



**Rhode Island State Office**

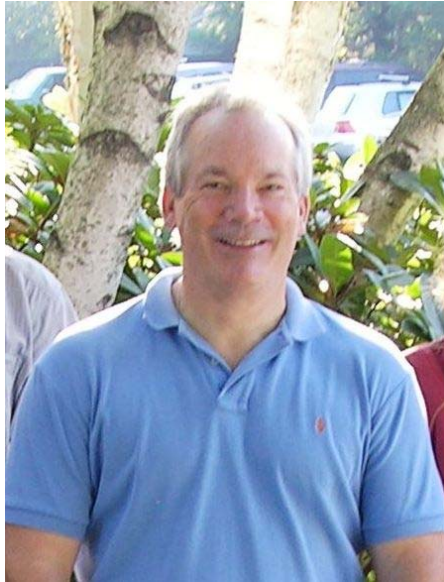
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# Employee Spotlight

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## **NRCS Rhode Island State Resource Conservationist Eric Scherer Retires After 36 Years of Federal Service**



WARWICK, RI (October 3, 2011) – Rhode Island State Resource Conservationist Eric Scherer retired from the federal government after more than 36 years of service in various agencies. Eric began his career as a Peace Corps volunteer after earning a bachelor of science degree in agronomy from Virginia Tech in 1975. He served as the assistant pasture research officer in Belize, Central America. After completing his tour with the Peace Corps, he accepted a position as a soil conservationist with the Soil Conservation Service (renamed the Natural Resources Conservation Service or NRCS in 1994) in Louisa, Virginia. On his first day of work, he wore professional business attire where his new supervisor had a soil conservation technician take him to the muddiest field he could find. Eric became a rather quick learner after such a memorable experience in the field.

After serving as a soil conservationist in several locations throughout Virginia, Eric took a position with NRCS in Vermont as a water quality coordinator in 1980. This was also the same year he got married and began moving his family up and down the eastern seaboard with the agency. A short time later, he and his family relocated to Rhode Island where he was district conservationist for Providence County. In 1984, Eric's federal career took him from Rhode Island to Connecticut, holding the positions of resource conservationist and district conservationist. In 1987, Eric was recognized by President George H. Bush at a White House ceremony with the distinguished "Take Pride in America" award for his extensive work with the conservation district. He later moved to Maryland in 1990 where he was center manager for the NRCS National Plant Materials Center. After a short time in Maryland, he returned to Connecticut where he earned his master of public administration degree from the University of Hartford. In 1999, Eric accepted the vice presidential appointment as the river navigator on the Hudson River for the American Heritage Rivers Initiative. In 2002, Eric and the family moved back to Rhode Island when he was promoted to the position of state resource conservationist where he served until retiring in 2011.

Eric always had a great appreciation for NRCS as an agency where he received comprehensive quality training and had the opportunity to travel. As a member of the National Facilitator Cadre, he found it particularly rewarding providing training to staff and also enjoyed serving on national, regional, and local teams and committees. He enjoyed working with many colleagues within NRCS along with the various conservation partners throughout Rhode Island. As a result, he decided to begin his next "career" as the district manager with the Southern Rhode Island Conservation District as well as working with the Rhode Island Resource Conservation and Development Council.