

**Fall Winter
2021 / 2022**

RESOURCE NEWS

District Newsletter Returns After a Brief Hiatus

The Cape Atlantic Conservation District has always enjoyed bringing informative events and news to the public and other interested parties about what's going on at the District and other ongoing events in the Atlantic and Cape May County areas.

The District has undergone some growing pains since the last Resource News was published in the winter of 2017.

David Reilly, a District employee for over 30 years and Cape Atlantic Conservation District Manager for 8 years, retired in October 2020. Dave's contribution to the conservation movement, public outreach, and overall outward approach to life at the District is well documented as he leaves a legacy behind him. Of course, the Covid situation was a scramble to piece together a plan of

action while still delivering the functions of the District expected by the construction community, municipalities, and state. Somehow, the District delivered in every aspect while providing a safe work space for staff.

The District's normal outreach opportunities (Earth Day, Envirothon, poster contest, etc.) were curtailed until a more opportune time presented itself. It appears that 2022 may afford the District to jump into, once again, disseminating the message of natural resource conservation education.

We have created a questionnaire, for interested parties, in order to assess the outreach needs and opportunities of the community. You can complete the survey by following the [questionnaire link](#).

Inside this Issue



[District Personnel.....pg. 2](#)
[Preserved Farms.....pg. 3](#)
[New Beginnings.....pg. 4](#)
[Meetingspg. 6](#)

Meet the Staff & Supervisors of the District

The Covid situation has created a strange dynamic where house construction seems to have taken off, meaning the number of plans sent into the District for certification and subsequently, the number of construction projects that need inspecting. As such, the District hired two new plan reviewers/site inspectors.

Chelsea Steffes joined the District February 2021. She is originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and attended a small liberal arts college, Wittenberg University. "I'm excited to join the Cape Atlantic Conservation District as a Site Inspector and grow with the District."



Rachel Thornton was a previous District intern and is a recent graduate of Stockton University with a degree in



Environmental Science. She is a native of NJ and specifically, the Southern Jersey coast. Rachel is a Site Inspector, covering mostly Cape May County.



Michael Kent, a long time employee of the District, was promoted from Asst. District Manager to District Manager after District

Manager David Reilley's retirement in October 2020.

Glenn Ward, a Site Inspector for the District for 15 years, was appointed Asst. Manager in 2020.



Marie is the District's Administrative Assistant. She is the front-line of communication when questions come into the District and is responsible for processing SE&SC plan certifications.



Allen Carter, Jr., a lifelong resident of Cape May County, is the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors at the District.



Joseph Lomax is currently the Executive Vice President of The Lomax Consulting Group. Joe serves as the Secretary on the District Board.

Rick Dovey has served as President of the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA) since 1990. Richard sits on the District's Board of Supervisors.



Cormac Morrissey is a New Jersey Licensed Professional Engineer and Planner. Mr. Morrissey serves as the District Treasurer.



Bob Fenton is a farmer and bayman as well as a member of the Atlantic County Board of Agriculture. Mr. Fenton has been on the Board of Supervisors of the Cape Atlantic Conservation District since 2017, serving as Vice-Chairman.



Preserved Farm Inspections

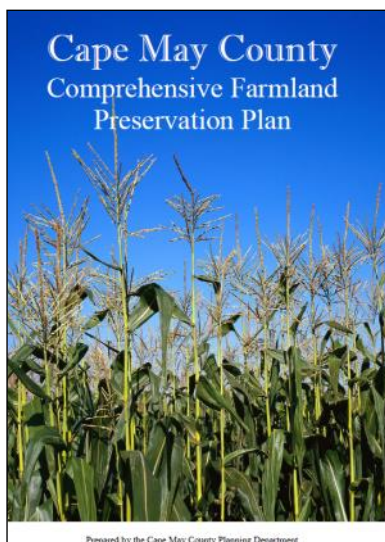
By Chelsea Steffes
District Inspector



The Preserved Farmland Program is administered by the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC), which works with County Agriculture Development Boards, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations to purchase farmland and development easements from landowners. By selling development easements, the landowner still remains the property owner, but ensures the land will forever be protected for agricultural use.

