



Land & Sea Together is building a network of services and opportunities to reduce stress for Fisheries, Forestry, and Farming (FFF) enterprises, workers, and their families in Rhode Island
www.landandseatogether.org

Fisheries Resource Guide

A Collection of Resources for Rhode Island Fisheries

Prepared by the Center for Mediation & Collaboration RI

Funded through the USDA Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network Grant

in partnership with the RI Department of Environmental Management Division of Agriculture

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OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

Forestry, Fisheries, and Farming (FFF) communities keep Rhode Islanders fed and tend our landscapes. But workers in these fields often face challenging and unpredictable conditions with limited support. Together we aim to offer services in the languages you speak, and seek out providers who understand natural resource sector challenges and reflect the diverse cultural backgrounds of the FFF communities.

Our goal is to provide a collection of practical, up-to-date financial and mental health resilience materials for fisheries businesses and individuals in the state of Rhode Island, and for the people and organizations who support the forestry sector.

This is a collaborative, living document, so please be in touch if you would like to add an organization, tool, resource, opportunity, or modify language in our guide about your programming. We welcome feedback, and we recognize that this guide is not exhaustive, but is hopefully a great place to start when looking for help. Our intention is that this document is shared widely within the networks we are working to establish.

For more information, to apply for relief grants as funds become available, to join our mailing list for events, new opportunities, or to contact us, please visit our website at: www.landandseatogether.org.

First and foremost, please reach out- we want to hear from you, and we are here for you!

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Fishermen. YOU are the most important piece of equipment on your boat. Regular maintenance - and critical repairs - help keep both you and your business running smoothly. Please know that help is available for you in Rhode Island, to support your physical and mental health.

- 1. Are you in crisis? Call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline now, at 988, or text HELLO to the Crisis Text Line at 741741.** Both services are free, confidential, and available 24/7.

2. [Land & Sea Together](#) is offering **free** access to [Coastline EAP](#) for all farm, forestry, and fisheries professionals (and their families) in the state. An EAP, or “Employee Assistance Program,” is a voluntary and confidential resource connecting individuals and families with financial and personal services in the community. Services include referrals for child and elder care, health and wellness consultations, financial consultations, and up to 3 *FREE counseling sessions* with a licensed provider, and more. **Call 1-800-445-1195 to learn more.**
3. The [AMOR](#) Support Line (**401-675-1414**) is a “multilingual (currently English & Spanish) line of volunteer operators that connects community members to AMOR’s network of services, including comprehensive mental health care, legal support, court accompaniment, community support, transportation, and interpretation.” AMOR is an alliance of grassroots organizations, providing community support in Rhode Island and Southern New England for victims of hate crimes and state-sponsored violence.
4. **Struggling with substance use? This crisis affects individuals and families across the state, and you are not alone.**
 - a. Referrals and support are available through Land & Sea Together’s helpline, in conjunction with [Coastline EAP](#). **Call 1-800-445-1195, 24/7, to learn more.**
 - b. [SAMHSA](#) (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration) offers a National Helpline, at **1-800-662-4357**. The helpline is a free, confidential, 24/7 information service, available in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental health and/or substance abuse disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations.
 - c. At [Prevent Overdose RI](#), you can learn more about treatment options across Rhode Island. Visit their website to learn more about [Safe Stations](#) (fire and police stations across the state where you can drop in 24/7 to get free and welcoming access to treatment and recovery support services), recovery centers, and more. Rhode Island also offers buprenorphine, a medicine used for opioid addiction, over the phone. You can find out more information by calling the Buprenorphine 24/7 Hotline at **401-606-5456**.

FUNDING YOUR ENTERPRISE: GRANTS, LOANS, AND SUPPORT

Fishermen need access to capital. Most fishermen use a combination of grants and loans to acquire infrastructure, make new purchases and improvements, and improve the viability of their businesses.

