

December 2022/January 2023, Bi-Monthly Education Report
Presented to the Board of Directors, Ocean County Soil Conservation District
January 19, 2023
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2022 Education & Outreach Accomplishments:

Although many of our outreach programs in year 2022 continued much like 2020 and 2021, as webinars, due to the ongoing pandemic, the silver-lining is that we also continued to reach a broader audience through our online forum than was ever possible in-person. However, we were excited to offer an in-person 25th Annual Barnegat Bay Environmental Educators Roundtable and celebrate alongside our watershed colleagues the past twenty-five years of offering quality professional development opportunities to our local educators. We look forward to another in-person 26th Annual BBEERT in 2023. Our conservation message is reaching across the state, and beyond, as our “communications toolbox” continues to grow and expand. Our monthly newsletter, social media, blogs, videos and our Annual Report provide myriad ways for OCSCD staff to keep our constituents informed about our many programs, projects, partnerships, events and our latest endeavors. Please see the attached spreadsheet for exact program and participant numbers.

- Provided **23** educational programs, workshops, speaking engagements and events.
 - 20 Partnership/Jersey-Friendly Yards
 - 3 OCSCD-specific
- Engaged **2100** total number of people
 - 1,905 Partnership/Jersey-Friendly Yards
 - 195 OCSCD-specific

December 2022 – January 2023 Education & Outreach Activities, as per the Annual Plan of Operations:

In support of OCSCD’s Annual Plan of Operations (APO), which includes in its vision “*to be recognized as a conservation leader*”, and includes in its mission “*to protect, restore and sustain fully functioning soil resources...*”, “*further natural resource stewardship through educational programs...*” and “*develop and nurture effective relationships... to sustain functioning ecosystem services...*”, the Education Department is championing the **Jersey-Friendly** initiative in cooperation with Barnegat Bay Partnership, to effectuate OCSCD’s vision and mission. In addition, the Education Department is supporting the OCSCD technical staff on two additional grant projects: **Sustainable Practices for Aquaculture Resource Conservation (SPARC)** and **Lakewood Township Stormwater Basin Retrofit Project**. In addition, the Education Department continues to provide community outreach programs and statewide initiatives, as well as research and write grants to support OCSCD’s overall mission.

(APO Item #1) IMPLEMENTATION OF CHAPTER 251 SOIL EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL ACT & OTHER NATURAL RESOURCE PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

1. (APO Item #1, Activity 14) Becky maintains the District Website.

- Becky maintains and updates the District website with Chapter 251 SESC-related information, Education & Outreach information, and general updates.

2. (APO Item #1, Activity 17, Sub-Task) Becky researches funding opportunities for District Technical Staff to be trained in non-SESC programs and projects.

- Becky and Brittany Moore are working together on the Lakewood Stormwater Basin Retrofit Project.

(APO Item #3) GENERAL OPERATIONS

1. (APO Item #3, Activity 1) Becky provides support and assistance to Christine Raabe, Jean Baluski and Christina Mooney to provide for the accountability of the District to the public, legislature and to NJDA-SSCC, by posting on the website, the following:

- financial information

- Board meeting minutes, agendas and meeting notices, as required
- Public Notices

2. (APO Item #3, Activity 3) Becky participates in various training opportunities to enhance overall abilities as a District employee.

- Becky has developed and submitted an Individual Professional Development Plan for FY23

3. (APO Item #3, Activity 5) Becky serves as OCSCD representative member of the Barnegat Bay Partnership’s Communication and Education Committee (CEC)

- Becky attends bi-monthly meetings of the CEC and reports on OCSCD’s education initiatives related to National Estuary Program activities and goals, such as those specified in BBP’s [CCMP](#) and [Communication Plan](#).
 - Sub-Task: Becky continues to work with BBP on the shared services agreement for: Part 2 - Bay-Friendly Yards. (see APO Item #4, Activity 1)
- Becky is representing OCSCD at the monthly New Jersey Bay Islands Initiative (NJBII), “Communications Working Group”. Becky attends monthly meetings as part of the Communications Working Group, as well as monthly meetings with all constituents.

(APO Item #4) EDUCATION INITIATIVES – GRANT RELATED

1. (APO Item #4, Activity 1) Becky manages, coordinates, administers and implements current grants to expand granted projects when opportunities arise.

