



A Homeowner's Guide to Environmentally Friendly Landscaping Practices

Jersey-Friendly Yards, a website promoting landscaping for a healthy Barnegat Bay environment, was launched in November 2015 by the Barnegat Bay Partnership. Funded in part by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the website is also a resource for homeowners in New Jersey interested in learning about the importance of implementing environmentally friendly landscaping practices. Combining several resources into a user-friendly and visually impressive package, Jersey-Friendly Yards provides a homeowner with a step-by-step guide to a sustainable property that includes practices like proper fertilizer use, the importance of soil testing, and even how to create wildlife habitat.

A key feature of the Jersey-Friendly Yards website is an interactive learning tool called The Interactive Yard, designed in part by Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) Water Resources Program. The Interactive Yard allows the user to model their own "Jersey-friendly yard" by reducing stormwater runoff, eradicating existing invasive species, and harvesting rainwater, and incorporating additional landscape practices. Users can then select plants best suited to their New Jersey yard from a searchable native plant database and learn about the benefits of a rain garden from the Rain Garden Manual of New Jersey developed by the RCE Water Resources Program and free [to download](#). Ending with an illustrative design plan and images, the tool helps homeowners better visualize sustainable landscaping in their own New Jersey yard.

Building a Better Yard

The Interactive Yard is designed to help you learn how to **convert a yard from a lawn-dominated landscape** into one that features beds with "Jersey-Friendly" plants.

As you transform the yard, you will be **removing high-maintenance lawn areas** and reduce the need for fertilizers, add beds with **native plants**, **reduce stormwater runoff** and create **habitat for wildlife** and pollinators.

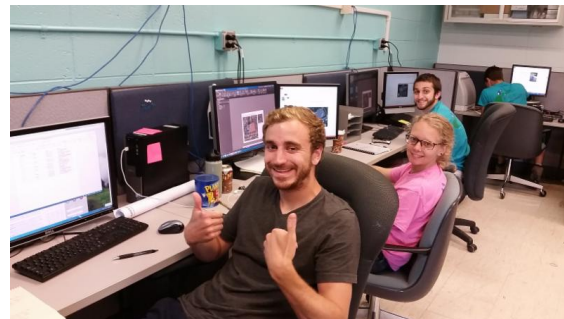


Click below to get started.

START THE INTERACTIVE YARD

Impervious Cover Action and Reduction Plans for 54 Municipalities in the Raritan River Basin

The Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) Water Resources Program received a grant from the [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation \(NFWF\)](#) to address concerns of [climate resilience in the Raritan River Basin](#). The project focused on partnering with 54 municipalities within the Raritan River Basin watershed. Climate models predict increased storm intensity in New Jersey due to climate change.



This leads to concerns of increased stormwater runoff from parking lots, rooftops, roadways, and other impervious surfaces during these intensified rainfall events. Many municipalities already have high areas of impervious cover than is deemed appropriate for protecting waterways. Therefore, the RCE Water Resources Program aims to address these concerns through the implementation of green infrastructure (GI) projects throughout the state of New Jersey. GI is designed to capture or retain stormwater and allow it to slowly infiltrate into the soil rather than flow directly into storm drains and into local waterways. GI practices include, but are not limited to, rain gardens, pervious pavements, and rainwater harvesting systems like rain barrels. These practices will be designed to handle the increased stormwater runoff generated from the large rainfall events predicted by future climate change and address concerns of flooding and water quality. Over the summer of 2015, the RCE Water Resources Program presented to each of the 54 municipalities an impervious cover assessment report which details impervious cover and the amount of stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces that would need to be managed.

The reports also included three model sites



where GI projects could be easily implemented (e.g., schools and churches). Some of these projects have already begun implementation. Throughout the summer, 25 summer interns conducted site assessments to identify potential sites in each municipality and were later surveyed for further GI opportunities.

Stormwater runoff from the sites was observed by students to determine locations for potential rain gardens and opportunities to repave areas with pervious pavements, along with other GI opportunities. Interns then worked on creating detailed plans for each site which include a visual aerial plan of the site where projects could be implemented as well as calculations for determining the size, impact, and approximate costs for each site. Plans for each site were then put together into impervious cover reduction action plans and reviewed by the RCE Water Resources Program staff. Once completed, these plans will be presented to each municipality to provide them with several sites where GI can be implemented to reach their goals for managing stormwater runoff. This project has been a tremendous learning opportunity for each of the 25 interns to apply real science practices into the environment. The RCE Water Resources Program looks forward to working with these municipalities to help implement some of the identified GI projects to improve stormwater infrastructure in the Raritan River Basin.

By: Matt Leconey, Bioenvironmental Engineer Intern

Available Grant Opportunities for Water Resources Projects

Here are the latest in grant funding opportunities for local organizations or municipalities! Should you wish to partner with the RCE Water Resources Program, please reach out to a staff member to discuss opportunities on how we can work together.

- [NFWF Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program](#)
- [Sustainable Jersey and Sustainable Jersey for Schools Small Grants Program](#)
- [NOAA Environmental Literacy for Community Resilience](#)
- [EPA Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Program](#)
- [US Forest Service Community Forest Program](#)
- [HUD Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant Program](#)
- [EPA Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Grant Program](#)

Happy Holidays



RCE Water Resources Program | New Brunswick, NJ 08901 | M-F 8:30 - 4:30pm

