



*Little Rhody
Big Conservation*

**Break-Out Session I
Monday, 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

Conservation Education Programs from Around the Nation and Territories

Columbia Room

Susan Schultz

NACD Education & Stewardship Specialist, Marketplace Manager

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<http://www.nacdnet.org/education>

Gina DeMarco

District Manager of the Northern RI Conservation District

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www.nricd.org

Education and outreach is an important component for local conservation districts. Educating youth and adults is more important than ever to instill an appreciation of our natural resources. Examples of various programs, projects and events will be shared from other states and U.S. territories. In this break out session, Gina will share ways in which the NRICD has utilized multiple outreach and education materials developed by NACD to enhance outreach projects she administers and oversees locally.

Participants are encouraged to bring a handout of a unique program they have developed to share.

Improving Public Access

Developing Trails Mapping, Signs, Parking, the Right Management Plan, & Creative Stewardship Funding: Enterprise Room

Kate Bousquet

District Manager and Land Use Planner of the Southern RI Conservation District

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Kathryn Zuromski

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Biologist & GIS Specialist of the Southern RI Conservation District

A collaborative effort between the Southern RI Conservation District and several of southern Rhode Island's Land Trusts and Conservation Commissions has produced an effective package for sustaining and improving public access to protected lands; including web accessible trail maps, standardized signs, trailhead parking, adequate trail establishment, and land management plans that incorporate holistic stewardship of the land. Improving public access to natural areas increases usage and public support for conservation. Please join us to learn more

about the approach we have taken, the creative funding established to develop and maintain these plans, and the nuances of the process.

Board Training and Employee /Board Relations: Courageous Room

Michael Brown

Executive Director of the National Association of State Conservation Agencies (NASCA)

mike-brown@nascanet.org

New Supervisors can learn the basics of what their job entails while senior supervisors can brush up on their duties and responsibilities. Employees and Supervisors will learn how their positions interface without the burden of micro-managing or managing up.

Break-Out Session II **Monday, 2:45 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.**

Science and Communication in Stormwater Management: Columbia Room

Molly Allard

Environmental Education and Outreach Coordinator of the Northern RI Conservation District

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As conservation professionals we all know why stormwater management is so important, but communicating the concepts involved to potential partners in the community can be a challenge. In this breakout session, we will review the scientific principles behind stormwater management and then discuss the challenges of, and strategies for, presenting them to community members in an easily understandable way. Lessons will be shared from the Northern RI Conservation District's work installing small BMP retrofits at privately owned homes and businesses in Scituate, RI.

Benefits of Oyster Restoration: Habitat, Water quality, Food, and the Local Economy: Enterprise Room

Gary Casabona with other USDA-NRCS Staff and Partners

RI State Biologist, USDA-NRCS

gary.casabona@ri.usda.gov

Restoration techniques, such as introducing shell material and oyster larvae to Rhode Island's coastal ponds, are expected to increase oyster populations in these locations. Oysters are filter feeders, and they provide significant benefits to water quality. As individual oysters die, their shells become part of an oyster reef, which provides habitat for commercially important finfish. Oysters themselves are a popular delicacy, and successful restorations also benefit both commercial and recreational fishermen, adding to the local economy.

Board Training and Employee /Board Relations: Courageous Room

Michael Brown

Executive Director of the National Association of State Conservation Agencies (NASCA)

mike-brown@nascanet.org

This session can be a repeat of the first session, or a continuation of it, depending on the attendees.

Break-Out Session III
Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

The Scientific Basis for Soil Health: Columbia Room

Dr. Wayne Honeycutt
Deputy Chief of Science and Technology, NRCS
wayne.honeycutt@wdc.usda.gov

The results of research studies will be presented on practices for enhancing soil health and how those enhancements increase yield and cropping system resilience.

Pollinators: Enterprise Room

Kelly Gill
Pollinator Conservation Specialist, The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation
Partner Biologist, USDA-NRCS, Mid-Atlantic and Northeast Regions
kelly.gill@nj.usda.gov

Learn about the latest science-based approaches to increasing pollinator populations for improved crop production and biodiversity conservation including pollination economics, the role of native bees in crop production, designing and installing pollinator habitat enhancements, best practices for pollinators, case studies from the Northeast.

The Small-Scale Forestry Project – Conserving Forestland in Northern RI

Courageous Room

Paul Dolan
Area Director RI Resource Conservation & Development Council
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Christopher Modisette
RI Resource Conservationist and State Forester for USDA-NRCS
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Kate Sayles
Forestry and Agriculture Technician for the Northern RI Conservation District
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Over 75% of Rhode Island's woodlands are owned by private landowners. The majority of woodlots are between 1 and 9 acres, a group of landowners that hasn't been targeted historically. Through an agreement between the Northern RI Conservation District and NRCS, an outreach effort was implemented to promote USDA Farm Bill programs and accelerate technical support for forestry, wildlife habitat, and water quality for smaller-scale forest landowners in RI. NRICD partnered with public and private forestry agencies throughout the state to host a series of field workshops that emphasized the importance of forest management with excellent results. Join us to learn more about the outreach effort, forest conservation on the ground in Northern RI, what worked and didn't work, and our plans to expand in the future.