

Egg Harbor City Schools Complete Wildlife Habitat Project

Students at the Fanny D. Rittenberg Middle School and Charles L. Spragg Elementary School in Egg Harbor City spent several days this fall completing their wildlife habitat improvement project. The project was funded under the Cape Atlantic Conservation District's contribution agreement with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Students and teachers planted native plants, trees and shrubs at their school to help provide food and shelter for wildlife. Teacher Melissa Axelsson developed the plans for the project along with students in her Environmental Service Club. Students did research on native plant species to help choose the best plants for their site. They then had to create detailed landscape drawings to help find the best location for the new plants. Congratulations to Mrs. Axelsson and her students for their hard work.



Students measured to ensure plants are installed the proper distance apart to provide the perfect habitat for wildlife at

From the Far Side



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CAPE ATLANTIC
 CONSERVATION DISTRICT



Resource News

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Senator Jeff VanDrew honored by the New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts.

On October 20, 2008 Senator Jeff VanDrew was recognized by the New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts at its annual conference held in Red Bank, Monmouth County. The award of "Outstanding Legislator" for 2008 was awarded to the Senator at the Association's banquet on Monday night.

The Cape Atlantic Conservation District nominated the Senator for his efforts in helping to keep the New Jersey Department of Agriculture as a separate Department within State government. Although not an easy task, his efforts were very important since he represents Cape May, Atlantic and Cumberland Counties, all strong agricultural Counties. He had \$300,000.00 restored to the Fiscal Year 2008 budget for the soil and water grant program which was a tremendous help in continuing that program which has been extremely popular with the farmers in his District.

Senator VanDrew has been a strong voice for the agricultural community and will continue to support the farmers in South Jersey.

Senator VanDrew was elected to the State Senate in November 2007 after serving three terms in the General Assembly.



Senator Jeff VanDrew (left) with District Supervisor Donald Hamer Sr.

District Supervisor Appointed to Two Boards



District supervisor Joe Lomax was appointed to two boards at the NJACD annual meeting. Joe is now a member of the NJ Department of Agriculture State Soil Conservation Committee and was appointed as the National Association of Conservation Districts representative for the State of New Jersey. Joe will be a valuable member of both boards and we wish him all the best.

Grants Available to Envirothon Participants



The Cape Atlantic Conservation District is offering eight (8) grants of \$100.00 to teams seeking to compete in the 2009 New Jersey Envirothon. Schools in both Atlantic and Cape May Counties may apply to the District.

Teams may apply for the grants only after they have registered to participate in the 2009 New Jersey Envirothon. The

first eight teams to register for the competition will be approved for the grant. The order of registration will be determined by the date that the Envirothon Coordinator receives the completed registration and entry fee. Funds will be released after your team has successfully completed the competition. The Cape Atlantic Conservation District's Grant Application form can be found on the District's website. Please contact Glenn Ward at (609) 625-1517 for information.

New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts Annual Conference

The New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts (NJACD) held its annual conference at the Oyster Point Hotel in Red Bank. This year's theme was "New Ways of Doing Business". The Three day conference is a time when the 15 Conservation Districts, District Board members, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), NJ Department of Agriculture State Soil Conservation Committee, and Rutgers Cooperative Extension all meet to share ideas and look at ways in which the programs of the partners will interact and grow.



The conference started on Sunday with a tour of the Mt. Mitchell Scenic overlook. At 266 feet above sea level, it is the highest point on the entire Atlantic Seaboard with views of Sandy Hook, Raritan Bay and the New York skyline. There is also a 9/11 memorial dedicated to those New Jersey citizens who lost their lives during the attacks. The tour then continued with a visit to the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans War Memorial. The day concluded with a dinner hosted by the Freehold Conservation District which was celebrating its 70th anniversary.

The next two days of the conference were filled with speakers from the various partners and a series of breakout sessions in which a variety of topics were discussed. The topics include things like AgLearn (sponsored by NRCS and is a series of on line training sessions), effective presentations and public speaking, and soil health and management. It is also a time when the NJACD and the State Soil Conservation Committee hold their business meetings to discuss things like productivity, upcoming events and budgets for the upcoming year.

The annual conference is also a time when many people are recognized for their contributions to the conservation movement. The awards include things like outstanding legislators, builders, supervisors and District employees who have gone above and beyond in their professional lives to make a difference. District supervisors and staff are also recognized for their years of service.

This year's annual conference was a great success and had everyone leaving thinking of "New Ways of Doing Business".

