RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
Water Resources Program
New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

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WATER PAGES eNEWSLETTER

So, you're a Green Infrastructure Champion ~ Now what?

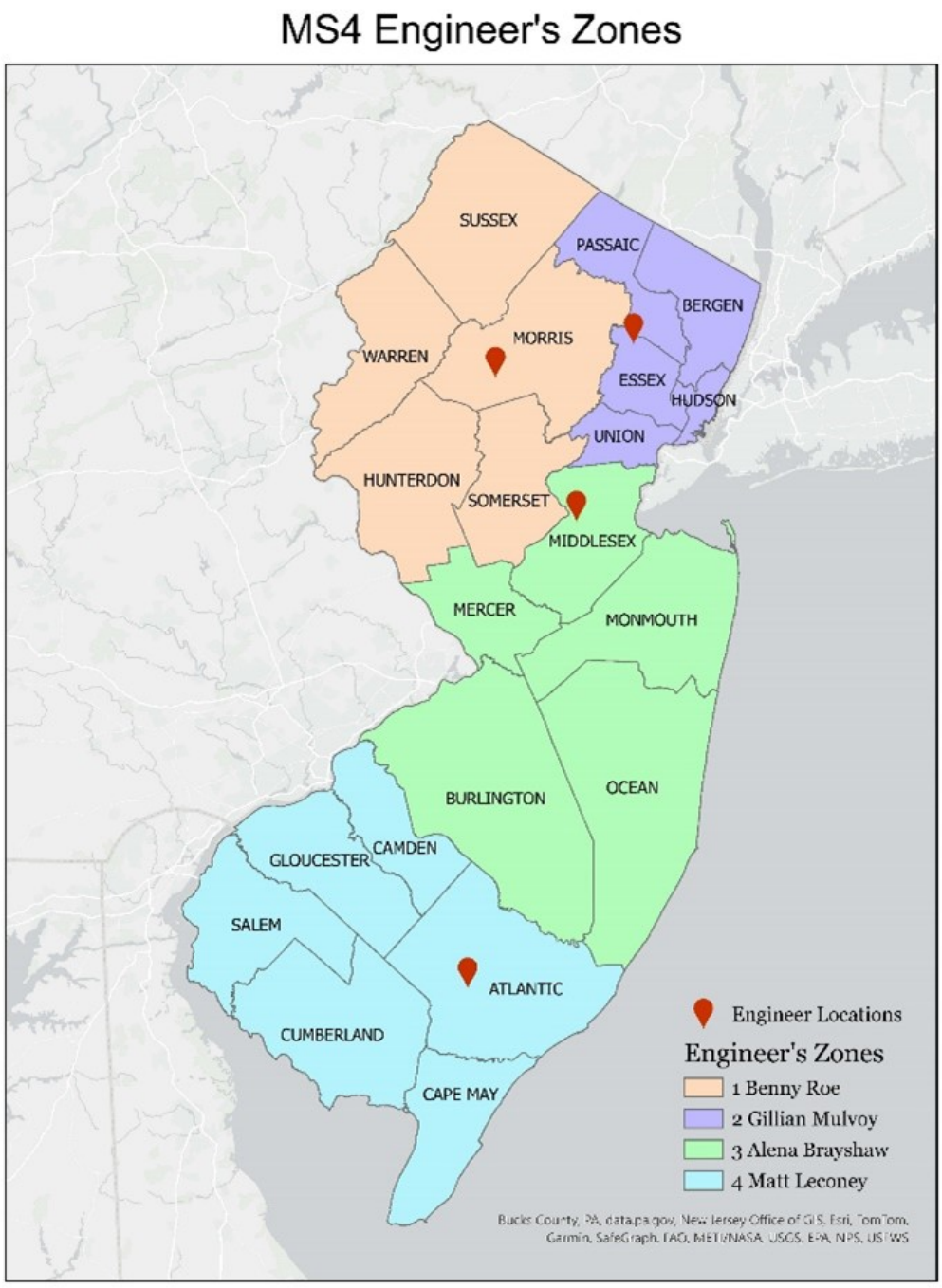
The Green Infrastructure Champion training program started in 2019, and after six years, there are over 600 certified Green Infrastructure Champions. The Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) Water Resources Program has been working closely with various Green Infrastructure Champions throughout New Jersey to help them design and install rain gardens, complete green infrastructure plans, and secure grant funding for green infrastructure community initiatives. The Green Infrastructure Champion training program consists of ten 2-hour virtual classes starting the second Friday in January and continuing every other week until mid-May. Attendees that take five or more classes are deemed Certified Green Infrastructure Champions, and the RCE Water Resources Program has dedicated resources to help Green Infrastructure Champions with green infrastructure projects in their communities.

