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Are you hungry for sustainable food practices?



Is your science curriculum less than AWESOME!?



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ANNUAL REPORT



**Southern Rhode Island
Conservation District**

**Southern Rhode Island Conservation District
July 2006 – June 2007**

OCTOBER 2007

About The Southern Rhode Island Conservation District (SRICD)



SRICD was established by state legislation in 1943. We are a subdivision of the Rhode Island State Conservation Committee, a quasi-public agency.

SRICD's MISSION

Our mission is to promote and achieve a healthy environment and sustainable use of natural resources for the people of Kent and Washington Counties and the state of Rhode Island by providing technical, educational, and financial resources in coordination with our partners.

Our Operating Philosophy

If we can foster a sustainable balance in the ways we relate to our landscape—as a place to work and play, grow food, store rainfall, and/or provide habitat for other creatures—we will have wholesome and beautiful places to live. SRICD's work promotes such a sustainable balance by focusing on the most essential and most often challenging elements of the equation:

- Clean and plentiful waters,
- Secure sources of food, and
- Well managed open space and wildlife habitat.

To be effective in our mission and operating philosophy we constantly attend to:

- Organizational strength and vision.

SRICD is governed by a board of directors—five voting members and several associate directors who provide technical assistance and a diversity of views. Our board represents communities and interests throughout Kent and Washington Counties. If your community is not represented by our directors, consider joining us.

SRICD Board (left to right): Clarkson Collins, Harvey Buford, Harriet Powell, Ross Adrain, Marjorie Weeden, Stephen DelPozzo, Patricia Lenihan, Rudi Hempe.



Directors:

Patricia Lenihan, Chair (*East Greenwich*); Rudi Hempe, Vice-Chair (*Narragansett*); Stephen DelPozzo, Treasurer (*West Greenwich*); Harriet Powell, Secretary (*North Kingstown*); and Clarkson Collins (*South Kingstown*).

Associate Directors:

Ross Adrain (*West Warwick*), Paul Boisvert (*Coventry*), Harvey Buford (*Hopkinton*), Richard Donnelly (*North Kingstown*), Kelly Fox (*Westerly*), and Marjorie Weeden (*Hopkinton*).

Staff:

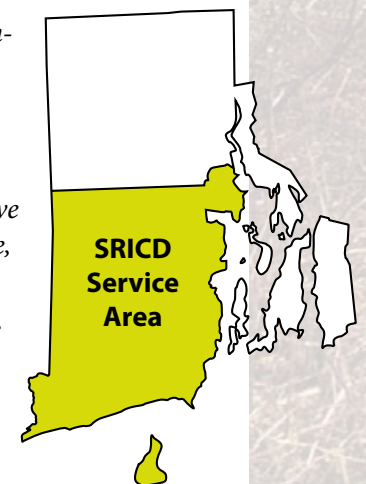
Alicia Lehrer, *District Manager*
 Susan Letendre, *Education and Outreach Director*
 Kristine Stuart, *Stormwater Management Specialist*
 Patricia Tanalski, *Special Projects Coordinator*
 Haidee Janak, *Project Intern*
 Heather Place, *Project Intern*
 Kristan Foster Reed, *Project Intern*
 Clare Stone, *Project Consultant*
 Jean Lambert, *Engineering Consultant*

SRICD Staff (left to right): Susan Letendre, Heather Place, Alicia Lehrer, Kristan Foster Reed, Patty Tanalski, Clare Stone, Kris Stuart.



SRICD serves the communities of Kent and Washington Counties: Coventry, West Warwick, Warwick, West Greenwich, East Greenwich, Exeter, North Kingstown, Hopkinton, Richmond, South Kingstown, Westerly, Charlestown, Narragansett and New Shoreham (Block Island). In addition, we serve all of Rhode Island in stormwater assistance, site plan review, and food policy programs.

Call us at 401-284-1885 or look us up on the web: <http://sricd.org>.



Local Assistance in Storm Water Management

SRICD is helping municipalities and institutions affected by RIDES' stormwater regulations as they grapple with the many nuances of the permit process. The list below demonstrates some of the ways SRICD helps to implement the six "Minimum Measures."

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Printed Materials:

SRICD developed a number of items either for display, inclusion on a town website or for direct mailing to residents.

Storm Water Annual Report: When SRICD helped the Town of Narragansett develop its Annual Report on implementation of its stormwater management program for RIDEM, we also put it into everyday language for posting on the web and distribution to interested citizens.

