

RI Forest Health Works Project

Kickoff Meeting

November 28, 2022

South Kingstown Land Trust Barn

Agenda for Today

- Project Overview
- Roles & Responsibilities
- Ranking Metrics

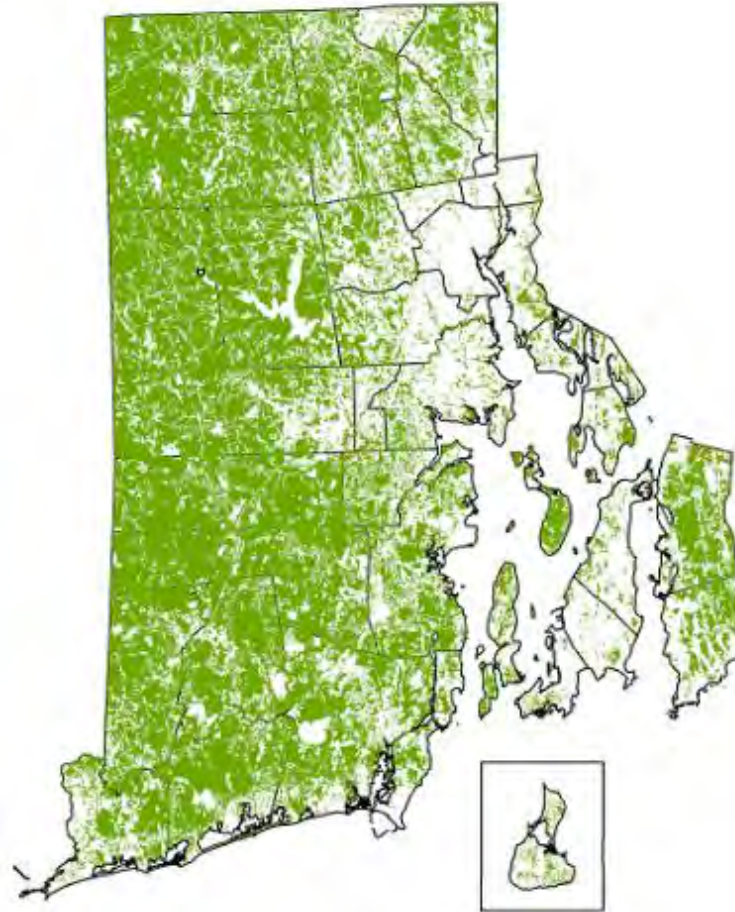


Remind me again?



RI Forest Health Works Project Overview

56% of Rhode Island is forested.



Extent of Forests in Rhode Island

Clean Air & Water





Wildlife Habitat & Connectivity



Economic Benefits & Recreation



Biggest Threat: Fragmentation & Development.



68% of forests are privately owned.



Lack of \$\$ for conservation on private lands.





R H O D E I S L A N D
FOREST HEALTH
WORKS PROJECT

Leverages permanent conservation work of partner organizations to access federal funding for easements through NRCS.

Lead Partner



A graphic featuring a close-up of two hands shaking. The hand on the left is wearing a black leather jacket, and the hand on the right is wearing a red and white plaid shirt. The handshake is framed by a white rectangular border. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with green grass and a red object.

