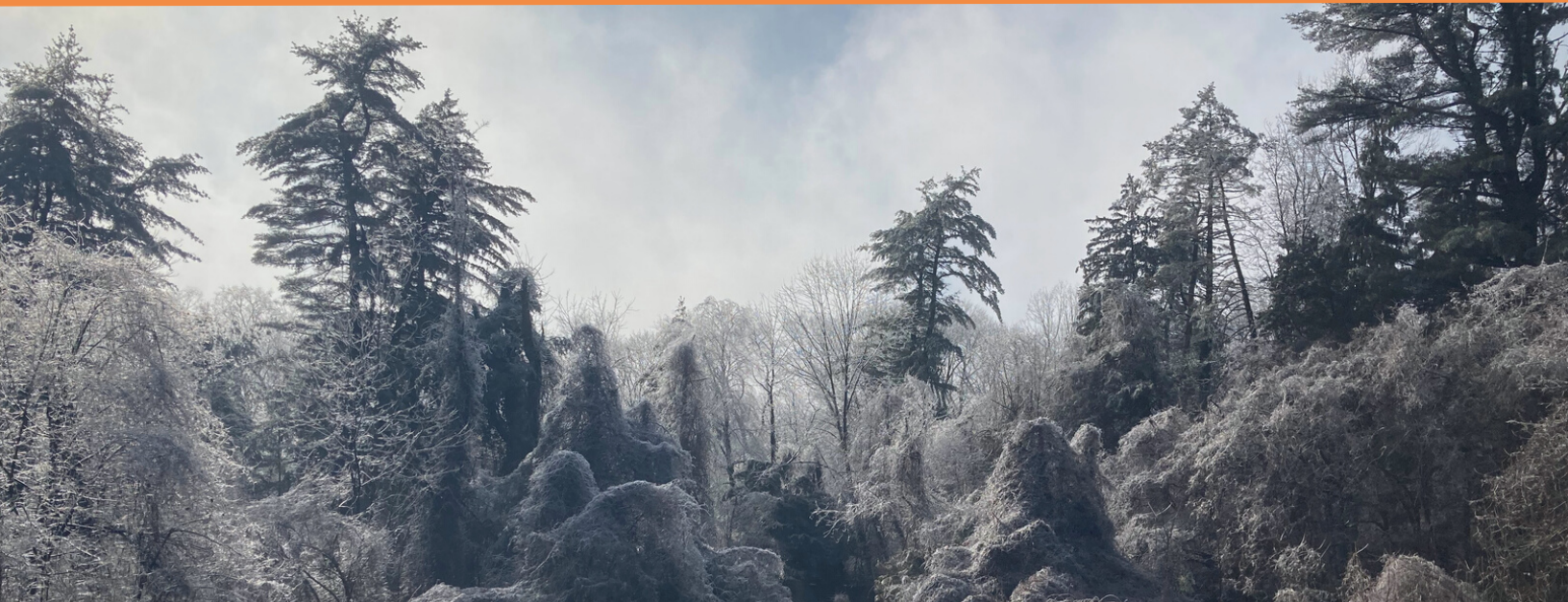




Nassau County Soil & Water Conservation District



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A Message from the District Manager

Derek Betts

The Nassau County Soil and Water Conservation District has long engaged with residents and community groups across Nassau County to help promote environmental conservation efforts and provide access to vital state funding for myriad community organizations. 2021/2022 was no exception, and the District is proud to present our 2022 Nassau County SCWD Newsletter! This document not only highlights the success of the District over the last calendar year, but also, and perhaps even more importantly, it showcases the work and dedication of our project partners. We look forward to continued collaborations in 2023 and offer our hearty thanks to everyone who helped make 2021/2022 such a success!



