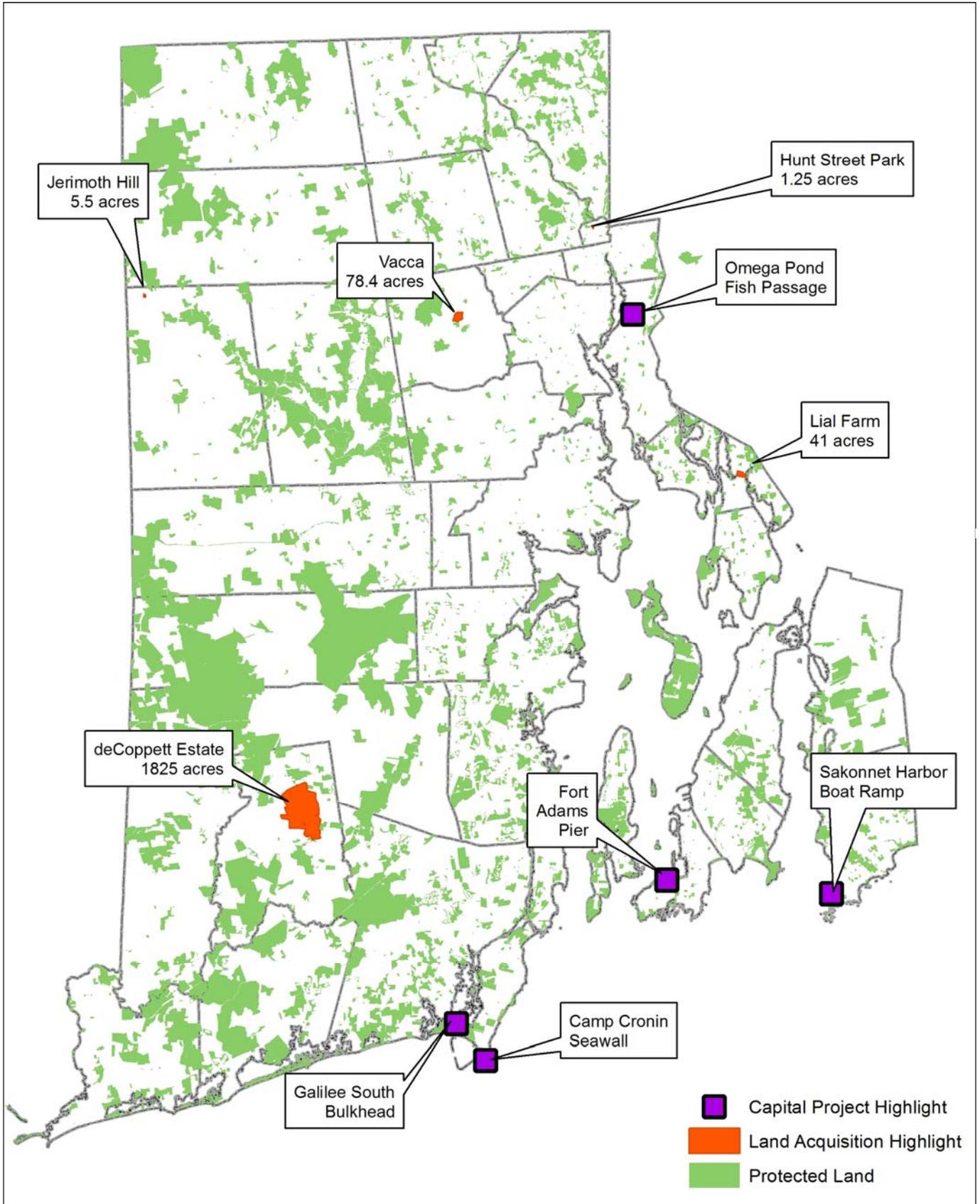
Camp Cronin Seawall, Narragansett

Fort Adams Pier, Newport

Sakonnet Boat Ramp, Little Compton

South Bulkhead, Galilee

Map of Featured Properties



Land Conservation Programs: *Featured Projects*

de Coppet Estate, Richmond

1,825 Acres

Little remains of the village on Hillsdale Road in Richmond except for stone foundations. What does endure is a lasting legacy of conservation for generations to enjoy. On June 13, 2014 the State of Rhode Island accepted the donation of 1,825 acres of land rich in history with significant natural resource value. The vision of the well-heeled Mr. de Coppet made this possible. Following a successful career as a New York stock broker, Mr. de Coppet relocated to Richmond and took up farming. Known for his philanthropy and interest in conservation, he spent the remainder of his life purchasing woodland property on both sides of Hillside Road. An active Town Council member for eight years, de Coppet's dedication to Richmond extended to after his death. In 1935, he wrote a will bequeathing the entirety of his land to the State as a forest and wildlife preserve.

