



Rhode Island  
Department of Environmental Management  
**Division of Parks and Recreation**  
1100 Tower Hill Road  
North Kingstown, Rhode Island 02852

## Fund for Rhode Island State Parks For People Who Love Parks

### OVERVIEW

In 2021, The Rhode Island Foundation established the Fund for Rhode Island State Parks to connect donors who value the state's recreational open space with opportunities to make a real and lasting difference.

Grants from the Fund support Rhode Island State Parks in the areas of Recreation and Education, Habitat and Historic Preservation, and Infrastructure Improvements and Resiliency.

Gifts to the Fund for Rhode Island State Parks do not reduce the responsibility of state government to fully fund the operational and capital needs of the state park system. Instead, they enhance the ability of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management's Division of Parks and Recreation to expand the quality and scope of its efforts to serve the people of Rhode Island by providing superior public parks, beaches, and natural places.

Donors who wish to support the Fund for Rhode Island State Parks make their gifts directly to the Rhode Island Foundation, designating the Fund as their beneficiary. A committee comprised of members of The Rhode Island Foundation and members designated by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management meets quarterly to review grant requests submitted by the Division of Parks and Recreation.

All funds are designated for the exclusive use of the Rhode Island DEM but managed and invested by The Rhode Island Foundation, a tax-exempt 501c(3) charitable foundation. Founded in 1916, the Rhode Island Foundation distributed a record \$56 million in grants to 2,000 charitable organizations in 2019. Over the last 20 years, the Foundation has averaged a 7% return on its total fund, with one-year returns as high as 12.3%.

### DONATING TO THE FUND FOR RHODE ISLAND STATE PARKS

Donors who wish to support the Fund for Rhode Island State Parks may contribute any amount by check or through an online gift on the Rhode Island Foundation's site, designating the Fund as the beneficiary.

Optionally, donors may select one of three general areas to support:

1. **Recreation and Education:** These gifts support the creation of recreational or educational opportunities for patrons, such as the construction of a universally accessible playground, an environmental stewardship program, trail improvements, improved access for people living with disabilities, or other projects that extend RI Parks' ability to offer valued programs and services to the public.



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2. **Habitat and Historic Preservation:** These gifts support special projects involving habitat and historic preservation, such as erosion control, introduction of native plants/reduction of invasive plants, preservation of historic buildings, public programs relating to historic sites, and other projects that promote preservation natural and historic places within the state park system.
3. **Infrastructure Improvements and Resiliency:** These gifts support long-term improvements to the RI State Parks' infrastructure and help to build a more resilient park system. Examples of this type of project include installation of potable water bottle filling stations, construction of sun awnings at beach pavilions, improvements to protect against the effects of climate change, strategic planning to improve processes and systems, and other projects aimed at strengthening the vitality of the state park system.

## DESIGNATED GIFTS

Gifts of \$10,000 or greater may be designated toward a specific property within the state park system. While the donor is welcome to suggest projects of interest, the funds must be used toward projects that fall within the strategic priorities of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management and must be approved by the Grant Committee.

## NAMED FUNDS

If a donor wishes to establish a named fund, they will work with the Rhode Island Foundation to establish the fund and may designate the Fund for Rhode Island State Parks as the beneficiary.

Named funds may be established as endowment funds (in which the fund is owned by the Rhode Island Foundation and generates an annual revenue stream of approximately 4% of the rolling three-year average to the beneficiary) or as sub-funds of the Fund for Rhode Island State Parks (which enables the Grant Committee to distribute any amount deemed necessary toward current projects).

## FINANCIAL REPORTING

All grants made by the Rhode Island Foundation to the DEM will be deposited in the Natural Resources Trust Fund, which is managed by the DEM. These funds will be applied toward expenses accrued in association with approved grant projects.

The DEM shall, on a quarterly basis, provide a reconciliation or report of all grant funds awarded and expended, as well as project status.

Unless otherwise stated by the donor, grants cannot be used for ongoing operational expenses, such as personnel and routine maintenance.