FALL 2026 NEWSLETTER

STORMWATER INNOVATION CENTER

Monitoring & Research | Water Quality Restoration| Education & Outreach | Training & Networking

PROJECT UPDATES

MAKING PROGRESS TOWARD A HEALTHIER ZOO POND

Through funding from a Restore America's Estuaries SNEP Watershed Implementation Grant (SWIG), nearly 650 common carp were removed from Roger Williams Park Zoo Pond between July and the end of October to understand if reducing carp numbers can help restore the pond's health. As carp feed, they stir up sediments and uproot aquatic plants, clouding the water and releasing nutrients that fuel algae growth. Reducing their numbers may help improve water clarity and give native aquatic plants a chance to recover. The goal is to reduce carp biomass (the total weight of carp) to levels that no longer contribute to poor water quality.

The Stormwater Innovation Center is working with The Nature Conservancy, Roger Williams Park Zoo, Carp Solutions, and other partners to track changes. In addition to carp removal, the team is tracking fish movements, water quality, aquatic vegetation, and native fish populations for changes. Fish tissue testing is also underway to explore potential uses for the removed carp, including compost, fertilizer, lobster bait, and food for animals such as raptors.

We look forward to getting back out on the water in early spring 2027 to continue carp removal. Once the project wraps up, we will share our findings and lessons learned in a best practices guide to help inform future restoration efforts across the region.



Staff holding down the boat while over 200 carp are removed from the net.



Staff using a boom to move carp to one side of the net. This photo gives perspective to the size of the net used and teamwork this project takes.



A tote containing carp is passed up from the pond for data collection .

PROJECT UPDATES

SHARING IDEAS AT THE STORMWATER INNOVATION EXPO

On October 7, the SIC joined the Rhode Island Green Infrastructure Coalition to host the eighth annual Stormwater Innovation Expo at Roger Williams Park. This year's theme was Nature at Work – Water, Soil, Plants & Trees Protecting our Communities. Municipal staff, engineers, researchers, and community organizations gathered to share projects and discuss shared stormwater challenges.

Inside the Casino, presentations explored green infrastructure, climate resilience, funding opportunities, watershed permitting, and urban forestry. Outdoor sessions brought attendees into the park for hands-on discussions at Roosevelt Lake, Polo Lake, and the Cunliff Boardwalk, highlighting stormwater maintenance, student-led projects, and our ongoing carp project.

The Expo was a great opportunity for professionals to connect with colleagues, share lessons learned, and strengthen partnerships that help advance stormwater solutions across our communities. View the 2026 Program **HERE**.



Expo attendees listening to keynote speaker, Kate Kennen.



Expo attendees gathered as Joseph Genga from Tighe & Bond presents.



Expo attendees working together during a team building exercise of "Stormwater Bingo" .

PROJECT UPDATES

CONNECTING THROUGH TOURS AND PRESENTATIONS

Over the summer and fall, Stormwater Innovation Center tours and presentations brought municipal professionals, university partners, students, funders, and community members together to see our work firsthand. University visits highlighted research, student learning, and shared resources that support ongoing collaboration. Tours with funding partners showcased projects their support has made possible and provided opportunities to share progress and future steps.



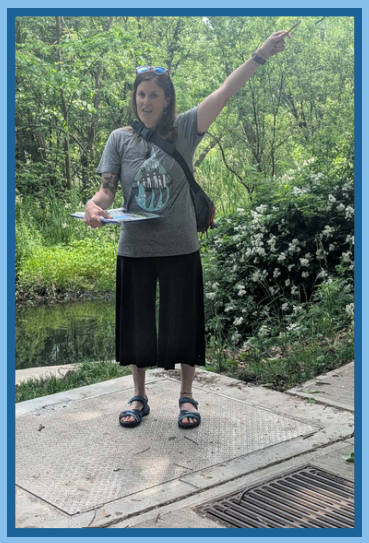
SIC staff, former interns, and URI leadership gathered to highlight student research and projects.



