



**CAPE ATLANTIC
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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From the Forest...

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Save a Tree! Kill a Vine!

The last week of February was invasive species awareness week. This seemed the most appropriate time to create a public service message—**Save a Tree! Kill a Vine!**



How many of you have come across this scene to the left in your travels on a daily basis here in New Jersey? If we had only one action to take to save a tree and deal with invasive species, there may be no better choice than to help a tree like this in need! Pictured is English ivy, a terribly invasive species here in New Jersey, in an oak tree. We can all

remember a place or location where we saw English ivy growing in a cemetery, or historic building, a park, and admired its lush, dark green appearance, and its tidiness as a ground cover (virtually smothering out all competition). Despite this, English ivy, as other vines, has a nefarious reputation for climbing into trees and killing them. The tree cannot handle the extra weight as the vine ages. The vine can also eventually prohibit the tree from getting sunlight to live.

Do a tree a favor and save a tree from vines. Whether it is English ivy, wisteria, Japanese honeysuckle, or others, you can save a tree by simply cutting the vines where they climb the base of the tree, then again a couple feet up. Careful! Do not cut the tree's bark! You do not need to remove the vines from the tree. They will eventually die and deteriorate. It is best to treat the cut vine with herbicide, but even if you do not, just make sure that you keep the vine from growing up the tree.

For more information on invasive species management, visit Rutgers Extension:

<https://envirostewards.rutgers.edu/tag/invasive-species/>

Community Forestry Program

By Tyler Savage, Community Forestry Program

Since the establishment of soil conservation districts in 1937, the Cape Atlantic Conservation District has expanded the scope of its programs to address additional natural resource conservation matters. One of these conservation matters includes forestry, which, naturally, the district's growing forestry program oversees.

The Forestry Program practices both private and public tree resource management throughout the state by providing a range of services to landowners and municipalities alike. However, to better address the forestry needs of NJ communities, the district established its own Community Forestry Program (CFP). More specifically, this program allows the district to provide focused technical assistance to communities interested in managing their forest resources.

One of the main objectives of the district's CFP is to assist communities in establishing a Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP), which is a personalized guide for managing community forest resources. While the process of establishing a CFMP can be a significant undertaking for a community, especially those with limited available resources, a CFMP is vital for a healthier, safer, and more sustainable community forest. To achieve its objective the district intends to provide services to conduct community tree inventories and write CFMPs following the updated 2024 NJ Community Forestry Program CFMP guidelines. The district hopes that by providing these services and streamlining the NJDEP Urban & Community Forestry accreditation process, more communities can take advantage of the benefits their community forests provide.

Does your community need a CFMP? Grant money is available

to eligible communities through the NJ Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program. Contact us today! How can we help you?

Need a forester? Have a forest or tree related question? Contact our forester for your community forestry or private land forestry needs!

Are You Prepared for Wildfires?

New Jersey has a long history of wildfire, especially in the coastal plain that exists across the central and southern part of the state. There has been an apparent increase in wildfire incidents across the state, as well as increases in severity. It is a complex topic, and while a changing climate is a factor, a change in our forest management strategies, land use and increased development in the wildland urban interface (WUI), without doubt, adds more fuel to the fire.

were more open and parklike when they first came to North America.

But the answer is not in burning the forest alone, using RxB. If the fuel load, the amount of consumable burnable material, in the understory is too thick, or if canopy trees are too close together, or combinations of these conditions, management may be needed to thin these materials before RxB is utilized. This is where the forester works. The forester uses scientific research and knowledge to thin the forests to make them more resilient against wildfires. Our forests will inevitably burn; it is their nature. We cannot stop the process, but a healthy and resilient forest will respond better, and heal naturally, with proper forest management.



**The recent Jones Road Wildfire in Ocean County, NJ.
Courtesy NJ Forest Fire Service**

If you are a forest landowner, or woodland owner, a forest management plan is the best defense in preventing a catastrophic wildfire. For those communities and property owners living in the WUI, it is imperative to be Firewise. There is a better way, and not so better way, to live in the WUI, and the Firewise program can guide you in those practices. Just as we can protect our forest through proactive forest management, we can also make our homes and

So, what can we do? Consensus amongst forest and forest fire professionals across the state is more proactive forest management in our forest understories is needed. The understory is that area of shrubs and small trees growing under the tall trees of the forest canopy. Our forests in the coastal plain are unique; they are a *fire dependent* ecosystem. The species of plants that grow here are fire adapted and have evolved to thrive in areas of frequent fire. The pitch pine, *Pinus rigida*, the most numerous tree species in New Jersey, is the poster child of the NJ pine barrens, but also likely the most fire dependent plant living in the forest. But, did you know, our oaks are also fire dependent? Today, prescribed fire (RxB) is the tool that the professionals with NJ Forest Fire Service employ annually to make our forests safer and more resilient. The practice of RxB

neighborhoods more resilient to wildfire by preparing today and following the guidance of forest fire professionals in our communities. Learn more about Firewise through the NJ Forest Fire Service website at <https://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/fire/program/firewise.html>. Or, scan the QR code on the lower left corner.



**NJ Forest Fire Service conduct a prescribed fire. Prescribed fires burn at a much lower intensity than wildfire, that is beneficial to the forest.
Courtesy NJ Forest Fire Service**



NJ Firewise

predates colonial times, when native people would utilize fire to manage the forest, clear land for farming, improve hunting grounds and make their communities safe from wildfire. Early settlers and explorers noted our forests

Visit our website at:

<https://capeatlantic.org/forestry-in-new-jersey/>; or scan the QR code to the right.

Let's have a chat! Let us help you manage your forest!



CACD Website

Contact our forester for your community forestry or private land forestry needs!