Annual Newsletter: SRICD developed a second issue of Stormwater Currents, a newsletter mailed to all 8,000 plus residences of Narragansett that provides an overview of the Town's stormwater management program, ways to help protect water quality and get involved with local watershed organizations.

Consumer Confidence Report Tips Section: SRICD wrote

"Tips on Reducing Runoff" for inclusion in the Consumer Confidence Reports on water supply that was mailed out to every water user in Narragansett (see page 4 of <http://www.narragansettri.gov/Point%20Judith%202006.pdf>).

Posters at Public Venues: SRICD placed laminated posters adapted from an outreach campaign designed in Olympia, Washington (as shown below) for the Town of Narragansett in five public venues throughout the Town including veterinarian offices,



pet stores, the public library and Town Hall.

Town Hall Runoff Evaluation Poster: To illustrate the steps citizens can take to reduce runoff, SRICD performed a "runoff evaluation" at Narragansett Town Hall. While options for reducing runoff at the site are limited, a poster showing the process and demonstrating the Town's commitment should prove beneficial in the long run.

School Education:

Hands on Workshop for 200 Elementary School Students: In May, 2007 SRICD joined forces with the Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA) to deliver a watershed education program for the entire third and fourth grade (approximately 200 students) of Narragansett Elementary School. Susan Letendre of SRICD gave an overview of "What is a Watershed" and "the Watersheds of Narragansett" and students learned their watershed address (the name of the watershed in which they live). Veronica Berounsky of the NRPA board



Veronica Berounsky of the Narrow River Preservation Association takes Narragansett Elementary students on a virtual tour of the Narrow River Watershed.

took students on a virtual tour of the Narrow River Watershed and Rosemary Smith (NRPA volunteer) provided students with hands-on watershed fun with games and exploration of a watershed model.

Citizen Education:

Water Quality Protection Training for Homeowners: Approximately 50 homeowners in the Great Island Association in Narragansett attended a workshop presented by SRICD and the Salt Ponds Coalition. Participants enjoyed Alicia Lehrer's presentation of SRICD's newly developed "Water Quality Report Card for Homeowners" that helped them learn best practices to protect the natural waters most important to them. For Great Island residents, that treasured water body is Point



Alicia Lehrer (left), Mark Bullinger (center) and Art Ganz (right) talk to homeowners in the Great Island Association in Narragansett about how to help protect Point Judith Pond.

Judith Pond. The “Report Card” addresses issues such as lawn fertilization methods and quantities, pet waste, septic system care and more. Mark Bullinger and Art Ganz of the Salt Ponds Coalition informed residents about the fragility of the salt pond ecosystem, typical monitoring parameters and why they are chosen, and urged them to get involved in monitoring.

Public Involvement and Participation

Public Workshop at “Land & Water Conservation Summit: In cooperation with URI’s NEMO program, SRICD conducted a workshop session at this year’s Land and Water Conservation Summit on opportunities for citizen involvement in Phase II (stormwater management).

Mettatuxet BMP Monitoring: On behalf of the Town of Narragansett, SRICD partnered with Tom Boving, Professor

of Geosciences at URI and his graduate student Pamela Cady, CRMC and RIDEM to design and implement a program to monitor the effectiveness of an innovative storm water treatment facility we designed at Mettatuxet Beach in Narragansett (see photos right). The three part system includes a swirl separator to remove solids, an infiltration system (under the parking lot in the photo on the top) and a detention basin (shown in the photo on the bottom). The program will study this three part system to determine the effectiveness of each part in removing bacteria (total coliform, E. coli and enterococci) and nutrients (nitrate and phosphate). The study will span two years during which the system will be monitored monthly and during wet weather twice annually.

Crooked Brook Monitoring: On behalf of the Town of Narragansett, SRICD partnered with the Narrow River Preservation

Association (NRPA) to monitor two locations on Crooked Brook, a tributary to the Narrow River. NRPA volunteer Ken McShane completed his third year of monitoring Crooked Brook the summer of 2007. Crooked Brook will be monitored for five years in order to try to determine whether the horse boarding facility on the brook is causing the increased bacteria levels.

Point Judith Pond Monitoring: On behalf of the Town of Narragansett, SRICD partnered with the Salt Ponds Coalition (SPC) to monitor the Narragansett portions of Point Judith Pond. Monitoring locations were selected based on known pollution “hot spots”. SPC volunteers monitor for bacteria, nutrients and dissolved oxygen at four locations. This monitoring will continue indefinitely and provide a baseline from which water quality changes can be noted as improvements are made in the watershed to mitigate known pollution sources.