1. Fishermen can access state and federal **grant funding** from a number of entities. Many grants are cyclical, so please check the links to see if the grant is currently accepting applications.
 - a. [DEM Rhode Island LASA \(Land and Seafood Act\) Grant](#)
 - b. [Fishery Relief Assistance Programs](#)
 - c. [USDA LAMP Grant](#)
 - d. [Market Your Catch](#) has a large list of federal, state, local, and private grants
 - e. [National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Fisheries Innovation Fund](#)
 - f. [Marine Stewardship Council Ocean Stewardship Fund](#)
2. Fishermen can access public and private **loan programs** from a number of entities across the Northeast. Keep in mind that interest rates and conditions may vary.
 - a. NOAA's [Fisheries Finance Program \(FFP\)](#) provides long-term fixed rate loans for the fishing industry. The Northeast Financial Branch is based in Gloucester, MA and can be reached at **978-281-9202**.
 - b. [Fish 2.0](#) connects sustainable fisheries businesses with potential investors.
 - c. [U.S. Small Business Administration](#) provides information on federal loan programs and offers free business counseling.
 - d. [Farm Credit East](#) provides loans for commercial fishing in the Northeast.

LEGAL HELP

Rhode Island fishermen can access **free** or **low-cost** legal help from the following organizations:

1. [Legal Food Hub](#) offers a free service that connects eligible Rhode Island farmers with volunteer attorneys who can provide pro bono services related to farm succession planning. Eligibility requirements available on their website. Our Rhode Island contact is Francesca Gallo. You can reach her at legalfoodhub@clf.org.
2. All fishermen are also eligible for thirty minutes of free legal advice through

Coastline EAP. **Call 1-800-445-1195 to learn more.**

3. [Farm Credit East](#) offers long-term tax planning, with expertise in commercial fisheries and aquaculture tax law. They “generally charge by the number of hours needed for tax planning and/or filing your tax return. The cost of our service is dependent on the complexity of your operation.”
4. If you do not qualify for free or low-cost services, reach out to julia@cmcri.org and we can discuss further options.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

As Rhode Island fishermen consider retirement, and the future of their businesses, it is critical that families come together and establish a transfer plan. This can be an intense and sometimes emotional process, especially without an established successor. Take a deep breath. There are a number of organizations and resources that can help.

1. [Legal Food Hub](#) offers a free service that connects eligible Rhode Island fishermen with volunteer attorneys who can provide pro bono services related to succession planning. Eligibility requirements available on their website. Our Rhode Island contact is Francesca Gallo. You can reach her at legalfoodhub@clf.org.
2. [Sea Grant Alaska](#) offers a helpful publication on how to make a direct transfer of your business.
3. [Louisiana Direct Seafood](#) has a number of videos on retirement and business succession planning.

LABOR

Attracting and retaining skilled labor is a major challenge for many fishermen. How and where are folks finding reliable employees? How and where are employees finding supportive environments where they can learn and grow?

1. Post and search on the following employment job boards and email listservs:
 - a. [RI Fishing Industry List-Serv](#)
 - b. [N.E. Ag Exchange](#)
2. [Commercial Fishing Apprenticeship Program \(CFAP\)](#) “is a crew training program designed and offered by the East Farm Commercial Fisheries Center of Rhode

Island and in cooperation with the University of Rhode Island, commercial fishermen, and the supporting shoreside businesses of Point Judith. The 2024 Program will begin on May 28th and end late June 2024. After the initial training, apprentices will be given opportunities to work as crew members on RI vessels to begin on-the-job learning. The training provides essential knowledge and skills to hard-working, self-motivated, and dependable men and women. Upon completion of the month-long training, participants will have the potential to become the next generation of conservation-minded fishermen and secure full-time employment aboard local commercial fishing vessels.”

MARKETING

The [Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance \(NAMA\)](#) has a number of valuable resources for fishermen, and recently released a Sustainable Seafood Guide, which “aims to provide a high-level overview of the seafood landscape in order to empower folks in making seafood purchasing decisions.” You can share this guide, and the pre-made social media posts, with your consumers! [Here's a Digital Toolkit](#) for easy sharing on social media, or you can simply share this link: bit.ly/NAMASustainableSeafoodGuide

ACCESSING CRITICAL RESOURCES AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Health insurance, child care, and retirement. Let’s talk about building a secure financial and personal life in one of the most expensive states in the nation.

1. Health Insurance

- a. Compare plans on the state-based marketplace, [HealthSource RI](#). Farmers can access health and dental insurance from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island, Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island, and Delta Dental.
- b. The [Rhode Island Office of Healthy Aging](#) offers help navigating Medicare coverage and programs. Call **1-888-884-8721** for more information.

