

1965: An Opportunistic Beginning

A 50+-year partnership with the Audubon Society of Rhode Island begins with the Conservancy's support for Audubon's acquisition of The Davis Memorial Refuge in North Kingstown.

1968: First Land Donation Accepted

The Conservancy accepts a donation of two lots at Fogland Marsh in Tiverton to create the first TNC preserve in Rhode Island. As of 2016, the Conservancy is still conserving parcels abutting this preserve.

1971: First Property Purchased

The Conservancy purchases its first property in Rhode Island, the 50-acre Ell Pond Preserve in Hopkinton, for \$20,000. The property is part of the Ell Pond/Long Pond Preserve complex and is managed jointly with the Audubon Society of Rhode Island and the State of Rhode Island.

1972: Work Begins on Block Island

The Conservancy accepts the donation of an 8-acre conservation easement on Block Island and assists the Block Island Conservancy (BIC) with conserving Rodman's Hollow. This marks the start of a 44-year partnership with BIC.

1978: Natural Heritage Program Launched

With funding from TNC and the State, Rhode Island becomes one of the first participants in the Natural Heritage Program, a TNC initiative created to identify and track rare species and study exemplary natural communities.

1983: Successful Conservation Partnership Launched

The Conservancy assists in several key acquisitions on Block Island, including the Lewis-Dickens Farm. As a result of this acquisition, The Champlin Foundations help launch a partnership between the Conservancy, the State, and the Foundations that to date has contributed nearly \$56,700,000 over 33 years to protect 28,977 acres of Rhode Island's special places for all to enjoy.

1989: Conservancy Opens its Doors in Rhode Island

As part of a long-standing national effort to open an office (or a chapter) in every state, the Conservancy establishes its first Rhode Island office, located in a basement on Hope Street on the East Side of Providence. Keith Lang is named Rhode Island's first State Director.

1989: Block Island Recognized

Block Island is designated as one of the Conservancy's "Last Great Places", which launches a campaign that eventually sees nearly half of the island conserved.

1991: First Satellite Office

Thanks to widespread community support for land conservation, a satellite office opens on Block Island. Today, that office has seven staff and several seasonal employees and is a globally recognized model for community-based conservation.

1993: Regional Record Set

In partnership with The Champlin Foundations and the State, 23 land acquisition projects are completed in 1993, more than any other program in the Eastern Region.

1994: New State Director Hired

Rhode Island Director of Development Doug Parker is hired as the Chapter's second State Director.

1998: We Move Our Office

The Conservancy buys and moves to its current location, at 159 Waterman Street on the East Side of Providence.

1999: Ten Years of Growth

In ten years, The Nature Conservancy in Rhode Island grows from a team of just 3 staff members and a \$100,000 operating budget, to 23 staff members and a \$900,000 operating budget. Today, The Nature Conservancy in Rhode Island is the state's largest statewide nonprofit conservation organization.

1997-2001: Rhode Island Capital Campaign

During this groundbreaking campaign, the chapter's fundraising goal is raised from \$22 million, to \$37 million, to \$50 million. Incorporated into the campaign is an international component to raise a \$450,000 international endowment for TNC international projects that have ecological concerns similar to those in Rhode Island.

1999: Supporting the Land Trust Movement

Rhode Island residents' desire to protect their communities' important natural areas has spurred the formation of 43 land trusts. With support from The Nature Conservancy of Rhode Island, the leadership of these land trusts form the Rhode Island Land Trust Council to foster a sustainable land conservation movement by supporting the missions and operations of land trusts and providing a forum for their effective cooperation. TNC supervised and housed the RI Land Trust Council Director until the program moved to Audubon Society of Rhode Island in 2009.

2001: A New State Director Hired

Previous Florida Director of Government Relations and Rhode Islander Terry Sullivan is hired as State Director.

July 2001: Borderlands Program Launched

The Nature Conservancy launches the Borderlands Program, a two state, community-based conservation initiative spanning a 200-square mile forested landscape in Western RI and Eastern CT.

2002: Over 10,000 Acres

The Conservancy reaches the 10,000 acres-protected mark and conserves its 175th property.

2003: A New State Director Hired:

Eastern Region Director of Government Relations Janet Coit is hired as the chapter's fourth State Director.

2003: Francis C. Carter Memorial Preserve Acquired

The Conservancy acquires the "823 UNC" property in Charlestown and christens it the Francis C. Carter Memorial Preserve in memory of the former Champlin Foundations Director. This is now the Conservancy's largest preserve in Rhode Island and is staffed by a land steward.

2003: Open Space Bond

Governor Carcieri endorses an open space bond at the Conservancy's Commitment to Conservation luncheon.

2004: Land Trust Rally

The Conservancy hosts the 2004 Land Trust Alliance Rally, an annual conference for land trusts across the nation, in Providence.

November 2, 2004: Question 8 Approved

More than 71% of RI residents approve a \$70 million environmental bond, the largest ever passed in the state.

2005: More Than Just Land Protection

The Conservancy embarks on an ambitious freshwater conservation program, which not only includes acquisition of key tracts in watersheds of important waterways such as the Queen's River, but also begins engagement in issues such as water use policy and fish passage.

2006: Conservancy Completes its Largest Acquisition To-Date

In partnership with the State of Rhode Island and the Town of West Greenwich, the Conservancy acquires 1,640 acres of highly threatened land in West Greenwich and Coventry. These tracts are adjacent to other Conservancy-protected lands and together form the Tillinghast Pond Management Area, a 1,800-acre preserve now managed jointly with the Town and the State.

