

Environmental Commission/Green Team Monthly Update, January 2026

Dear Neighbors:

Happy New Year! Let's get to the update!

Upcoming Meeting

Attend our next Green Team and Environmental Commission meeting on Monday, January 12, 7:30PM, at the Porch Club, 213 Howard Street.

Everyone is welcome. Bring a neighbor. You can just observe or get involved with our programming!

Road Salt Season Has Arrived!

Did you know? Road salt is not good for the environment, so experts encourage us to use less. In fact, you only need about a coffee mug's worth of salt for the average twenty sidewalk squares! [You can learn more about how to "salt smarter" through this Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions webinar](#) through the [Winter Salt Week website](#). See also [this guidance from our friends at the Loudon Wildlife Conservancy](#).

State-Wide Drought Warning

We are currently in under a [state-wide drought warning](#). Some NJ DEP recommendations for conserving water this winter include but are not limited to: install low-flow shower heads; run washing machines and dishwashers only when they are full; compost veggie waste instead of using your garbage disposal; as you plan your spring and summer gardens, consider planting native plants; figure out where your water valve is so you can turn off the water immediately if a pipe bursts. And more!

Formal Wear Pop-Up Shop

Want to donate formal wear? Or do you have the need for formal wear? The Mount Laurel Environmental Commission invites you to donate and/or borrow. Donations will be accepted at the Mount Laurel Free Library, 100 Walt Whitman Avenue, Mount Laurel, NJ, 08054, through January 31, 2026. The Pop-Up Shop will take place Saturday, February 7, 2026, 12:00PM-5:00PM, and Sunday, February 8, 12:00PM-3:00PM, at the Mount Laurel Community Center, 100 Mount Laurel Road, Mount Laurel, NJ, 08054.

Upcoming Events

Multi-week programs

Do you want to learn more about green infrastructure? Register for the Rutgers Green Infrastructure Champions Program! Workshops take place online on Fridays, 10AM-12PM, 2026, starting January 9. *This program as already begun, but you can still register.* Participants must attend five workshops to earn a certification. FREE. [Learn more and register here.](#)

Want to become a local environmental expert? Consider registering for the 2026 Rutgers Environmental Stewards continuing education program! The class convenes online weekly on Tuesday nights, Jan. 20-May 12, 2026. Certification requires a community service project. Fee is \$325 with a limited number of discounts are available to those in need. [Join today!](#)

Do you want some helping turning your outdoor space into wildlife habitat? Register for a four-week workshop, led by Sarah F. Jane and hosted by the Native Plant Society of New Jersey. Workshop dates: Monday, February 2, 9, 16, and 23, 2026, 6:30PM-8:30PM. Online on Zoom. Registration cost: \$160. [Learn more and register here.](#)

One-off events

“Wildlife in Winter,” lecture with Burlington County Principal Park Naturalist Jen Bulava. This lecture will take place on Friday, January 23, 2026, 2:00PM-3:00PM, at the Burlington County Lyceum of History and Natural Sciences, 307 High Street, Mount Holly, NJ 08060. FREE. [Register here.](#)

Wildlife Baby Shower for Cedar Run Wildlife Preserve. This event will take place on Saturday, February 7, 2026, from 1:00PM-3:00PM, at the Farmstead at Medford, 370 Stokes Road, Medford, NJ, 08055. Includes wildlife meet and greets! [Learn more here.](#)

9th Annual New Jersey Watershed Conference, February 26 (online)-27 (in-person), 2026. The in-person location is the College of New Jersey, Ewing. [Learn more and register here.](#) [\\$65-130.](#)

Long-term opportunities

Enjoy visiting museums? Check out *Ecosystems at Risk: Threatened and Endangered in New Jersey*, an [exhibition at the State Museum of New Jersey](#), on view through March 15, 2026, 205 West State Street, Trenton, NJ, 08608. General admission is Free.

What Have We Been Up To?

The Environmental Commission and Green Team, along with Council liaisons, have been listening to and researching resident related to environmental issues such as pollution drift from Philadelphia and possible code violations at sites within the Borough. The Environmental Commission and Green Team are exploring partnering with Burlington County and an engineering firm to conduct a climate change vulnerability assessment for Riverton. The goal is to identify key actions to help mitigate risks to the community.

Led by Borough Council member Edgard Wilburn and thanks in part to a grant from the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commission (ANJEC), volunteers from the Green Team and Environmental Commission, along with student volunteers from St. Joseph's Prep School, started clearing the trail along the Pompeston Creek next to Riverton Memorial Park. The next step will likely involve lining the trail with some railroad ties. If you want to get involved, let us know!