STAFF & BOARD DIRECTORY



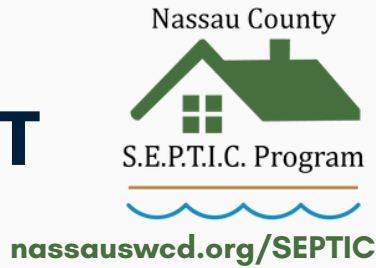
NCSWCD Staff

Derek Betts	District Manager
Olivia Calandra	Conservation Technician
Sean Rooney	Conservation Technician
Tom Parisi	Conservation Technician
Yoan Carrillo	Bookkeeper

NCSWCD Board of Directors

Tara Schneider	Board Chair
Eric Swenson	Treasurer
Patricia Aitken	Secretary
Meagan Fastuca	Vice Chair
Reese Michaels	Board Member
Mary Studdert	Board Member
Lou Imbroto	Board Member

S.E.P.T.I.C. REPLACEMENT PROGRAM



The Nassau County S.E.P.T.I.C. Replacement program aims to fight Nitrogen pollution by helping LI homeowners replace their conventional cesspools and septic systems with nitrogen-reducing septic systems. By providing up to \$20,000 in grant funding per property, this program has successfully installed over 50 nitrogen-reducing septic systems throughout Nassau County. Antiquated wastewater technology is one of the greatest threats to clean water on Long Island--we hope to continue this project for years to come!



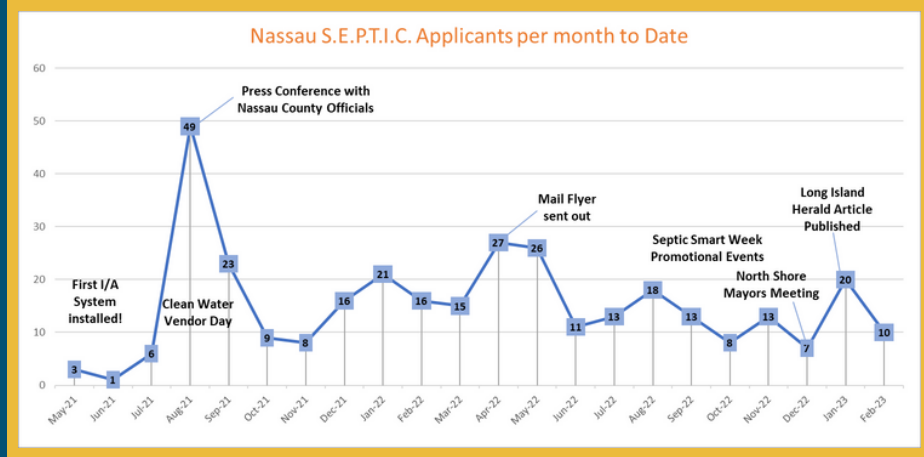
NCSWCD GOES TO WASHINGTON!

The Nassau County Soil & Water Conservation District, along with various environmental organizations, travelled to Washington DC to meet with state representatives and discuss many topics important to quality of life on Long Island, including continued clean up of the Long Island Sound, the classification of Plum Island Preserve, and the tax status of Nassau County S.E.P.T.I.C. Replacement Program grant awards.

