

2013-2014 Annual Awards

Conservation Farmer of the Year: **Greenview Farm**

Conservation Forester of the Year: **Antonia & Tom Bryson**

Excellence in Conservation Education:
Kim Sullivan, RI DEM Fish & Wildlife

Excellence in Promotion and Conservation of Land and Water Resources:
The Town of Hopkinton

Professional Conservationist of the Year:
Scott Ruhren, Audubon Society of RI

Annual Report July 2013 - June 2014



2013-2014 Financial Statement	
Income:	
Contribution Income	14,635.00
Program Income	60,450.90
Expenses:	
Program Expense	50,326.50
Business Expense	3,360.00
Salary Expense	13,954.18
Facilities & Equipment	1,980.00
Insurance	1,417.10
Advertising	240.00
Computer Expense	500.00
Postage, Mailing Service	144.00
Supplies, Printing	300.00
Telephone, Internet	360.00
Travel, Workshops, Meetings	1,004.00
Annual Dinner	250.00
Contributions, Donations	450.00
Net Income / (Loss)	800.12



Photos taken by K.Bousquet, SRICD 2013-2014

The Southern RI Conservation District serves the cities and towns of Kent & Washington Counties. If your community is not represented on our board of directors, please consider joining our team. We meet the first Monday of each month, in Building #61 (Master Gardener Field House) at URI East Farm, East Farm Road, Kingston, RI. To receive a copy of our agenda and minutes, please call 401-500-0422 or email SRICD.info@gmail.com

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 401-500-0422



What are Conservation Districts?

Conservation Districts were established in Rhode Island by State Law in 1944, and are a subdivision of the Rhode Island State Conservation Committee. Thus, Conservation Districts are quasi-public organizations with a wide breadth of opportunity to focus efforts on the environmental and conservation concerns within our communities.

The function of the Districts is to take available technical, financial, and educational resources, focus and coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land user for conservation of soil, water and related resources. They operate on the premise that local people know the most about local needs. The Districts do not regulate or enforce laws. There are approximately 3,000 conservation districts nationwide. There are three Districts in Rhode Island.

- ◆ **Southern RI Conservation District, serving Washington and Kent Counties,**
- ◆ Northern RI Conservation District, serving Providence County,
- ◆ Eastern RI Conservation District, serving Newport and Bristol Counties.

SRICD FREE ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Contact Information & Recommendations for:

- Foresters, Local Technical Service Providers, etc.
- Presentations to Municipal Boards, Commissions and/or Committees
- Site visits to farms and woodlots

FEE-FOR-SERVICE Programs

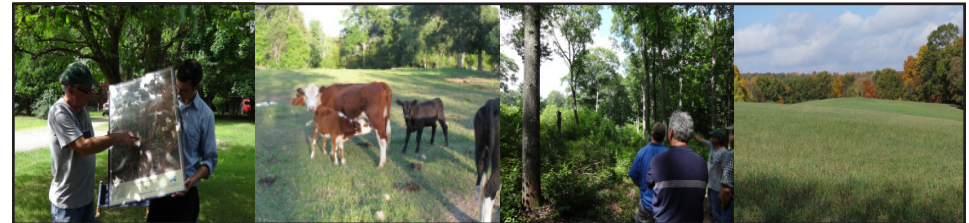
Land & Watershed Management:

- Farm, Forest & Open Space Program - Farm Conservation Plans
- Open Space Mapping
- Whole Farm Conservation Planning
- Land Use Consultation
- Wetland Determinations & Permitting Assistance
- Soil Sample Collection, Preparation, & Analysis Interpretations
- Natural Resource & Environmental Assessments
- GIS Mapping, Map Interpretation & Analysis
- Invasive Species Assessment & Management
- Public Outreach & Training
- Assistance with US EPA Stormwater Phase II Requirements
- Soil Erosion & Sediment Control Plan Review
- Stormwater Impact Assessment
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPP) Review
- Rain Garden & Bio-Retention Basin Design & Installation
- Stream Assessments

PARTNERSHIPS: the fountain of organizational STRENGTH & EFFICIENCY

SRICD's Primary Partners & Cooperators:

- ◆ Landowners
- ◆ Municipalities, including Coventry, West Warwick, Warwick, West Greenwich, East Greenwich, Exeter, North Kingstown, Hopkinton, Richmond, South Kingstown, Westerly, Charlestown, Narragansett and New Shoreham (Block Island)
- ◆ Municipal and Private Land Trusts and Conservation Commissions
- ◆ RI Department of Environmental Management
- ◆ USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



Conservation Districts have a unique relationship with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Program parameters are established by Congress through the Farm Bill, but local landowners meet monthly to identify and prioritize the needs for each state by local county. The SRICD Board of Directors represent the communities, directing the work prioritized and conducted in Kent and Washington Counties. The District Conservationist at NRCS, John Richard, attends SRICD monthly meetings to work in conjunction with the Board to best serve people and protect natural resources in our communities.

SRICD works directly with USDA NRCS to accomplish and improve the process for NRCS Outreach and Education, Conservation Technical Assistance, Wetland Restoration, enhancing Fish and Wildlife Habitat, Grassland and Forestland Ecosystems, improving Soil Quality, Water Management, Water Quality, Energy Conservation, and Forest/Farmland Conservation.

SRICD's Work in 2013 - 2014

◆ Agricultural & Forestland Outreach

SRICD participated in eight established educational events in Kent & Washington Counties. The purpose of this on-going participation in community events is to encourage public landowners to make the cognitive connection between daily actions and daily impact on their immediate environment.

