



March 2018

WATER PAGES eNEWSLETTER

Green Infrastructure Planning Tools for New Jersey

The Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) Water Resources Program has developed several rapid stormwater management planning tools to engage communities to take action. We have been conducting impervious cover assessments (ICAs) for municipalities to raise awareness about the impacts of stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces on localized flooding and the health of local waterways. The ICA is intended to help municipalities better understand their risk and to set goals to reduce runoff from impervious surfaces. To further promote action, we have been preparing impervious cover reduction action plans (RAPs) that identify sites where stormwater can be better managed using green infrastructure practices. The RAP provides ten to twenty sites based upon a review of aerial photography and site visits where specific green infrastructure practices can be installed. For many municipalities, we have incorporated the ICA and RAP into a green infrastructure feasibility study that also includes much of the information from our Green Infrastructure Guidance Manual for New Jersey. Individually, as well as collectively, these tools can help a municipality begin addressing their local flooding and water quality problems.

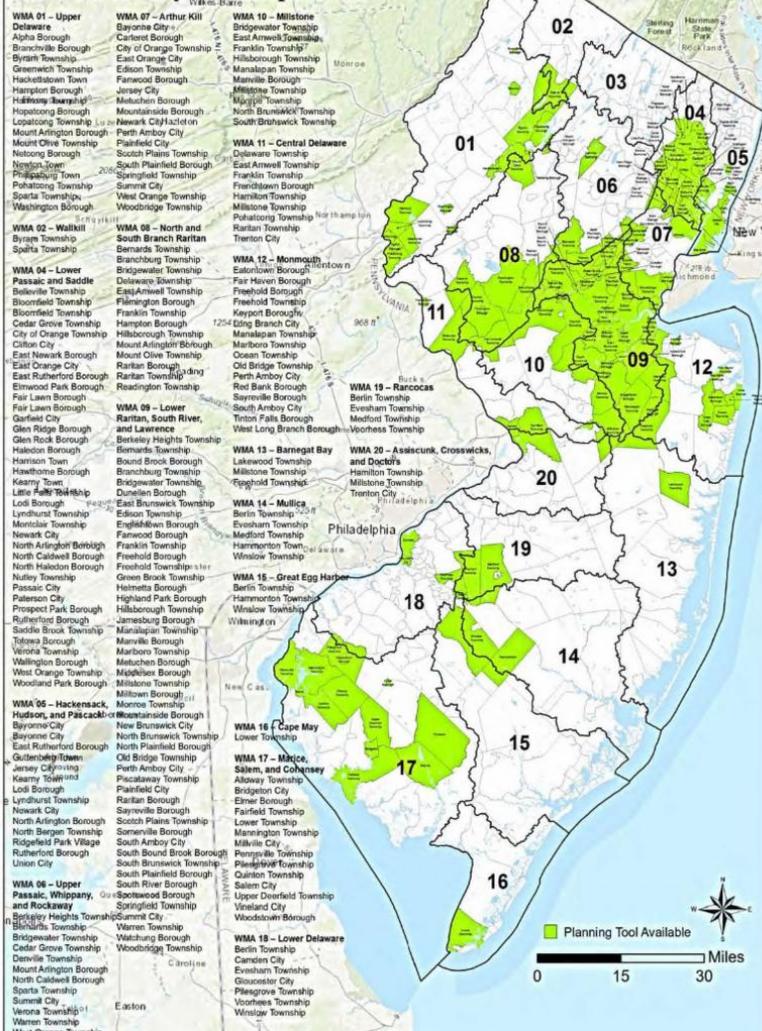
We have completed green infrastructure planning documents for 150 municipalities in New Jersey, and we are currently working on an additional 25-30 plans this summer. It costs approximately \$10,000 to \$20,000 to prepare an ICA, RAP, and a green infrastructure feasibility study for a municipality, and it takes several months to complete. The RCE Water Resources Program has received grant funding to offset some of these costs in various portions of the state. The Sustainable Jersey program is promoting the development of ICAs, RAPs, and green infrastructure feasibility studies and provides municipal Sustainable Jersey points for these activities.

After these plans are complete, the RCE Water Resources Program has worked with municipalities to design and implement the green infrastructure projects in the plans. Part of this effort is to help communities secure funding for the design and implementation of these projects. As communities move forward and begin to implement the projects outlined in these plans, they can receive additional points from Sustainable Jersey.

If you are interested in having an ICA, RAP, and a green infrastructure feasibility plan developed for your municipality, please contact **Hollie Dimuro**.

To find out if plans have already been developed for your municipality, click here.

