

Conservation Corner

Durham Soil & Water Conservation District newsletter

District Paints the Town Green:

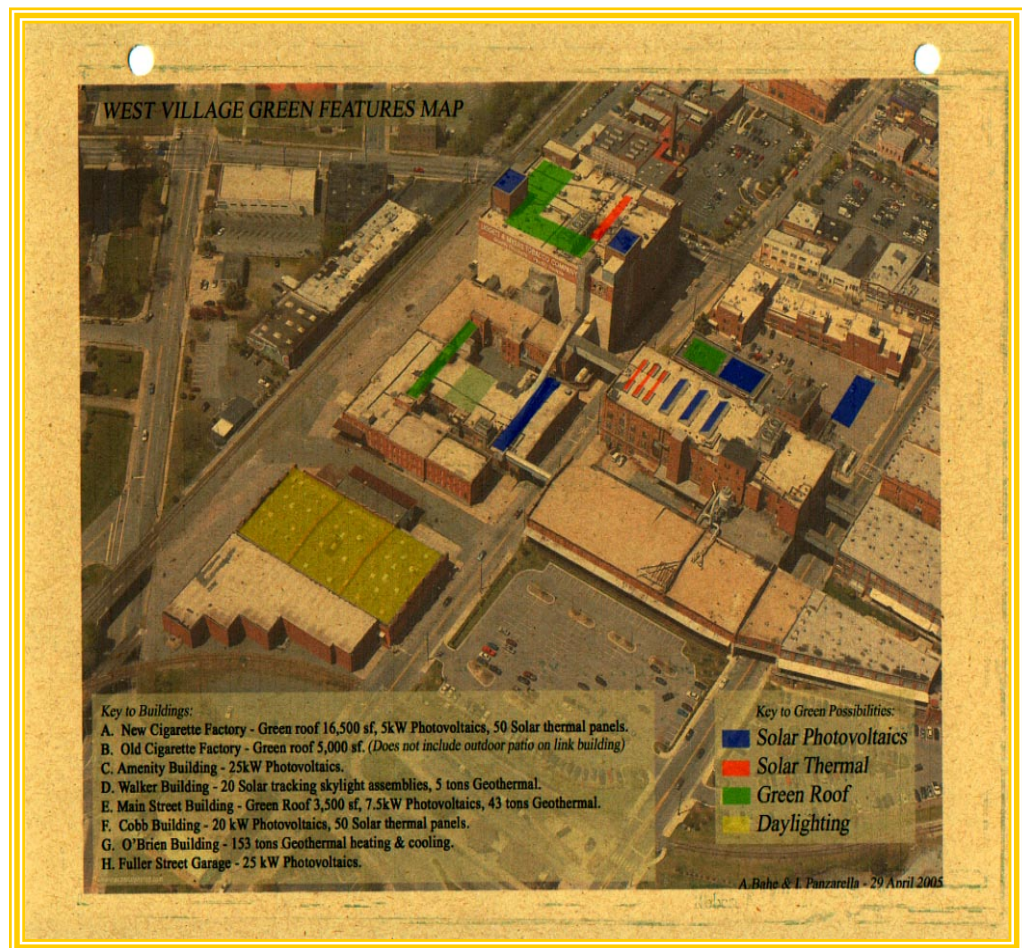
Partners with Blue Devil Ventures on Green Roof Project

Many state and local governments continue to face mounting challenges associated with protecting water quality and conserving water resources. As economic and population growth pressures rise, urban areas have particularly difficult choices to make in terms of technology, regulations, and investments in water quality management. Today it is

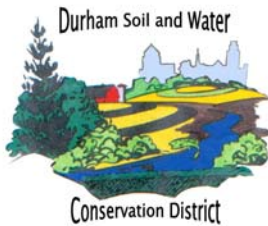
recognized that stormwater runoff is one of the greatest contributors of pollution in watersheds and the high percentage of impervious surfaces found in metropolitan areas makes our city centers primary sources of impairment. Despite this situation little is known about the most effective and efficient ways to integrate stormwater BMP's into urban centers. In addition, property redevelopment activities pose unique opportunities for communities to enhance and protect environmental quality. Not only is it beneficial to remediate old industrial sites, but redeveloping and retrofitting existing building sites can help reduce sprawl and demands for long distance commutes.