The donation of the parcel is the largest land grant in the history of Rhode Island—and also represents the only time in history that an endowment was created to manage state property. The land includes 3/4 mile section of the Beaver River, a major tributary to the Pawcatuck River. Because of Theakston de Coppet's generosity, the space will now be preserved and available to the public forever.



Stone foundation remains



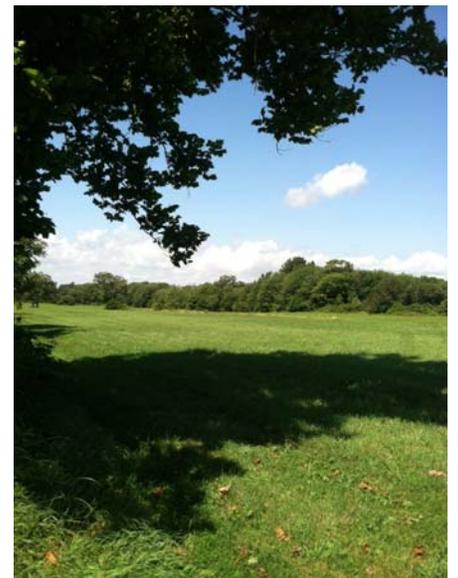
Lial Acres, Warren
40.5 Acres

Dusk on the Farm

In December 2014 the Agricultural Lands Preservation Commission purchased the development rights to the 40.5-acre Lial Acres in Warren. This large, undeveloped tract on Serpentine Road between the Kickemuit River and Palmer River will remain in agriculture as it has been for nearly 125 years. It is owned by Mrs. Bertha Lial, widow of Manuel Lial, who ran the farm as a dairy operation for decades. The farm is currently leased to a local farmer who uses the land for diversified vegetable production. Nearly 60% of the property consists of prime and important farm soils.

Lial Farm boasts wide open vistas from the road and across to the Warren Reservoir, a section of the Kickemuit River. Draining to Mount Hope Bay, the river contains salt marsh, intertidal estuarine wetlands and a diverse array of habitats supporting both native and migratory species. More than 135 acres of conservation land associated with Kickemuit River abut the farm and lines the waterfront, preserving the natural corridor of the river. In addition, Lial Farm sits across the river from Frerichs Farm and down river from Chase Farm – two protected farms that help to support the agricultural integrity of the Kickemuit watershed.

The purchase price for the development rights was \$385,000 funded with \$192,000 from the Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Farm and Ranchland Protection Program; \$75,000 from The Nature Conservancy and The Champlin Foundations; and \$117,500 from the Agricultural Lands Preservation Commission.



CELEBRATING 100 PROTECTED FARMS

This year, the RI Agricultural Lands Preservation Commission (ALPC) celebrated the protection of its 100th Farm. Chase Farm in Warren was the first farm protected ALPC in 1985. Thirty years later the agricultural community gathered to celebrate a milestone, the protection of the 100th Farm, Lial Acres, also in Warren. The ALPC, working alongside DEM, has protected a total of 102 farms, 7,000 acres, and \$100.6 million in land value while leveraging \$53 million in partner funding from the federal government, local land trusts, non-profits, and municipalities. The volunteer work of ALPC members and partner organizations has ensured that RI's farmland remains available for agriculture for future generations.

"By recognizing Lial Acres, we are demonstrating the importance of supporting families who have dedicated their lives to farming and to preserving a culture of farming for future generations to experience and enjoy"
-Governor Gina M. Raimondo



Vacca, Johnston

78.4 Acres

An 78.4-acre wooded parcel in Johnston is now protected and open for public recreational use, thanks to the efforts of the town of Johnston's Land Trust. In exchange for a Conservation Easement DEM awarded the town a Local Open Space Grant to help purchase the property. In addition to its upland forest, the parcel contains swamp, wetlands and a small stream that serves as a feeder to the Pocasset River. Several vernal pools provide habitat to spotted salamanders, wood frogs and a number of other plant and animal species.