2. Child Care & Elder Care

- a. The [Rhode Island Early Learning Council](#) offers a full list of early childhood state programs, including Head Start and BrightStars.
- b. Many farming and fishing families may be eligible for the [Child Care](#)

[Assistance Program](#) (CCAP), which can subsidize child care for RI residents.

- c. [BrightStars RI](#) “assists families in finding quality early care, education and afterschool programs.” Visit their website or call 1-855-398-7605 to speak with a referral specialist.
- d. [Land & Sea Together](#) has limited funding available for vouchers for DHS licensed childcare facilities and for licensed Elder Care for members of the FFF community. Referrals and support are also available through Land & Sea Together’s helpline, in conjunction with [Coastline EAP](#). **Call 1-800-445-1195 to learn more.**

3. Retirement

- a. The [Alaska Fishermen’s Network](#) has a helpful post highlighting the options for planning for retirement in the fisheries industry.
- b. [Louisiana Direct Seafood](#) has a number of videos on retirement and business succession planning.
- c. This webinar from Penn State, “Retirement Planning for Farmers,” is another excellent place to start:
https://psu.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/1_wumxg2nh

4. Social Services

- a. [The Rhode Island Association of Community Action Agencies](#) is a statewide network of Community Action Agencies (CAAs), which provides a range of programs to help low to moderate income families across the state. Services include rent and mortgage assistance, income tax preparation assistance, senior services, and more. Call **401-921-4968** or fill out this [form](#) to find out what services you may be eligible for.
- b. [AMOR RI](#), Alliance to Mobilize Our Resistance, is “an alliance of grassroots organizations, providing community support in Rhode Island and southern New England for victims of hate crimes and state-sponsored violence... The AMOR Support Line (**401-675-1414**) is a 24-hour multilingual (currently English & Spanish) line that connects community members to AMOR’s network of services, including comprehensive mental health care, legal support, court accompaniment, community support, transportation, and interpretation.”

- c. To find **local food assistance**, visit the Rhode Island Food Bank’s [website](#).
- d. If you are experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, the [Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness](#) has a large list of statewide resources available.
- e. [Land & Sea Together](#) Referrals and support are also available through Land & Sea Together’s helpline, in conjunction with [Coastline EAP](#). **Call 1-800-445-1195 to learn more.**

NON-PROFIT AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

You don’t have to do this alone. There are many existing professional organizations in Rhode Island across the fisheries community, offering a wide range of resources and connections. Visit their websites to learn more!

Rhode Island:

[Commercial Fisheries Center of Rhode Island](#) is “the home for the Ocean State’s commercial fishing community... [They] seek to preserve the sanctity of our community, the solvency of our small business and the sustainability of the fishery resource. The Commercial Fisheries Center of Rhode Island is our headquarters to bring fishermen, scientists, managers, and elected officials together in a collaborative effort to improve our fisheries and our understanding of the marine environment so that the proud heritage of our industry continues nobly through future generations.”

[DEM- Rhode Island](#) is the state’s Department of Environmental Management, and its mission is to “protect, restore, and promote our environment to ensure Rhode Island remains a wonderful place to live, visit, and raise a family.” The Division of Marine Fisheries offers information about regulations, relief assistance programs, research, and more.

[Farm Fresh RI](#) is a non-profit organization with a new hub in Providence, Farm Fresh’s mission is “to grow a local food system that values the environment, health, and quality of life of the farmers and eaters in our region.” This mission is expressed through Community Access Programs, which include Farmers Markets, Farm to School and Community Education, Bonus Bucks, and Harvest Kitchen’s culinary job training program; and Food System Enterprise Services, which include Market Mobile and

Harvest Kitchen’s food production and processing.

[Coastal Resources Center at URI](#) “works to develop innovative methods of research, extension and outreach to sustainably manage valuable fisheries and aquaculture resources in Rhode Island, the United States and around the globe.”

[Ocean State Community Seafood](#) educates the Rhode Island community about local fishermen, and the state’s abundance of diversified species of locally-caught seafood that can be purchased directly from fishermen’s boats.

[Rhode Island Lobstermen’s Association](#) is a “a nonprofit association that works towards the implementation of practical and meaningful State and Federal regulatory measures which take into consideration the welfare of the fishermen while building a sustainable fishery.” Their website has a list of helpful fisheries resources.

