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***The Thomas Dambo Trolls in South County, RI Are Now Open!***

*Meet Erik Rock and Greta Granite – South County’s Newest Residents*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** May 3, 2024, Charlestown, RI – The South County Tourism Council unveiled the first of two giant troll sculptures by internationally renowned Danish recycle artist Thomas Dambo today in Ninigret Park in Charlestown.

Erik Rock sits by Little Nini Pond in Ninigret Park and holds clues that will reveal the location of the second troll, Greta Granite. Greta is almost ready, but still under construction. The trolls are not only pieces of art but help spread Dambo’s message to be good stewards of our planet by reusing and recycling what we can to cut down waste. Trash is treasure to Dambo and he strives with his art to share that philosophy with the world.

Thomas Dambo is the world’s leading recycle artist. His art is in more than 20 countries on 5 continents, including the USA, China, Brazil, Australia, GB, Germany, France, South Korea, Chile, and Puerto Rico. There are 125 Thomas Dambo trolls in the world, and 44 of those are in the USA.

“We are very excited to share Thomas Dambo’s trolls with Rhode Island and the world,” says South County President, Louise Bishop. Bishop first saw Dambo’s work in the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens and decided they would be a great addition to South County to help drive tourism, especially in the shoulder seasons. The Maine trolls have doubled visitation to the area, and Bishop hopes the same for South County and Rhode Island.

Bishop is passionate about public art and sees it as a wonderful and beautiful addition to the region’s natural beauty. The fact that Dambo’s work is environmentally conscious and invites people to enjoy and appreciate nature makes it a perfect match for South County where nature takes center stage.

Dambo has scouted several locations while in Rhode Island with plans to install several more trolls by next year. The locations have not yet been decided, but they will spread throughout the state to create a true Rhode Island, “Troll Trail.”

Commerce Secretary, Elizabeth Tanner was joined by Senator Victoria Gu and Representative Robert Craven at today's ribbon cutting ceremony. Both Senator Gu and Representative Craven, presented citations to artist Thomas Dambo and South County Tourism Council President, Louise Bishop.

### **About Thomas Dambo**

Thomas Dambo (Odense, Denmark; 1979) is the world's leading recycling artist. Since 2014 he has produced artwork with discarded materials in more than 20 countries on 5 continents, including the USA, China, Brazil, Australia, GB, Germany, France, South Korea, Chile, and Puerto Rico.

Among Thomas Dambo's most famous works are his giant Trolls, made out of recycled materials. More than 125 of them have been built from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, from forests to deserts. He has also built more than 7,000 birdhouses all over the world. Some of his most acclaimed works include the Happy Wall (Beijing, Las Vegas, Hollywood, Rio De Janeiro, Santiago de Chile, Edmonton, Copenhagen, Roskilde) and the Future Forest (Chapultepec Park, Mexico City).

His passion for recycling and upcycling started when Thomas Dambo's parents taught him and his brother the value of protecting nature and using recycled materials to make their own toys, costumes, tree houses, and items. In 2010, he graduated in Interactive Design from Kolding Design School. In his life, he has shown multifaceted interest in art and the music world: he has performed as a rapper, human beatbox, graffiti- and street artist. In 2011, he decided to quit his job in Danish television to fully embrace a full-time career in art. Today, Thomas Dambo lives on his farm in the Danish countryside, where he has his studio. He also offers talks about his activist art practice and workshops to teach people how to reuse and upcycle.

*"My mission is Waste No More: our world is drowning in trash, while we are running out of natural resources. I spend my life showing the world that beautiful things can be made out of trash. I give new life to discarded materials by turning them into large-scale artworks. My aim at the moment is to build 1,000 Trolls using recycled materials all over the world,"* states Thomas Dambo.

Thomas Dambo's creative vision is to match together the beauty and the trash, together with the sense of adventure coming from the research needed to find his works on-site - most of which are hidden in natural sites. He works in and with local communities, who are involved in several stages of his projects, such as finding the discard materials, and maintaining the works. "The involvement of people is essential in my mission. I can give an example, but it's the whole world that has to waste no more", highlights Thomas Dambo.

**About South County Tourism Council** The South County Tourism Council is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the towns of Charlestown, Coventry, East Greenwich, Exeter, Hopkinton, Narragansett, North Kingstown, Richmond, South Kingstown, West Greenwich and Westerly as a single leisure travel destination known as "South County". For more information, please visit [southcountyri.com](http://southcountyri.com).

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