Events and Fairs attended in 2014, included: RI Raised Livestock Association Annual Meeting (Coventry), URI Spring Festival (Kingston), North Kingstown Enviro Fair (North Kingstown), RINLA Green Market Festival (Kingston), Young Farmer Meetings (statewide), and URI Twilight Meetings (statewide).

Additionally, four focused workshops were offered to agricultural and forest landowners in order to provide them with on-site demonstrations of conservation practices, as well as the opportunity to learn about technical and financial assistance available for conservation assistance through USDA-NRCS.

Workshops were held at *South County Rod & Gun Club* (Exeter/West Greenwich), *Louitt Library* (West Greenwich), *Matunuck Vegetable Farm* (South Kingstown), *Homelands Family Forest* (Richmond).

◆ Farm, Forest & Open Space Plans

Natural resources on farmland, as well as the finances of farmland owners benefited from the technical oversight of District Ag Planners. Owners of agricultural land who chose to enroll in Rhode Island's *Farm, Forest, and Open Space Program* gained significant tax relief in 2014. District Ag Planners worked with farmers to outline operational objectives and provided recommendations to best manage and protect the farms' resources.

◆ Improving Public Access to RI's Open Lands with Land Trust Planning Assistance

SRICD participated in the RI Land Trust Council's Annual Conference, the *Land & Water Summit*. A presentation was made to spark Land Trust and other participant interest in the value of improving public access to open space with GIS mapping and trails maps, improved land management & conservation with management planning tools, and standardized trail and property signage.

SRICD met with several new Land Trusts and Conservation Commissions during the summer of 2014, and is partnering with them to improve available mapping for various lands.

SRICD continued working with the Town of Hopkinton's Conservation Commission to digitally map trail systems. Trail maps were developed in various formats and are available at trailheads for hikers. Maps are now available online at ExploreRI.org.

◆ Geese Abatement Program

The Geese Abatement Program efforts continued in the spring of 2014. SRICD participated in three field trainings: Indian Lake (South Kingstown), Ninigret Pond and Green Hill Pond (Charlestown), resulting in 218 goose eggs oiled using the GeesePeace methodology. In partnership with the Wood Pawcatuck Watershed Association, the use of kayaks & motor boats resulted in a huge success for the season! SRICD continues to support the on-going efforts by the Town of Charlestown and is working to develop municipal trainings throughout the state.

◆ Baseline Surveys

SRICD was hired by the *Land Conservancy of North Kingstown* in June 2014 to develop a baseline survey for one parcel. SRICD is looking to further develop this business line in 2015.



SRICD's Work in 2013 - 2014

◆ Completion of the 2014 Update of the *RI Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook*

Over the past 2 years, SRICD has worked with URI, RI DOT and RI DEM to facilitate a major revision of the *RI Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook*. Necessary revisions were drafted and edited based upon public comments. These revisions will provide the framework for trainings for plan reviewers, site inspectors, DOT staff and their contractors throughout the remainder of 2014 into 2015. This much needed revision was the cornerstone for addressing Storm Water Phase II regulations. SRICD will lead the effort for ongoing public education and outreach for preventing stormwater pollution, actively involving the public in carrying out the stormwater management plan.

◆ Wetlands Permitting Assistance

SRICD responded to an RFP posted by the Town of North Kingstown (NK), seeking professional consultants to assist the town in submitting a wetland application to RIDEM for proper permitting for development of walking and biking trails within Cocumscussoc State Park. Once awarded this project, SRICD began working with the Town and a local biking group to GPS existing trails and advise on best avenues for potential new trails; minimizing impact to sensitive wetland areas.



◆ Partnership with Frosty Drew Nature Center

In May, 2014 SRICD & Frosty Drew Nature Center forged a partnership to increase the effectiveness of established *Field Study Programs* at Frosty Drew. SRICD assisted with the 2014 summer camp program and is looking to bolster the outreach efforts to schools within Kent & Washington Counties.

◆ RI Envirothon

High School and Middle School students from all over Rhode Island came together for the annual environmental competition, known as the *RI Envirothon*, in May. SRICD sponsored and supported the 2014 event held at Snake Den Farm (Johnston). SRICD staff guided students through the Soils Test Station. Congratulations to the winners, Narragansett High and the Compass School (middle school)!



Local people represent their communities, promoting natural resource conservation

The Southern RI Conservation District is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and Associate Directors. Directors are locally elected and appointed. At monthly Board Meetings, Directors review requests for conservation assistance on private and local land, review project and program advancements, and establish priorities in response to concerns within the southern RI community.



SRICD Members (left to right): Rudi Hempe (Vice Chair), Harriet Powell, Kate Bousquet, Clarkson Collins (Chairman), Peter Stetson, Carl Sawyer, Harvey Buford, Eric Scherer.

Board of Directors:

Clarkson Collins, Chairman, Kingston
Rudi Hempe, Vice-Chairman, Narragansett
Harvey Buford, Treasurer, Hopkinton
Harriet Powell, Secretary, North Kingstown
Carl Sawyer, South Kingstown

Associate Directors:

Peter Stetson, Richmond
J. Eric Scherer, South Kingstown

SRICD Staff:

Kate Bousquet, District Manager & Agricultural Planner
Kathryn Zuromski, Biologist & GIS Specialist
Jean Lambert, Engineering Consultant

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service staff serving SRICD:

John Richard, District Conservationist
Stewart Taffe, Soil Conservationist
Matt Richardson, Soil Conservationist
Joe Rocks, Civil Engineer