Grant 1: Jersey-Friendly Yards (including subcontract)

- Subcontract with Barnegat Bay Partnership **Part 1: Assistance with BBP Communication & Outreach. This portion of the subcontract has been fulfilled and is now complete.** OCSCD was subcontracting with Barnegat Bay Partnership to support watershed-wide education and stewardship initiatives, including Jersey-Friendly Yards and Barnegat Bay Master Naturalist Program.
 - Per the subcontract, Becky assisted Karen Walzer, Public Outreach Coordinator for BBP, to provide programs and promote the JFY website as a guide to landscape practices for managing stormwater and reducing nonpoint source pollution in the Barnegat Bay watershed, and engage community members and statewide “Green Groups”, including Green Teams, Environmental Organizations, Garden Clubs, in best practices.
 - Per the subcontract, Becky produced a quarterly Barnegat Bay Master Naturalist Newsletter, titled *The Naturalist*. Newsletters can be found on BBP’s [Master Naturalist Program](#) webpage. (Newsletters: Fall/Winter 2022/23, [Spring/Summer 2022](#), [Winter 2022](#), [Fall 2021](#), [Summer 2021](#), [Spring 2021](#), [Winter 2021](#), [Fall 2020](#))
- Subcontract with Barnegat Bay Partnership **Part 2: Bay-Friendly Stewardship Certification Project (3 year contract):**
 - Becky continues to assist Karen Walzer, Public Outreach Coordinator for BBP, on the **Jersey-Friendly Yards Certification Program**. District staff, Jessica Pinto, is now also assisting with the grant. OCSCD has subcontracted with Eileen Miller, Soil Health Specialist, Healthy Landscapes NJ, LLC., is also assisting with the implementation of the grant. The [Jersey-Friendly Yards Certification Program website](#) is up-and-running. The following schools and municipalities have enrolled in the program:

Enrolled Schools Receiving Funding:	Enrolled Municipalities Receiving Funding:
Pinelands Regional Middle School	Pine Beach Borough
Pinelands Regional High School	Point Pleasant Borough
Brick Township High School	

Enrolled Schools Not Receiving Funding:	
Eagleswood Elementary School	
Ocean Gate Elementary School	
H&M Potter Elementary School	

- **Resident Certification Program:** <https://www.jerseyyards.org/certification-program/residents-certification/>
- **School Certification Program:** <https://www.jerseyyards.org/certification-program/schools-certification/>
- **Municipal Certification Program:** <https://www.jerseyyards.org/certification-program/municipal-certification/>

Grant 2: Lakewood Township Stormwater Basins Retrofit Project

OCSCD is partnering with South Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council, Lakewood Township Department of Public Works, and the Camden County Soil Conservation District on a grant from the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection: Lakewood Township Stormwater Basin Retrofit Project. The grant is funded by a Federal 319(h) Water Quality Restoration grant awarded by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection to the SJRC&D.

- Brittany Moore is the OCSCD staff representative managing OCSCD’s grant activities, with assistance from Becky Laboy. OCSCD’s role is to implement and promote the Lakewood Township Stormwater Basin Retrofit Project.

2. (APO Item #4, Activity 2) Seeks Grants and Funding to support both on-going and new initiatives and programs:

Becky continues to research potential grants that will support the District’s Mission. Becky looks forward to collaborating with other organizations, agencies and District staff on application submittals and project implementation. No new grants have been submitted at this time.

(APO Item #5) EDUCATION INITIATIVES

1. (APO Item #5, Activity 1) To maintain and enhance OCSCD website. To more effectively utilize and disseminate pertinent and educational resources and assist in fulfilling OCSCD Mission.

Communications: Website, Newsletter, Blogs, Social Media and Annual Report:

Becky has been using several OCSCD media communications platforms in an effort to engage a broader audience in support of the District’s Mission. OCSCD staff have been regularly contributing articles for publication.

