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Water Pages eNewsletter

[Demonstration Green Infrastructure Projects Underway in Milltown!]

The Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) Water Resources Program, with funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, has been working on laying the foundation to reduce future flooding impacts from impervious surfaces in the Raritan River Basin. By completing impervious cover assessments and reduction action plans for 54 municipalities within the Raritan River Basin, we aim to improve water quality, enhance wildlife habitat, and increase resiliency.

As part of our tasks, we are producing guidance documents for municipalities on "How-To" implement green infrastructure strategies to reduce the impact of stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces on water quality. We are also working with municipalities to install "climate resilient" green infrastructure practices in the Raritan River Basin to reduce water quality and flooding impacts and to help move these municipalities towards climate resiliency.

The RCE Water Resources Program is working with the Borough of Milltown to identify opportunities to eliminate, reduce, or disconnect directly connected impervious surfaces. Over the summer, the RCE Water Resources Program and the Borough of Milltown worked together to construct two (2) bioretention systems, or rain gardens, to capture, treat, and infiltrate runoff from the roadway and railroad tracks that surround Parkview Elementary School. More projects in the Raritan River Basin are underway to improve water quality and remove one million gallons of stormwater annually.



To learn more about our Climate Resilient Green Infrastructure for the Raritan Basin project, be sure to visit our [website!](#)

[Upcoming Rain Garden Education and Technical Assistance Program at Duke Farms]



Duke Farms, in partnership with the Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) Water Resources Program, will provide homeowners with an opportunity to learn more about ways everyone can help reduce flooding in our community while installing beautiful gardens at their own homes.

This three-part program will begin with an overview of rain gardens and sustainable landscape practices for residential properties where participants will be given instructions and materials to evaluate and photograph their own property (Sept 22nd).

Class participants will participate in a hands-on rain garden installation at Duke Farms to learn best practices (Sept 27th). Homeowners will then meet with Rutgers design staff to develop plans for a rain garden and drainage

improvements at their home that will include the appropriate size, location, and perennial plants recommended for the property (Sept 29th).

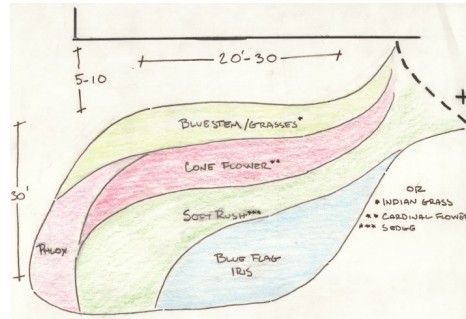
At the conclusion of the course, participants will be offered free native plants and a full rebate for the course fee if their home gardens are installed.

Workshop Dates & Times:

September 22 @ 6 - 8pm: *Rain Garden Education Presentation*

September 27 @ 9am - 12 pm: *Rain Garden Installation at Duke Farms*

September 29 @ 5 - 8pm: *Technical Assistance Appointments*



Cost: \$50 per person

To register to the program at Duke Farms, please [click here](#).

[Spanning Three Focus Areas with Green Infrastructure]

The National Urban Extension Leaders (NUEL) is a network of Extension professionals across the United States that have joined together to advance the strategic importance and long term value of urban activities. NUEL has identified five action areas as a means to group together the efforts of urban Extension programs throughout the nation. Many projects fit into more than one of these focus areas. For example, Extension's efforts in green infrastructure can be considered "Protecting the Environment" because we are working with communities to eliminate combined sewer overflows (CSOs) from discharging to local waterways. It also can be considered "Improving our Health" because it seeks to eliminate combined sewer systems from releasing a slurry of raw sewage and stormwater into people's basements and the streets where people are walking. Finally, since green infrastructure often requires community engagement, it could also be included in the "Strengthening Communities" focus area.

Green infrastructure is an approach to stormwater management that is cost-effective, sustainable, and environmentally friendly. Green infrastructure projects capture, filter, absorb, and reuse stormwater to help restore the natural water cycle by reducing stormwater runoff, promoting infiltration, and enhancing evapotranspiration. Many urban areas across the nation are using green infrastructure to reduce the occurrences of CSOs, and Extension is right there providing them technical support. This is one of the fields where the land-grant universities (LGUs) can play a critical role in research, education, and outreach. Rutgers, Penn State, and University of Connecticut (UConn) are just a few of the LGUs that have an outstanding green infrastructure research and Extension program.

This past summer, the UConn Extension hosted a meeting in Storrs, Connecticut focusing on green infrastructure for managing stormwater runoff. Extension and research faculty came from six of the northeastern LGUs to share their efforts and discuss how better to collaborate on addressing the flooding and water quality issues in each of our states using green infrastructure. Even though the water professionals at each of these six universities are very successful in each of their states, they realized that by working together and sharing resources, they can accomplish even more.

A nationally funded urban Extension system can increase these opportunities for regional collaboration on many important urban issues like green infrastructure. Without funding, it is difficult for research and Extension faculty to come together even though we know collaboration is the key to achieving a much larger impact for our stakeholders. The UConn green infrastructure meeting was the first step towards facilitating a collaborative partnership that will help move the LGUs to the forefront of this important field. We hope the urban Extension movement will engage many more LGUs in the green infrastructure efforts!

[Shout Out to Our 2015 Summer Interns!]

The RCE Water Resources Program was able to offer and support 25 internship opportunities over the summer. It was a great honor to have had the opportunity to work with each of our student interns! We are so proud of the work our intern team accomplished this summer and their eagerness to learn throughout the summer. We are thankful for all their hard work and for a wonderful summer program. Keep up the great work!



(Top Row, Left to Right: Stephanie George, Nimah Ahmed, Kaylin Mahoney, Amna Rahman, Tsz Lok Eunice Leung, Marta Goraczniak, Vinay Ravinder, Matt Leconey, Enrique Jimenez, Bhavani

*Thotakura, Shivangi Ganatra, Dominick Cardella, Tianshui Yu; **Middle Row:** Karen Leu, Kaylene Campbell, Adam Cucchiara, Kyhlil Palmer, Elizabeth Pyshnik, Tekla Pontius-Courtney, Robert Brown, Christopher Obropta; **Bottom Row:** Nicole Del Monaco, Cody Obropta, Dillon Swiderski; **Not Pictured:** Eliot Nagele, Farielle Brazier, Hollie Dimuro)*

Interested in learning more about our interns? Be sure to visit our website to [meet our intern](#) team!

Don't forget to visit our website at: water.rutgers.edu

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