SIC and Providence Parks hosted federal and state agency partners to showcase projects in Roger Williams Park.

We welcomed planning professionals and community members to explore stormwater solutions, learn about projects underway in the park, and see how local policies can help protect water quality. These visits also created opportunities to share ideas, answer questions, and learn from one another.

Public tours have also been well received, with strong participation and positive feedback. These walks introduce community members to green infrastructure, water quality, and ongoing research while highlighting volunteer opportunities and simple ways to make a difference at home.



SIC staff discussing stormwater infrastructure during a public tour.



SIC staff speaking to a group of public tour attendees in June 2026.

PROJECT UPDATES

EXPLORE THE WATERSHED WALK

Take a closer look at Roger Williams Park through the Watershed Walk! Six interpretive signs bring together watershed science, local history, wildlife, and community creativity, highlighting how water connects the park and surrounding neighborhoods.

Artwork, poetry, photographs, and stories shared by community members help bring the watershed to life. Scan the QR codes on each sign to explore additional resources and a digital gallery. More than 70 people joined us on August 27 to celebrate the launch with art, hands-on activities and a chance to learn more about the watershed.



This project was made possible through funding from the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program, support from the Providence Parks Department, and the creativity and contributions of local community members. A big thank you to everyone who helped make it happen!

For those of who might not be able to get out on a walk you can view the signs and additional information **HERE.**



Children painting the community rain barrel at launch event.



Jessy Minker, creator of the walk, shares the story behind the project and thanks the community for helping bring it to life.



Community member viewing one of the Watershed Walk signs.

PROJECT UPDATES

NEW EQUIPMENT WILL STRENGTHEN BACTERIA MONITORING

A new Southeast New England Program (SNEP) mini-grant will help the Stormwater Innovation Center to purchase bacteria-testing equipment and supplies. These purchases will allow us to expand bacteria monitoring in Roger Williams Park and help us investigate potential sources of bacterial contamination more thoroughly. We're grateful to SNEP, EPA New England, and Restore America's Estuaries for supporting this next step in our monitoring work.



Stormwater Innovation Center Staff attending at the regional SNEP grant celebration

EXPLORE THE DATA BEHIND THE WORK

Curious to take a deeper look at the data we are collecting? Our interactive dashboards offer a window into watershed health, from water quality and cyanobacteria observations to real-time data collected by monitoring buoys in Roger Williams Park and the surrounding watershed. Our Canada Goose Survey adds another piece to the picture, helping us track their activity throughout the park.

Watershed Watch



View Dashboard Here

Cyanobacteria



View Dashboard Here

Buoy Network



View Dashboard Here

Canada Goose



View Dashboard Here

OUR NEWEST TEAM MEMBER

STEPHEN KIELY

TerraCorps Community Engagement Coordinator



Stephen Kiely joined the SIC in September as our TerraCorps/AmeriCorps Community Engagement Coordinator. With a background in ecological design and a passion for creating ecological gardens throughout New England, Stephen brings a strong interest in native plants, healthy ecosystems, and helping people make a difference in their communities. He holds an M.S. in Ecological Design from the Conway School of Landscape Design.

Through July 2027, Stephen will be working on several projects, including designing new stormwater management features at the Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium in Bristol, developing a rain garden curriculum for homeowners, and helping lead inspection and maintenance trainings for professionals. We're excited to have him on the team!

KEEP IN TOUCH

UPCOMING EVENTS:

FREE Public Tour of Green Infrastructure
Nov 13 11:00am-12:30pm | Seal House RWP

Municipal Planning Officials Stormwater Tour
Nov 17 10:00am-12:30pm | Seal House RWP

Community Clean Up at Mashapoug Pond
Nov 22 10:00am-12:00pm | JT Owens Park

TO LEARN MORE AND REGISTER

CLICK HERE

CLICK AND FOLLOW:

@stormwaterinnovationcenter
Stormwater Innovation Center
stormwaterinnovation.org

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

Contact
shorvet@asri.org
for more information!

Stormwater Innovation Center