- OCSCD’s new [website](#)
- [Newsletters](#) continue to be distributed monthly through our Constant Contact platform, typically on the first day of the month, to our audience of 1,777 contacts on our “General List”, with an additional 2,294 statewide education administrators (used for our Roundtable campaigns), totaling 4071, of which, 1,070 are considered “most engaged”. We have a 40% average email “open rate”. Our newsletter offers featured sections such as “Education Programs & Events”, “Staff in the Field” and “Partner Projects”, where they discuss the latest updates about educational programs, projects and events, as well as grants, current partner projects, technical information regarding SESC Standards, and informative content about soil, water and natural resource conservation in the Barnegat Bay watershed.
- [Blog posts](#) on our website highlight the District’s many projects, as well as our soil conservation message, and are linked in our newsletters and social media.
- Newsletters, blogs and other soil conservation information are also distributed via the District’s social media platforms by Becky and Kristin Adams via [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)
- For access to all our social media and project links, visit the “[Connect](#)” page on our website
- Becky is currently working on the [OCSCD Annual Report](#), highlighting the many projects, programs and partners with which the District staff are engaged.

2. (APO Item #5, Activity 2) Becky maintains communications and networks with regional and statewide Conservation Education and Environmental Education initiatives, including Barnegat Bay Roundtable Steering & Planning Committee, Barnegat Bay Estuary Program’s Communication and Education Committee, Conservation Partnership meetings, Natural Resource education Foundation of New Jersey (NREF), Jersey-Friendly Yards.

3. (APO Item #5, Activity 3) Poster Contest: The 2023 Annual Conservation Poster Contest has been announced. This year’s theme is “One Water”, highlighting the importance of water as a natural resource. The contest information, rules and entry form can be found on our [website](#). Deadline for entries to the OCSCD is March 1, 2023. OCSCD Staff will select the First Place winning posters for each of the four grade groups. The Board will select the Grand Champion Winner among the First Place winners. OCSCD will award the Grand Champion Winner a \$50 cash prize. Winning OCSCD posters can be found on our [Annual NJ Conservation Poster Contest webpage](#). [Winning statewide posters can be found on the NJACD website](#).

4. (APO Item #5, Activity 4) Promote the Distribution of Low Maintenance Landscaping Guides. Becky is currently searching for grants to support funding to print additional LML Guides.

5. (APO Item #5, Activity 5) Barnegat Bay Environmental Educators Roundtable: SAVE-THE-DATE! The District’s 26th **Annual Barnegat Bay Environmental Educators Roundtable** will take place on **April 19, 2023**, at The Lighthouse Center for Natural Resource Education. Details are forthcoming, and will be posted on the OCSCD website, on the [Barnegat Bay Environmental Educators Roundtable webpage](#). Planning for the 2023 BBEERT will continue over the next few months.

6. (APO Item #5, Activity 6) Internship & Volunteer Opportunities and Agreements: The District hosted an intern, Christina Fiocco, over the Fall 2022 semester. Ms. Fiocco worked with the Technical Staff on SESC projects.

7. (APO Item #5, Activity 7) Offer a variety of Outreach Programs based on soil health & natural resources to various groups/organizations; at least 12 per year. In 2022, Becky participated in the planning, implementation and/or presentation of 23 programs and events. Becky shares her regrets that she was unable to attend the last webinar program in the Jersey-Friendly Yards 2022 Webinar Series, and the JFY Fall Conference this year, due to a medical leave of absence. Please refer to the attached document for a full accounting of all OCSCD programs, events and participant attendance numbers.

In 2023, Becky has two programs on the calendar so far, which she will be presenting:

- **February 8:** Becky will be presenting **Don’t Treat Your Soil Like Dirt – Building a Foundation for your Jersey-Friendly Yards**, webinar hosted by Bergen-Passaic Chapter of the Native Plant Society of New Jersey.
- **April 12:** Becky will be co-presented **Jersey-Friendly Yards Resident Certification Program** webinar with Karen Walzer, BBP, hosted by JCNERR. This program will fulfill requirements for the Bay-Friendly/Jersey-Friendly Stewardship Certification Program grant, in partnership with BBP.

8. (APO Item #5, Activity 8) Envirothon: The 2023 NJ Envirothon has been announced and will take place in-person, for one day (no overnight) on **Saturday, May 20**, at Camp Zehnder, in Wall Twp in Monmouth County. This year’s theme is Changing Climate. Becky is assisting with the creation of the Wildlife Station written-test.

9. (APO Item #5, Activity 9) Track Participants, evaluations, provide reports on E&O activities to District Director and Board: Becky maintains constant contact with District Director, Christine Raabe, and provides bi-monthly reports regarding all education activities to the OCSCD Board of Supervisors.

