



## Protecting the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer and Surface Waters of the New Jersey Highlands



The William Penn Foundation has provided the Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) Water Resources Program a unique opportunity to work with the leading conservation organizations of the Delaware River Watershed in an effort to protect the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer and the surface waters of the New Jersey Highlands. As part of our efforts, the RCE Water Resources Program has completed impervious cover assessments, reduction action plans, and green infrastructure feasibility studies for 15 municipalities in the Kirkwood-Cohansey area and 17 municipalities in the New Jersey Highlands area. These plans identify sites where green infrastructure practices could be installed to capture, treat, and infiltrate stormwater runoff. This is a great opportunity to

engage communities to take action to address their water resources issues. We are very proud to support the William Penn Foundation effort and all the great partners that have come together to protect and restore the surface waters and groundwater of New Jersey. For more information, please visit our website by [clicking here](#).

## Green Infrastructure Practices are Installed at the Watsessing Elementary School in Bloomfield

Students from Watsessing Elementary School (WES) in Bloomfield, New Jersey, returned from spring break to find their school a bit greener. WES received a rain garden and a cistern through a [partnership between the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission \(PVSC\) and the RCE Water Resources Program](#).

A rain garden is a landscaped depression designed to intercept and treat stormwater runoff before it returns to water bodies and groundwater. Native perennials and shrubs were planted in the garden to provide pollinator habitat and seasonal interest. In this project, stormwater from the WES rooftop is diverted into a rainwater harvesting system or cistern. When the cistern fills, the overflow is directed into the nearby rain garden. PVSC's River Restoration Team worked with the RCE Water Resources Program to design and construct this project as a demonstration to showcase the positive impact rain gardens, rainwater harvesting systems, and other green infrastructure practices can have on local flooding and water quality issues in the PVSC service area.

As part of their partnership with the PVSC/RCE team, students and teachers at WES will learn about the hydrologic cycle and the impact of their rain garden on stormwater runoff. They will also learn about community environmental stewardship by learning how to care for and maintain the garden. Students are looking forward to taking ownership of their rain garden by getting their hands dirty at the upcoming planting day in June!



## Municipal Action Teams are Moving Green Infrastructure into Action Across

# the State

Municipal action teams have been formed in combined sewer system communities to foster community engagement and serve to advocate for green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is one method to reduce the negative impacts associated with combined sewer systems. Municipal action teams are established to bring together local governments, utility authorities, residents, and community organizations to develop a community-based green infrastructure initiative. The goal of these teams is 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. Detailed below is an update on the various municipal action teams across the state.

The **Camden SMART** (Stormwater Management and Resource Training) met on April 11th at CCMUA. The partners are finalizing plans for the upcoming Camden Environmental Summit on June 14th. In addition, members have been monitoring multiple green infrastructure projects constructed in the fall of 2016. These projects will be planted in the coming weeks by the contractor and will be added to the inventory of over 50 demonstration projects throughout the city. Upcoming events will highlight the work of Camden SMART and its partners. On April 20th Cooper's Ferry is leading a volunteer planting and maintenance work day at Von Neida Park with volunteers from American Water. On April 28th, the New Jersey Tree Foundation will be hosting an Arbor Day Tree Planting and program at the Camden Day Nursery School which will include the installation of enhanced tree pits, raised garden beds, and a rainwater harvesting system. For more information about Camden SMART, please visit [www.camdensmart.com](http://www.camdensmart.com).



**Harrison's Municipal Action Team** partners identified two goals: one is to pursue the implementation of demonstration green infrastructure projects throughout the town and the second is to educate residents on the benefits and opportunities of green infrastructure. In evaluating opportunities identified in the [Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study for the Town of Harrison](#), the partners identified three priority sites to explore and identify funding resources. A town-wide clean up will take place before the end of June, hosted by the Lions Club, and will look to begin understanding residents' interest in rainwater harvesting measures. Additional information will be provided after the next meeting in May.

