

## NEW CASTLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# CONSERVATION NEWS

You are invited to the Local Work Group meeting for New Castle County to be held on Wednesday, June 9th at 10:00 a.m. in the District's 2nd floor conference room. The Local Work Group provides recommendations to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service on natural resource priorities and criteria for conservation activities and programs. We will review both NCCD and NRCS Farm Bill Programs, including current cost-share practices, and discuss recommendations for practices in 2022. If you would like to attend in person, please notify Mike Popovich at [Michael.Popovich@delaware.gov](mailto:Michael.Popovich@delaware.gov). To attend via Zoom, contact Madson.Walter@delaware.gov by June 7th to receive the virtual meeting information.

SPRING 2021

## GOVERNOR'S CONSERVATION AWARDS RECIPIENTS HONORED



Governor John Carney designated April 25th to May 2nd as Soil and Water Stewardship Week in the State of Delaware during a virtual ceremony held on April 29, 2021.

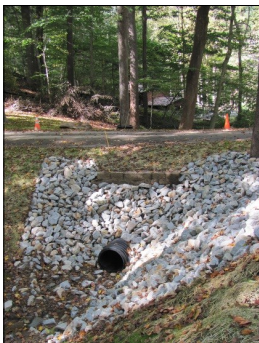
In Marianne Hardesty's 40+ year career with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the New Castle Conservation District, the summary of her conservation activities with farmers would fill a library. She and the NRCS team worked on just about every farm in New Castle County to implement on-farm conservation practices for soil erosion and nutrient management. Marianne also provided producers with expert technical guidance for various wildlife practices while contributing significantly to the New Castle County Agricultural Land Preservation program. She also advised landowners in the urban/suburban landscape. A strong advocate for outreach and education, she served for many years as an education on the soils topic for the Delaware Envirothon, provided outreach during University of Delaware Ag Day, and was a key person in the development of the Day on the Farm event, organizing the farm tour portion of the event. **Congratulations to Marianne for the 2021 Governor's Conservation Award for Agriculture.**



Marianne doing outreach during UD Ag Day event



The Governor's Conservation Award for Urban Conservation was given to the Skyline Orchard Civic Association and General Excavating, Inc. for the Skyline Orchards Emergency Road Repair Project. August 2020 storms caused significant damage to road infrastructure on Dogwood Drive and Hemlock Drive. The drainage pipe on Dogwood Drive filled with sediment during the storm. The runoff overtopped the road causing severe downslope erosion. The same storm event caused a large sinkhole on Hemlock Drive over a stormwater pipe and filled a stormwater basin with sediment. On Dogwood Drive, the sediment was removed, the pipe extended and both sides protected with riprap.



Project funding came from the Skyline Orchard Civic Association, NCC Councilperson Janet Kilpatrick, State Representative Krista Griffiths, and Senator Laura Sturgeon along with funding from the District. Congratulations to all!



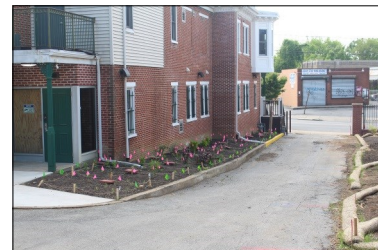
## URBAN FARMER AND GARDENER MINI-GRANTS AWARDED

The District was delighted in the amount of interest in the mini-grant program for 2021. There were nearly double the number of applicants from previous years. The thirteen recipients of grants are:

- ♦ **Urban Promise Academy**—school green space and garden project
- ♦ **Duffy's Hope Youth Garden**—regenerative practices and community engagement
- ♦ **Resurrection Parish Community Garden**—garden expansion
- ♦ **Good Shepherd Community Garden**—garden expansion
- ♦ **Kranz Hill Farm/Omnia Humanitas**—manure spreader
- ♦ **Conscious Connections Inc.**—water cistern
- ♦ **West Side Grows Delamore Place Garden**—composting system
- ♦ **West Side Grows Rodney Street Reservoir Community Garden**—raised bed repairs
- ♦ **Downtown Visions Community Garden**—eco-plastic raised beds
- ♦ **American Turners of Delaware**—"Sound Mind, Sound Body" garden
- ♦ **The Challenge Program with Lulu's Farm**—fencing for garden area
- ♦ **The Village Tree**—reinforcing garden infrastructure