“This innovative treatment system at Mettatuxet Beach in Narragansett incorporates both infiltrators under the parking lot (top) and the dry pond (bottom) to protect the Narrow River.”

Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination

Dry Weather Outfall Monitoring: SRICD is conducting the dry weather outfall monitoring program required under Phase II for the Town of Narragansett. This involves visiting every known outfall in town twice per year – once in spring and once in fall – at least 72 hours after a rain event to assure that there is no storm water flow. If outfalls are flowing during dry weather, this could indicate an illicit discharge

from a sewer or septic system into the storm system. Therefore, flowing outfalls are sampled for fecal coliform bacteria, pH, temperature, conductivity and flow. We also note odor, discoloration, unusual vegetation growth and scouring.

Construction Site Storm Water Runoff Control

Erosion & Sediment Control Workshops for Municipal Staff: SRICD is pleased to be playing a small role in a contract between URI, RIDOT and RIDEM to help raise the awareness of storm water management issues. SRICD's role is primarily in developing and presenting a number of workshops over the next few years; one that we are developing should help municipalities to update their erosion and sediment control ordinance so it is better aligned with the State's storm water regulations.

Post Construction Storm Water Management in New Development & Redevelopment

Storm Water Ordinance Development: SRICD is developing a model ordinance to ensure that storm water facilities on privately-owned land are maintained.

We are also working with the Town of Narragansett on a guide for homeowners' associations. Both of these documents will be presented in workshops in 2008.

TR-55 Workshop: This year, SRICD helped put together a workshop on the updated computer model to estimate runoff (TR-55). USDA NRCS provided the bulk of instruction on how to use the new model, then a RIDEM Engineer spoke about common errors and what regulators prefer to see.

Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping in Municipal Operations

Storm Water System Inspection & Maintenance and DPW Garage Maintenance: SRICD is revising its workshop on Storm Water System Inspec-



tion & Maintenance to make it available throughout the state. In conjunction with URI, we will hold a "train the trainer" workshop early in the spring of 2008. We are also developing a series of presentations for a "train the trainer" workshop on operation and maintenance of DPW garages and other maintenance facilities to be held this December.

Operation & Maintenance Plan Development for Storm Water Systems: As the Town of Narragansett continues to identify and locate BMPs, SRICD prepares Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Plans for those facilities that do not have a plan on file. This year, SRICD worked with the Town and CRMC to make sure workable plans for maintenance were properly permitted for facilities on Lilly Lane and Cedar Island Road. SRICD also provided options for managing flooding at Stanton Avenue.

In 2006, through a grant from the NRCS, and in partnership with the RIDEM Division of Agriculture (Div. of Ag.), SRICD began a multi-faceted project to locate and inventory livestock producers in the Saugatucket and Pawcatuck Watersheds.

Alphabet Soup

You will find several abbreviation throughout this report. Here is a handy guide to decoding them:

- BMP** Best Management Practice—A method for preventing or reducing the pollution resulting from an activity
- CIG** Conservation Innovation Grants—An NRCS grant program administered by RI Conservation Districts
- GPS** Global Positioning System
- NACD** The National Association of Conservation Districts
- NRCS** USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service
- NRPA** The Narrow River Preservation Association
- RIDEM** Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
- RIPDES** Rhode Island Pollution Discharge Elimination System regulated by RIDEM
- SPC** The Salt Ponds Coalition
- SRICD** Southern Rhode Island Conservation District
- TMDL** Total Maximum Daily Load—pollution studies developed by RIDEM for polluted water bodies
- URI** University of Rhode Island
- USDA** United States Department of Agriculture

Livestock Producer Inventory in Saugatucket and Pawcatuck Watersheds



Kristan (left) and Heather (center) survey Lou Perotti (right) at Fenner Hill Farm in Hope Valley. Kristan locates the farm using a Trimble GPS unit and Heather conducts the survey.

SRICD developed this project originally when working with a group that was identifying possible pollution sources to the Saugatucket River. Livestock producers were one possible pollution source. SRICD conducted a windshield survey, driving through the watershed with an eye for livestock, big and small. That survey yielded fifteen livestock operations. Cross checking the approximate addresses with Div. of Ag's farm database and the producers who are assisted by NRCS, we found that only five producers were known to either agency.