Being a part of the program strengthens New Jersey's agricultural industry, and landowners gain access to resources that can assist with financial goals and expanding their operations. Participants are also eligible to apply for grants to fund soil and water conservation projects. This program safeguards New Jersey's farmland with 230,000 acres of farmland already preserved under the program.

The District was approached by the SADC



and Cape May County to assist in their monitoring of properties enrolled in the Preserved Farmland Program. Monitoring



entails site visits to each preserved farm to ensure compliance with the deed of easement as well as interacting with farmers to discuss any changes to the property and answer questions.

This year, the District visited 145 farms in Atlantic, Cape May, and Cumberland counties. Farms visited varied considerably, from large blueberry farms that spanned hundreds of acres to wheat farms and vineyards. The District plans to continue this partnership with Cape May County and the SADC in 2022.

To learn more about the preserved farmland program, please visit: <https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/farmpreserve/>

Internship Program Continues

The District has an on-going internship program, allowing interested Stockton students to intern at the District. Every fall and spring school semester, the Cape Atlantic Conservation District takes on new ospreys from Stockton University's School of Natural Sciences & Mathematics. The internship is a great opportunity for students to gain hands-on work experience as well as fulfilling a requirement needed by the students before graduating.

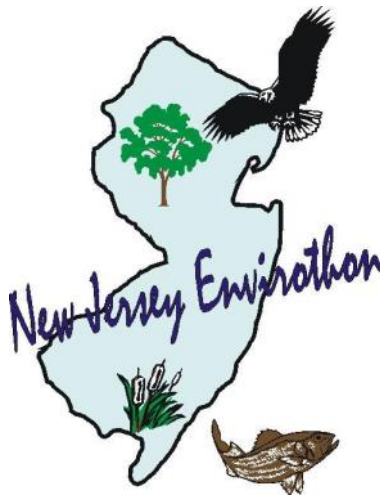
This fall, the District invited Stephanie Lugo to join our team. A senior from the University and anticipating graduation in 2022, she is majoring in Environmental Science with a concentration in soils and a minor in sustainability. In addition to her internship with Atlantic Cape Soil District, she is completing a senior project studying perennial wheat as a climate resilient crop. Post-graduation, Stephanie intends to further her education in a graduate school program.



Stephanie Lugo

Envirothon Returns

The Envirothon is a hands on competition where high school students can pursue knowledge about New Jersey's natural resources and can gain skills in navigating environmental issues. The 2021 current issue was **"Water Resource Management: Local Control and Local Solutions"**.



The 2020 NJ Envirothon was cancelled all together. However, the 2021 took place virtually on May 22, 2021. Although only a few teams participated, it was important to keep students and teachers engaged in this worthy event.

Cedar Creek High of Egg Harbor City placed fourth in the NJ Envirothon while Marine Academy of Technology & Environmental Sciences (MATES) of Ocean County took first place and 13th place in the National Conservation Foundation Envirothon, held virtually also.

The topic for the 2022 Envirothon is **"Waste to Resources."** Updates to be forthcoming.

2022 Poster Contest

Each year, the Cape Atlantic Conservation District, in cooperation with New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts, sponsors an annual Poster Contest. The poster contest is sponsored to help promote a better understanding of conservation issues in Atlantic and Cape May Counties. Unfortunately, the District did not participate in the poster contest in 2020 or 2021.

Now that life is getting back a resemblance of normal, the District is looking forward to participating in the 2022 poster contest. The theme for 2022 is **"Healthy Soil Healthy Life."** Information, contest rules and entry will be distributed in the Spring of 2022.



