



APRIL 2023

WATER PAGES eNEWSLETTER

Rutgers Strike is Over!



On Monday, April 10th at 9 am, 9,000 faculty, part-time lecturers, teaching assistants, and post-docs walked off the job at Rutgers University in a contract dispute. I am a proud AAUP-AFT Union member. We have been working without a contract since July 1, 2022. I firmly believe that strong unions lead to a strong middle class and there is plenty of data to support this belief. Before joining Rutgers, I was an engineer for a small consulting firm. During my annual review, I would meet with two bosses and make an argument for a salary increase and at times a promotion. I had some leverage in this negotiation. I was a good employee, and they invested a lot of time in training me, so they didn't want to lose me. At Rutgers, I am one of

many faculty, making it impossible for me to individually negotiate a raise with my dean. Only through collective bargaining can we achieve reasonable pay increases.

I hope our strike did not inconvenience any of you reading this message. I know it was tough on the students not having classes as the sun shined brightly and temperatures reached the 90's. Some students joined us on the picket line, and others will get a "C" in my class (only kidding). Now, it's time to get back to work.

NEIWPC 33rd Annual NPS Conference in Saratoga Springs, NY

The New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPC) has an annual conference on nonpoint source pollution. It is a two-day event and about 120 people attend including consultants, regulators, academics, watershed association members, and

members of other non-governmental organizations. It is a great mix of people and good presentations. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection has created some great tools including a Watershed Restoration Planning Tool. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection has developed some good protocols for managing soil erosion associated with large scale solar installations. The Center for Watershed Protection is working to advance the state of professional training for watershed planners and coordinators. There were also some good presentations by consulting companies such as Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB), Fuss & O'Neill, and the Horsley Witten Group. I gave two-presentations: 1) Addressing Climate Change and Flooding Issues in Watershed Restoration and Protection Plans in Underserved Communities and 2) The Role of Municipal Action Teams to Advocate for Green Infrastructure in Environmental Justice Communities.



Saratoga Springs, NY

Next year's conference will be in Connecticut. I strongly encourage you to go!

Peer to Peer Learning with Schools in Taiwan

Prior to the COVID Pandemic, the RCE Water Resources Program had the opportunity to visit Taiwan and meet with the Taiwan Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and National Taipei University of Technology. Taiwan EPA is beginning to install green infrastructure in Taipei to manage stormwater runoff and help reduce the heat island effect. When we were in Taiwan, we visited several projects and one of them was at an elementary school. The visit to Taiwan was fruitful and resulted in the Taiwan EPA providing the Water Resources Program with a contract to partner on exploring the ability of green infrastructure to manage larger storm events such as the hurricanes we get in New Jersey and the typhoons that occur in Taiwan. This work culminated in a two-day virtual seminar on February 23-24, 2022.

Taiwan EPA wishes to continue their relationship with the RCE Water Resources Program. Our goal is to identify an elementary school and middle school in New Jersey where we can work with the school to install green infrastructure practices. We will set up monitoring systems for these practices, and Taiwan will set up similar systems on their green infrastructure practices. This will provide the New Jersey students with an opportunity to engage with students in Taiwan to share data and discuss green infrastructure technology. Students are the key to our future, and this project will help engage them in our struggle to fix our planet.

If you know of a elementary school and middle school that would be interested in participating in this study, please contact Christopher Obropta at obropta@envsci.rutgers.edu. It would great if a few students in these schools spoke

Chinese. Let me know if you can help.



Zane North Elementary School, Collingswood, NJ



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Rain Garden Native Plant Spotlight ~

Golden Groundsel (*Packera aurea*)

Golden Groundsel, or Golden Ragwort, is a versatile compact perennial that does double duty in a rain garden, providing masses of yellow flowers in April and a leafy groundcover year-round. Preferring moist, part-shade, but tolerant of other conditions, Golden Groundsel naturalizes easily and provides early spring interest to the garden. Following the bloom, the leaves provide understory cover, allowing other perennials and shrubs to shine.

For more information:

Jerseyyards.org native plant database

<https://www.jerseyyards.org/plant/packera-aurea/#more>

Wildflower.org

https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=paau3

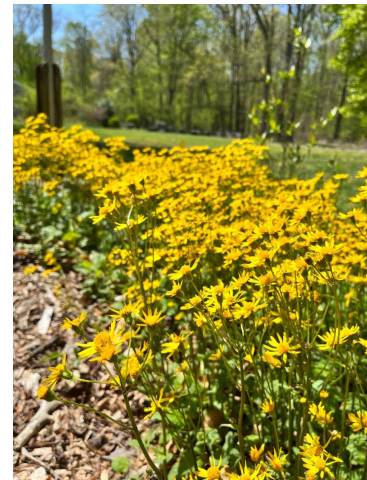


Photo credit: Chris Perez, RCE Water Resources Program



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