RCPP



**REGIONAL CONSERVATION
PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

**\$2.9 Million for Conservation Easements over
4-5 years**

\$2.9 Million in Matching Funds

- Conservation Projects/\$\$ from Partners
- In-Kind from other Partners

US Held vs. Entity Held Easements

In-Kind Conservation Projects



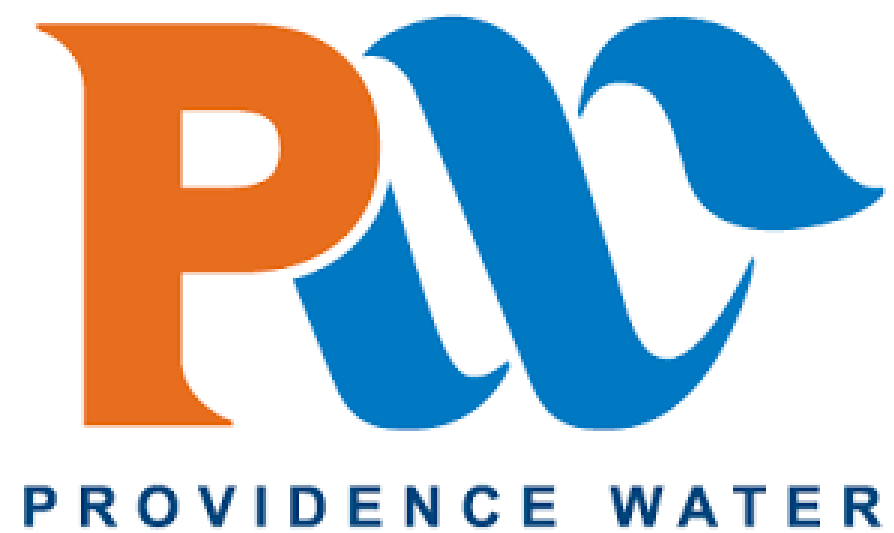
**Audubon Society
of Rhode Island**



SOUTH KINGSTOWN LAND TRUST

Open Space Makes All the Difference

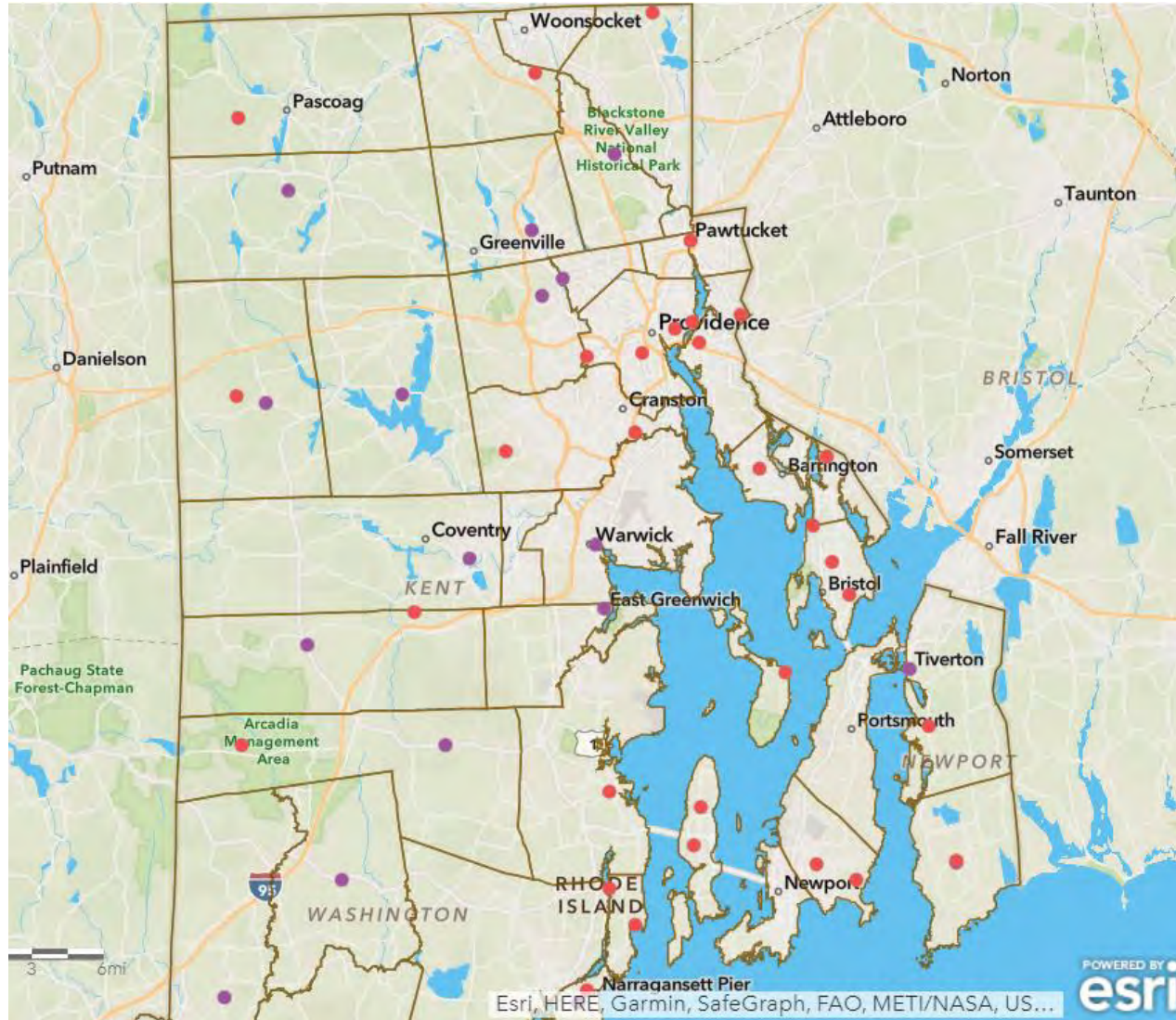
Cash by Partners



In-Kind Contributions by Partners



Centering Land Trusts in Outreach & Opportunities



Eligibility: Forest Management Plan



What's in it for Partners?



Goals: 2,000-2,500 acres



Make Sense?



Turn it over to Bruni and NRCS

Framework of Project Year 1-2



Lead Partner: RIDEM Div. of Forest Environment



Work Closely with USDA-NRCS



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Technical Steering Committee Conservation Values & Ranking



Technical Steering Committee

Project partners that are contributing to this project will have input into the scientific basis for the ranking criteria used to assess which easement projects are funded. Scientific data/assessments used include (but are not limited to):

- The RINHS Natural Heritage database RI Wildlife Action Plan
- TNC Resiliency Data
- Proximity to conservation land
- Conservation opportunity areas
- High Value/High Vulnerability Habitat
- Core forests (unfragmented blocks 500+ acres, 250+ acres)
- Proximity to water features
- Cultural Resources



