



## Monmouth County Environmental Newsletter: November Edition

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A rafter of turkeys. Happy Thanksgiving! Source: Linda Brennen



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#### Stormwater Management Rule Webinar Recording Available

The Monmouth County Division of Planning recently hosted a webinar with Gabe Mahon, Bureau Chief of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Bureau of Nonpoint Pollution Control, who discussed amendments to the Stormwater Management Rule adopted on March 2, 2020. The meeting was very well attended. Mr. Mahon's presentation was detailed and informative and an interesting Q&A session followed. The full meeting was recorded and is available on the Monmouth County Stormwater Technical Advisory Committee [web page](#).

Mr. Mahon noted the amended Rule becomes effective on March 2, 2021. He directed interested parties to the NJDEP [stormwater web page](#) for more information including a FAQ sheet, guidance documents, and the [model stormwater control ordinance](#).

Municipalities are required to bring their current Stormwater Ordinance into conformance with the new Rule by March 2021. In order to complete the process, municipalities must submit their adopted ordinance within 30 days to the County for review and approval. Within 60 days of submission, the County is required to approve, disapprove or conditionally approve the ordinance. Monmouth County municipalities should contact [Amber Mallm](#) for information on how to submit for County review.

#### Upcoming Environmental & Outdoor Events in Monmouth County:

Some activities may require registration and/or fees:

- [Nov. 10, 12 -1 p.m. Is Seaweed a Fish?](#)
- [Nov. 12, 6:20 p.m., Lessons from a Virtual Tour of the Earth Center Gardens.](#)
- [Nov. 13, 12 -2 p.m. Mitigation of Harmful Algal Blooms](#)
- [Nov. 17, 12 -2 p.m. Coastal Lakes Observation Network Annual Workshop](#)
- [Nov. 18, Marine Life Under a Microscope Art Collection Showcase](#)
- [Nov. 19, 6:30 p.m., Caring for Indoor House Plants](#)
- [Nov. 19, 7 -8 p.m. Nature Lecture Series: Salamanders of](#)

## Nature Friends and Foes Webinar Recordings Available

This October, the Monmouth County Environmental Council hosted a two-part webinar series focused on Native Plants and Invasive Plants and Critters. The first session kicked off with an introduction to Jersey Friendly Yards, an initiative and online tool to help citizens grow landscapes using native plants. The night also included a look at the spotted lantern fly, an invasive insect on the rise in Pennsylvania and parts of New Jersey.

The second session covered a summary of the habitats found at our County Parks and how management protects them from invasive plants and pests. Next, individuals learned about aquatic invasive plants with special attention to hydrilla, an aggressive plant being controlled at the Manasquan Reservoir.

Click [here](#) to access the recordings and slides from both sessions.

- [Monmouth County, Freneau Woods Park](#)
- [Nov. 21, 2-3 p.m. Wildlife Rehabilitation, Freneau Woods Park](#)
- [Nov. 29, 10 -11 a.m. Save Coastal Wildlife Micro-Plastic Monitoring Training](#)
- [Dec. 3, 5 p.m. Monmouth County Environmental Council meeting](#)

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## Park System Completes Portland Place Shoreline Stabilization Project



*A mature oak tree and historic site adjacent to a shoreline stabilization at Portland Place, Hartshorne Woods Park, Middletown. Source: Monmouth County Park System.*

This October, the Monmouth County Park System wrapped up a living shoreline stabilization project at Hartshorne Woods Park in Middletown. The site is accessible from Hartshorne Road at the [Portland Place Historic Site, listed on the National Register of Historic Places](#). There, visitors can see a well preserved home that belonged to the Hartshorne family as well as views of the Navesink River.

During Hurricane Sandy, storm surge severely eroded the 20-foot high bluffs along the river and wiped away some mature trees, however a beautiful mature oak is still perched on the bluff. To protect the site, the Park System embarked on a project to restore the lower slope and upper slope. Along the shoreline, they removed some invasive phragmites and planted native spartina grasses. To stabilize the lower slope, engineers used a marine mattress, a type of revetment made from a heavy duty plastic matrix that can be filled with stone and sewn shut with wire. After they installed the marine mattresses, they placed soil on top and planted a coastal seed mix. It is expected the plants will be established by next year. On the upper slope, they installed a block retaining wall with openings for plantings to create a living wall. Since the installation, the plants have already taken root and begun to flourish. While the project is intended to restore the habitat and protect the site from further erosion, the Park System hopes this project will act as a model for shoreline restoration.

