

# CONSERVATION NEWS

Focus 2014: Conservation in Challenging Times

February 2014

## COVER CROPS FOR WATER QUALITY AND SOIL HEALTH



Winter cover crops play an important role in cropland water quality and soil health. During the winter, they protect the soil from erosion, break up compaction, and take up available nutrients. After crops are harvested, the remaining residue helps the soil retain moisture, prevents erosion, and adds organic matter to the soil. The state funded conservation cost-share program provided **critically needed funding** to assist farmers with the costs associated with planting over 7,000 acres of cover crop in 2013. **The proposed state budget does not include funding for cover crop or cost-share programs in 2014.**



Daikon radish



Corn growing through wheat stubble

### FOCUS ON SOIL HEALTH

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services has an excellent web site devoted to the importance of soil health. Go to [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov) and click on the soil health initiative.

### *Inside this issue:*

Conservation Cost Share	2
Water Management	3
District Board Members	4
Educational Outreach	4
Poster Contest Winners	4
Soil and Water Theme	4
Logo for 2014	

### Did You Know?

In 2013, 46 farmers planted 7,010 acres of cover crop in New Castle County through the Conservation Cost Share Program.



## WORK CONTINUES ON DELAWARE BAY DIKES REHABILITATION PROJECTS



Riprap protection along a section of Buttonwood Dike looking towards the Delaware Memorial Bridge. Work by Merit Construction Engineers.



Rock being installed by K. C. Construction on the Army Creek Dike project south of New Castle in November 2013.

The District is administering five dike projects through funding provided by DNREC—Division of Watershed Stewardship. **The Red Lion Dike project has been completed.**

Red Lion Dike





## CONSERVATION COST SHARE PROGRAM ADDRESSES NATURAL RESOURCE CONCERNS



This hi-tensile fencing was being installed around a crop field that is being converted to pasture for beef cattle.



This newly dug wildlife pond is on the same farm and will be a great addition for water fowl habitat.



An eroding area at this stormwater pond in The Estates at Red Lion was protected with landscape stone and riprap.



These townhomes in Balleymeade back up to Naaman's Road. Trees were planted for noise reduction and wildlife habitat.



This heavy use area concrete pad provides a place for the farmer to clean up the animal manure from his herd of pigs.



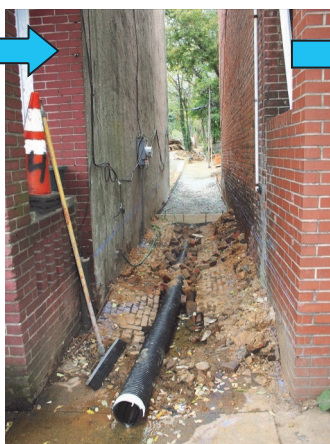
The pasture was planted using the District's seeder. The watering device will provide clean water for the beef cows as they are grazed through the pasture on a set rotation.



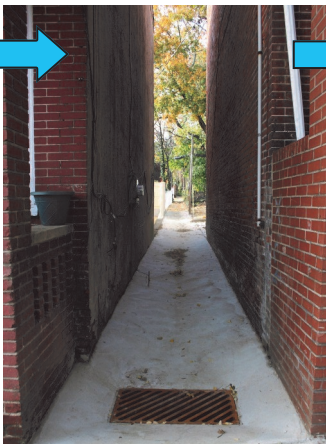
# WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS ADDRESS DRAINAGE ISSUES IN NEW CASTLE COUNTY



Constantly running water down this alleyway caused icing on West 5th Street in Wilmington



View of new pipe before being buried and connected to pipe system in street



View of completed project looking up alleyway



Catch basin located at upper end of project



An eroding drainage ditch behind this home in Piermont Woods near Newark is being piped with a lawn basin



The area was then seeded and stabilized using erosion control mat



The upper section of the drainage ditch was protected with riprap



Drainage system being installed in Huntington subdivision near Newark



View of completed project with photo insert of catch basin



The drainage from several yards comes to this outlet



Swale and enclosed drainage system in the Four Seasons community near Newark



Swale installation along Route 71 near Townsend





## NEW CASTLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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### Board of Supervisors

Robert L. Emerson	Chair
J. Christopher Roberts	Vice-Chair
Dan Severson, Extension Agent	Secretary
Meghan Lester	Treasurer
Kathy Klein	Member
Richard E. Morris	Member
Thomas Gordon	County Executive
Mike Harris	County Executive Rep.

Top row: poster winners from All Saints Catholic school.

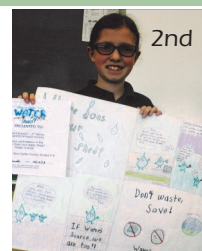
Bottom row left: poster winners from Middletown H. S.

Bottom row right: Eason Li from The Independence School was the **state and national winner** for his age group—second and third grade. The winning poster was displayed at the National Association of Conservation Districts annual conference in Anaheim, CA. All the winning posters are on display at the NCCD office.

### POSTER CONTEST WINNERS



Madeleine Morris



Olivia Knestaut



Jack Sweeney

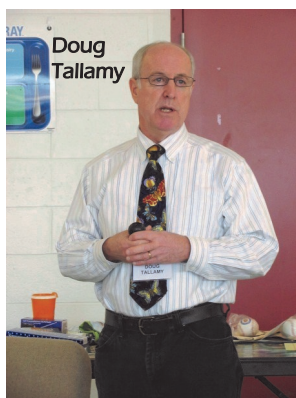


David Hall (2nd), Alexis Ferguson (1st) and Taylor Cameron (3rd)



Eason Li - National Winner!

## EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH



The District was a sponsor of the Delaware Association for Environmental Education's 5th annual conference held at Milford High School. The conference drew almost 90 participants to hear Professor Doug Tallamy speak about the importance of "Bringing Nature Home" - how we need to connect suburban landscapes with the natural environment to sustain local wildlife populations.



2014 Soil and Water Stewardship Theme



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