

Date: May 25, 2022

To: Narragansett Land Conservancy Trust, Chair, Tom Rodgers and Narragansett Parks and Recreation Director, Michelle Kershaw

From: Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA) and Narrow River Land Trust (NRLT) NRPA Board Vice President, Veronica M. Berounsky (contact: [vberounsky@uri.edu](mailto:vberounsky@uri.edu)), NRPA Program Director, Rebecca Russell (contact: [nrpa@narrowriver.org](mailto:nrpa@narrowriver.org)), and NRLT Co-Chair Julie Sharpe (contact: [juliesharpe55@gmail.com](mailto:juliesharpe55@gmail.com))

Re: Narrow River Education & Activity Center at Middlebridge, Summer 2022

In 2013, the Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA) and Narrow River Land Trust (NRLT) in conjunction with the Town of Narragansett Park and Recreation Department launched the initial series of educational programs and family activities at the recently acquired Town property at Middlebridge. It was very successful with many attentive participants. We have held similar events each year since (except in 2020 and 2021 during the COVID pandemic) and propose another series for the summer and fall of 2022.

NRPA and NRLT share common interests to preserve, protect, and restore the environment and the quality of life for all communities within the Narrow River Estuary and its watershed and providing informational and educational opportunities to the public is an ideal way to promote those interests. The Middlebridge property is a location with unique attributes: central in the watershed, easy access to shallow water, and with panoramic views. For these reasons it serves well as an educational and activities center and a starting point for events that increase awareness of the cultural and natural history of Narrow River. We will also hold an activity at this location for "Gansett Days" in September.

Our format has worked well the past eight years, and we plan to repeat it. Programs will take place once a month, June thru September, on a Saturday (except for the sunset kayak paddle). Inclement weather date will be the next day (except for "Gansett Days"). Activities will be located near the water and just north of the marina and adjacent building. We will be onsite approximately an hour before and an hour after the activities for setup and clean up. Parking will be in the Marina/Narrow River Kayak Overflow lot and the listed times will not be in conflict with other activities at the property. Questions and reservations will be handled through the NRPA website, [www.narrowriver.org](http://www.narrowriver.org). Registration (including liability waivers already approved by the Parks and Recreation Department) will be onsite. Activities will be free, though donations will be accepted for kayak rentals at the July paddle. The events will be advertised in local newspapers, and on educational listservs in addition to the NRPA website and social media accounts. IF we can also have them listed on the Town of Narragansett website calendar of events, that would be great.

For the ninth season of the Middlebridge Education and Activity Center we propose a slate of programs similar to those we offered in 2019:

**What Lives in the River?** (Saturday, June 11, 9 am – 11:00 am): An all-ages introduction to common fish, shellfish, crabs and other inhabitants in the River. There will be hands-on net seining with experts to catch river creatures and guided walks along the intertidal zone and salt marsh to observe the inhabitants. There will be river water tanks and microscopes to examine river creatures and guidebooks to help identify them. Experts will discuss the importance of estuaries as nurseries

for fish & shellfish, the migration of river herring, and the importance of marshes. We recommend that guests wear footwear and clothing that can get wet.

**Sunset Paddle** (Friday, July 29, beginning at 5:00 pm): The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Pettaquamscutt Paddle, sponsored and hosted by Narrow River Kayaks, is an annual guided sunset paddle for 2022. After a brief paddle & safety instruction and a presentation by NRPA Board members, the guided sunset paddle takes paddlers into the John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuge at Pettaquamscutt Cove and to the beach near the mouth of the inlet for a stretch before returning to Middlebridge with the incoming tide as the sun gently sets on the western horizon. We invite participants to stay around afterwards for refreshments and conversation. Visit <https://www.narrowriverkayaks.com/pettapaddle> for details and registration.

**Art at the River** (Saturday, August 6, 9 am – 11 am): Local artists will give instruction to adults in drawing and painting scenes of the Middleridge area, while children will have their own guided artistic activities such as making fish prints and pressed seaweed art. We encourage you to bring blank T-shirts and/or pillowcases so you can make a fish print onto those, too! Silvermoon LaRose, Assistant Director to the Tomaquag Museum will be hosting an Indigenous art and game activity. Bring your own easel or sketch pad. Sketch your version of an expansive landscape view or crouch down and capture a still life view of oysters on the fringe of the salt marsh. Visit <https://narrowriver.org/artontheriver/> for details and free registration.

**“Gansett Days” and What Lives in the River** (Saturday September 17, 9am – 12pm): NRPA will do another round of our popular “What Lives in the River?” event, from 9am – 11am (visit <https://narrowriver.org/whatlivesinriver/> for details and free registration) and our partner, Narrow River Land Trust will host another Narragansett marsh walk on either US Fish and Wildlife Service property or conservation land managed by the Narrow River Land Trust. Walkers will gather in the parking lot for 10:30am and the trail walk will be led by one of the NRLT Board Directors. Walk expected to end by 12noon. Please wear sturdy shoes and if you have them, bring binoculars.

**Other Narrow River Land Trust Trail outdoor opportunities in 2022:** Sign up at [office@narrowriverlandtrust.org](mailto:office@narrowriverlandtrust.org). Put “workday” in the subject line. If cancellation due to rain, the office will reschedule and contact you. All updates will be done by email. Bring: gloves, brimmed hat, sturdy shoes, hand clippers and loppers, water, snacks, sunscreen, and bug spray. Suggested: Light-weight and light-colored clothing with long trousers tucked into light-colored socks.

***NRLT Trail Improvement & Invasive Species Removal Volunteer Workdays:***

- June 12 Sunday 9am – 12pm Walmsley Woods and Lower Pond Overlook Preserves. Meet at 112 River Road, North Kingstown.
- July 31 Sunday 9am - 12pm Benson Preserve. Meet at 518 Snuff Mill Road, North Kingstown.
- Aug 14 Sunday 9am - 12pm Garrison House Acres. Meet at 160 Middlebridge Road, South Kingstown.
- Sept 11 Sunday 9am – 12pm Viall Preserve , Meet at 115 Gilbert Stuart Road, North Kingstown.