The City of Durham reflects a number of urban centers located throughout the Piedmont and Eastern region of North Carolina

where, historically, local economies were based on industrial operations, particularly some facet of tobacco and textile production. As a result, a range of old warehouse and industrial facilities exist within the urban areas having the potential for redevelopment. Property redevelopment can serve as a form of low-impact development (LID) in urban centers where the impacts of growth can be accommodated in environmentally sound ways. This is particularly so when green and sustainable design features are integrated into redevelopment projects.



(Article continues on next page)



(919)560-0558

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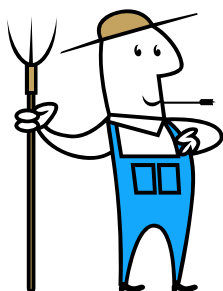
USDA

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE

BRENT BOGUE DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

The Durham Soil & Water Conservation District and the NRCS work in a partnership to conserve, enhance and promote the natural resources of Durham County by providing technical assistance, environmental education information and economic incentives to County citizens and by exhibiting a diversified program to meet its changing needs.

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.



(Continued...)

The Durham Soil and Water Conservation District has been awarded a Clean Water Management Trust Fund Grant to conduct such an innovated project in the City of Durham. The Districts' original grant application was for \$325,000 to assist with the project but the District was granted only \$100,000. At that time a new budget was developed. The revised plan, now projected to cost \$672,000, will concentrate on two roof tops of 3,000 square feet areas for substrate performance comparisons. The Durham Soil and Water Conservation District and the developer are interested in demonstrating and evaluating innovative BMP's and green design features throughout the project site. The technology mix would include green roofs, cistern collection and recycling systems, specialized pervious materials in streetscapes, and a subsurface sand filter nitrogen treatment system. As a result, it is expected that both stormwater flows and pollutant loads leaving the site would be reduced in a measurable way. It is anticipated that flow reductions of at least 50% can be expected and subsequently transport of suspended solids and pollutants often associated with particle transport (phosphorous and some metals). The integration of vegetated areas, sand filters and green roof areas is expected to reduce total nitrogen flows and overall pollutant loads from the site, including bacteria. The system is expected to reduce nitrogen outputs as much as 40%. The project is expected to get under construction this summer. Once the project is completed the District plans on conducting educational tours.

North Carolina Ag Cost-Share Program News

The North Carolina Cost Share Program year runs from July 1 through June 30 each year. Normally we receive notice of our allocation amount sometime in August but we begin accepting applications for the 2007 fiscal year July 1. These will be ranked in priority to be funded based on such criteria as nearest proximity to watershed water supplies, highest soil loss reduction due to slope length and slope percentages and other water quality improvement criteria. This is a water quality improvement program which shares the cost of Best Management Practices on agricultural land such as grassed waterways, field borders, terraces and cropland conversion to grass, trees, and wildlife plantings just to name a few. This past fiscal year (2006) we wrote 17 cost share contracts for a total sum of \$98,593 dollars. Best Management Practices included in these contracts were cropland conversion to grass, sod-based rotations and 5 year no-till. These practices have and will continue to prevent thousands of tons of soil loss from entering our streams and lakes saving our water quality from the harmful effects of sedimentation to us and our wildlife.

If you own or operate agricultural land and have a need for improving water quality runoff, please contact the Durham Soil and Water Conservation District office by calling 919-560-0558.

~ To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves ~ Mohandas K. Gandhi

Big Sweep

Don't forget, the annual Big Sweep event will be here before you know it! This year the county wide clean-up of all streams, rivers, and lake shores is set for October 7, 2006. So if you'd like to get more information, be a zone captain or just want to participate, be sure to call Jennifer at (919) 560-0557 as soon as possible!

Also, let us know if there is a stream in your area in need of a good clean-up. We need sites to visit on October 7th and need your help to find the streams though out the county in the most need of a cleaning.