Located in a densely populated area, this property has important recreational and ecological value. The land is contiguous with the 32 acre Johnston Town Forest, which contains an existing trail network. The town quadrupled the size of the Forest with this acquisition and plans to extend the trails onto the Vacca property. Nearby Memorial Park and Ferri Middle School create a large swath of recreational and open space land. The total purchase price was \$310,000. DEM contributed \$155,000. The additional \$155,000 was provided by the Town of Johnston Land Trust.

Hunt Street Park, Central Falls

1.29 Acres

With the assistance of a DEM Local Open Space Grant, the City of Central Falls purchased a 1.29 acre parcel on Hunt Street to transform and expand a local park. The acquired property included a vacant VFW building with significant mold and asbestos issues, adjacent to an existing playground in disrepair. The building will be demolished and the land developed for outdoor recreation. This project demonstrates how cooperative efforts by the City and DEM can help revitalize a community and create a resource to be enjoyed by many. Central Falls was hard hit by the recent economic downturn. The city is now rebounding and thriving.

Demolishing the highly visible abandoned VFW will transform the space. The redevelopment will include a community garden, gazebo that can be used a performance space, a playground and a "splash park" in a city with no community pool. Picnic tables and other amenities will allow residents to gather and enjoy the rebirth of their city.



Artist rendering of redeveloped park

DEM contributed \$96,000 to the \$192,000 purchase price in exchange for a Recreation Easement. The City was awarded an additional \$365,832 companion grant to assist with park development.

Jerimoth Hill, Foster

5.58 Acres

Jerimoth Hill, at an elevation of 812 feet, is the highest natural point in Rhode Island. Originally part of the first farms cultivated by early settler John Brown in the late 1700's, the high point named after his brother Jerimoth who lived nearby. DEM has been working for years with landowner Brown University to acquire the 5.58 acre parcel. The property, in combination with an abutting 4.6 acre parcel purchased in 2008 on Hartford Pike, will secure public access to the hill's summit. Hikers are now able to easily access RI's highest point. Jerimoth hill is an essential destination for "Highpointers," hikers who travel around the country to reach the highest elevation point in each state. For others, the summit provides a scenic opportunity for outdoor recreation.

The land was purchased for \$100,000 with 80% of the funding provided by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Enhancement Program. The remaining \$20,000 was funded by the State's Open Space Bond Program. Brown University will continue to use a portion of the property for astronomical study.



Leave a message for fellow hikers in the summit journal.



A short stroll takes you to the top.

Engineering and Capital Development: Featured Projects

Omega Pond Fish Passage, East Providence

Atlantic Herring is a keystone species in decline in New England. It provides food for striped bass, cod, and other fish vital to Rhode Island's fishery and the state's economy. DEM has been working throughout the past several decades to restore the fish runs that sustain herring and other anadromous fish. This year DEM celebrated the completion of the Ten Mile River Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Project with federal, state, and local officials. The

project provides river connectivity and restores river herring and other fish to the Ten Mile River watershed. The Omega Pond Dam was the final phase of the project that included the Turner Reservoir and Hunt's Mill fish ladders, both finished in September 2012. The 56 square-mile Ten Mile River watershed originates in Massachusetts and flows through East Providence into the Seekonk River at the Omega Pond Dam.



The restoration project created fish ladders, concrete waterways with wooden baffles that allow anadromous fish to swim to their natural spawning habitat. These fish live as adults in salt water but return to the freshwater where they were born to spawn. DEM projects that these habitat areas can support a fish run of more than 200,000 river herring, restoring the ecosystem disturbed by the dams constructed centuries ago and allowing anadromous fish, such as herring, to flourish.

The Omega Pond Fish Ladder construction proved to be extremely complicated, involving a Providence & Worcester Railroad rail bridge, a natural gas main line, and high powered electric lines. The work of many contributed to the success of this project including DEM, the Army Corps of Engineers, Coastal Resources Management Council, City of East Providence, Ten Mile River Watershed Council, Save The Bay, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).



