



February-March 2019

WATER PAGES eNEWSLETTER

We've Come A Long Way ...



The Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program was created in July 2002. In the beginning, we developed Regional Stormwater Management Plans that quickly lead to the creation of Watershed Restoration and Protection Plans. These plans took several years to complete and cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. More recently, these planning efforts morphed into conducting impervious cover assessments (ICAs), impervious cover reduction action plans (RAPs), and green infrastructure feasibility studies for municipalities. These plans cost ten to fifteen thousand dollars to develop and take several months to complete. This acceleration of the planning process has allowed us to work with more municipalities and get more green infrastructure practices into the ground.

In the beginning, engineers, planners and even state regulators were skeptical of the ability of green infrastructure to effectively manage stormwater. Over the last 16 years we have helped install hundreds of practices in New Jersey that clearly demonstrate the ability of this technology. Green infrastructure technology is now well-accepted at the national level, and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has proposed new stormwater management regulations that require major development to use green infrastructure. New Jersey has come a long way.

Even as new development does its part to better manage stormwater, our streams are still not meeting water quality standards, and most of our municipalities suffer from localized flooding. We realize we must retrofit existing development with stormwater management practices. Municipal officials as well as individual residents have risen to the occasion by implementing green infrastructure practices to disconnect impervious surfaces from flowing directly to local waterways. Over the last two weeks alone, we have designed over 40 rain gardens for individual homeowners through our rain garden rebate program. We are having a hard time meeting the public demand for help with green infrastructure.

On March 18th, Governor Murphy signed a law that allows for the creation of stormwater utilities. Over the last few weeks, I have been asked many times to discuss the implications of this new law. While many ask about this law and refer to it as the "rain tax," after short explanation they all seem to understand how paying a fee to a stormwater

utility will help reduce flooding and improve local water quality. As municipalities move forward with creating stormwater utilities, the retrofitting of existing development with stormwater management will quickly become common-place, localized flooding will be reduced, and the health of our waterways will be restored. New Jersey truly has come a long way.

Retirement of a Giant in Water Resources

As March comes to an end so does the leadership of Pat Rector as one of the first Rutgers Cooperative Extension Environmental County Agents. She begins her retirement on April 1st. Pat joined Rutgers Cooperative Extension in 2009 as a County Environmental and Resource Management Agent for Morris and Somerset Counties. Pat has focused her efforts in three program areas: disconnection of stormwater, aquatic invasive species, and youth and water programming. Pat was also the Statewide Program Coordinator of the Rutgers Environmental Stewards (RES) Program and Coordinator of the RES Program at Duke Farms.



Pat's work has affected so many lives throughout New Jersey. Her dedication to protect and restore the environment is unparalleled. She trained hundreds of volunteers that will continue her efforts into the future. Pat educated youth, college students, adults, municipal officials, and other environmental professionals on key environmental problems and how to fix them. She was a true Extension professional, extending the knowledge of the university to help improve the quality of lives of the residents of New Jersey. Let's all take a moment to thank Pat for her hard work and dedication and wish her the best of luck in her retirement. She will truly be missed.

The Rain Garden Rebate Program is in Full Swing!



The rain garden rebate program has held three sessions during March 2019. Over 40 rain gardens have already been designed for homeowners throughout the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer region of South Jersey. This program is being funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and is being conducted with our great project partners: Pinelands Preservation Alliance, Association of New

Jersey Environmental Commissions, American Littoral Society, South Jersey Land and

Water Trust, Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River, New Jersey League of Conservation Voters, and New Jersey Audubon. Rain garden educational and technical design sessions have been offered in Millville, Vineland, and Evesham. One-hour rain garden educational sessions will be offered in Upper Deerfield on April 10th and Hammonton on April 18th. We hope to offer this program in the Neshanic River Watershed in Hunterdon County and the Culver Lake Watershed in Sussex County in the coming months.