In March, NCCD worked in partnership with the Delaware Urban Food and Farm Coalition to host a virtual resource and networking event for Delaware community gardeners. Madi Walter was a panelist for "The Dirty Secrets of Community Gardens" as part of the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary and City of Wilmington's Earth Week Virtual Celebration. The Grow It Yourself workshops continue to be held on a regular basis with a transition to in-person workshops this summer. New to the mini-grant program, a virtual grant writing workshop was offered in February to community

gardening leaders. NCCD is continuing to work closely with the Delaware Urban Food and Farm Coalition on a number of urban ag policy education and outreach efforts at the city, county and state levels.



Urban Promise Academy future vegetable garden underway along with the start of a pollinator garden.



Overhead view of the Good Shepherd Community Garden located on Foulk Road.



Recycled plastic raised beds at the Downtown Visions Community Garden. The beds are purchased from Eco Plastic Products of Delaware in Wilmington.



Newly installed garden shed and four newly installed raised beds at the Good Shepherd Garden.



## URBAN/SUBURBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS PROVIDE DRAINAGE RELIEF



From L to R: bank stabilization behind home in Sycamore Gardens, slot drain for homeowner in Brookemeade, before and after erosion control in Glen Brennie Estates at Red Clay Creek.



From L to R: wet soils behind homes in Odessa National remediated with the installation of a pipe and catch basin drainage system. Tree removal in rights of way behind homes on Newport Gap Pike near Brandywine Springs Park. Future drainage work is planned.

## TAX DITCH MAINTENANCE KEEPS DITCHES WORKING



From L to R: mowing vegetation on Brennan-Berry Tax Ditch, tile line replacement on Sandom Branch Tax Ditch, dipping out sediment in the Woods Road Tax Ditch, and ditch cleanout on the main stem of the Pencader Tax Ditch.



## NEW CASTLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2430 Old County Road  
Newark, DE 19702  
Phone: 302-832-3100 ext. 3  
Fax: 302-832-5060  
Email: [newcastleconservationdistrict.org](mailto:newcastleconservationdistrict.org)  
Website: [www.newcastlecd.org](http://www.newcastlecd.org)



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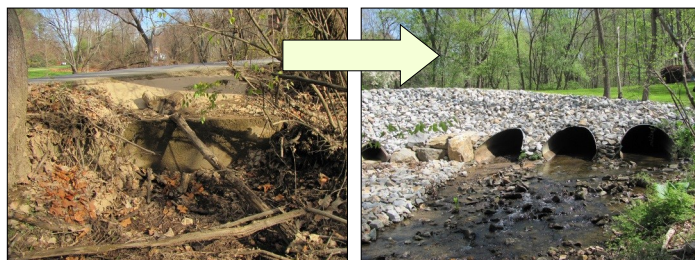
The New Castle Conservation District is an equal opportunity employer and provider.



Board of Supervisors (L to R): Norman Pierce (Associate Member), Mike Harris (Representing County Executive Matt Meyer), Julian Pellegrini (Associate Member), Dan Severson (Secretary), Richard Morris (Vice-Chair), Robert Emerson (Chair), Brandon Yerkes (Member), Gwen Pierce (Treasurer), and S. R. Smith, III (Member).

The 2021 Soil and Water Stewardship theme is Healthy Forests—Healthy Communities. Whether on the farm or in the city, trees are an important part of our environmental health. Plant a native tree!

## CONSERVATION COST SHARE



Storm related erosion of embankment in Way Ridge stabilized with riprap with downed trees and debris removed.



Yard protected in Rolling Meadows

## CHARTER SCHOOL WINS DELAWARE ENVIROTHON

The pandemic delayed 25th anniversary Delaware Envirothon competition was held virtually in April for 10 teams representing 50 high school students. Schools participating from New Castle County were Charter School of Wilmington, Newark Charter School, Middletown High School and Odessa High School. The Charter School of Wilmington Team C took top honors with each of the five students winning a \$500 college scholarship. The teams tested their environmental knowledge in the areas of Air Quality, Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Soils, Wildlife and the current issue of Water Resources Management. The competition also included an oral presentation based on a scenario involving the current issue. The team will now represent Delaware in the virtual National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon from Lincoln, Nebraska.



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