

**From:** Richard Casagrande [mailto:[casa@uri.edu](mailto:casa@uri.edu)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 16, 2009 9:54 AM  
**To:** 'Peter Paton'; 'Carol Thornber'  
**Cc:** [fgswamps@uri.edu](mailto:fgswamps@uri.edu); 'Keith Killingbeck'  
**Subject:** North Woods Bird Counts

Hi Carol, Peter,

As Peter knows, I had a PhD student, Barry Devine who in 2000 defended his dissertation evaluating the effectiveness of golf courses in serving as nature preserves. As part of that work, he evaluated the bird population of URI's North Woods for two purposes: 1) to develop a bird sampling plan and 2) because we were considering using the woods as part of a golf course/nature preserve.

This dissertation sits on my desk and is available to you. But since you're short on time, let me summarize the items of most interest. Barry evaluated bird populations at 39 sites to the north of campus, including 19 in North Woods. Of the 86 bird species he detected, 36 were found in the North Woods area and 15 of them were found only in that site.

Barry summarizes the results of his North Woods survey as follows: *"A wide red maple wetland stream corridor traverses the landscape from south to north, draining into the Chipuxet River above Hundred Acre Pond. Bird counts show the area is rich habitat for a number of species common to deeper forest. Alterations to this landscape would negatively impact these species and disturb the large wetland ecosystem. This portion of the site must be preserved as core habitat for the reserve."*

Under the heading "Rare and uncommon species", Barry continues: *"The diversity of the North Woods and the deciduous wetland on the eastern half of the site is also worthy of special concern. Species common to stream corridors and woodland areas such as the Canada Warbler, Veery, Wood Thrush, Ovenbird, Eastern Wood Peewee, Acadian Flycatcher, and Black and White Warbler would likely be adversely impacted by fragmentation of this habitat type."*

In developing a plan for "Kingston's Reserve" a nature preserve/golf course, Barry concluded that the forest to the north of campus was too valuable as a natural area to disturb - even with an eco-golf course. Hence, he planned a course in the lower lands on either side of Plains Road.

Barry's 200-page dissertation contains maps of the area, bird counts, by site, and a wealth of additional information that might be useful in your deliberations. I also have large maps of the area with soil types, gradient slopes, vegetation types, etc. that were developed in planning a golf course. Since much of the lower area is now paved for parking, it is unlikely that the course will be developed.

Please feel free to share this information with others who would find it useful in evaluating uses for the North Woods.

- Dick

Richard A. Casagrande  
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Dr. Swallow,

My name is Heather Lewis and I am a biology major at the University of Rhode Island. I would like to voice my concern over the plans to build a research facility in North Woods. I understand that the university has decided that this would be the best spot, but I believe this part of the forest has great value staying as it is now, considering how much research and teaching are currently done there. As a biology major, I am hoping to take some classes that involve researching in this part of the forest and would like to see it preserved. It also saves the university money by providing a diverse and old forest so close to campus instead of having to bus students to a different location. I would really appreciate it if you could consider this request, for me and for all of the other students and faculty who oppose the research park in North Woods. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Heather Lewis

Good Morning,

I am sure I am not the first concerned citizen, alumni, or current student that has written to you. I am currently a grad student and also a resident of South Kingstown as well as an alumni. URI has been the reason for my permanent move to Rhode Island. I am writing to you to urge you to relocate the research park from the North Woods down to the area near the bottom of flag road and the area near the former Kingston dump. Since a goal for this project is to create a green LEED certified building, I would think it would be more suited in an area which should be re-used instead of an area which is a natural resource and needs to be permitted through the RIDEM. In my undergraduate classes alone we used to North Woods from my junior year through my senior year and it was an invaluable tool to our education. With URI trying to demonstrate green building and a sustainable campus cutting down an old growth forest is irresponsible at best. As a current wetlands biologist working for an engineering firm that does a good deal of work for the campus, I can't urge you enough to reconsider. The building being moved to not destroy a valuable resource seems like a no brain move. It will be a better planned area and closer to the parking areas that MOST of the students used. The

distance for walking to the research park is a null point. This campus is SMALL. That walk is shorter than it would take you to get from Flagg Rd to the Union.

The destruction of this natural resource area is IRRESPONSIBLE at best. This area is a valuable wetland and wildlife resource area as well as a teaching tool for your own programs. The NRS department IS the reason people attend this school. I strongly urge you to think green and not with the wallet and do what is right for Kingston, URI, and the environment. Rethink this layout and this plan. Move the park somewhere else! That is the correct decision to make.

Please make the responsible choice.

