



NEW YORK CITY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT Annual Highlights 2013

In 2013, the District continued to make progress in the area of green infrastructure implementation, monitoring and policies despite the significant fiscal constraints. We remained actively engaged in numerous partnerships, including the SWIM Coalition, NYC Green Infrastructure Steering Committee, NY NJ Harbor & Estuary Program, Lower Hudson Coalition of Conservation Districts and Lower Hudson Long Island Resource Development and Conservation Council. We formed new partnerships with the Community Assisted Tenant Controlled Housing for green infrastructure projects and Crauderueff & Associates for stormwater policy research.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

For details on the District's Green Infrastructure implementation projects, please see the separate report, *Small Scale Green Infrastructure on Private Properties*.

1084 Home Street Stormwater Capture Planter

With a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Bronx River Watershed Initiative, the District worked with Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association and eDesign Dynamics to build a stormwater capture planter system in the courtyard of the apartment building at 1084 Home Street in the South Bronx.

The construction is nearly complete. We will work with residents to plant the plugs in spring 2014.



Blue Flag, or *iris versicolor*, blooming at 970 Prospect Avenue.

270 Rochester Avenue

The District partnered with the Community Assisted Tenant Controlled Housing (CATCH) to implement GI projects on three buildings in CATCH's portfolio with funding from the Deutsche Bank. The first of the three project is a stormwater capture planter system at 270 Rochester Avenue in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. The construction is complete and the planters will be planted in spring 2014.

Maintaining Past GI Projects

We continued to monitor and maintain the past projects. The Prospect Avenue required a minor plumbing repair. We again provided vegetable plugs in spring for the residents. The wetland plants are thriving and the density of the plants seems to have

increased in both planters. The yard now provides a pleasant outdoor space for the young children who attend summer camp in the building.

We re-located the Woolly Pockets at West 83rd Street from the wall to other areas in the yard. The plants in the Woolly Pockets were not receiving adequate sunlight because of the large tree with an overhang canopy. We also cleaned out a rectangular pit in the preschool yard. The pit had been filled with refuse and was a hazard for the children. We removed the trash, filled the pit with clean soil and planted it with flowering plants. The Riverside Goddard Community Center donated plants to replant the Woolly Pockets and the pit.

We weeded both the Bryant Avenue planters and the West 150th Street garden. The native species planted at Bryant Avenue were overwhelmed by weeds. The District will supplement the planters with new plugs in spring 2014. The native species at West 150th Street are thriving despite persistent weeds.

GI Bus Tour

With funding through the Lower Hudson Coalition of Conservation Districts, the District hosted the 4th GI bus tour, which featured community-oriented, innovative GI projects with an educational and public notification component. There were many sites to choose from, but because the day is only so long, we had to limit the tour to 5 sites: we visited the rain

garden in Shoelace Park in the Bronx, District's own project, stormwater planters on a private property in the Bronx, constructed wetland along the Bronx River at ABC Carpet and Home Warehouse, porous pavers and rain gardens on Queens College campus and the "guerilla" garden/farm, Smiling Hogshead Ranch in Queens. We had 63 participants from various levels of government agencies, private consulting firms, contractors, landscaping firms, green roof industry, universities, and community groups. We extend our special thanks to the interpreters at each site.

Staten Island West Shore Stormwater Assessment Green Infrastructure Bus Tours

The District partnered with Crauderueff & Associates to conduct a preliminary assessment of watershed conditions on the West Shore of Staten Island. The study, commissioned by the Staten Island Economic

Development Corporation, reviewed existing laws, policies and regulations that are relevant to stormwater management and habitat protection and preservation on the West Shore of Staten Island as well as existing data, such as topography, depth to water table, soils, etc. that would be needed to conduct a more thorough watershed characterization.

DEC Endorsed 4-Hr Construction Site Inspection Training

The District successfully hosted two NYSDEC endorsed 4-hr Erosion and Sediment Control Trainings in April and December. We served a total of about 80 people through these sessions. The District continues to receive inquiries from agencies as well as the private sector. We will offer workshops as needed in the future in partnership with the Dutchess Co. Soil & Water Conservation District.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIP

Stormwater Infrastructure Matters Coalition

Tatiana and Shino continued to serve on the steering committee and provided leadership working with Rob, who continued as a volunteer SWIM coordinator.

The renewal of the Green Roof Tax Abatement law with amendments was a major SWIM accomplishment in 2013. SWIM also continued to provide relevant and timely news on stormwater via regular e-blasts.