Introducing the Coastal Resources Conservancy



The Cape Atlantic Conservation District has partnered with the Coastal Resources Conservancy (CRC) in the hopes of expanding the environmental outreach opportunities offered to the public. The Coastal Resources Conservancy, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization created to help address key issues in our coastal environments. It strives to increase awareness, appreciation and

understanding of the importance of conservation of natural resources among the public through education and outreach programs.

Partnering with CRC, the District envisions obtaining funding opportunities, allowing both agencies to work towards its' common goal of increasing the awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the importance of conservation of natural resources among the public through education and outreach programs.

Check out the CRC website for more info.
<http://coastalconserve.org>

We're on Facebook



The District took to social media and now has a Facebook page, in addition to its website and newsletter, to get the word out about current events and going-ons at the District. Give us a spin and friend us to keep up to date!

Your Conservation Tip of the Season



Composting

Composting turns household wastes into valuable fertilizer.

All organic matter eventually decomposes. Composting speeds the process by providing an ideal environment for bacteria and other decomposing micro-organisms. The final product, humus or compost, looks and feels like fertile garden soil. This dark, crumbly, earthy-smelling stuff

works wonders on all kinds of soil and provides vital nutrients to help plants grow and look better.

Decomposing micro-organisms need four key elements to thrive: nitrogen, carbon, moisture, and oxygen. For best results, mix materials high in nitrogen (such as clover and fresh grass clippings) and those high in carbon (such as dried leaves and twigs). If there is not a good supply of nitrogen-rich material, a handful of general lawn fertilizer will help the nitrogen-carbon ratio. Moisture is provided by

rain, but you may need to water or cover the pile to keep it damp. Be careful not to saturate the pile. Oxygen is supplied by turning or mixing the pile. More turning yields faster decomposition.

The complete fact sheet about composting can be found on the [District's website](#).



NJ Annual Conservation Partnership Meeting Planned



Each year, the 14 conservation districts and its partners in New Jersey gather for the Annual Conservation Partnership Meeting. Because of COVID precautions, the 2020 event was virtual. This year, the annual business meeting will be held virtually on November 20, and the annual partnership meeting will be held in person on March 28, 2022.

The **Partnership Meeting** allows District Supervisors, Staff and Conservation Partners to communicate and learn about the ongoing work of New Jersey's Conservation Districts each year.

While the meeting covers relevant and wide-ranging issues, it also allows the New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts (NJACD) to acknowledge those persons and organizations that have made an exceptional contribution towards achieving the resource conservation and management goals of the district and the State Association.

National Association of Conservation Districts to Hold Meeting

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) is celebrating 75 years of NACD.

The Association represents America's 3,000 conservation districts and the 17,000 men and women who serve on their governing boards. NACD's mission is to promote responsible management and conservation of natural resources on all lands by representing locally-led conservation districts and their associations through grassroots advocacy, education and partnerships.



The 2022 NACD annual meeting is scheduled for February 12-16, 2022 in Orlando Florida at the Hilton Orlando Lake Buena Vista-Disney Spring Area.

Northeast Regional NACD Meeting Scheduled



National Association of Conservation Districts

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) region meetings give conservation district leaders, members and partners a time and place to discuss their most pressing concerns and share their most valuable insights.

The 2020 Northeast Region Meeting was postponed due to COVID. It is planned to take place from October 31—November 1, 2021 in Portsmouth, N.H.



YOU SHOULD BE ASKING YOURSELF, HOW CAN THIS NOT WORK? PEOPLE LOVE FREE STUFF



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“Committed to the Conservation of Our Natural Resources”

District Supervisors

Allen Carter, Jr.—District Chairman
Robert Fenton—Vice Chairman
Cormac Morrissey—Treasurer
Joseph L. Lomax—Secretary
Richard Dovey—Supervisor

District Staff

Michael Kent—District Manager
Glenn Ward—Assistant Manager
Chelsea Steffes—Site Inspector I
Rachel Thornton—Site Inspector I
Marie Rogowski—Administrative Assistant