Regards,  
NRS GRAD STUDENT  
WEST KINGSTON RESIDENT  
URI ALUMNI

hey steve,

this is jim tappero from the South Shore Chapter or RIDU.

i just wanted to throw my name in the ring as another supporter for saving North Woods. my next door neighbor used to own it (before selling it to URI) and over the years i've spent countless hours hiking, camping, hunting and just enjoying that particular piece of property. the biggest deer i've shot in my life came off that land, needless to say it holds alot of special memories for me personally.

more importantly, a 100 year old forest is something that is very rare in RI these days and can't be replaced once its gone (heh, not for at least a 100 years that is). i've only heard parts of the arguements for destroying N woods but it seems to me that moving the site down the hill a short distance to the field seems like a small price to pay, and a pretty good compromise. i think most americans could afford to walk a little more these days... i know you've heard all this before, but figured i'd take this chance to add my name to the list...

thanks for you time.

hope to see you on the water this duck season.

jim tappero  
co-chairperson  
South Shore Chapter RIDU

<http://media.www.ramcigar.com/media/storage/paper366/news/2009/04/16/Editorialopinion/Editorial.Keep.The.Trees.Please-3713248.shtml?refeature=htmlmailedition>

## **Editorial: Keep the trees, please**

**By:**

**Posted: 4/16/09**

04/16/09 - "They just don't make 'em like they used to." You've probably heard your grandparents mumble a statement similar to this one while trying to assemble something along the lines of a "new-fangled" electrical appliance.

While many people can appreciate the perks of modern society, there is something to appreciate about the things of the past.

Across the street from the University of Rhode Island's Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences and the Northwoods Apartments, is a woodsy stretch of land. Driving down Flagg Road, this stretch may appear to be hinting of URI's former days as farmland, but there is more than meets the eye.

This particular area, the North Woods, is more than 100-years-old and serves as an educational resource for students interested in environmental sciences.

According to a Providence Journal article, the forest sustained a 1938 hurricane and has not been harvested for about 100 years.

More than 1,000 students each year study the species in the forest.

About three years ago the URI administration began exploring options to put a research park on campus. The spot that seemed to suit their intentions best, because of its proximity to the CBLS, remains the North Woods.

This proposed park would bring private research firms to the university that would elevate both URI's income and status as an institution serious about scientific progress.

While URI is certainly in no position to turn down a dime, it is in the university's best interest to protect what is irreplaceable. It's just not possible to artificially reconstruct the research value of the North Woods. While new trees can always be planted, the ecosystem cultivated during more than 100 years in the forest is priceless. Future students should not have to wait 100 more years to reap the benefits of what has quietly been a part of this campus before it was even established.

Buildings, on the other hand, can be built anywhere. Surely the university can find a suitable spot on grounds that serve no other purpose.

The University of Rhode Island is, by all means, in a rural setting.

While some students loathe the secluded locale of URI, inconvenient to the modern shopping malls and nightclubs that more urban areas offer, there are those who wouldn't dream of being anywhere other than a place where you can see all the stars at night.

Dear Mr. Swallow,

I am writing in regards to the proposed research park in Century Forest. I am currently a graduate student in the Natural Resources Science department housed in the Coastal Institute on main campus. I wholeheartedly disagree that the best place for this research park is in these woods. As a graduate student studying soil science, I know that in Rhode Island it is difficult to find forested sites that are as old as that of Century Forest. It would be a great loss to URI, the surrounding community and the state of Rhode Island to lose this natural resource.

Why not move the park into the empty field at the corner of Plains Road and Flagg Road? As someone who works at the Coastal Institute, I can say that I personally would not find it difficult to walk to that site. An increase in the University bus service that would create routes to shuttle people to the park would alleviate that issue as well as benefit the entire campus.

I find it hard to believe that we cannot come up with a better site than the current selected site. Not only do you lose these century old trees but you are also losing the carbon storage potential of the wooded area. Aren't we as a University trying to lessen our carbon footprint? This would be a huge step in the wrong direction.

I beg of you to reconsider this site for development. Please make the hard and difficult but responsible decision of moving the site to a more suitable location.

Thank you,  
Christina Pruett

Dear Professor Swallow,

Through various faculty and staff members I have heard about the plans to build a Research and Technology Park in the North Woods at URI. As a graduate student in the environmental sciences, I am excited by the development of a new research center and have been very impressed with the recent construction projects on campus. In particular, the new biology building is an exceptional workplace and I look forward to the development of similar structures to expand URI's research space.

