

Contact: Marc Tremblay, Outreach Coordinator
PO Box 53, North Scituate, RI 02857
(401) 568-3421
www.rifco.org
info@rifco.org

For Immediate Release – May 1, 2006

RHODE ISLAND FORESTRY & WOOD EXPO WELCOMES STUDENTS, PUBLIC & OFFICIALS TO LEARN ABOUT STATE'S WOODLAND RESOURCES
Governor Carcieri & Lt. Governor Fogarty are on hand to help launch the inaugural event



Area high school students enjoy the many exhibits on the main floor.

WARWICK, RI – The 2006 RI Forestry & Wood Expo held its inaugural event on April 7th and 8th at the Community College of Rhode Island Knight campus in Warwick to the delight of students, enthusiasts and industry supporters who devoted a large portion of an early Spring weekend to learning about Rhode Island's burgeoning forest and wood industries.

Industry leaders Northeast Stihl Corporation and Wood-Mizer joined with organizations such as the RI Department of Environmental Management, RI Rural Development Council, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the American Forest Foundation to sponsor this special event. The event was organized by the Rhode Island Forest Conservators Organization, the RI Resource Conservation & Development, and the RI Tree Farm Committee.



Charlie Chase of Charlie's Sugarhouse presents Governor Carcieri with a jug of Rhode Island native maple syrup.

Governor Donald Carcieri addressed a full house at Friday's Business Luncheon. The Governor spoke on the importance of developing Rhode Island's unique and native industries. Governor Carcieri, as well as all other speakers and guests, were presented with a jug of Rhode Island native maple syrup courtesy of Charlie's Sugar House. Other luncheon speakers included Dr. Michael Sullivan, director of the RI DEM, and Eric Johnson, executive editor of *The Northern Logger Magazine*, who addressed the crowd on 2006 industry trends and answered questions.



Lt. Governor Fogarty leads the lively small business development panel.

On Friday afternoon, Lt Governor Charles Fogarty moderated the Small Business Development Panel, which included representatives from USDA Rural Development, the Small Business Administration, RI EDC, First Pioneer Farm Credit, and the Small Business Development Center. The often lively discussions covered diverse topics and issues such as finance, loans, and grants to state agency support and the industry's unique employment needs.



Larry Rathbun's wood strip canoes were a highlight of the exhibit hall

Also on Friday's busy agenda were visits from several area High School students who listened to a panel of speakers that discussed the many career opportunities that exist in the wood and green industries. The presentation was held in conjunction with Rhode Island School to Career, and was sponsored by JobsinRI.com.

On Saturday, attendees were provided with a variety of workshop and seminar sessions that were designed to promote good forest stewardship and also promote business development. Topics for these sessions included Forest Management, Wildlife Habitat Improvement, Alternative

Forest Products, Starting a Forest / Wood Business, Energy from Forest Biomass, and Selling Timber from Your Woodlot. In addition, there was an open forum covering taxes and estate planning.

Plans for the 2007 edition of the Rhode Island Forestry & Wood Expo are already underway.

 <p><i>Students look on during a demonstration of a Wood-Mizer portable sawmill.</i></p>	 <p><i>Modern wood turning techniques were shown throughout the weekend.</i></p>	 <p><i>A local cub scout group used the Expo to achieve their Forestry Badge.</i></p>
 <p><i>Stihl displayed a great variety of saws and equipment</i></p>	 <p><i>Local high school students look on during a discussion of career opportunities in forestry.</i></p>	 <p><i>Over 20 exhibits populated the Expo floor from a variety of agencies and businesses</i></p>