Camp Cronin Seawall, Narragansett

Located in Narragansett on the southern shore of Rhode Island, Camp Cronin is a prime travel destination for anglers. The site at Point Judith promises a beautiful view of the ocean, and the nearby jetty is a popular fishing site. In 2012, Hurricane Sandy caused extensive damage to the existing shoreline, breakwater, surrounding Camp Cronin area, and washed out a section of the access road that connects Ocean Road to the jetty.

In response to the destruction, DEM teamed up with the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the New England District to begin much needed repairs. The \$3.4 million project was funded by HUD and commenced in late October, 2014. The bulk of the work went into the installation of a stone revetment that would repair the hurricane damage and prevent erosion caused by future storms. The existing cobble and boulders were removed, then reset, and the revetment involved excavation, furnishing and placing gravel bedding, and the use of a variety of other materials to replace displaced stones and secure the shoreline. Gaps and low points in the breakwater were filled and the project re-established public access to Camp Cronin, Point Judith, and the fishing jetty.

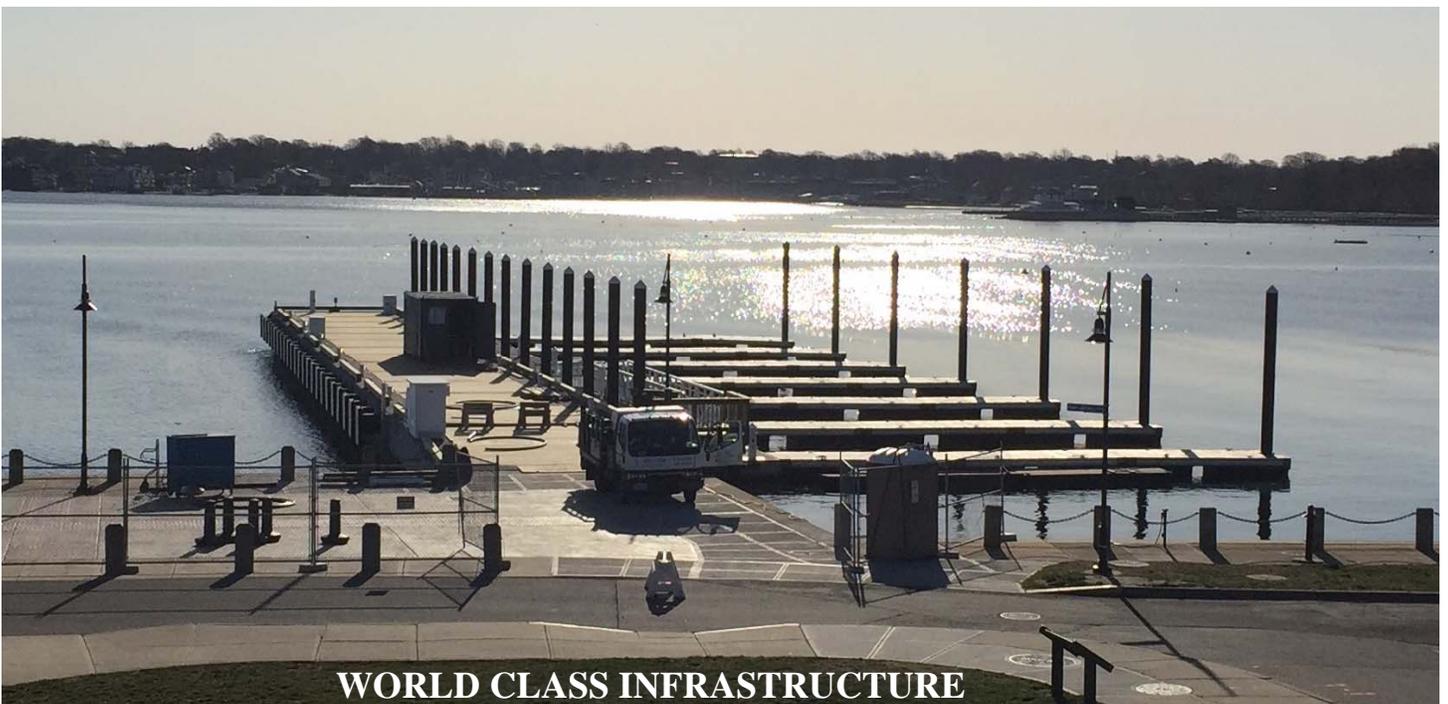
The revetment portion of project was completed in May, 2015. It's construction was led by the US Army Corps of Engineers who also repaired the breakwater.