S.E.P.T.I.C. REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

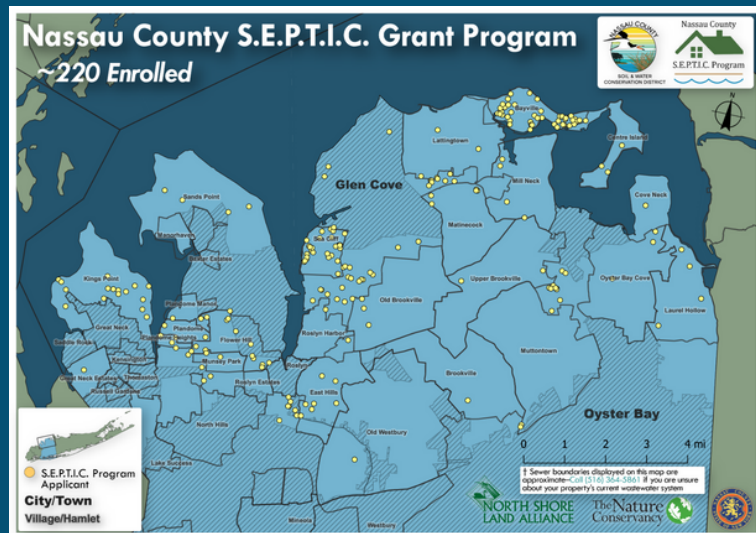
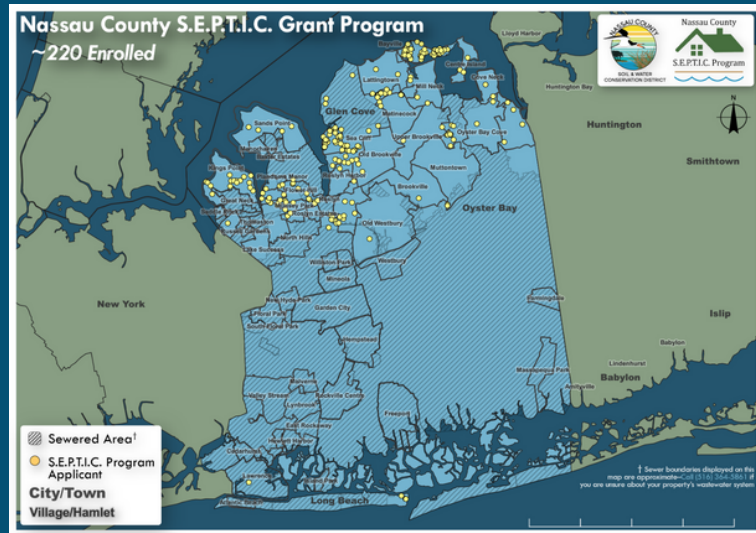
Stats & Figures

Our S.E.P.T.I.C. Replacement Program is continuously growing, with an average of 15 new applicants each month! We experienced peaks in August 2021 and April 2022 which correlate with our Vendor Day event and our Mass Flyer Mailing, respectively. For more info about our upcoming S.E.P.T.I.C. Events, visit nassauswcd.org/SEPTIC



The village of Bayville has seen the highest number of applicants in our program with 47 to date!

Since most of southern Nassau County has sewer service, applicants are primarily in North Shore communities. We have over 200 active applicants in the program.



Average Program Costs	
Average Cost of Installation*	\$26,518.64
Average Out of Pocket Expense to Homeowner	\$6,518.64

*This cost includes the Design fee, Installation, Abandonment of Old System and Operation & Maintenance Contract

LONG ISLAND REGIONAL ENVIROTHON

April 27th, 2022

This year was the first in-person LI Regional Envirothon since 2019--hosted at USDAN Summer Camp for the Arts in Wheatley Heights.

Our local event is organized jointly by the Nassau and Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation Districts, but our success can be partly attributed to the countless volunteers who donate their time each year. Special thanks to participating environmental professionals that help keep the spirit of the Envirothon alive by inspiring students.

The winners of the 2022 Long Island Regional Envirothon were representing Great Neck South High School in Great Neck and Harborfields High School in Greenlawn. Congratulations to the winning teams!



longislandenvirothon.org

Consider Volunteering for the Long Island Regional Envirothon

We're looking forward to our next Envirothon to be held on April 26th, 2023!

Participating Schools

NASSAU

Chaminade High School
Division Ave High School
Farmingdale High School
Garden City High School
General Douglas MacArthur HS
Great Neck High School North
*Great Neck High School South**

SUFFOLK

Commack High School
*Harborfields High School**
Riverhead High School

* = *Winning Team*

Thank You to our Event Sponsors

If you're interested in making a contribution to future Envirothon Events, please reach out to us at **(516)364-5860** or email info@nassauswcd.org



A DAY IN THE LIFE

Events on 11/4/22 & 11/18/22

www.nassauswcd.org/A-Day-In-The-Life

A Day in the Life is a program organized by the South Shore Estuary Reserve that focuses on environmental education, community engagement and water-quality monitoring. Geared towards students from local middle and high schools, the main goal of the project is to run single-day field trips to sites around Long Island's South Shore where students are given the opportunity to collect water quality samples, learn about ecosystem services, and engage with local flora & fauna.

