

# ADVOCATING FOR FUNDING FOR THE RI CONSERVATION DISTRICTS



Southern Conservation District (SRICD)

Northern Conservation District (NRICD)

Eastern Conservation District (ERICD)

## WHAT ARE WE ABOUT?

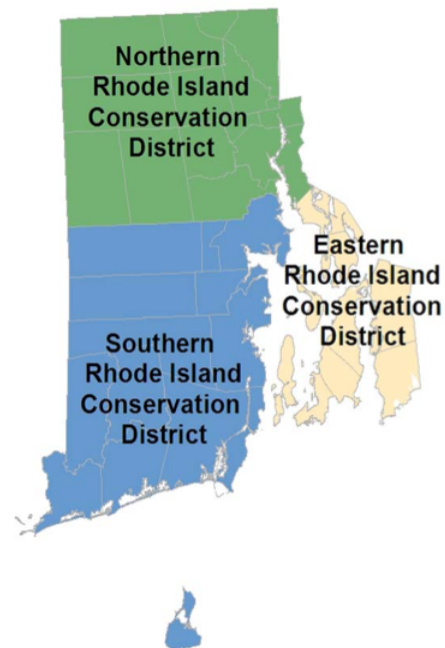
We are **not for profit, quasi-public** organizations that function as facilitators for meeting the needs of the local land user in the conservation of soil, water, and other related natural resources.

Benefitting the people of RI by addressing the **issues concerning natural resources** through **community-based approaches** such as education and outreach, technical assistance, and partnership with other agencies.

Our partners:

- ❖ USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- ❖ Aquidneck Island Planning Commission
- ❖ Coastal Resource Management Council
- ❖ Department of Environmental Management
- ❖ Providence Water
- ❖ RI Forest Conservators Organization
- ❖ RI Resource Conservation & Development Council
- ❖ RI Statewide Planning Municipalities
- ❖ Roger Williams University
- ❖ University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension
- ❖ USEPA

## GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVIDED—UNITED IN GOALS



**NORTHERN**  
Focus on protecting drinking water supplies

**EASTERN**  
Focus on storm water management and providing educational workshops

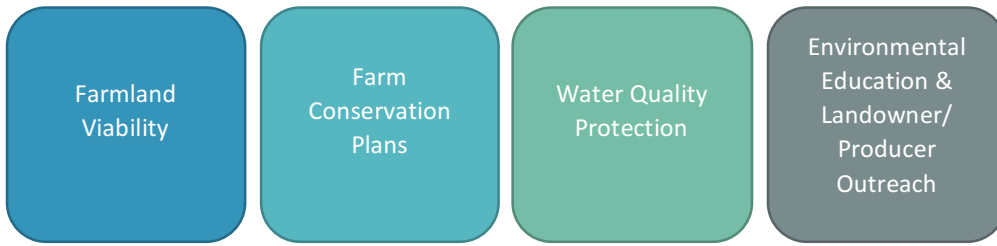
**SOUTHERN**  
Focus on improving public knowledge and access to public land



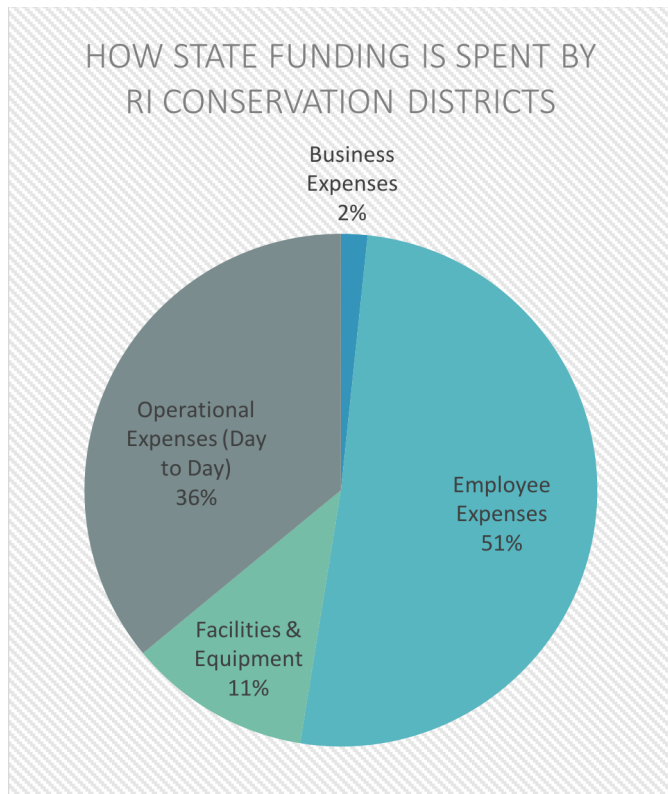
## GOALS/ ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ❖ Assist in farm management plans
- ❖ **Educating** the community through **free** workshops and hands on experiences
- ❖ Improve water quality
- ❖ Focus on Farm, Forest, and Open Space Tax program
- ❖ Improve public **use of and access to** public land

## MAJOR PROGRAM AREAS



## BUDGET ALLOCATIONS



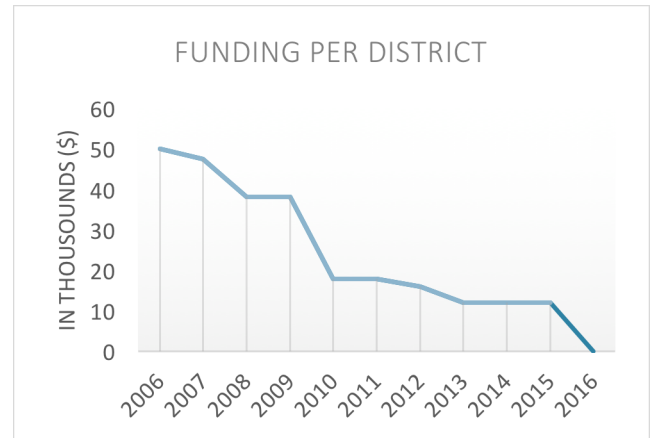
## WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

- ❖ Rhode Island is home to over **1200 farms**, and farming is one of the major program areas the districts support.
- ❖ The longer farms are viable and sustainable, the greater the **benefit for the RI economy**.
- ❖ Districts are essential for ensuring safe public and private drinking water supplies statewide.
- ❖ **The districts are REQUIRED to exist by law but are all struggling to currently keep their doors open.**

*ERICD is so underfunded they will **close their doors** in 6-12 months.*

## HOW ARE WE FUNDED?

History of average **state funding** per district:



THIS FUNDING HAS DECREASED BY **76%** BETWEEN 2006 AND 2015. NO FUNDING RECEIVED IN 2016.

## WHAT WE NEED

- ❖ We need base funding in order to keep our doors open and serve the state.
- ❖ We need \$180,000 per year, restoring the districts to \$50,000 for each conservation district, which hasn't been seen since 2006, as well as \$30,000 for the RI State Conservation Commission.
- ❖ We need the Governor, legislators and other political leaders to understand and support the importance of who we are and what we do.