The Green Infrastructure Champion training program has been recognized by many as an outstanding educational program. The RCE Water Resources Program has always taken pride in the fact that our educational programs result in action. While the Green Infrastructure Champion training program has resulted in many plans being completed and projects being installed, we are still trying to empower more of our Green Infrastructure Champions. On July 17, 2024, at the **Jersey Water Works** Membership Meeting, we offered a workshop for Green Infrastructure Champions to help them better engage with their municipalities on completing the requirements of the municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permits. We focused on the requirement for municipalities to conduct education and outreach activities and the requirement to develop Watershed Improvement Plans. Over 25 people attended the workshop and gained the confidence needed to help their municipalities with the MS4 permit requirements. We will be offering additional workshops in the coming months to further empower Green Infrastructure Champions and other volunteers that are looking to make a difference in their community. For more information on the Green Infrastructure Champions Program go to our website at: **http://water.rutgers.edu/Projects/GreenInfrastructureChampions/GIC.html**.

Green Infrastructure Champions discussing siting green infrastructure practices at the Jersey Water Works Membership Meeting at Montclair State University on July 17, 2024 [Photo credit: Paula Figueroa, NJ Future]

Municipal Stormwater Management Technical Assistance Program

Many of New Jersey's municipalities will need technical support to develop their Watershed Improvement Plans and to comply with many of the requirements in the recently renewed MS4 permit. The Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) Water Resources Program's experience makes us the ideal group to offer technical assistance to New Jersey's municipalities. With financial support from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), the RCE Water Resources Program has hired four (4) engineers to cover four regions of the state, namely the northeastern, central, northwestern, and southern regions. These engineers, under the direction of the RCE Extension Specialist in Water Resources, will help communities to better position themselves for funding opportunities, to begin to evaluate lasting solutions such as stormwater utilities, and to support MS4 and CSO Long-term Control Plan compliance.



The four regional engineers will work with municipalities and NJDEP to offer help with completing the following tasks to maintain compliance with MS4 permit requirements:

Tasks

1. Build or enhance stormwater asset inventory or mapping

Evaluate existing mapping and asset inventory of stormwater infrastructure, inlets, catch basins, outfalls, and drainage systems which are needed to comply with the MS4 permit requirements; identify gaps and help fill the gaps for compliance

2. Stormwater system vulnerability, condition/functional assessment

Work with municipalities to evaluate the condition and function of the stormwater system and its vulnerability to handle water under current precipitation and future precipitation estimates due to climate change

3. Water quality and flood stressor identification

Identify stressors that can impact water quality and cause flooding, such as land use,

impervious cover, sewage infrastructure, septic systems, etc. that may be sources of pollution or contribute to flooding

4. Watershed implementation planning and project identification and design
Assist municipalities with utilization of available information on the stormwater infrastructure, land use attributes, water quality impairments, and flooding concerns to develop planning and produce project identification and designs to implement to meet planning goals

5. Zoning and impervious surface build out analysis
Perform zoning and build out analyses to evaluate impacts to water quality and flooding risks

6. Ordinance evaluation and amendment
Evaluate the effectiveness and compliance with existing ordinances and recommend changes and amendments to maximize benefits

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