Shino also worked with the graduate student intern, who was responsible for collecting and compiling relevant news items and sending out e-blasts on a regular basis.

NYC Department of Environmental Protection's Green Infrastructure Steering Committee

Shino continued to serve on the GI Steering Committee and the Education and Outreach Subcommittee.

Lower Hudson Coalition of Conservation Districts

The District continued to serve as the fiscal administrator of the Coalition as well as provide programmatic leadership. Shino served on the Steering Committee and worked closely with the Coordinator. Through the LHCCD, the District secured funding for a Green Infrastructure project. We also received funding for the GI Bus Tour through the LHCCD's contract with the Hudson Valley Regional Council.

As in the past, the District was an active member of the Stormwater Conference planning committee and advanced the City's GI initiatives by including presenters from NYC Parks & Recreation and Brooklyn Greenroof.

New York New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program

Shino continued to serve as the alternate to the NY Co-Chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

NYC Outdoors: Environmental Education Expo

The 13th Annual NYC Outdoors! Expo with the River Project and NYU Wallerstein Collaborative was held on November 26th at the Kimmel Student Center at NYU. We scheduled the event later than the prior years so that we can host it in an event hall that can accommodate more exhibitors.

The event, held on a very cold, rainy evening the week of Thanksgiving, was well attended with 33 exhibitors and approximately 100 attendees that included

teachers from various schools across the City and students from NYU. For the first time we invited teachers to exhibit. Sam from the NY Harbor School and Naima from the City As School shared their work with their students.

As in the past, the event provided a good networking opportunity. In fact there were some recent graduates in search of employment, and they found the event extremely useful.

Envirothon

The NYC Envirothon 2013, generously funded by Con Edison, was held in Brooklyn Bridge Park. We had 20 teams participate from a total of 12 different schools throughout the five NYC boroughs. That's a total of 98 students, who braved the bad weather to compete! The current event topic was "Sustainable Rangeland Management."

The pouring rain had made the competition a little more challenging, between the cold and wet, wind-blown papers, tents (one of which fell in the East River), and persons. Furthermore the Bronx was unable to participate in the event. Despite this, the event was a great success. We even met an Envirothon advisor who was herself a NYC Envirothon contestant when she was in high school. She shared with us how the event got her interested in environmental sciences and led her to the teaching career. We think this is a sign of the long-term success of the event!

We had several partnering organizations help us with the stations for the NYC Envirothon, including the

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy, NYC Law Department, and Natural Resources Conservation Service of USDA.

The winners of the 2013 NYC Envirothon were Stuyvesant High School (first place), Staten Island Technical High School (second place), and Brooklyn Technical High School (third place).

NY State Envirothon

Only three winning borough teams attended the 2013 NY State Envirothon. Those teams were Staten Island Technical High School, Stuyvesant High School from Manhattan and Brooklyn Technical High School. Grover Cleveland High School, from Queens was unable to attend.

Despite the esoteric nature of the Current Events topic and the rural focus of the state competition, Staten Island and Manhattan placed the 14th and the 15th respectively at the State Envirothon. Brooklyn Tech came in at 21st. We are immensely proud of our teams doing so well at the State Envirothon!

HUDSON RIVER FOODWAY CORRIDOR

The District was the project manager for the NYSERDA-funded research project, which was completed in April 2013. Shino gave a presentation on the project at the project wrap-up meeting hosted at NYSERDA. A representative from Senator Gillibrand's office attended the meeting. Many members of the Technical Advisory Committee joined the meeting via the web.

Shino was also invited to present the project to a graduate class on freight transportation at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in April.

The RC&D Coordinator, Jill, and Shino worked on funding proposals for the project. We will continue to seek resources for the project in 2014.

NEW YORK CITY SOIL SURVEY

NYC Urban Soils Institute

The District, the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Brooklyn College have formed a partnership to establish an Urban Soils Institute for New York City. Urban Soils Institute will serve as 1) a clearing house for all soil-related resources; 2) a provider of soil testing, interpretation and other technical services; and 3) a coordinator of soil science research for the City.

The partnership has met several times in 2013 to develop the goals and the focus of the Institute. We envision the following four program areas:

1. Soil Testing and Technical Services
2. Education & Outreach
3. Data Depository
4. Research

The partnership is in the process of creating a technical advisory committee to solicit input from stakeholders and will be seeking resources to fund this initiative in 2014.