

News Release

Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Block Island NWR □ John H. Chafee NWR at Pettaquamscutt Cove □ Ninigret NWR □ Sachuest Point NWR □ Trustom Pond NWR



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For Immediate Release

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service To Conduct Controlled Burns To Benefit Wildlife Habitat

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service will conduct controlled burns at the Goose Field Units of Trustom Pond National Wildlife Refuge in South Kingstown, Rhode Island, in accordance with an approved Prescribed Fire Plan. This includes Field 1 of the South Shore Management Area Goose Hunting Unit. The controlled burns will require two days, weather dependent, between September 21th and November 25th, 2015 at which time the units will be closed to goose and dove hunting.

Controlled burns will be performed by a fire management team of professionals trained and skilled in prescribed burning. The burns will adhere to the smoke management guidelines developed by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. The use of a controlled burn is part of the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex (RINWRC) annual habitat management plan.

The objective of the burn is to restore wildlife habitat by removing thatch, woody vegetation and stands of non-native grasses from areas that are managed for native warm season grasses and plants. Removing invasive, non-native plants and woody vegetation allows for the growth of native grassland plants that provide important early successional habitat for wildlife. Once restored these areas provide valuable foraging and nesting habitats for several species of grassland birds currently in decline throughout New England. Prescribed fire also helps create abundant wildflowers which in turn provide nectar for native bees, butterflies, and other beneficial pollinator species. To observe these birds and other wildlife, viewing scopes are available at several refuge observation platforms. Birding backpacks with binoculars and bird guides are also available to borrow at the Complex visitor centers.

Because controlled burning is weather-dependent, hunters are encouraged to call the office at 401.364.9124 during the burn period for any current updates. Hunters can also visit the Complex's website at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/trustom_pond or on Facebook, keyword: Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitat for the continuing benefit of the American people.
