



RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

Water Resources Program

New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station



MARCH 2025

## WATER PAGES eNEWSLETTER

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THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES  
FOR WATER RESOURCES

### National Institutes for Water Resources 2025 Annual Meeting

I am in Washington DC at the annual meeting for the National Institutes for Water Resources (NIWR). Every year the directors and staff of the 54 Water Resources Research Institutes, that are housed at our nation's Land Grant Universities, gather to discuss how to continue to provide leadership in our States and Territories for water research. We share ideas and discuss opportunities for collaboration. The mood in DC is somber. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) is the federal agency that oversees the NIWR program and its 54 institutes. The week before our meeting USGS had to fire all their probationary employees. According to the USGS representatives at the meeting, many of the young professionals that were fired were outstanding employees, young, smart, and energetic.

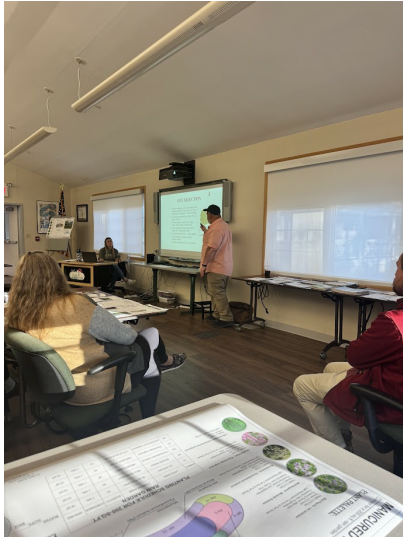
I have been the Director of the **New Jersey Water Resources Research Institute** (NJWRRI) for 16 years. Lisa Galloway Evrard serves as the Assistant Director and does most of the heavy lifting in running the institute. NJWRRI receives approximately \$146,000 per year from USGS. We regrant these funds by soliciting proposals from graduate students and junior faculty that are just beginning their academic/research careers. We have an advisory board that reviews and ranks the proposals for funding. These funds are used by faculty to conduct experiments and collect data that can be used to prove their theories so they can seek larger grants from the National Science Foundation, United States Department of Agriculture, and the National Institute of Health, just to name a few. We also fund graduate students so they can expand their research or attend conferences where they can present their research.

Over the years, we have funded research on microplastics, harmful algal blooms, forever chemicals like PFAS, green infrastructure, PCBs, arsenic in drinking water wells, and a lot of other water resources issues that are facing New Jersey. Most of the faculty we funded have gone on to great academic careers, securing large grants, writing many peer-reviewed papers, and getting promoted with tenure. The research that they conduct provides important science-based information to help the decision-makers better understand the water resources problems that they are facing.

As of the writing of this article, the federal government is continuing to support the 54 Water Resources Research Institutes. Thankfully, it has yet to be eliminated by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). The research these institutes conduct is vital to improving the quality of life of the residents of the United States.

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## Hands-on Learning Experience at the Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve



On Tuesday, March 11th, the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program partnered with Green Infrastructure Champion, Amanda Archer, of the **Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve** to provide local environmental commission members with a hands-on learning opportunity. The session focused on teaching participants how to host a residential rain garden design workshop and guide homeowners in designing rain gardens for their properties.

The event took place at the Jacques Cousteau Coastal Education Center in Tuckerton, NJ, where Dr. Christopher Obropta delivered an engaging presentation on green infrastructure and homeowner rain gardens to a group of 17 attendees. Following the presentation, participants worked in small groups to design their own rain gardens while receiving guidance from experts at the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program and experienced Green Infrastructure Champions.

This interactive session aimed to equip attendees with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to organize similar workshops in their communities, empowering residents to implement green infrastructure solutions and improve local stormwater management.

*[Photo credit: Hollie DiMuro, RCE Water Resources Program]*

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## Our First Rain Garden Construction Project for the 2025 Season!

Our project partners, **ANJEC (Association of Environmental Commissions)**, with grant funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, have supported our first rain garden construction of the season in Gibbsboro Borough, Camden County, NJ. Located on municipal property along Driftwood Way, the rain garden will capture stormwater runoff from the street before it enters the catch basin. Covering 880 square feet, the garden will treat runoff from a 3,120-square-foot drainage area, removing approximately 13 pounds of total suspended solids annually. Once completed, the garden will feature over 500 native plants, enhancing both stormwater management and local biodiversity.





# 2025 New Jersey Sustainability Summit

Bell Works, Holmdel

REGISTRATION IS OPEN

[bit.ly/SustainabilitySummit-25](https://bit.ly/SustainabilitySummit-25)

Friday, May 9  
9 am - 4 pm

19  
Educational  
Sessions



Sustainability  
Exhibit



Networking  
with 600  
NJ change-  
makers



SCAN ME



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