The District hosted two ADITL events this year--one at the Marine Nature Study Area in Oceanside and another at the Jones Bay Boat Basin at Jones Beach. These events were attended by high school and college students from Westbury High School and SUNY Old Westbury College. The students were able to learn more about local tides, currents, turbidity, and marine organisms.



BLACK SKIMMER MONITORING



Black Skimmers are a prominent species of migratory seabirds found on Long Island's South Shore and were at the center of two NCSWCD projects.

Kate Robb from the Town of Hempstead's Department of Conservation & Waterways managed a citizen science project that surveyed beachgoers about their knowledge and interest in ethical wildlife photography. The survey resulted in 50 Skimmer photo submissions from photographers!



District Manager Derek Betts

The District also assisted with bird-banding events at Nickerson Beach in partnership with the University of Oklahoma's Aerocology Group in attempt to better understand the species migratory habits.

PLANTING FOR CLEAN WATER COMMUNITIES

NFWF Grant aimed at installing Raingardens & Permeable Pavement

www.nassauswcd.org/Planting-for-Clean-Water



This project was made possible with grant funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Dubbed "Planting for Clean Water Communities", NCSWCD staff installed permeable pavers at a Community Center in the North Shore town of Bayville.

Permeable pavement re-establishes a more natural hydrological balance while simultaneously reducing runoff, flooding, pollution, erosion, and the need for road salt. This is accomplished by having gaps between interlocking paver blocks. These gaps as well as the space underneath is filled with a stone layer catching precipitation and surface runoff, storing it in a reservoir while slowly allowing it to infiltrate the soil below.



BAYVILLE SIGNAGE INSTALLATIONS

Green Infrastructure Projects at Bayville Community Center

As part of the Planting for Clean Water Communities project, two educational signs were installed at the Bayville Community Center. The first sign showcases the raingarden and describes the native species present, such as Black-eyed Susan, Blazing Star, and Milkweed.

The second educational sign was installed in proximity to the permeable pavers and explains the environmental benefits they provide.

These green infrastructure improvements serve as showcases of these technologies.



SAPLING GIVEAWAY

Arbor Day Event providing free tree saplings to community members



Our annual sapling giveaway was hosted on Arbor Day, April 29th, 2022. The giveaway was sponsored by Bartlett Tree Experts, and provided over 50 saplings to the community, along with educational material on proper plant selection and planting techniques!

This event was hosted at our District offices in Nassau Hall, inside Nassau County's largest nature preserve, the Muttontown Preserve.

DISTRICT BAT BOX INSTALLATIONS

Building Bat Boxes for Pond Park and Chelsea Mansion

NCSWCD installed a bat box in Pond Park, Great Neck Estates as a part of our Native and Invasive Species Education and Outreach Program. This bat box will provide a vital habitat for Long Island's native bat species, the Little Brown Bat (*Myotis lucifugus*.) Native bat species help control populations of pests, such as beetles and mosquitos, and a single bat can catch 1,000 mosquitos in just one hour! Some bats can also play essential roles in native plant pollination and the dispersal of seeds, and are known as the pollinators of the night!



(Left to Right) Olivia Calandra, Sean Rooney, & Tom Parisi

TOWN OF NORTH HEMPSTEAD PLANT REBATE

Part C Project run by Board Member Meagan Fastuca supporting native plantings in Town of North Hempstead



The NCSWCD provided reimbursement to Town of North Hempstead Residents who purchased native plants to create native plant gardens and raingardens. Native plants provide food, shelter and nesting resources for a variety of wildlife species, including birds, pollinators, small mammals.

Native plants have a multitude of environmental benefits, including but not limited to extensive root systems that absorb polluted stormwater, carbon sequestration, reduced maintenance requirements and reduced need for fertilizer, mowing and irrigation.

