



# American Sustainable Business Network

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## Clean Water: Volume 5, July 2023



*Image captions left to right:*

Left: PA delegation Farmer Jawn, ASBN staff, All together Now PA, National Family Farming Coalition and PA Flax Project with Representative Scanlon's office.

Right: The New York Delegation outside the Capitol building while on the Hill to advocate for regenerative agriculture in the 2023 Farm Bill: Scenic Hudson/Northeast Carbon Alliance, Bromberger Law, Armonia, LLC, Brand Geek, and Iva Kaufmann Associates.

Building on a series of successful DC events that have amplified farmer voices, the American Sustainable Business Network teamed up with the Regenerate America coalition to host The 2023 Farm Bill Fly In Making the Business Case for a Regenerative Transition. The coalitions were joined by over 30 business leaders and farmers, including delegations made up of representatives from within the watershed in New York and Pennsylvania, in nearly 40 congressional meetings.

The business leaders shared the story of their business or farm and why it is so vital to prioritize regenerative agriculture practices in the farm bill in order to protect not only soil health and water quality but also the future of the U.S.

economy. Both groups from within the watershed had very successful meetings.

The Pennsylvania delegation met with both Senator Fetterman and Casey who are continuing to be strong allies and support multiple of the conservation bills that were included in the lobby day asks. Notably, Fetterman is expected to introduce and co-sponsor the [Strengthen Agricultural Organic Research Act of 2023](#) which had not yet been introduced on the Senate side. By investing in projects to solve critical problems and help farmers become more productive, efficient, and profitable when using organic practices, this program would ultimately empower more farmers to use practices that will protect waterways and promote soil health. The PA team met also met with Representatives Scanlon, Evans, and Dean.

The New York delegation met with Senator Gillibrand, a member of the House Agriculture Committee to talk about local food systems. On the House side, they met with Representatives Nadler, Espaillat, and Ryan. As a result of this meeting, Representative Nadler submitted his support for our policy priorities!

*Thank you to ASBN members Megafood, David Robinov, and Jeffrey Scales for their donations to bring in farmers for this event!*

Please consider showing your support for these policies by signing on to our letter of support [here](#).

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## Watershed Stories

### **Op-Ed: Renew Delaware Basin Act to Protect Watershed and Economy**

By Kelly Knutson, Director of the Coalition of Delaware River Watershed and Richard Lawton, Director of NJSBC

The Delaware River Watershed is a key resource for communities and businesses in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. Proper stewardship of the Delaware River and its surrounding ecology is critical to the generation of drinking water, agricultural activities, fishing, and recreation, among other important uses. The Delaware River Basin Conservation Reauthorization Act was recently reintroduced in Congress. The

bill would extend the existing Act to 2030, effectively providing funding to expand recreation, mitigate erosion, improve water quality, protect wildlife, and control flood damage in the basin. These investments will ensure a resilient watershed, which will have numerous positive economic effects on the residents and businesses reliant on clean water, in particular for low-income and rural communities in need of additional local jobs. The full Op-ed, published in the Press of Atlantic City can be accessed [here](#).

“In New Jersey, the watershed supports more than 174,000 jobs, with \$3.71 billion in wages. Without clean, reliable water, New Jersey’s economy would not thrive, as polluted water affects businesses and strong clean water protections contribute to a healthy economy and local jobs. Investing in the Delaware River and its tributaries is not only an investment in the watershed’s health, but in New Jersey’s economic growth and vitality.”



*Image Captions left to right:*

Left: Speakers included N.J. Assemblyman William Spearman (NJ-5), Camden Community Partnership’s Joe Myers, Camden County’s Maggie McCann Johns and the N.J. Dept. of Environmental Protection’s Elizabeth Dragon.

Center: Mayor Vic Carstarphen received a resolution honoring and recognizing the City’s commitment to its communities and natural environment at the quarterly business meeting.

Right: Local Advocacy organizations, private sector companies and representatives from state government came together to interface with members of the public on issues related to community health, the environment and more.