South Jersey "Tour des Farms"

On September 7th, the South Jersey Resource and Conservation Council held its second annual bike ride. Scheduled originally for September 6th, but postponed until the next day, Sunday the 7th, due to rain. It was a great move to postpone the event because Sunday was a bright and sunny day! The purpose of the ride is to send riders through the agricultural areas of Burlington County to acquaint them with all the Jersey Fresh produce that is grown locally.



The ride was broken down into 3 segments – 13, 25 and 50 mile routes. Each rider decides for themselves which route is most challenging for them. The longer the route the more farm markets the rider can visit.

Many riders were amazed at all the farms and farm markets that are tucked away on the back roads of this rural community. For some riders it is their second year taking this ride. Along the way riders would stop and buy produce which is then picked up by Council and returned to the starting point for the riders to gather when they return. One incentive for



riders to stop at the markets are the five "farm bucks" that the Council gives them as part of their registration. The "bucks" can only be spent at participating farm markets. This aspect of the ride is a real financial winner for the farm markets because the riders usually spend more than the farm bucks the Council gives them.

This year there were about 200 riders which was very good considering the ride was postponed a day. The ride will be held in Burlington County again next year and also in Gloucester County as well. See you next year!



The Supervisors and Staff of the Cape Atlantic Conservation District would like to wish you and your family A Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy New Year.

District Accepting Entries for Annual Poster Contest

The Cape Atlantic Conservation District, in cooperation with New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts, is again sponsoring its annual Poster Contest. The contest is held each year to help promote a better understanding of the environmental issues in Atlantic and Cape May Counties.

This year's theme "Dig It! The Secrets of Soil" is an opportunity for students to learn about the importance of soil in your daily life. There is much to learn about soil. Almost all of the minerals and nutrients we need for life, to nurture us, to help us grow, to give us energy and keep us healthy come from fields, gardens, trees and pastures. Every plant, vegetable, or fruit that we eat gets its nutrients from the soil in which it grows. Your home is built on soil; the type of soil used is very important.



The contest is open to students in grades 2-12 in public, private or home school. First place winners on the District level will receive a \$100.00 gift card, and the second place runner-up will receive a \$50.00 gift card. All first place winners will have their posters entered into Statewide level competition. The contest is co-sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture - State Soil Conservation Committee, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Rutgers Cooperative Extension. **The deadline for submitting entries to the Cape Atlantic Conservation District is March 13, 2009.**

District staff is available to make a presentation at your school to help students prepare for the contest. Please contact David Reilly at (609) 625-1517 if you would like to schedule a presentation, or if you have any questions. The poster contest entry form can be found on our website: www.capeatlantic.org.

High Schools Invited to Participate in New Jersey Envirothon

The Cape Atlantic Conservation District would like to invite your school to participate in the 2009 New Jersey Envirothon, which will be held at Montclair State University School of Conservation in Branchville, Sussex County on Saturday, May 9, 2009. The Envirothon is a nationally promoted educational competition targeted toward students in grades 9-12. This event emphasizes to students the importance of environmental awareness and the need for natural resource conservation. This is done by testing student's knowledge in categories such as Aquatics, Wildlife, Soils, Forestry, and a current environmental issue. This year's current issue topic is "Biodiversity in a Changing World". To help teams and teachers prepare for the Envirothon, a training session will be offered to all schools in South Jersey on Friday, April 3, 2009 at the Gloucester County Office Complex in Clayton. Professionals from various environmental fields will present materials to the groups.



Activities will begin on Friday night the 8th, with overnight camping available for all teams. If your team will be camping over Friday night and plan to eat at the School of Conservation there will be an additional non-refundable fee of \$50 per team. A small number of cabins will be available on a first come first serve basis at an additional cost of \$7 per person. The competition will begin Saturday morning on the 9th. **Deadline for registration is March 2, 2009.** The registration form for the Envirothon can be found on our website. For more information about the Envirothon, please contact Glenn Ward at (609) 625-1517, or Rich Belcher, New Jersey Envirothon Coordinator at (609) 292-5540.

Changes to Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Fee Schedule

The fee schedule used to determine the fees to be submitted when making an application for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan Certification has been revised. The new fee schedule is effective January 1, 2009. All applications received after January 1st are required to have accompanying fees that reflect the revised schedule. Projects that do not have the correct fee will be deemed incomplete, delaying the processing of your application. The revised fee schedule is available on the District's website. Please do not use this schedule for projects to be submitted before January 1, 2009. You should continue to use the fee schedule dated 3/06. Please contact the District if you have any questions.