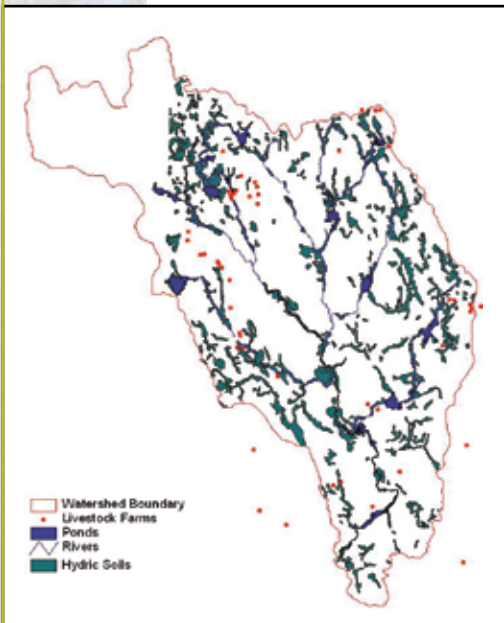
Originally, SRICD hoped to find funding for outreach to the farmers just to let them know about programs to assist them, such as federal cost share programs, and the state Farm, Forest and Open Space Act, under which they can receive a significant tax break on their land. Discussions with NRCS and Div. of Ag. revealed that contacting livestock producers could have many more benefits, and the project evolved into its current form:

1. Determine overall phosphorous loading to the Saugatucket and Pawcatuck watersheds from manure production.
2. Give an overview of the natural resources and potential threats to those resources in the Pawcatuck Watershed in order to best use limited financial resources to prevent pollution.



3. Prepare for biosecurity hazards such as mad cow disease or avian influenza by using a global positioning system to develop a database of farms and average numbers and types of livestock for use by the state veterinarian.
4. Provide farmers with informational resources about programs from which they can benefit:
 - USDA cost share programs available through the Farm Bill
 - Purchase of development rights programs through federal, state, and local organizations
 - Farm, Forest and Open Space tax relief information
 - Contact information for the state veterinarian in case of sick animals
 - Tips on managing livestock on small acreage from the URI Cooperative Extension Healthy Landscapes Program
 - Maps showing their operations in relation to local natural waters

All livestock farmers are given an aerial photo like this one showing their farm with a dot and its watershed location and proximity to nearby water bodies. The dark line is the watershed boundary.



Results: Upper Wood Subwatershed - 67 Livestock Owners Surveyed.



Project area - Saugatucket and Pawcatuck Watersheds. The lighter lines depict subwatershed boundaries.

In June of 2007, SRICD hired interns Haidee Janak, Heather Place, and Kristan Reed to complete the field work for this project. To date, they have identified and interviewed an astounding 200 livestock owners in the project area. We will develop reports by subwatershed and expect the project to be complete by December 2007.

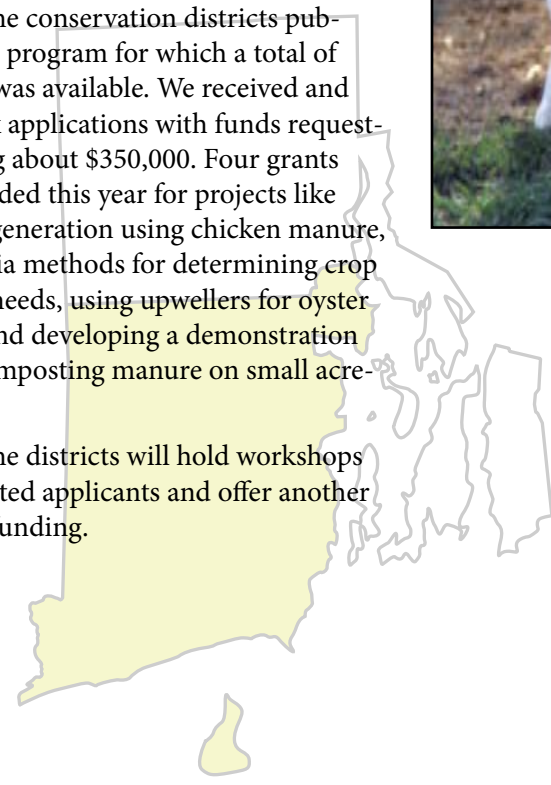
As part of this project, SRICD also developed a “Rapid Watershed Assessment” (RWA) for the Pawcatuck Watershed in order to get a holistic view of natural resources, issues, and information gathered to date for the watershed. Clare Stone, SRICD’s project consultant, did a great job developing the report and the many GIS maps that comprised it. Maps developed for the RWA include location, relief, precipitation, land ownership, open space, land use/land cover, soil capability class, prime farmland, surface water classification, impaired surface waters, groundwater reservoirs and resources, water withdrawals for agriculture, anadromous fish habitat, habitat of rare and noteworthy species, economic concerns and population. The RWA report was completed and presented to NRCS in 2007 to assist NRCS in better understanding resource concerns in this large watershed.