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## County Historic Sites Inventory Now Online



The Monmouth County Historic Sites Inventory is now available online. It is a comprehensive survey of the county's architectural and historic resources covering 1879 sites and 59 Historic Districts. The inventory goes beyond the State and National Registers of Historic Places by identifying additional, locally important resources. Originally prepared in the mid-1980s, the inventory includes an overview of the County's development and settlement patterns and discusses common building techniques and styles. The Inventory [website](#) features an interactive map of historic sites with links to individual information and documentation. The updated [2019 Summary Report](#) and featured historic sites. The Inventory is currently undergoing an update and the web featured sites change periodically. History buffs are encouraged to check the site regularly.

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## Draft NJ State Forest Action Plan Available for Comment



The New Jersey Forest Service recently released the draft [New Jersey State Forest Action Plan \(SFAP\)](#) for review and public comment. This strategic plan is a 10-year roadmap for management of the State's forests and related climate mitigation efforts. The draft reassesses forest resources and provides the State's stewardship plan. It outlines the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) philosophy, goals, proposed actions and priority locations. Comments on the draft plan can be submitted to NJDEP [electronically](#). The [2010 plan](#) is also available online. The final SFAP is scheduled to be released in December 2020.

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## Rutgers Experiment Station Uses High Tunnels to Grow Marigolds for Dia De Los Muertos

*Below, marigolds for sale at the New Brunswick Community Farmers market inspired a pilot project at the Cream Ridge Rutgers Experiment Station.*

The latest initiative from [Rutgers Cooperative Extension](#) (RCE) of Monmouth County involves recent work building and testing moveable high tunnels with the goal to assist local farmers in extending their growing season. Also known as hoop houses, the tunnels are being used this year in a pilot program to grow African Marigolds as a late season flower crop with a harvest time that will coincide with the holiday Dia de los Muertos, (Day of the Dead). RCE staff hopes this trial will encourage local farmers to use the tunnels in the fall and to consider locally growing African Marigolds to provide for area families that celebrate the holiday. For more information, contact Monmouth County's Agriculture and Natural Resource Agent, [Bill Erickson](#).



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## RU Ready to Farm: Getting Rooted in the Garden State

[Rutgers Cooperative Extensions](#) of Monmouth and Middlesex Counties recently announced a statewide beginner farmer training program titled, "RU Ready to Farm: Getting Rooted in the Garden State." As part of a larger project through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Rutgers program will focus on developing necessary skills for next generation farmers to succeed in the agricultural industry. Rutgers description of the program states that the program will, "Expand the existing Rutgers Cooperative Extension RU Ready to Farm initiative to a multi-year, Statewide program providing technical education, mentorship and land access opportunities to beginning farmers." For questions or assistance, contact Monmouth County's Agriculture and Natural Resource Agent, [Bil Errickson](#).

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## Rutgers Seeking Videos Highlighting Ag Program Impacts

The [New Jersey Agriculture Experiment Station \(NJAES\)](#) has unveiled plans to create a video demonstrating the variety of NJAES programs available as well as the importance of their research and outreach to stakeholders. They are seeking short video clips that highlight their activities including the following:

- NJAES's range of programs and implementation of safety guidance recommendations prepared in response to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Assistance provided to 4-H projects and activities, including remote participation during COVID-19 quarantine;
- Ag agents' work with farmers to help diagnose issues and offer recommendations;
- Master Gardeners demonstrating seasonal gardening techniques; and
- Ongoing projects at NJAES research farms

For more information or to submit a video, contact Monmouth County's Ag Agent, [Bill Erickson](#), at the Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County.

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## Share Your Experience with Flooding



In 2021, the [Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve \(JCNER\)](#) and NJDEP will launch an education campaign to give New Jersey residents and visitors information to better understand how flooding will impact their lives and how to prepare for a safer future. To make sure the upcoming campaign addresses public knowledge gaps and concerns with flooding, JCNER is gathering data with this anonymous, five-minute [survey](#). By sharing your local experience with flooding, you will help ensure the campaign is relevant to your needs. The survey will close on Nov. 20.

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## Introducing AmeriCorps NJ Watershed Ambassador, Samantha LaRocca



For the past two decades the Monmouth County Division of Planning, Environmental & Sustainability Planning Section has hosted the annual NJDEP AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador assigned to Watershed Management Area 12 (WMA 12), the Monmouth Coastal Watershed. The 2020-2021 Ambassador is Samantha LaRocca of Shrewsbury. Her term of service is scheduled to last through August 2021.

