



Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

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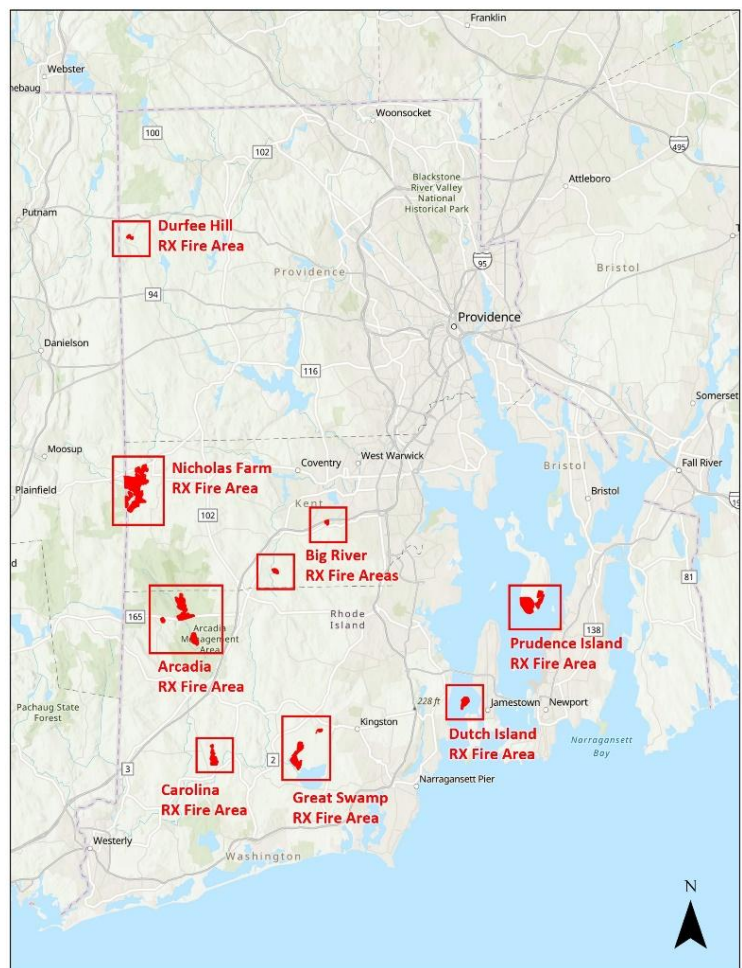
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Monday, April 6, 2026

Fighting Fire with Fire: DEM Resuming Prescribed Burns

PROVIDENCE, RI – The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) [Forest Fire Program](#) plans to conduct low-severity prescribed burns on state lands in Exeter, West Greenwich, Coventry, Richmond, Glocester, Jamestown, and South Kingstown. Weather permitting, the first prescribed burns of 2026 will begin this week. Prescribed (planned) burns depend on weather and wind conditions and are typically announced a day in advance. Prescribed burns help maintain healthy habitats and reduce hazardous fuels, protecting communities from extreme wildfires.

DEM will provide additional public notice through social media, website updates, and flyers to nearby landowners once a burn window has been identified. A burn window occurs when fuel, moisture, and weather conditions align to safely meet management goals, including fuel reduction, habitat improvement, and ecological restoration.



DEM burn managers are targeting parcels at Durfee Hill Management Area in Glocester, Arcadia Management Area in Exeter, Nicholas Farm Management Area in Coventry, Big River Management Area in West Greenwich, Dutch Island in Jamestown, Carolina Management Area in Richmond, and Great Swamp Management Area in South Kingstown.



From burn to bloom: native pollinators and grassland habitat thrive at Great Neck Road field in Great Swamp Management Area following DEM's prescribed burns at this location.

Climate change is increasing wildfire risk by creating warmer, drier conditions, and longer fire seasons. In 2025, Rhode Island experienced 62 wildfires, and DEM's Forest Fire Program [conducted 12 prescribed burns treating more than 100 acres of state land](#). DEM continues [shaded fuelbreak brush-clearing projects](#) to reduce the risk of uncontrolled wildfires. By expanding its use of prescribed fire, DEM's land management policies and practices are better aligned with neighboring states and strengthens regional ecological restoration and climate resilience.

Prescribed burns are led by experts from [DEM's Forest Fire Program](#) and they will employ detailed operational and safety plans. Fire behavior, fuels, and weather are monitored throughout the burn, and if the prescription parameters are exceeded, the fire is shut down.

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