## **New Jersey**

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) announced the enactment of the Inland Flood Protection Rule which will update New Jersey’s existing flood hazard and stormwater regulations by replacing outdated precipitation estimates with modern data that account for observed and projected increases in rainfall. These changes will help reduce flooding from [stormwater runoff](#) and increase the [resilience](#) of new developments located in flood-prone inland areas. The updated standards will apply to certain

new and substantially reconstructed developments in inland riverine areas that are subject to flooding, but they do not prohibit development in these flood-hazard areas. Upon adoption, New Jersey will become the first state to use predictive precipitation modeling to implement rules to inform and protect future development and redevelopment from the impacts of [climate change](#).

[Read more about the rule](#) from [Clean Water is Good for Business Steering Committee](#) member Princeton Hydro.

To further protect New Jersey from the impacts of flooding NJDEP has awarded \$7 million in Stormwater Assistance Grants. Largely funded by the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund, the grants will go toward water infrastructure projects that will reduce flooding threats, create jobs, protect public health, and enhance the health of the state's waterways. Read more about the specific projects in the waterway and across the state [here](#).

### **The Delaware River Basin Commission Held the first “Camden Community Day”!**

On June 7, 2023, the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) held its first-ever Camden Community Day. Speakers discussed future plans to further transform the remaining industrial sites along the waterfront into usable, accessible, and connected spaces for recreation and a new era of business. Read the full story [here](#).

*The DRBC would like to especially thank the Camden Community Partnership, the Riverlink Ferry and Rutgers University Camden for their assistance and support in hosting Camden Community Day.*

### **New York**

In light of Sackett v. EPA New York Takes a Stance on State-Level Water Protection

Last month, the New York State legislature passed the Class C Streams bill (S.1725/A.4601), which stands to greatly expand the number of fully protected waterways across the state. Strong state-level measures like this are urgent and critical in the wake of the Supreme Court's March 2023 ruling in Sackett v. EPA, which greatly reduced the scope of the Clean Water Act of 1972. See our national water stories for more on the decision.

Our streams are essential to our economy, our livelihood, and our climate resilience. They provide clean drinking water to our homes and to the many

farms, breweries, wineries, and countless other businesses in our food system. They provide essential habitats for fish and wildlife and also serve as vital buffers against flooding events by reducing and redirecting surges that would otherwise cause property damage, road closures, or loss of life. Now, without the federal protections that endured for half a century, these streams require state protections.

### **New York Passes First-in-The-Nation Anti-Pesticide Act**

The New York State Legislature also passed the Birds and Bees Protection Act (A.7640/S.1856), a first-in-the-nation bill that would rein in the use of neurotoxic neonicotinoid pesticides (“neonics”). Neonics persist in soil and are easily carried long distances by rain or irrigation water. This bill focuses specifically on the types of crops for which neonics have negligible pest management benefits.

Widespread neonic contamination in New York harms wildlife, pollutes water, and contaminates our food. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, pollinators provide nearly \$440 million worth of pollination services to New York. The State’s ability to produce staple crops such as apples, grapes, onions, and pumpkins depends heavily on these pollinators, and many of these crops are pollinator limited. The well-documented effect of neonics on bee colonies, birds, and other pollinators impacts small farms across the state as well as the breweries, food establishments, and other businesses that depend on those farms. Meanwhile, more and more farmers are demonstrating that eliminating synthetic pesticides can increase their revenue and improve their yield amid extreme weather events.

### **Pennsylvania**

Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia’s Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Partners hosted their Spring Quarterly Meeting on Friday, June 23 at member business North Creek Nurseries in Landenberg, PA. The meeting was an opportunity for businesses in the GSI and architecture industries to meet a native plant supplier directly and to see the operations of such a business up close which includes native gardens and a comprehensive stormwater management system. Attendees ranged from landscape designers, architects, nonprofit organizations, water product providers, and other GSI practitioners. North Creek Nurseries is a 70 percent native plant grower and wholesaler, celebrating its 35th anniversary as a company.

North Creek Nurseries was recently recognized by the Governor’s Invasive Species Council for the second annual Pennsylvania Native Species Day. At the event, Dana Rhodes, the Plant Protection Division Chief for the Department of Agriculture said, “We can all play a role in caring for our environment. The simple act of planting a native plant in place of an invasive one bolsters our ecosystem and increases biodiversity, making a positive impact on the world around us. Partners like North Creek Nurseries can support your efforts by helping ensure we’re picking the right plants for a greener future.”