To learn more visit www.northhempsteadny.gov/np

RAINGARDEN PROGRAM

nassauswcd.org/Raingardens

Part C Project to revitalize raingardens in Nassau County

The NCSWCD used Part C funds to revitalize a number of neglected raingardens across the county, 5 in total:

- Nassau Hall inside the Muttontown preserve
- Bayville Community Center
- West Harbor Beach in Bayville
- Bayville Eastern Waterfront Center
- The Hempstead Plains Nature Preserve on the NCC Campus

Staff worked with interns Taylor and Theresa to remove invasive plants and help restore natives. This raingarden will help capture excess stormwater runoff and provide pollutant filtration.

This Green Infrastructure project uses native plants with long root systems to capture and clean water as it filters into the ground.



REVITALIZATION AT HEMPSTEAD PLAINS

The NCSWCD works with the Friends of the Hempstead Plains to protect, preserve, restore and manage approximately 19 acres of special and rapidly vanishing ecological and historical habitat. Home to 250 species of plants, including some rare and endangered species, the Plains Preserve is a reservoir of genetic variability, a cherished part of Nassau County's heritage, and a globally significant natural asset.

This year, the District focused on restoring a raingarden at the Hempstead Plains Preserve on the campus of Nassau Community College which was predominately populated by invasive Mugwort, comprising roughly 65% of the gardens flora. With efforts led by Rob Longiaru (Habitat Director for the Friends of the Hempstead Plains), the District enlisted the help of Nassau's local Girl Scouts of America to assist with a robust plant removal event to clear the area of Mugwort roots. In total the NCSWCD replaced this invasive Mugwort with just over 300 native plants.

Learn more about the Hempstead Plains at www.friendsofhp.org



MUTTONTOWN PRESERVE MAINTENANCE

Part B Trail Installation & Maintenance

The Nassau County Soil and Water Conservation District recently completed its 2021 maintenance project in Muttontown Preserve by installing 67 posts with arrows. The King Zog's loop trail covers 2.5 miles of woodland, open grass fields and scattered ruins. This project required the removal of invasive species and fallen trees to improve and widen the trail system. The District is currently creating an additional trail on the South side of the preserve with funding for its 2022 project.

Also coming in 2023, the District will be publishing a new trail map and educational brochure complete with a list of native species and descriptions of the Preserve's history and ecological importance.

Read more by visiting nassauswcd.org/Muttontown-Preserve



Long Island is home to many types of plants and animals all competing for food and space to grow. Invasive species are capable of rapidly spreading into relatively undisturbed natural communities. Once established, invasive species outcompete native plants, which can damage soil and cause adverse ecological impacts. The NCSWCD is committed to invasive species prevention across the County, attending regional invasive management meetings and cooperating in new and emergent invasive species monitoring programs.

Learn more at nassauswcd.org/Invasive-Species



TICK BLITZ
Community Based Science



SURVEYING FOR TICKS

In the Muttontown Preserve nassauswcd.org/Tick-Information

The NYS Tick Blitz is a yearly event created by the Northeast Regional Vector Control Center, with help from Cornell Cooperative Extension and NYS Integrated Pest Management.

The purpose of the study is to survey all NY regions simultaneously to understand where different tick species are present and track their northward expansion.

In 2022, Conservation Technician Sean Rooney collected ticks by surveying a collective 1,500 meters of the Muttontown Preserve. A white corduroy sheet was used to sweep tall grass and brush, catching ticks that were then stored in a vial. The samples collected were mailed to Cornell University for review by entomologists.

By collecting ticks local to our area, we are able to understand the different species present, test for tick-borne diseases, and learn more about tick expansion throughout the state.

HABITAT RESTORATION OF LEEDS POND

Part C Project run by the Science Museum of Long Island

The Invasive Plant Removal and Native Plant Revegetation of Leeds Pond Preserve was made possible with funding from the Nassau County Soil & Water Conservation District.

The Science Museum of Long Island worked with Spadefoot Design and Construction to complete this project with the goal of clearing two acres of invasive plants such as Japanese Knotweed, English Ivy and Norway Maple. The area was then replanted with resilient native species as part of an ongoing, multi-year project aimed at rehabilitating the area's native biosphere.