Municipal Action Teams' Green Infrastructure Initiative Updates

MARCH 2019

Camden SMART (Stormwater Management and Resource Training) met on March 12th. The Trust for Public Land presented on their Green + Healthy Camden project that focuses on climate preparedness, equity, health, and park and open space planning. It is being developed in collaboration with Cooper's Ferry, NJ Conservation Foundation, Rowan University, CCMUA, and others to develop mapping tools to identify areas where investment can have the most beneficial impact in the city. The NJDEP Urban and Community Forestry LSR project also presented on their work to update the City's Urban Forestry Plan asking for assistance from partners to collaborate on the plan. The project also includes installation of twenty redesigned enhanced trees pits in the City. The next monthly meeting is planned for April 9th at 10:30AM.

Gloucester City Green Team met on March 13th. Plans for construction of a rain garden at the Gloucester City Water Department in the spring were also discussed. NJ Tree Foundation will excavate the garden, and students and local volunteers will be involved to help with planting the garden. The group was updated on the progress of the Gloucester City High School courtyard project which is far into the design phase, and revisions to the plans are being done to get ready for an anticipated summer installation. Locations for tree planting for the urban forestry LSR grant were brought up to determine where a total of twenty redesigned enhanced trees pits will be installed in the City. The next monthly meeting is scheduled for April 10th at 1PM.

Harrison TIDE (Transforming, Infrastructure and Defending our Environment) did not meet in March. The group instead held the West Hudson Community Forum between Harrison, Kearny, and East Newark to discuss CSO issues and the long term control plan on March 6th from 6-7 PM at the Harrison High School with great success. The next monthly meeting is scheduled for April 11th at 2PM.

Municipal action teams have been formed to foster collaboration and collective action that helps the municipality speak with a common voice and achieve a common goal while advocating for green infrastructure. Updates on the various municipal action teams across the state are listed in this newsletter.

Technical assistance provided to these municipal action teams by the RCE Water Resources Program is funded in part by the Surdna Foundation, the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission with support from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), and our local partners.

Camden SMART

Gloucester City Green Team

Harrison TIDE

Jersey City START

Newark DIG

Paterson SMART

Jersey City START (Stormwater Treatment and Resiliency Team) did not meet during the month of March, but has been working with the Jersey City MUA during presentations at three different locations throughout the month to inform and gather feedback from the public about the Development and Evaluation of Alternatives Report for the City's long term CSO control plan. Please check the START webpage (<https://www.jcmua.com/ltcp>) for presentation dates. The next meeting will be held at the Jersey City MUA on April 11th at 10AM.

Newark DIG (Doing Infrastructure Green) met at 11:00 AM at Newark City Hall on March 28th. Partners of Newark DIG discussed upcoming events in Newark including Earth Day tree plantings, catch basin litter clean-ups, and engagement of schools for upcoming projects. A representative from HDR, Inc. presented "Newark CSO Alternatives Analysis Preliminary Results," originally presented at the long term control plan (LTCP) public engagement meeting held on March 7th. For additional information and upcoming public meetings about the LTCP and combined sewer overflow (CSO) issues, visit the webpages of Newark Stormwater Solutions and Newark DIG. The next meeting of Newark DIG will be held at Newark City Hall on April 23rd at 11AM.

Paterson SMART (Stormwater Management and Resource Training) met on March 28th at 5:30 PM in the Paterson Museum. Green Team members discussed strategies and needs for implementing an "Adopt-A-Catch-Basin" program throughout the city to raise awareness about stormwater infrastructure and provide one solution to the city's litter/garbage problems. New green infrastructure project locations were discussed as well. START members and Sewage Free NJ members presented on CSO related issues and ongoing efforts to find solutions at the Christopher Hope Center on March 26th to the Paterson Homeowners Association, with 18 attendees. The next SMART meeting is scheduled for April 20th at 5:45PM with the location TBD.

Trenton Green Infrastructure Partners (TGIP) met on March 19th at the Isles, Inc. office at 3PM. Partners discussed and finalized the goals for 2019 and have begun finalizing dates for green infrastructure project installations to occur this spring/summer at Trenton Schools and Trenton-based businesses. There will be a group clean-up and bike ride for Opening Trails Day on Saturday April 13th at 9AM beginning at the Battle Monument and hosted by Trenton Cycling Revolution.