Fort Adams Pier, Newport

In the spring of 2015, nearly 130,000 fans flocked to Fort Adams State Park in Newport to experience the Volvo Ocean Race, an aquatic trek made by 6 teams travelling around the globe. The City of Newport was selected as the only North American stopover in the 9-month long race. The city provided international teams a 12-day break before embarking on the final leg of the journey that concluded in Gothenburg, Sweden. Race fans had the opportunity to become part of the action by exploring Race Village, meeting the competitors and viewing a cross section of the racing yachts. The event generated an estimated \$47 million of economic impact for the state of Rhode Island.

The new pier and its amenities were critical infrastructure needed to make this event possible and will allow Fort Adams to continue to host many more events and festivals in the future. A 240 foot long by 24 foot wide fixed pier on steel pipe piles and a timber wave fence were installed. The wave fence provides calm harbor south of the pier for safe berthing of smaller vessels. The pier includes a floating dock with seven floating finger piers for small to medium sized boats. It also has two large mega yacht pedestals. The fixed pier and floating dock provide electrical and water hookups as well as sewer pumpouts.



WORLD CLASS EVENTS



WORLD CLASS DESTINATION

The \$4.8 million project, funded by RI Capital Plan Fund (RICAP), also included road improvements to make the Fort more accessible to pedestrians and cyclists. This project helped to bolster Newport's reputation. On October 30, 2015, the Volvo Ocean Race announced that the grand prix sailing event would return to Newport in 2018, selecting it again as the race's only North American Stopover Port.

Sakonnet Boat Ramp, Little Compton



The newly reconstructed boat ramp in Sakonnet Harbor was completed in June, 2015, just in time for the boating and fishing season. Robust coordination with the Town of Little Compton and The Nature Conservancy made this project a success. The original structure was in very poor condition and required frequent maintenance as a result of sand and debris accumulation caused by waves and current. The slight elevation of the 24 foot wide ramp was designed to mitigate these issues and greatly improved the ability of drivers to both launch and remove their boats without concern about getting stuck in the muck.

This boat ramp project demonstrates how the success of the partnership that DEM and the Nature Conservancy formed years ago continues to benefit Rhode Islanders and visitors alike. Meeting often as a team, members of both organizations collaborate to plan, design, improve and construct public access sites for fishing, boating, and hunting throughout the state. These infrastructure improvements are invaluable resources that enable thousands to enjoy Rhode Island's land and water.

Funding for the \$300,000 project was provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Sport Fish Restoration program. Taxes on motorboat fuel, fishing equipment and certain boats fund the Sport Fish Restoration program. These user taxes provide tangible public benefits by increasing public access and ensuring quality infrastructure around the state. The Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife receives a portion of this national funding to be used specifically for boating access.





Pile driving on work barge

South Bulkhead, Galilee

The Port of Galilee is one of the largest commercial fishing ports on the East Coast and provides seafood to both national and international markets. It is home to 38 docks and piers boat along with 240 permanently berthed vessels. The Port not only serves the economy through fishing, it also supports the many shore side businesses, retail marketers, ice making services and vessel repair shops. Thousands are employed catching, processing, distributing, and selling locally harvested fish.

The Port was established in the 1940's and has weathered decades of storms, high traffic and corrosive salt water. The infrastructure was deteriorating, structurally deficient and hazardous. The Economic Development Administration provided a \$2.9 million grant to repair and upgrade the facilities and the RI Capital Plan provided additional funding of \$3.2 million. These funds were used to complete electrical upgrades, replace 930 feet of steel bulkhead and replace the pier.

“The EDA grant has allowed us to undertake critical updates and improvements to the Port, ensuring this public infrastructure continues to serve the Rhode Island commercial and party/charter fishing industry. Capital investment in Port Infrastructure is key to strengthening the commercial fishing industry, promoting tourism and enhancing the economic potential of the area.”

-DEM Director Janet L. Coit