BAXTER'S POND SHORESCAPING

Repairing the riparian buffer along the shores of Baxter's Pond

Bordered by a densely suburban community and two highly trafficked roads, Baxter's Pond is the catch basin for debris, runoff, litter and chemical waste from nearby lawns and roads. The pond is spring-fed and flows directly into Manhasset Bay, eventually feeding into the Long Island Sound.

This project addressed the need to prevent nonpoint pollution sources from reaching Manhasset Bay and increase native plant populations to help restore natural hydrological and filtration processes.

Partnering with Rusty Schmidt and staff from Nelson Pope & Voorhis, this project commenced in 2019 and supports a multi-year design and planting program. The Baxter's Pond Foundation has engaged volunteers to assist in the planting process and educate community members about the importance of native plant selection.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Overview of Events / Volunteering / Partnerships



Nassau County S.E.P.T.I.C Replacement Program's Vendor Day



NCSWCD Staff Providing Guidance and Support to Town of Oyster Bay's Environmental Resources Department



Conservation Technician Sean Rooney virtually hosted educational presentations about raingardens for Friends of The Bay on April 20th, and for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau County on July 19th.

Sean's presentation outlined raingarden design, planning & installation basics, as well as the importance of green infrastructure, xeriscaping and eliminating conditions that lead to poor water quality and harmful algal blooms.

INVASIVE WATER CHESTNUT PULL

NYS DEC's Annual Water Chestnut Pull at Mill Pond in Wantagh

The District Staff helps the DEC's Fish and Wildlife team pull invasive Water Chestnut from Mill Pond in Twin Lakes Preserve, Wantagh. This annual event is vital to controlling the Preserve's invasive species populations.

Water Chestnut is an invasive aquatic plant that forms dense mats. It consists of a black spiked nut that lodges itself into the lake and riverbeds, with a long stem that extends to the water's surface, and distinct, triangular leaves. Water Chestnut outcompetes native aquatic plants, reduces light penetration through water, and reduces the growth of native species. It can also contribute to decreased dissolved oxygen levels and fish kills.



District Technicians Olivia Calandra and Sean Rooney

PART C PROJECTS

List of Part C Projects completed in 2022

- **Michael Sperling Bird Sanctuary Habitat Restoration** - South Shore Audubon Society
- **Town of Oyster Bay Rain Garden Revitalization Program** - Town of Oyster Bay's Environmental Resources Department
- **Exploring the Value of Citizen Science Contributions in Black Skimmer Chick Provisioning and Site Fidelity** - TOH Conservation & Waterways
- **Building Communities through Sustainable Living: Community Pollinator Garden Initiative** - TOH Conservation & Waterways
- **Town of North Hempstead Native Plant Residential Rebate Program** - TONH Department of Planning & Environmental Protection
- **The Long Island Tallgrass Prairie: A Restoration and Education** - Friends of Hempstead Plains
- **Conversation of a Neglected Utility Line at Cushman Woods** - The North Shore Land Alliance
- **Advancing Habitat Restoration at Hope Goddard Iselin Preserve's Meadow** - The North Shore Land Alliance
- **Winter Water Quality Monitoring** - Hempstead Harbor Protection Committee
- **Removal and Revegetation of a Kudzu Infestation Site on Leeds Pond Preserve** - Science Museum of Long Island
- **A Day in the Life of an Estuary** - NCSWCD
- **NCSWCD Raingarden Maintenance Project** - NCSWCD

- SEEKING VOLUNTEERS -

Interested in protecting your local resources? Looking for a chance to give back to your community?

The Nassau County Soil and Water Conservation District is currently seeking volunteers to help implement various environmental projects. No experience required. Weekend opportunities available.

For more information and a listing of volunteer opportunities visit nassauswcd.org

Call us at 516-364-5860 or send an email to srooney@nassauswcd.org



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[facebook.com/nassauswcd](https://www.facebook.com/nassauswcd)