**Gloucester City Environmental Partners** is comprised of the green team, municipal action team, and supplemental CSO team. Participants are working to communicate environmental concerns with residents and businesses throughout the city. The group has

met with the Gloucester City Democrats Club, the Gloucester City Business Association, and the Gloucester City Lions Club. These presentations will continue through the early summer. A display highlighting environmental efforts in Gloucester City is planned for Gloucester City Day in June. The team members last met on April 5th at the Gloucester City Municipal Building and will be meeting again in early May.

**JC Make It Green Team** partners continued to discuss various green infrastructure projects that will be implemented during the Year of Water. Three stormwater planters have been installed. You will find two along the Pedestrian Mall on Newark Avenue and one behind City Hall on Mercer Street. The next green infrastructure project the team is seeking to implement will be located at Public School #5 and the New Jersey City University. The group also discussed the Jersey City Resiliency Master Plans, specifically the Green Infrastructure Master Plan which will be finalized no later than June. The team will continue to move forward on demonstration projects, improving ordinances that promote green infrastructure, and engaging residents to take action. To learn more about the actions you can take as a resident of Jersey City, please visit the Year of Water webpage.



**Newark DIG** (Doing Infrastructure Green) is working with partners to implement green infrastructure projects of various scales at schools, parks, and city right of ways. The Department of Water and Sewer, in partnership with Newark DIG, hosted their first public meeting on the city's Combined Sewer System (CSS) permit and the process in the Long Term Control Plan to residents and local groups. This community-based supplemental team will meet quarterly during Newark DIG's scheduled monthly meetings. DIG will be hosting a Quality of Life Summit on June 24th where Newark DIG is looking forward to continuing the dialogue between city departments and residents on sustainability issues and actions that can be taken. For more information about Newark DIG, please visit [www.NewarkDIG.org](http://www.NewarkDIG.org).

**Paterson SMART** (Stormwater Management and Resource Training) partners participated in Paterson's Great Falls Day which was hosted by the National Parks Service on April 13th. The event was open to all schools and the public to participate in a park clean up as well as visiting several educational exhibits. SMART partners hosted several exhibits throughout the day to educate youth about watersheds and local

waterways, soil composition and texture, soil infiltration tests, macro and micro invertebrates that live in the Passaic River, and the associated issues of combined sewer systems utilizing the Sewer-in-a-Suitcase model. SMART partners have also engaged with the principals of the Napier Academy, Academy for the Gifted and Talented, and the John. F. Kennedy STEM High School as well as the Paterson School Facilities team to review the proposed green infrastructure projects. The next step will be to present to the Board of Education for approval to begin implementing demonstration projects over the course of the summer. For more information about Paterson SMART, please visit [www.PatersonSMART.org](http://www.PatersonSMART.org).



Technical assistance provided to these municipal action teams by the RCE Water Resources Program is funded in part by the Surdna Foundation with support from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and our local partners. For more information about the RCE Water Resources Program's New Jersey Technical Assistance Program for Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) communities please [click here](#).

## The 2017 March for Science on Washington, DC



On Earth Day 2017, The March for Science was held in Washington, DC, and several members of the RCE Water Resources Program attended. It was a cold rainy day, but this did not stop scientists from across the nation from coming together to advocate for science. With a backdrop of the Washington Monument, the “teach-in” offered some great speakers like Bill Nye who rallied the audience to encourage scientists to speak out and be heard. After the “teach-in,” the march started at the Washington Monument and ended on the steps of the Capital. As the scientists marched, there were some very unique chants and signs like "The data will set you free!" "Science Serving the Common Good" “iPhones, laptops and

TVs, were all made by folks like me!” "Thanks to the EPA This Isn't Acid Rain," and there were plenty of T-Rex dinosaurs running around carrying the sign "There is no Planet B - Take it from Me".....you get the picture. The bottom line is that science is apolitical, and we should let science drive policies.