2007: Marine Conservation Program Launched

After years of planning, the Conservancy launches its coastal and marine program, thanks to a grant from the Lattner Foundation. Initial strategies aim to tackle water quality challenges, shellfish restoration, shoreline habitat loss, and fisheries health.

2008: Key Freshwater Tract Acquired

The Conservancy completes its acquisition of the 850-acre Grills property in Hopkinton, which includes five miles of riverfront along the Pawcatuck River. Today, nearly 10 miles of key river corridor habitat are now conserved in this critical area, an accomplishment achieved in partnership with the State and the Town of Hopkinton.

2008: 30,000 Acres and Counting

As a result of an ambitious land protection program in partnership with The Champlin Foundations and the State of Rhode Island, the Conservancy reaches the 30,000 acres-protected mark.

2008: First Shellfish Transplant Completed

In partnership with the State, the Salt Ponds Coalition, and Save The Bay, and supported by a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Conservancy transplants 400,000 quahogs into Ninigret and Quonochontaug Ponds in Charlestown and Westerly. This two-year project eventually sees four tons of clams released into spawner sanctuaries in the ponds and tests the clams' ability to naturally clean the ponds for people and wildlife.

November 2008: Passage of \$2.5 Million Open Space Bond

The Conservancy and Rhode Island Land Trust Coalition spearhead another successful campaign to keep the Open Space Bond on the ballot. Voters overwhelmingly approve the bond despite difficult fiscal times.

2009: 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

To thank its many members and supporters, the Conservancy hosts eight guided walks at some of our oldest and most beloved preserves.

2010: Wolkoff Wins Bayberry Wreath Award

Dennis Wolkoff, the Conservancy's Vice President, a conservation visionary, and a mentor to many, was honored with the Bayberry Wreath Award for his role in starting The Nature Conservancy's program on Block Island.

2011: A New State Director Hired

Terry Sullivan is again named State Director after Janet Coit moves to become RI Department of Environmental Management Director.

2012: Conservation Engineer Hired

As part of a cooperative agreement with RIDEM, a conservation engineer is hired to complete public access and habitat restoration activities. This is the first conservation engineer hired in the history of the Conservancy.

July 2012 – Present: Land, Water, Hope, A Campaign for Rhode Island's Future

A \$50 million campaign comprised of \$15 million public funding, \$26 million in private funding, \$2 million in legacy commitments, and \$7 million in land donations is launched. As of June 30, 2016, we have raised \$52,939,832. This breaks out into \$18,603,881 in public funding, \$20,902,325 private funding, \$3,502,926 in legacy commitments, and \$9,930,700 in land donations. During the course of the campaign, \$2,342,030 has been realized in bequests from RI Legacy Club members to support TNC's high priorities at our world office.

2013: Fish Pier Restored

The Conservancy's conservation engineer designs and manages the restoration and addition of a fishing pier in Colt State Park in Bristol.

2014: 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The office is now comprised of 26 individuals working in all habitats and areas of Rhode Island.

2014: Sandy Cooperative Agreements Received

The Conservancy signs onto two cooperative agreements with USFWS to complete restoration activities in the Narrow River and Pawcatuck River. Original agreements totaled \$3.8 million and have since increased to \$5.8 million.

2015: River Freed for First Time in 245 Years

Sponsored by Sandy Funds, the Conservancy removes the 6-foot high 191-foot-long White Rock Dam on the Pawcatuck River. This restores and connects 6.75 miles of river for diadromous fish and other animals.

2015: Largest Oyster Reef Construction Project Completed

The Conservancy, in collaboration with RIDEM, deploys 131 tons of shell to construct 8 reefs in Ninigret Pond. The productivity of these reefs is being analyzed by renowned fish ecologist Jon Grabowski. This was the largest reef construction project ever completed in the state.

2016: Largest Thin Layer Deposition Project Completed

Sponsored by Sandy funding, almost 1,000 dump truck loads of sand are deposited on Sachuest Marsh in Middletown to elevate and protect the marsh from rising sea levels. This was the largest thin layer deposition project ever completed in the state.

2016: 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Block Island Program

The Block Island Program celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a ferry cruise around the island that was attend by 556 people. Since the office opened in 1991, 25% of the island has been conserved. In total, 46.2% of the island is permanently protected.

2016 Statistics:

*Rhode Island Field Office:* 159 Waterman Street, Providence, RI 02906

*Current Membership:* 3,050

*Staff Size:* 28 and 6 short term assistants

*Satellite Office:* Block Island Program, 352 High Street, Block Island, RI 02807

*Community-based Programs:* Block Island and Sakonnet

*Total Acres Protected:* 35,032 acres

*TNC Fee Owned:* 9,883 acres

*Miles of Trails:* 75

*TNC Easements Held:* 2,866 acres

*Flagship Preserves:*

Aust Family Preserve at Lime Rock; Lincoln

Tillinghast Pond Management Area; West Greenwich

Carter Preserve; Charlestown

King Preserve; North Kingstown

John C. Whitehead Preserve at Dundrey Brook; Little Compton

Goosewing Beach; Little Compton

Clay Head Preserve, Hodge Family Wildlife Refuge, Fresh Swamp, Rodman's Hollow,  
Black Rock; Block Island

*Other Preserves:*

Cuttyhunk Brook Preserve; Exeter  
Queen's River Preserve; Exeter  
Canochet Brook Preserve; Hopkinton  
Ell Pond/Long Pond Preserve; Hopkinton  
P.T Marvel Preserve; Little Compton  
Whale Rock Preserve; Narragansett  
Beaver River Preserve; Richmond  
Grass Pond Preserve; Richmond  
Fogland Marsh Preserve; Tiverton  
Pocasset Ridge Conservation Area; Tiverton