



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet Rhode Island 2023



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2022 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$113,000
Forest Legacy	\$40,000
Forest Stewardship	\$107,760
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$476,961
State Fire Assistance	\$128,127
Urban and Community Forestry	\$250,000
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$37,276
Total	\$1,153,124

NOTE: This funding is for all entities within the state, not just the State Forester's office.

State, private, and other non-Federal forests make up 92 percent of the 176 million acres of forests across the 20 states of the Northeast and Midwest. The U.S. Forest Service and state forestry agencies collaborate with other partners on shared stewardship goals, which also support each State Forest Action Plan. The State, Private, and Tribal Forestry programs promote the health, resilience, and productivity of trees and forests across all ownerships for the benefit of people and wildlife; establish and manage urban and community forests; empower private landowners with information and technical assistance to sustainably manage their forests; and protect critically important rural forests and watersheds.

Program Goals

- Conserve and manage working forest landscapes for multiple values and uses.
- Protect forests from threats.
- Enhance public benefits from trees and forests.

Key Issues

- Forest loss, fragmentation, and parcelization.
- Forest health.
- Water.
- Fire.
- Climate change.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2022 Accomplishments	Value
Population	1,097,379	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	148
Acres of Forest Land	354,931	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	2,203
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	266,252	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	2,073
Number of NIPF Landowners	5,195	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	14
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	8
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	433,000	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	25
Number of Rural Fire Departments	70	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	39	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	25
Forest Based Employment	3,877	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	921,426
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	5	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	4,357
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	1,750,000		

Program Highlights

Cooperative Fire Protection

Rhode Island provided 14 Volunteer Fire Assistance grants to local departments in 2022. State Fire Assistance provided training for 50 firefighters, including leadership and higher-level incident command courses. Rhode Island was in a drought throughout much of 2022, resulting in 83 wildfires and 51 acres burned, the largest of which was 13 acres. The drought increased the need for staffing and resistance to control many wildland fires. Rhode Island provided firefighters to Connecticut for wildfire response and to Massachusetts for five prescribed fires.

Forest Health Protection

In 2022, Rhode Island saw a significant increase in defoliation by winter moth of 12,500 acres. Ash mortality caused by the emerald ash borer was documented from aerial surveys for the first time at 3,392 acres. A seventh emerald ash borer biocontrol was established by the University of Rhode Island in Coventry in 2022. Beech leaf disease has been detected throughout the State and is being monitored as a potential mortality event. Orange-striped oakworm was present in 19 municipalities, a moderate increase from 2021.

Forest Stewardship

The Rhode Island Forest Stewardship Program reported 40 new or revised stewardship plans for 2,203 acres, 2,073 of which are in Important Forest Areas per the State's Strategic Forest Action Plan. Rhode Island participated in fall tree farm tours and small-scale forestry workshops in conjunction with the Rhode Island Soil and Water Conservation Districts. In 2022, 116 landowners were provided forestry technical assistance and 32 landowners participated in education programs.

The State of Rhode Island does not operate a nursery. Through the Forest Stewardship program and National Reforestation, Nurseries, and Genetics Resource program, the State receives financial assistance to support nursery, genetics, and seed programs.

Landscape Scale Restoration

Grantee: Groundwork Rhode Island

•Federal investment: \$476,961

•Non-federal match: \$483,897

•Project Title: Planting Resilient Riparian Forests for Water Supply and Public Health in Underserved Rhode Island Communities

•Project Description: Four communities and forest, river, health and environmental justice nonprofit organizations will demonstrate how restoring resilient forests along the Blackstone River can improve

water quality, reduce flooding and cool neighborhoods. Hundreds of trees will be planted in riparian areas, beginning resilient forestry along a 15-mile stretch of an American Heritage River. The landscape contains drinking water supplies, Health Equity Zones and Opportunity Zones and is the focus of American Forests' tree equity work.

Urban and Community Forestry

The Rhode Island Urban and Community Forestry program (UCF) celebrated 13 Tree City USA communities and Tree Campus Higher Education recipients, and held their 135th State Arbor Day celebration. The state's UCF program worked with local partner organizations, as part of a State Urban Forest Resilience grant, to implement tree equity-based planting projects in Newport and Providence. The state also administered the UCF grant program, which provided municipalities and nonprofit organizations match grants for tree planting, public tree inventory, and educational/outreach projects, and developed a guide to assist Rhode Island municipalities in developing or updating their basic street tree ordinances. UCF, in partnership with the Rhode Island Tree Council, held 12 workshops, hosted three tree steward educational courses, and continued the Energy-Saving Trees program with 2,000 free 3-gal trees given to state residents.

Contact Information



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