I do not, however, support building such a center in the North Woods. As a graduate student at URI I have taken several classes that make frequent use of the North Woods for illustrating concepts in lectures and for practical use in laboratory exercises. Specifically, Mark Stolt's soil morphology class (NRS 471) and Keith Killingbeck's course on methods in plant ecology (BIO 524) made almost weekly use of this area as a resource for quantifying soil types and various aspects of plant communities. As the oldest forest community adjacent to URI's campus, the North Woods is an invaluable and irreplaceable resource for our science courses. The forest is part of URI's heritage as a

school with a strong environmental science program and should not be undervalued. Personally, I would rather see the Research and Technology park developed on another part of URI property, even if it meant I had to walk much further to utilize the park. Thoughtful design of campus developments (including raised, multilevel parking structures) would allow URI to expand its functionality without negatively impacting its substantial natural resources, such as the North Woods, or contributing to campus sprawl.

Sincerely,  
Josh Atwood

Dear Drs. Swallow and Martin –

As a 2004 URI graduate and partial Kingston resident I appreciate the peace and calm of a nice forest and am concerned to hear that the new research park is potentially being planned for the North Woods. There must be numerous better locations on campus, such as at the bottom of campus near the Ryan Center. In addition, I ask why a new parking garage must be an above ground structure or why one of the exiting parking lots cannot be made multi story. Now that I am @ MIT, where the Institute is busily building over its green spaces, I appreciate URI's "rural" nature even more and this must be preserved.

With best regards /  
Avec mes meilleures salutations,

Nevan Clancy Hanumara

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Arun: Thank you for your email. I am forwarding it to Professors Stephen Swallow and Celest Martin for distribution to the ad hoc committee.

Peter Alfonso, Ph.D.  
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Carlotti Administrative Building  
75 Lower College Road, Suite 001  
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-----Original Message-----

**From:** Dr. Arun Shukla [mailto:shuklaa@egr.uri.edu]

**Sent:** Monday, April 20, 2009 2:34 PM

**To:** peteralfonso@uri.edu

**Subject:** Research park Site

Dear Peter,

I am writing to you with regards to the location of the Research Park that is proposed to be built for URI. I have had discussions about this with some faculty in our department, and today Prof. Suren Malik also stopped by my office to discuss this issue. I strongly feel that the research park should be located at a walking distance from the main campus. Most of the campuses that I have visited have research parks located right next to the main campus. The success of the research park will depend on how actively the faculty and students participate in activities both on campus and at the research park and to facilitate this it is important that the research park is located within walking distance.

I just thought I should share my thoughts on this important topic with you.

Regards,

Sincerely,

Arun Shukla

Arun Shukla  
Simon Ostrach Professor and Chair  
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-----Original Message-----

**From:** Peter Alfonso [mailto:peteralfonso@URI.EDU]

**Sent:** Thursday, April 16, 2009 9:47 AM

**To:** 'Philip Boudjouk'; 'Celest Martin'; Stephen Swallow

**Cc:** 'Robert Carothers'; 'Don DeHayes'; 'bobweygand'; Tom Frisbie-Fulton; Ann Morrissey

**Subject:** RE: proximity research parks

Phil: Thanks for your response, which I will share with the faculty/student ad hoc committee. In regard to documentation, I forwarded the Battelle 2007 report to the committee. But let me know please of other documentation that you might have that bears on the proximity issue.

Glad you survived the floods. I wasn't surprised at all to see the spirit of ND folks banded together once again.

Best regards,

Peter

Celest and Stephen: Dr. Boudjouk is VP Research North Dakota State University. NDSU won this year's AURP (Association Univ Research Parks) annual award for excellence. They have done a remarkable job with their R&T park in a short 9 years. Dr. Boudjouk knows what he is talking about. Please distribute to committee.

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** Philip Boudjouk [mailto:Philip.Boudjouk@ndsu.edu]

**Sent:** Thursday, April 16, 2009 9:24 AM

**To:** peteralfonso@uri.edu

**Subject:** RE: proximity research parks

Peter,

I will look for documentation but I am willing to attest to the advantages of proximity. 1) Students have much better access to the companies for jobs, mentoring of entrepreneurial ventures, etc. the benefit to students is significant and should be emphasized, I think. 2) the companies will, presumably, have access to university facilities and activities. This will very likely lead to greater support for the university in general and especially in the political arena. For example, we get great buy-in from our companies in the park. They have testified for us in the legislature, supported our athletics big time and are committed, when the economy improves, to provide scholarship money.

In contrast, administrators of the RTPs at Ariz St and U of Az are emphatic that the 7 and 14 mile separations from their respective campuses essentially cripple meaningful relations with the faculty and students. Ditto for U Wis.

This is a no-brainer.

I would be glad to discuss this more if you like.

Sheers,

Phil

Ps. Fargo escaped serious damage. Lost 4 or 5 homes on the far south side, actually outside city limits. I did a lot of sandbagging (United We Sand is our motto) and rediscovered muscles I forgot about a long time ago.

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