10. (APO Item #5, Activity 10) Jersey-Friendly Yards Conference & Webinars: 2022 Jersey-Friendly Yards Webinar Series: Becky attends all meetings of the JFY Conference and Webinar Committee and takes and distributes notes.

- The JFY Conference & Webinar Committee hosted a 2022 JFY webinar series, “Back to Basics: 8 Steps to a Jersey-Friendly Yard”. Each of the 8 webinars reflected one of the [8 Steps to a Jersey-Friendly Yard](#). Becky presented the first 2 webinars: Step 1 Plan Before You Plant, and Step 2 Start With Healthy Soil. Recordings can be found on the [Jersey-Friendly Yards Events](#) webpage.
 - ✓ **Step 1: Plan Before You Plant in February** - Becky presented – **136 attendees**

- ✓ **Step 2: Start with Healthy Soil on March 8** - Becky presented – **16 attendees** (*suggestion – create a flow chart that connects to other steps in the series... plus carbon cycle*)
 - ✓ **Step 3: Water Wisely on April 12** – Steve presented – **57 attendees**. Comment came in and was sent to Karen regarding “peat” – that is should not be recommended because it holds carbon and it’s not good to harvest. Commenter also said it’s not good to use cardboard as mulch because it suffocates the soil.
 - ✓ **Step 4: Fertilize Less on May 10**: speaker, Chris Adams of Eastbound LLC. **118 attendees**
 - ✓ **Step 5: Minimize Risks When Managing Pests on June 14**: Emily May of Xerces Society. **82 attendees**
 - ✓ **Step 6: Loose the Lawn and Create a Wildflower Meadow Instead on July 12**: speaker Patt Sutton presented. **554 attendees**
 - ✓ **Step 7: Create Wildlife Habitat on August 9** – Kathleen Kerwin presented. **214 attendees**
 - ✓ **Step 8: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle on September 13** – Sandra Blaine-Snow presented. **114 attendees**
- The JFY Conference & webinar Committee hosted an in-person half-day Conference on October 1, 2022, at Ocean County College, Gateway Building 101. A fee of \$20 will was charged by the Barnegat Bay Partnership to cover the cost of speakers. (This was our first conference since 2019). **(120 attendees)** The schedule was as follows:

Schedule: 2022 JFY Conference

8:15 – 9:00	Sign-in & visit exhibit tables
9:00 – 9:15	Welcome remarks
9:15 – 10:30	Screening of documentary, <i>Wild in the Garden State</i> , followed by Q&A Presented by Sarah Galloway and Dave Comins
10:30 – 10:45	Break
10:45 – 11:45	<i>Garden for Wildlife</i> Presented by David Mizejewski, Naturalist, National Wildlife Federation
11:45 – 12:00	Closing remarks & Door Prizes
12:00 – 1:00	Native Plant Sale

2022 Education and Outreach Programs, Events and Participants - Tracking						
Color Key:	Green: OCSCD specific	Yellow: JFY related (bold if funded by BBP subaward)				
Grant Related or E&O	# of Participants	Date	Time	Place/Host	Program, Tour or Event / Title	Presenters
PRGM OCSCD	80	12-Jan-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	Bergen County Chapter of the NPSNJ	Wildflowers of Barrens and Bogs	OCSCD - Becky Laboy
PRGM JFY	125	25-Jan-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	Great Swamp Watershed Association	JFY Landscaping for a Healthy Environment	OCSCD - Becky Laboy
PRGM JFY	136	8-Feb-21	7:00pm-8:00pm	BBP/OCSCD/RCE - JFY Monthly Webinar Series	Plan Before you Plant	OCSCD - Becky Laboy; BBP Karen Walzer
PRGM JFY	54	9-Feb-22	10:30-11:30am	Master Gardeners of Hunterdon County	Jersey-Friendly Trees and Shrubs for a Winter Wildlife Garden	OCSCD - Becky Laboy
PRGM JFY	15	16-Feb-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	JCNERR - Friends Along the Mullica Series	Invasive Species - JFY Alternatives	OCSCD - Becky Laboy; BBP Karen Walzer (also Kaitlin Gannon, the Fiedlers and the Connors)
PRGM JFY	106	21-Feb-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	Southeast Chapter of NPSNJ	Jersey-Friendly Trees and Shrubs for a Winter Wildlife Garden	OCSCD - Becky Laboy
PRGM JFY	16	8-Mar-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	BBP/OCSCD/RCE - JFY Monthly Webinar Series	Start With Healthy Soil	OCSCD - Becky Laboy
PRGM OCSCD	15	12-Mar-22	1:00pm-1:15pm	Pinelands Short Course hosted by Pinelands Commission	Soil Toils	OCSCD - Becky Laboy