Ms. LaRocca graduated from West Chester University in May with a BA in Sociology. She attained several honors while there including the West Chester University 1871 Award (2020), Distinguished Sociology Senior Award (2020) and was named the Alpha Kappa Delta Student of the Year (2019). Alpha Kappa Delta is the Sociology Honors Society.

During her senior year, Samantha worked in the University's *Office of Sustainability* as a Peer Educator. Her tasks included facilitating, promoting and collaborating on sustainability related events. As a 2019 Education and Outreach Intern with *Save Barnegat Bay*, she gained additional relevant experience facilitating and promoting educational and restorative programs throughout the Barnegat Bay watershed.

AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassadors monitor local waterways, provide watershed related programs to schools, municipalities and community groups, as well as organize rain barrel workshops, clean-ups and watershed restoration projects. When asked what she is looking forward to this year, Samantha responded, "I am most excited to engage with my community and facilitate hands-on projects that get community members excited and interested in their watershed!" For more information or to schedule a program or activity, contact [Samantha LaRocca](#)

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## American Littoral Society Completes Old Mill Dam Fish Ladder

*Installing a 60-foot fish ladder on Old Mill Dam. Source: American Littoral Society.*



The American Littoral Society (ALS) announced in their October issue of [Littoral News](#) that they have installed and opened a 60-foot Alaska-Steppass Fish Ladder on Old Mill Dam. Located in Spring Lake Heights, next to The Mill Lakeside Manor, this dam has been the main Wreck Pond Brook obstruction for migrating fish species for over 100 years. Anadromous fish such as Alewife and Blueback herring spawn in freshwater. The ladder, engineered with the proper water depth and velocity for fish to navigate, will allow these and other species to access almost one additional mile of optimal spawning habitat. You can watch the ALS installation [video on YouTube](#) or through the [Wreck Pond website](#).

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## New Wave-Monitoring Buoy New LEED Gold and Energy Star Affordable Housing Deployed

Monmouth University's Urban Coast Institute recently announced their participation in the deployment of a buoy 13 miles east of Barnegat Bay as part of a national network of stations operated by the [Coastal Data Information Program](#) (CDIP). The buoy transmits real-time wave and ocean temperature data, and can be used to evaluate the performance of coastal projects such as beach replenishment and channel dredging.

This new buoy filled a gap along the New Jersey Coast, and together with a buoy located off Long Island at the entrance to New York Harbor, provides important information on wave fields for the Monmouth County shoreline. The Mid-Atlantic Regional Association Coastal Ocean Observing System ([MARACOOS](#)) is studying the data as part of an effort to more accurately model wave heights in the region. MARACOOS provides a publicly accessible online feed from a variety of buoys and stations on its portal [Oceans Map](#).



*The Cornerstone at Howell, Source: Walters Group*

A new income-restricted apartment community in Howell was built to be Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold and Energy Star Certified. The [U.S. Green Buildings Council](#) explains that LEED certified homes are designed to provide clean air and use less energy and water than regular homes, saving money and resources. According to [Energy Star](#), Certified homes are at least 10% more energy efficient than other homes.

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## Seal Monitoring Volunteers Needed this Winter

*Below, harp seal at Sandy Hook Bay. Source: Save Coastal Wildlife.*

In recent years more and more seals have been wintering in Sandy Hook Bay and along the northern coast of Monmouth County. Harbor seals, gray seals, and occasionally harp seals can be seen lounging together on the small islands and sand bars around Spermaceti Cove. [Save Coastal Wildlife](#) is seeking volunteers to commit to regular monitoring between early December and the end of March. Monitors will count seal populations and take pictures from a distance. Volunteers will need to provide their own binoculars/spotting scope and a good

camera. All interested volunteers must attend a least one of the training workshops on [Nov. 15, 8 -9 p.m.](#) or [Dec. 3, 7:30 -8:30 p.m.](#) For more information visit the Save Coastal Wildlife website Winter Seal [volunteer page](#).



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*About This Newsletter*

*The purpose of the newsletter is to inform Monmouth County citizens on the health of their environment and list environmental outreach events in their community. The newsletter is produced by the Monmouth County Division of Planning Section of Environmental & Sustainability Planning in coordination with the Monmouth County Environmental Council. The County of Monmouth and the Board of Chosen Freeholders do not necessarily share the viewpoints of any environmental group mentioned in this newsletter.*

*If you have questions, comments, or wish to have an event listed in the newsletter, please contact: [Amber.Mallm@co.monmouth.nj.us](mailto:Amber.Mallm@co.monmouth.nj.us)*

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