Conservation Innovation Grants

This year SRICD, in partnership with the Northern and Eastern RI Conservation Districts, has taken on the administration of the RI NRCS Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) program. This program promotes innovative measures on farms that conserve soil, water, air and energy resources that once tested, can be available to all farms through the USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program. Maximum grant funding for any one project under RI CIG is \$75,000 and must be matched one to one by the applicant.

In 2007, the conservation districts publicized the program for which a total of \$175,000 was available. We received and ranked six applications with funds requested totaling about \$350,000. Four grants were awarded this year for projects like methane generation using chicken manure, multimedia methods for determining crop watering needs, using upwellers for oyster farming and developing a demonstration site for composting manure on small acreage farms.

In 2008, the districts will hold workshops for interested applicants and offer another round of funding.



Financial Statement

EXPENSE

| | |
|--|------------|
| Advertising | \$ 175.00 |
| Annual Meeting | 1,296.12 |
| Awards | 350.00 |
| Contributions | |
| RI Envirothon | 100.00 |
| Big E | 41.75 |
| Contract Labor | 13,605.00 |
| Dues and Subscriptions | 2,845.00 |
| Grants expenses | 3,161.50 |
| Marketing | 628.95 |
| Meeting Expenses | 1,384.14 |
| Office Expenses (Rent, Tel, Postage, etc.) | 27,502.79 |
| Pass-through funds to State Committee | 21,458.33 |
| Professional Development | 885.00 |
| Payroll Expenses | 121,988.62 |
| Professional Fees | 3,496.59 |
| Program Expense | 500.00 |
| Seedling Sale Expenses | 4,006.57 |
| Travel | 2,323.09 |

Total Expense \$ **205,748.45**

INCOME

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Contracts Income | \$ 55,095.89 |
| Grants Income | 55,249.09 |
| Legislative funding | 76,541.67 |
| Town Funding | |
| Charlestown | 0.00 |
| Coventry | 1,150.00 |
| East Greenwich | 720.00 |
| Exeter | 0.00 |
| Hopkinton (allocated funds but they were paid in next fiscal year) | |
| Narragansett | 1,500.00 |
| New Shoreham | 0.00 |
| North Kingstown | 1,687.50 |
| Richmond | 0.00 |
| South Kingstown | 1,000.00 |
| Warwick | 1,000.00 |
| West Greenwich | 600.00 |
| West Warwick | 0.00 |
| Westerly | 200.00 |
| Total Town Funding | 7,857.50 |
| Contributions Income | 500.00 |
| Sales | 7,720.57 |
| Miscellaneous Income | 1,323.65 |

Total Income \$ **204,288.37**

Announcements

SRICD's 2007 Award Winners

Conservation Farmer of the Year

Edwin "Scooter" LaPrise, of Emma Acres Dairy Farm, Exeter

Conservation Educator of the Year

Peter Stetson of Coventry High School

Conservation Community of the Year

Town of Narragansett

Conservation Legislators of the Year

Representative Peter T. Ginaitt and

Representative Donna M. Walsh

SRICD Has Moved

Our office is now located at 10 High Street, Suite I-8, Wakefield, RI 02879. We are very close to the intersection of Main Street and High Street and just upstairs from the South County Independent and South County Orthopedics. Call us at 401-284-1885, fax us at 401-284-1889 or visit our website at www.sricd.org.

SRICD's Website, www.sricd.org Has a New Look

SRICD warmly thanks Dick Perreault's class at Rhode Island College (RIC) for taking on our website as a class project. They took our humdrum website, updated it, made it much more user friendly and beautiful. Special thanks go to Emmanuel Mensah, one of the students on the project team, who has generously continued to give us his time to update our website. We love our new look and hope you will too.

SRICD offers special thanks to the RI Legislature and the municipalities of Kent and Washington Counties for their continued support, our partners at NRCS, and Mark Rea for donating his professional photographic talents for the board picture for this report.