Outreach to Land Trusts & Forest Landowners

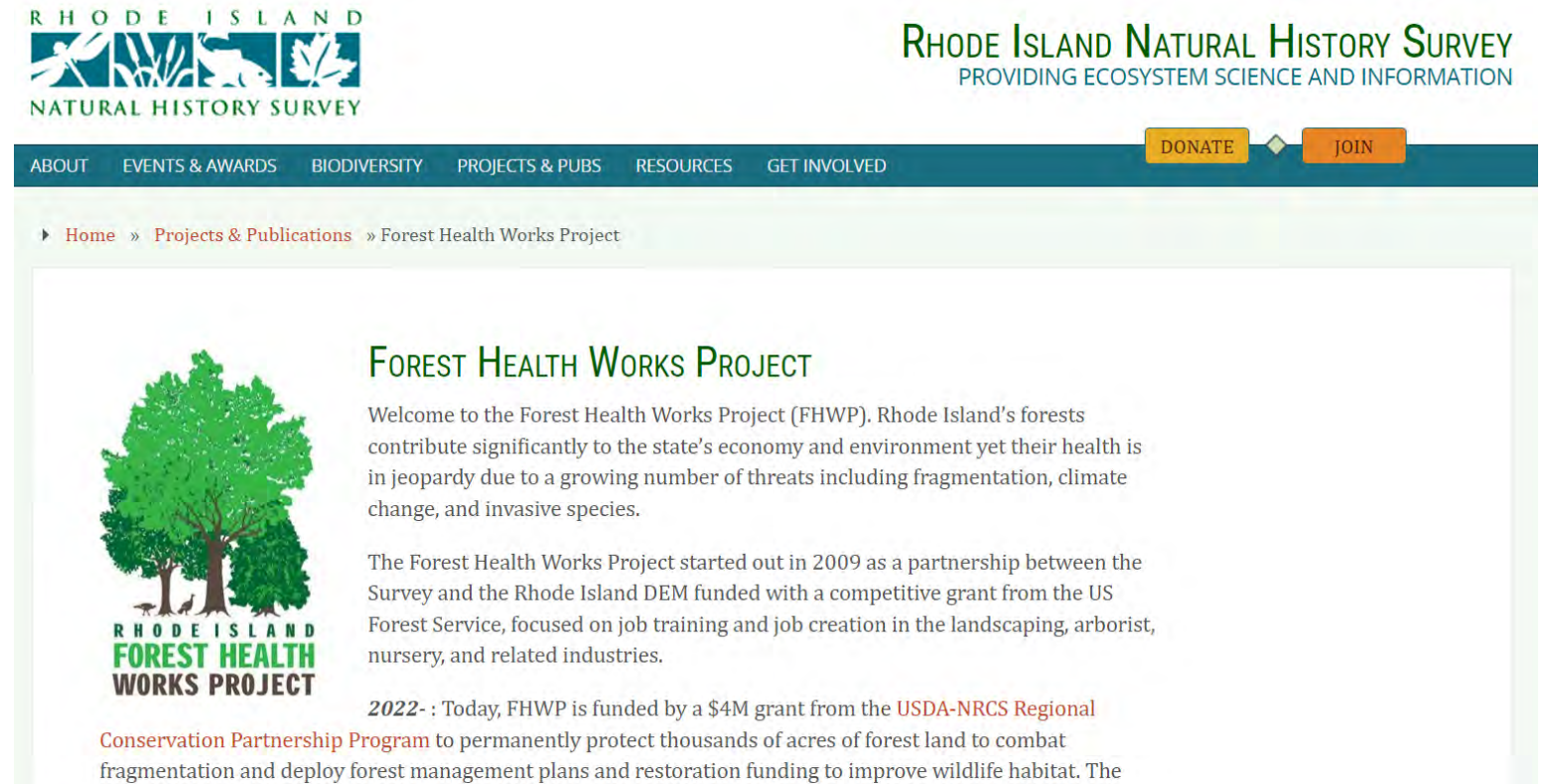


Outreach to Land Trusts & Forest Landowners



Workshops & Communications

- Newsletters
- Social media posts
- Workshops
- Materials
 - Table toppers
- Summit
- Build out website



<https://rinhs.org/projects-and-publications/forest-health-works-project/>

Identify Parcels for Protection

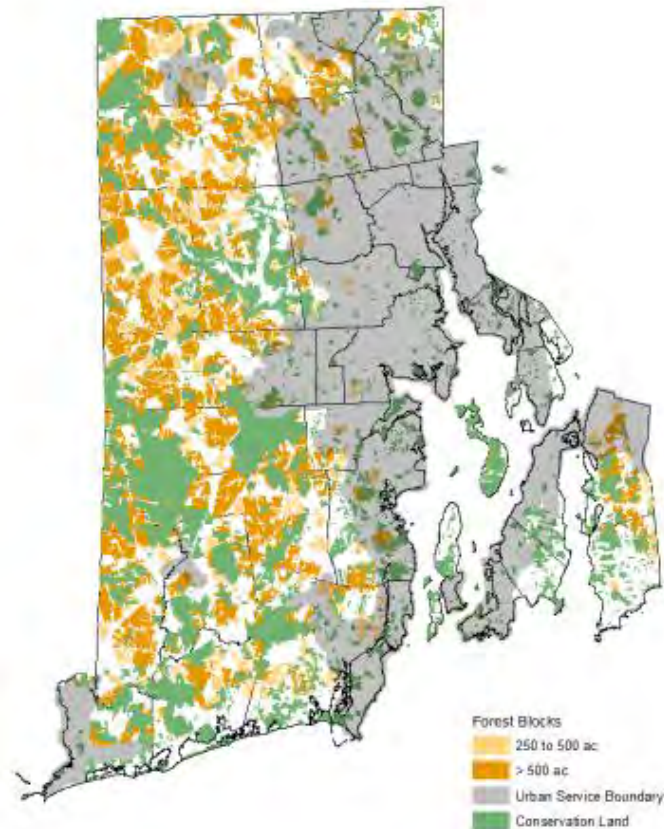


Figure ES-2: Core Forests in Rhode Island.

Source: Paul Jordan, RIDEM



Working with Land Trusts



Succession Planning Workshops



Application Assistance & Planning



Ranking & Contract Management



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High Level Timeline

Match Collection & Reporting

In-Kind Easements & Fee Simple Match

Actual values and verifiable information for recordkeeping

Outlined:

“What NRCS Will Accept for RCPP Match for Land Conservation/Easements.”

In-kind services

Sign in sheets for workshops and meetings

Receipts for materials or contracts

Attendance & Records

Ranking Metrics

Scientific Basis for the ranking criteria used to assess which easement projects are funded.

Ranking Metrics

Organizational forest priorities that determine baseline metrics for ranking

Conservation Values

Facilitated Discussion