



Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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'TIS THE SEASON TO RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE IMPROVE RIVER HABITATS

PROVIDENCE, RI – The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) is again partnering with the [Rhode Island Chapter of Trout Unlimited \(TU\)](#) for the 'Trees for Trout' habitat restoration program, which collects donated conifer Christmas trees to improve habitat for wild brook trout and other aquatic organisms. The public can drop off their Christmas trees at a collection event in the New Year.



WHAT: 'Trees for Trout'
Christmas tree collection

WHEN: Saturday, Jan. 4, 10 AM – 2 PM

WHERE: [Arcadia Check Station](#), Wood River Arcadia Management Area, 2224 Ten Rod Rd, Exeter

DEM and TU thank the public for their willingness to donate trees, which makes this program a success. Donors are urged to read the following information before dropping off trees:

- DEM is only accepting real trees, not fake ones or trees sprayed with fire-retardant chemicals.
- All decorations, tinsel, ornaments, lights, and the stand must be removed before the tree is brought in.
- Only whole conifers will be accepted, do not bring tree trimmings.
- Trees larger than 5' tall are preferred.

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- DEM will not accept large drop offs of surplus trees from businesses.

The Trees for Trout program was started by TU in 2018 to assist in restoration projects to fish habitats. During the summer months, DEM's [Division of Fish and Wildlife](#) (DFW) staff, along with volunteers from TU, build "conifer revetments" where trees are strategically placed along riverbanks to provide stability and control erosion. The trees trap sediment, decompose, and gradually become part of the banks themselves. The tree branches offer protection for small native brook trout and other aquatic animals seeking a place to hide from predators.

Rivers are dynamic and constantly changing. In impaired stretches of rivers, channels often become wider than they should be and are absent of necessary habitat to support aquatic life. When banks erode, sediment is carried away by flows that fill in pools downstream. Conifer revetments act to stabilize eroding banks by slowing the flow of water and accumulating sediments. They also help narrow the river channel and confine the flow so that there is deeper water during low flows and more habitat for fish.

The public should never dispose of Christmas trees in waterways or beaches. Permitting is legally required to modify any waterway under the Freshwater Wetlands Act. For information on how to properly dispose of real Christmas trees, please visit the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation's webpage [here](#).

For more information on DEM programs and initiatives, visit www.dem.ri.gov. Follow [DEM on Facebook](#), Twitter/X (@RhodeIslandDEM), or Instagram (@rhodeisland.dem) for timely updates. Follow [DFW on Facebook](#) and Instagram (@ri.fishandwildlife) to stay up to date on news, events and volunteer opportunities. You can also subscribe to DFW's monthly newsletter [here](#). [Sign up here](#) to receive the latest press releases, news, and events from DEM's Public Affairs Office to your inbox.

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