[Rhode Island Sea Grant](#), located at the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography, “supports research, outreach, and education programs designed to foster the resiliency of local and regional communities and marine environments... Through network building and collaboration, fisheries and aquaculture specialists connect industry and consumers with the best available science to build vibrant local markets for Rhode Island fishery and aquaculture products through ecosystem-based management practices, as well as continue its commitment to provide training for safe seafood processing.”

[Rhode Island Shellfisherman’s Association](#) is “dedicated to the improvement of the working conditions of shellfishermen in RI, to the enhancement and preservation of Narragansett Bay, and the promotion of shellfish products.”

The [Tomaquag Museum](#) is Rhode Island’s only Indigenous cultural education center and museum. Tomaquag’s Indigenous Empowerment Network (IEN) “strives to eradicate poverty in the Indigenous Community of Rhode Island through education, cultural competency, job training, employment, small business incubation, addressing social justice, and building equity through Tomaquag Museum and our ever-expanding network of partners.”

New England and Beyond:

[Fishing Partnership](#) is a “non-profit support services organization dedicated to

improving the health, safety and economic security of commercial fishermen and their families. Founded in 1997, we bring critical support services and programs to more than 20,000 New England fishing families. With 4 offices in Gloucester, New Bedford, Plymouth and Chatham, we deliver Health and Wellness, Safety at Sea and Economic Security support services in the communities where fishing families live.”

[New England Young Fishermen’s Alliance](#) is a non-profit that started in 2022 in response to the “Greying of the Fleet.” Their mission is to provide resources like networking and training for the regional young commercial fishing community. “We aim to preserve and protect the future of small-boat family fishing businesses in Northern New England, with value-based decision making by young fishermen and women.”

[Local Catch Network](#) is a “hub for knowledge exchange and innovation to support and catalyze local and community-based seafood systems... Local Catch Network members include seafood harvesters who sell their catch locally and regionally through direct marketing channels as well as those engaged in research, technical assistance, and community organizing.” LCN offers technical assistance, USDA LAMP grant support, a business accelerator program, and many other resources. Their shared email list is vibrant and collaborative.

[Northeast Seafood Coalition](#) is “a non-profit membership organization representing commercial fishing entities in the northeastern United States on political and policy issues affecting their interests as participants in the multispecies (groundfish) fishery... [They strive] to find creative solutions that work to rebuild fish stocks while preserving family-owned fishing businesses and a diverse groundfish fishing fleet.”

[SEMAP \(Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership\)](#) “dedicated to preserving and expanding access to local food and sustainable farming through research and education.” They provide a monthly newsletter highlighting jobs, opportunities, upcoming events, host workshops and conferences, and connect consumers with local producers.

A VERY BIG THANK YOU:

African Alliance of Rhode Island
Center for Mediation & Collaboration RI
Coastline EAP
Commercial Fisheries Council RI
Datacorp
East Coast Shellfish Growers
Farm Fresh RI
Hope & Main
Legal Food Hub
NOFA-RI
Ocean State Aquaculture Association
RI Commerce
RI-DEM

RI Farm Bureau
RI Food Policy Council
RI Land Trust Council
Rhode Island Nursery and Landscape
Association (RINLA)
South County Health
Southside Community Land Trust
The Carrot Project
Tomaquag Museum
University of Rhode Island
Young Farmers Network
And those of you who have been
involved with us since!

THANK YOU TO OUR WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Mason Billings
Shannon Brawley
Tricia Driscoll
Cameron Ennis
Neil Gan
Martha Machnik
Lizz Malloy
Jan Martin
Fred Mattera

Allison Montagnon
Heidi Quinn
Bob Rheault
Jesse Rye
Kate Sayles
Julianne Stelmaszyk
Lisa Townson
Laurel Witri

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS:

USDA/NIFA Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network Project Award No.
2021-70035-35721 in partnership with the RI Department of Environmental Management
Division of Agriculture

USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance
Network (FRSAN) project 2019-70028-30464 and 2020-70028-through the National Young
Farmers Coalition, in partnership with the RI Department of Environmental
Management Division of Agriculture

Please note: Information included in this document was sourced from various partner websites and through a collaborative process. Please respect the integrity of the guide, and request changes through the Land & Sea Together website as opposed to copying and modifying the guide. The most up-to-date versions will live on www.landandseatogether.org for free download. When appropriate, please credit Land & Sea Together, a program of the Center for Mediation and Collaboration, for the creation of this document.