PRGM JFY	16	15-Mar-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	Somers Point green Team	JFY - Landscaping for a Healthy Environment	OCSCD - Becky Laboy
PRGM JFY	57	12-Apr-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	BBP/OCSCD/RCE - JFY Monthly Webinar Series	Water Wisely	RCE - presented by Steve Yergeau. Becky Laboy assisted with Q&A.
EVENT OCSCD	100	27-Apr-22	2:30pm-8:30pm	Environmental Educators Roundtable	25th Anniversary	Co-hosted by OCSCD and OCPR, coordinated by Becky Laboy, Soil prgms presented by Jessica Pinto and Kristin Adams
PRGM JFY	5	5-May-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	Kemmerer Library, Harding Township, Morris County	Attracting Pollinators to your Jersey-Friendly Yard	OCSCD - Becky Laboy
PRGM JFY	118	10-May-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	BBP/OCSCD/RCE - JFY Monthly Webinar Series	Fertilize Less	Guest presenter, Christopher Adams. Becky Laboy represented OCSCD as JFY Team co-host.
PRGM JFY	65	19-May-22	6:00pm-7:00pm	Rutgers Master Gardeners of Cumberland County	JFY - Landscaping for a Healthy Environment	OCSCD - Becky Laboy
PRGM JFY	20	24-May-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	Manalapan Environmental Commission	JFY - Landscaping for a Healthy Environment	OCSCD - Becky Laboy
PRGM JFY	12	2-Jun-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	Southern Ocean Birding Group	Attracting Birds to Your Jersey-Friendly Yard	OCSCD - Becky Laboy
PRGM JFY	82	8-Jun-22	10:00pm-11:00pm	Rutgers Master Gardeners of Somerset County	JFY - Landscaping for a Healthy Environment	OCSCD - Becky Laboy

PRGM JFY	554	12-Jul-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	BBP/OCSCD/RCE - JFY Monthly Webinar Series	Lose the Lawn - Create a Meadow Instead	Guest presenter, Pat Sutton. Becky Laboy represented OCSCD as JFY Team co-host.
PRGM JFY	23	7-Jul-22	9:00pm-10:00pm	Lacey Garden Club	Native Plants for Small Jersey-Friendly Yards	OCSCD - Becky Laboy
PRGM JFY	53	25-Jul-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	Leisure Village West Garden Club	Attracting Birds to Your Jersey-Friendly Yard	OCSCD - Becky Laboy
PRGM JFY	214	9-Aug-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	BBP/OCSCD/RCE - JFY Monthly Webinar Series	Attracting Wildlife to Your Yard	Guest presenter, Kathleen Kerwin. Becky Laboy represented OCSCD as JFY Team co-host.
PRGM JFY	114	13-Sep-22	7:00pm-8:00pm	BBP/OCSCD/RCE - JFY Monthly Webinar Series	Reduce, Reuse, Recycle	Guest presenter, Sandra Blaine Snow, OC Depart of Solid Waste Management
PRGM JFY	120	1-Oct-22	9:00am-1:00pm	BBP/OCSCD/RCE - JFY Annual Conference	Welcoming Wildlife to Your Jersey-Friendly Yard	Guest presenter, Sarah Galloway and David Mizejewski of NWF.
2022 JFY ONLY # of Programs & Events	20					
2022 JFY ONLY # of Webinar Participants	1671					
2022 JFY ONLY # of Conference & Event Attendees	100					

2022 General OCSCD # of Programs & Events	3					
2022 General OCSCD # of Program Participants	95					
2022 General OCSCD # of Conference and Event Attendees	100					
2022 Total # of ALL Participants	2100					
2022 Total # of ALL Programs and Events	23					