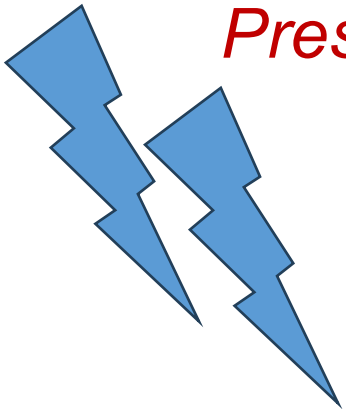




# Building Robust Community Partnerships through the Green Infrastructure Champions Program

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# Funders:



IMAGINE A BETTER NEW JERSEY



# New Jersey

- Most densely populated state
- 21 Counties, 565 municipalities
- 95% of our waterways are impaired
- Harmful Algal Blooms (HABS) in many of our lakes
- Hammered by Ida, Henri, Sandy, and a bunch of Nor'easters
- Climate change is real – more severe storms and sea level rise



# Water Quality Impairments in NJ

- In 2002, 95% of NJ's waterways were impaired
- Lots of new laws were passed:
  - 2004 New Stormwater Management Regulations
  - 2004 Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permits issued
  - 2011 New Jersey Fertilizer Law
  - 2021 Updated Stormwater Management Regulations
- In 2022, 95% of NJ's waterways are impaired
- Population increased by 724,000
- Urban Land Uses increased by 57,203 acres

# Insight to current problem

- Stringent stormwater regulations on new development has not improved water quality
- We must retrofit existing older development with stormwater management to reduce impairments to our waterways
- Green infrastructure is a great tool to retrofit existing older development
- Local champions are needed to advocate for green infrastructure retrofits
- We need to create these champions where they don't already exist

Green  
infrastructure  
in New Jersey



# Green Infrastructure is ...

...an approach to stormwater management that is cost-effective, sustainable, and environmentally friendly.

Green Infrastructure projects:

- capture,
- filter,
- absorb, and
- reuse

stormwater to restore the natural water cycle.



# Green Infrastructure Practices

## Bioretention Systems

- Rain Gardens
- Bioswales
- Stormwater Planters
- Curb Extensions
- Tree Filter Boxes



## Permeable Pavements

## Rainwater Harvesting

- Rain barrels
- Cisterns



## Dry Wells

## Rooftop Systems

- Green Roofs
- Blue Roofs





# Green Infrastructure Champions Program

Green Infrastructure Champions are key players in implementing green infrastructure as a stormwater management approach in their community.



Cheryl Reardon works for the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions



Nathaniel Sajdak works for the Wallkill River Watershed Management Group



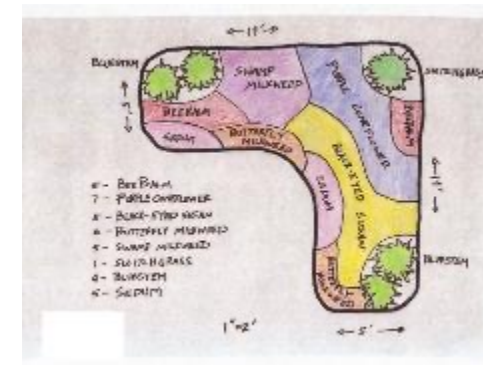
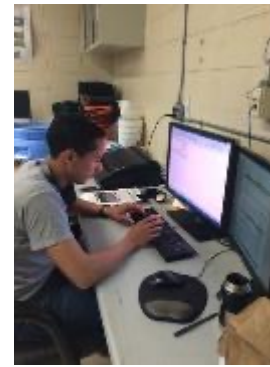
Laura McBride created the Deal Lake Watershed Alliance

# Rutgers inputs to the Green Infrastructure Champion Program

- 10 training classes on various aspects of green infrastructure planning and implementation
- Professional staff to provide technical support to develop a design for a green infrastructure demonstration project
- Networking opportunities with other Green Infrastructure Champions for mutual support
- Assistance with grant writing and submission

# GI Champions Classes

1. How to identify green infrastructure projects in your town
2. Moving from planning to implementation of green infrastructure
3. Maintaining green infrastructure practices/projects
4. Stormwater management regulations, policies, and ordinances
5. Green infrastructure planning and implementation for Sustainable Jersey points



# GI Champions Classes

6. Green infrastructure projects for schools
7. How to design and build a rain garden
8. Retrofitting traditional detention basins with green infrastructure
9. Developing green infrastructure master plans for an entire site or neighborhood
10. Using green infrastructure to promote climate resiliency

**Classes Start on January 12, 2024**



# 606 Certified Champions



# Next Steps

- Expanding the GI Champions Program throughout the Northeast
- Advance classes
  - Integrating gray with green to manage large storms
  - Living shorelines, floodplain restoration, and stormwater wetlands
  - Advocacy Strategies for Green Infrastructure
- Green Infrastructure Program for Youth
- Dedicated demonstration project funding for champions
- Create online learning tools
- Hands-on workshops



## **Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program**

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