Green Infrastructure Planning Tools for New Jersey Municipalities



22nd Annual NJ Land Conservation Rally

On March 2nd, the RCE Water Resources Program attended and participated in the 22nd Annual NJ Land Conservation Rally at the Hyatt in New Brunswick. The event broke attendance records this year and was a great opportunity to connect with many current and future environmental conservation partners across the state. The RCE

Water Resources Program participated as an exhibitor discussing our work and answering many questions about impervious cover assessments and floodplain restoration planning. Jeremiah Bergstrom, along with Jim Simon from Isles and Andrew Wilkinson, a local Trenton artist, led a presentation titled “Activating Neglected Spaces: A Multifaceted Approach.” The speakers shared experiences from Trenton and Camden where efforts to reclaim vacant, underutilized, and contaminated properties through gardening, public art, and green infrastructure have been successful in partnership with local residents and neighborhood organizations.

**Mahwah's First Rain Garden:
A Partnership between the
Mahwah Environmental
Commission &
Rutgers Cooperative Extension
By: Karin La Greca,**

Mahwah Green Team



This past September of 2017 was a big one for the township of Mahwah as they had their first rain garden built in town history! The Environmental Commission of Mahwah has been working hard for the past five years to get a public rain garden built for the benefit of the community, water supply, and ecology. After many years of meetings and planning the Environmental Commission and community residents were happy to see their hard work pay off.

This past summer the Township of Mahwah had reached out to the Cooperative Extension of Landscape Architecture at Rutgers University to spearhead the project. With a pre-determined placement for the rain garden site, logistical work moved fast and smoothly. The rain garden was planned to be situated between a commuter parking lot and Winters Pond, a well-trafficked area for residents to walk their dogs and engage with wildlife. Designers from the Landscape Architecture Department surveyed the site and decided on four rain garden pits totaling 2,500 square feet, that would capture the polluted run-off from the parking lot, and which would be interwoven by a series of pedestrian trails. Native plants were carefully chosen to be able to handle the stresses of the area such as excess salt from the parking lot and long periods of drought.

After the Township had approved the design, construction then commenced as members from the Landscape Architecture Department began building with the special help of volunteers from Ramapo College, MEVO (Mahwah Environmental Volunteers Organization) and the Mahwah Department of Public Works. The construction was quick and flawless as the DPW excavated the soil, a new bio-retention sand mix was mixed on site and paths were scratched out and built while native plants were planted and re-introduced to the area. A ribbon cutting took place in late September on Mahwah Day where residents were introduced to the sustainable new addition to their town. The rain garden seems to bring joy to both residents and travelers as a monarch butterfly stopped by for some native pollen in late September before its long journey south.

A special thanks to Karin Lagreca, The Mahwah Environmental Commission, MEVO, Tobiah Horton, The Department of Landscape Architecture, and the Mahwah DPW. Funding for this rain garden was made possible by a grant from Sustainable Jersey and PSEG.



Site before the rain garden installation



Site after the rain garden installation

Municipal Action Teams' Green Infrastructure Initiative Updates

Newark DIG (Doing Infrastructure Green) partners provided the City of Newark input on the draft Sustainability Action Plan to the GREEN chapter, which will focus on green infrastructure as well as recommendations to the combined sewer overflow brochure to incorporate actions residents can take to improve the quality of life in the community. The GI Reformers, a program of Newark DIG, finalized their 2018 campaign and will begin sharing information and outreach efforts in the next couple of months on the Newark DIG website and Facebook page. Please join Newark DIG, the GI Reformers, and other partners on April 14th in City Hall's Rotunda to attend the Newark Resilience Action Plan Summit!

Camden SMART (Stormwater Mangement and Resource Training) partners continue to develop plans for the 2018 Camden Environmental Summit. The event will be held Wednesday, June 6th at Rutgers-Camden Campus Center. Registration is now open! In March, the latest phase of green infrastructure projects were started with a third contract executed through CCMUA with funding provided by the NJ Environmental Infrastructure Financing Program. Efforts continue to distribute rain barrels to local residents, and partners are looking to begin spring maintenance of many green infrastructure projects in partnership with the Camden PowerCorps Program.

Gloucester City Green Team met recently to continue its work of coordinating green infrastructure demonstration projects and updating residents on the progress of the Long Term Control Plan. This coming spring, Gloucester City staff will assist with efforts to complete a community tree planting and build rain gardens at several sites. These will be the first demonstration projects funded through a NJDEP 3 19(h) grant to the Camden County Soil Conservation District.

Trenton Green Infrastructure Partners met in late February along with members of the Trenton Green Team. The meeting participants shared ideas and opportunities for collaboration and are looking forward to coordinating efforts and programs in 2018. Partners continue to develop plans for demonstration projects with the first green infrastructure efforts funded through a NJDEP 3 19(h) grant in the spring and summer of 2018. Partners will be meeting again in early May.

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 stated 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

Perth Amboy SWIM

Trenton Green Infrastructure Partners



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Connect with us