In other news, the NC Big Sweep, an award winning 501c3 Nonprofit, is holding a raffle in an effort to raise money. Pick up a raffle ticket for your chance to win a 16 ft Daysailer Boat. Tickets are only \$5 and the drawing will be held on Nov 17th (you do not have to be present to win). If you'd like more information, check out www.ncbigssweep.org to see a picture of the boat and call Jennifer at (919) 560-0557 to get a ticket today.

Congratulations to Durham's Envirothon Teams

The Durham Soil & Water Conservation District would like to congratulate all four Envirothon teams from Durham County on their outstanding success at recent NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation's Envirothon Competitions. These teams, the Vicious Vipers, the Killer Kudzu, the Cypress Knees, and the Dirt Bags participated in the Area IV Envirothon competition on March 17, 2006 and we are proud to announce that all four teams placed high in the rankings, with two of the teams, the Vicious Vipers and the Cypress Knees, qualifying for the State competition.

At the State level Envirothon competition on April 28-29th the Vicious Vipers, a Durham home school team, took home 7th place from the middle school category. The Cypress Knees, from the NC School of Science and Math, earned a 9th place finish from the high school category. This year there were a total 53 high school teams and 54 middle school teams from across NC competing at the State level.

The Envirothon test middle and high school students in their knowledge of natural resources in the areas of soils, wildlife, aquatics, forestry, and current environmental issues. Anyone interested in competing at next years competitions or volunteering their time to help our teams should contact us at (919) 560-0558.

Rain Barrel Sale

Thank you to everyone who came out on June 3, 2006 to our first ever Rain Barrel sales event. The Durham Soil & Water Conservation District, in partnership with the City of Durham Department of Water Management sponsored the "Conservation Station" in the parking lot of Durham's Agricultural Building (721 Foster St.). The "Conservation Station" allowed citizens a chance to come out and receive water conservation tips and ideas as well as purchase Rain Barrels and Water Efficient Showerheads. All proceeds from the Rain Barrel sale went back to the District's Environmental Education efforts. If you didn't get a chance to come out on the 3rd and pick up a Rain Barrel for yourself, don't worry, another event is in the works. Be on the look out for the next "**Conservation Station**" **on August 5, 2006 from 9am – 12 pm** here in the parking lot of Durham's Agricultural Building (721 Foster St). Pre-order by August 2nd to make sure you get one. In the meantime, if you'd like more information on the Rain Barrels just visit our webpage at www.co.durham.nc.us/swcd and click on the 'Items for Sale' link. To reserve one, just call Jennifer at (919) 560-0557 or email jbrooks@co.durham.nc.us and leave your name, number, how many you want and you'll be put on the pre-order list. Remember, quantities are limited, so be sure to pre-order your Rain Barrel today!

*Durham Soil and Water Conservation District
Spring/Summer 2006 issue*

Adopt-a-Stream

The Durham Soil & Water Conservation District is in the process of setting up a county-wide Adopt-a-Stream program. Like the statewide Adopt-a-Highway program, Durham County residents can "adopt" a section of a stream, river, or lake shore near them. Participants will be responsible for their sections clean-up and monitoring of its health year-round. Anyone interested in participating or if you would like more information please call us at (919) 560-0558 or email Jennifer at jbrooks@co.durham.nc.us

Bird Boxes for Sale

In an effort to support and encourage local wildlife, the Durham Soil & Water Conservation District is now offering bird boxes for sale. We have Bluebird, Wood Duck, and Bat boxes. The Bluebird boxes come in two different designs. You can get a basic framed pine Bluebird box for \$12, or a beautiful A-framed design made out of cypress for \$14. The Wood Duck boxes also come in two different types, pine for \$32 and cypress for \$42. Bat boxes are made of cypress and are \$15. Supplies are extremely limited so call (919) 560-0558 now to get yours.

*Durham Soil & Water Conservation District
721 Foster St
Durham, NC 27701*

If you have an address change, please call us at (919) 560-0558 to update your information.