Our new native plant subcommittee is working on exciting initiatives such as a native plant garden tour. If you want to get involved, let us know!

We're also collaborating on developing a compost education and pilot program for Riverton residents—stay tuned for more information about this soon!

Finally, we kicked off our Climate Change reading group in July. Are you interested in reading more about climate change and learning about what you can do to help? Join our climate change reading group! We will meet **every third Thursday** of the month through February 2026. There are two meetings left (January and February). We will meet at Calvary Presbyterian, 300 4th St, from 7-8PM. You need not read the entire book or attend every session to participate! Free plus the cost of books. Register any time (including after July) by [filling out this form](#). Questions? Email Nicole at nbelolan@pm.me.

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This reading group was created in partnership with the Rutgers Environmental Stewards (RES) program. The program is funded by Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. For more information, visit envirostewards.rutgers.edu.

Things to Read

It's winter! Do you need to brush up on your knowledge of winter weather? Check out this resource from the [UCAR Center for Science Education](#).

Want to learn more about stormwater management? Check out ANJEC's resource paper, "Stormwater Management for Municipalities: Green Infrastructure Designs and Options," [available here](#).

Curious about how you and our community can manage climate change? Review Rutgers-New Brunswick New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center and the Nature Conservancy, "New Jersey Nature-Based Solutions: Planning, Implementation, and Monitoring Reference Guide," June 2025, [available here](#).

[Nature Neighbors—Q&A](#)

Nature Neighbors will be back next month!

[Year in Review](#)

[Communications](#)

Issued monthly e-update to list of approximately 95 residents.

Maintained a Green Team Facebook (125 followers) and Instagram (290 followers) presence along with an Environmental Commission Facebook page (346 followers).

[Field Work](#)

Performed multi-municipality Delaware Riverbank cleanup

Performed several school native plant rain garden and War Memorial native plant maintenance sessions.

Recycled over 1,500 pounds of flexible plastic in 2025 and earned two benches from the NexTrex challenge (with some plastic recycled in 2024).

Assisted planting ten white oak trees at Lockheed Martin in Moorestown, in collaboration with Hainesport Environmental Commission and Green Team.

[Outreach](#)

Welcomed four speakers on native plants (Brooke McGinn and Gina DiMaio), rain barrels (Emma Melvin), and residential solar (Dan Reed). Served from 15-50 residents at each event. The DiMaio event was sponsored by the Porch Club.

Distributed educational handouts on topics ranging from dark skies measures to native plants resources to renewable energy resources at six Borough of Riverton Food Truck nights.

Launched climate change reading group, in collaboration with Rutgers Environmental Stewards, with each session attracting between 4 and 10 registrants.

Collaborated with regional Green Teams on organizing and hosting a regional Repair Cafe at the Agricultural Center in Moorestown, which served 37 individuals.

Distributed educational handout on leaving the leaves at the Riverton Free Library.

Policies and Issues

Advocated for native plants in Borough Council meetings.

Established a Native Plant subcommittee.

Advocated for and assisted with researching environmental concerns at two sites in Riverton.

Provided support for early stages of Borough-wide composting initiative.

Grants

Led by Councilman Wilburn, received a \$750 grant from ANJEC to work on the trail along the Pompeston Creek. Completed two work days clearing the trail with the help of Ronan Kelly and the St. Joe's Prep Environmental Club. Assessed the trail for next steps.

And much more! We look forward to working more on safeguarding Riverton's environmental resources with you in 2026!

Are you in the Know?

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Sincerely,

Michael Gawbill

Borough of Riverton Environmental Commission Chair and

Nicole Belolan

Green Team Chair and Borough of Riverton Councilperson



See next page for our November and December 2025 updates.

Please note: Due to Borough staffing changes, the November and December 2025 updates were not distributed widely. Please see below for November and December 2025 updates.

Environmental Commission/Green Team Monthly Update, November 2025

Dear Neighbors:

We hope everyone had a fun and safe Halloween! If you don't think you'll use your costume again next year, consider saving it to donate to a Halloween shop next fall!