FEBRUARY 2019

Camden SMART (Stormwater Management and Resource

Training) met on February 12th. Issues concerning EIT projects and the CSO long term control plan were discussed. Rutgers is working to compile a list of green infrastructure projects in the City and develop a comprehensive maintenance plan for the installed projects. RCE Water Resources Program, as part of the North Camden Stormwater Initiative, is working to revise projects at Camden Tool and Higher Ground Church after meeting with owners for a planned summer or fall installation. Preliminary designs for a sculpture rain garden at the the Camden County Historical Society have been developed, and partners are excited to be involved in this unique project. Locations for tree planting for the urban forestry LSR grant were brought up to determine where a total of twenty redesigned enhanced trees pits will be installed in the City. The next monthly meeting is planned for March 12th at 1PM.

Gloucester City Green Team met on February 13th. A special presentation on the Cross Camden County Trail was given by members of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. The goal of the project is to connect local trails throughout the county, and ideas for directing it through Gloucester City were considered. Plans for construction of a rain garden at the Gloucester City Water Department in the spring were also discussed. NJ Tree Foundation will excavate the garden, and students and local volunteers will be involved to help with planting the garden. The group was updated on the meeting with the Gloucester City High School for the rain gardens in the courtyard, and revisions to the plans are being done to get ready for an anticipated summer installation. Locations for tree planting for the urban forestry LSR grant were brought up to determine where a total of twenty redesigned enhanced trees pits will be installed in the City. The next monthly meeting is scheduled for March 13th at 1PM.

Harrison TIDE (Transforming, Infrastructure and Defending our Environment) met on February 14th. The group focused on organizing a West Hudson Community Forum between Harrison, Kearny, and East Newark to discuss CSO issues and the long term control plan. The forum is open to all members of the public and is scheduled for March 6th from 6-7 PM at the Harrison High School. The next monthly meeting for March has been canceled, but regular meetings will resume on April 11th at 2PM.

The **Paterson SMART** (Stormwater Management and Resource Training) meeting for February was cancelled due to weather events, but the upcoming meeting will be on March 18th at 5:30PM at the Paterson Museum, 2 Market Street. The group continues to work with local schools, community members, and the green team on getting Paterson to become a more sustainable community.

Jersey City START (Stormwater Treatment and Resiliency Team) met on February 14th at the Jersey City MUA building. Members met and discussed the goals for 2019 and spoke with attendees from the Canco Park Conservancy about the possibility of green infrastructure in Canco Park. There are three upcoming community presentations that will be given by members of START and the Jersey City MUA. Check the following link for dates and locations (<https://www.jcmua.com/ltcp>).

Trenton Green Infrastructure Partners (TGIP) met on February 19th. At this meeting, partners discussed a collaboration between green infrastructure opportunities and complete street projects. With a number of projects scheduled for installation this spring, the group is currently working to identify 2019 goals and priority sites to design. Members also held a discussion surrounding the first steps to redeveloping the community forestry management plan. The partners typically meet on the third Tuesday of every month.

Newark DIG (Doing Infrastructure Green) met on February 28th to discuss ongoing green infrastructure projects and initiatives within the city. The next meeting will be held on the 4th Tuesday of March in Newark City Hall.

Perth Amboy SWIM (Stormwater Infrastructure Management) has continued their efforts toward promoting green infrastructure throughout the city of Perth Amboy. The group is continuing their efforts on educating the public on the importance of green infrastructure. Since the last meeting, SWIM has prioritized long term planning of green infrastructure as part of a larger combined sewer overflow reduction strategy. The group met with the mayor, earlier in February, and are excited about the future for the city. Additionally, in partnership with the Lower Raritan River Watershed, SWIM is hosting a rain barrel workshop on March 21st at 6PM. The workshop will include rain barrel construction, educational demonstrations, and other public art activities. The partners recently met on February 21st for their monthly meeting and continue to meet regularly on the 3rd Thursday of the month.



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