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Want the NJ State Assembly to pass the Green Amendment? Would you like to discuss this with others in the region? Join the Pinelands Preservation Alliance online for "The People's Hearing for the New Jersey Green Amendment." This event will take place via zoom on Wednesday, Nov. 12, from 7:00PM-8:00PM. [Register here.](#)

Rutgers Cooperative Extension Earth Day Every Day Webinar Series—FREE! [Register here.](#)

- Monday, November 10, Rock You Like a Hurricane: Hurricane Science, with Dr. Travis Miles, Rutgers University

Thinking about adding a small pond to your garden? Attend "How to Create a No-Fuss Wildlife Pond with naturalist Pat Sutton," Coordinated by Southeast Chapter of the Native Plant Society of New Jersey, Monday, November 17, 7:00PM, Stockton University, Unified Science Center, Room 346. FREE.

Like looking up at the stars? Attend a FREE Public Star Watch at Batsto Village on Saturday, November 22, 2025, at 5:30PM, 31 Batsto Road, Hammonton, NJ 08037. Note per the advertisement: “The event is weather permitting, and visitors are encouraged to check the WAS website (<https://go.pinelandsalliance.org/e/1047083/2025-11-06/2qgpv/534052789/h/fsw5W4zcEaRRTOTNV2bwdMWsLO9fcdJgFrvoxJwCT68>) after 1 PM. the day of the event to confirm it is still happening should there be cloudy skies.”

Enjoy visiting museums? Check out *Ecosystems at Risk: Threatened and Endangered in New Jersey*, an [exhibition at the State Museum of New Jersey](#), on view through March 15, 2026, 205 West State Street, Trenton, NJ, 08608. General admission is Free.

New Resource!

Thanks again to Dan Reed for an excellent talk on residential solar last week! If you missed it, [check out our resources on renewable energy here](#).

It's That Time of Year Again—Time to Leave the Leaves

Leaves are great, free mulch and fertilizer, and they provide habitat for beneficial insects and other wildlife. [They even help trap carbon](#) and prevent it from turning into carbon dioxide (which contributes to global warming). If this practice is new to you (and that's OK – it is new to many of us!), consider leaving the leaves in one or two garden beds. Of course, if you have excess leaves, the Borough will pick them up as usual. [You can read more about the benefits of leaving the leaves here](#), and feel free to let us know if you have questions. Tag us on social media with your fall leaves pics!

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We recently completed maintenance on the native plant rain garden at the Riverton School and the native plant garden behind the war memorial. Check out these spaces for inspo for your own property. Remember—[we have many native plant resources on our website, too](#).

We're also collaborating on developing a compost education and pilot program for Riverton residents—stay tuned for more information about this soon!

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Sincerely,

Michael Gawbill and Nicole Belolan

Borough of Riverton Environmental Commission and Green Team



[Environmental Commission/Green Team Monthly Update, December 2025](#)

Dear Neighbors:

Brrr! It feels like winter. Let's get to the update!

[Upcoming Meeting](#)

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Everyone is welcome. Bring a neighbor. You can just observe or get involved with our programming!

[Tips for a More Sustainable December](#)

Did you know? According to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, "American households generate about 1 million additional tons of trash between Thanksgiving and the New Year." You can [read some tips from the DEP about how to reduce trash output here!](#)

[Here Comes Road Salt Season](#)

Road salt is not good for the environment, so experts encourage us to use less. Did you know that you only need about a coffee mug's worth of salt for the average twenty sidewalk squares? [You can learn more about how to "salt smarter" through this](#)

[Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions webinar](#) through the [Winter Salt Week website](#).

There is Still Time to Leave the Leaves

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Are you interested in learning more about how Riverton can mitigate flooding, extreme heat, and more? Attend the “Nature-Based Solutions” webinar, hosted by the New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center, Rutgers-New Brunswick. This webinar is FREE and will take place on Wednesday, December 10, 12PM-1PM. [Register here](#).

One-off events

Do you want to learn more about ducks? Do you want to spend a little time outside? Join Burlington County naturalist Gina DiMaio for “Wildlife Watch: Weird Ducks of Winter.” This outing will take place at Willingboro Lakes Park, 60 Beverly-Rancocas Rd, Willingboro, NJ 08046, on Thursday, December 11, 2025, from 10:30AM-12:00PM. FREE. [Register here](#).

Hoping to put some outdoorsy events on your January calendar now? Register for “Wildlife Watch: Hibernation Hike” with Burlington County naturalist Gina DiMaio. This hike will take place on Thursday, January 8, 2026, 10:00AM-12:00PM, at Amico Island Park, 81 Norman Ave., Delran, NJ 08075. FREE. [Register here](#).

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