Native plants are an integral part of a healthy and biodiverse ecosystem by encouraging healthy and dynamic systems that can better respond to stormwater, climate impacts, provide natural habitats, support pollinators, and minimize the need for harmful fertilizers and pesticides.

Read more here: <https://www.morningagclips.com/invasive-species-council-celebrates-pa-native-species-at-north-creek-nurseries/>



Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia’s Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Partners hosted their Spring Quarterly Meeting at North Creek Nurseries in Landenberg, PA

Delaware Democratic Senator Carper has announced that he will not seek re-election to a fifth term this year, capping a political career of nearly a half-century in office. A champion of clean water and economic development, Senator Carper has been instrumental in protections and historic funding for the Delaware River watershed.

Sen. Carper has served Delaware in many capacities including as its Senator and as the Chairman of the Senate Environment & Public Works (EPW) Committee. He has consistently worked to advance and defend sensible policies that safeguard clean drinking water, protect against harmful pollution, and conserve crucial wildlife habitats for our Delaware River Watershed communities. Simultaneously, he has actively fostered job creation and economic expansion, fully recognizing the crucial role the Basin plays in both the region's environment and economy.

[Read the full statement from the Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed here.](#)

## **National Water News:**

### **Sackett**

On May 25th the Supreme Court made the decision to side with big polluters, narrowing the scope of the Clean Water Act by eliminating protections for wetlands and streams, except in minimal circumstances, putting the health of our communities, the prosperity of our local economies, and the safeguarding of our local ecosystems in danger. The Supreme Court's decision ignores the overwhelming scientific consensus and undoes protections that had safeguarded our waters for over 50 years. Now it's up to the states. While all wetlands are at risk, Delaware is among the states with the most wetlands and the highest proportion of wetlands to land, but the least protective laws. This could be catastrophic for Delaware's local economies, and even some of the states in the watershed that have stronger clean water protections, like New York, still face an uphill battle to ensure protection for all the wetlands and streams that federal laws will no longer cover. Congress and state officials across the country need to act fast and use every tool in the toolbox to stop big polluters from bulldozing our wetlands and dumping waste into our streams, exporting their pollution onto the communities and businesses downstream.

## **Clean Water Resources**

Clean Water is Good for Business Steering Committee member Dominique Lueckenhoff, SVP of Hugu Neu, recently published an article on how Climate-Smart Resilient Green Corridors (CSRGC) are nature-based, partnership-driven, equity-oriented, and use identified impacts and opportunities to achieve net zero (& beyond) climate and environmental outcomes. The CSRGC optimizes MS4 program implementation by leveraging decentralized, distributed infrastructure opportunities to target green infrastructure(GI) and nature-based approaches that enable greater collective resource investments, impact, and outcomes. The CSRGC

Corridor has key geospatial, temporal, and technological aspects, including the address of upstream and downstream watershed impacts, which ensure success. To help improve the identification and targeting of opportunity “sites” for restoration, mitigation, and preservation, the US EPA Region 3 in partnership with USACE, USDOT/FHWA, Maryland State Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Environmental Services, Maryland Department of Environment and numerous other partners developed the Watershed Resources Registry\_(WRR).

Read the full article [here](#)

## Events

### SBN Business for Impact Workshop: Debt Management for Sustainable Businesses

August 1 | 3:00–4:30PM | 915 Spring Garden St, Ste 502, Philadelphia, PA 19123

As most sustainable businesses prepare to rebound post the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as other challenges, debt management remains a crucial way of survival. Yet, more and more businesses find themselves drowning in new debt that they took on during the pandemic. How can businesses manage high levels of debt? What tools and resources exist to ensure their financial health and stability in the years to come?

In this interactive workshop, led by Chad Shank, Sr. Vice President, and Steve Salomon, Sr. Relationship Manager, for M&T Bank, as well as Camille Simpkins, Relationship Manager for PIDC, guests can expect a presentation and time to discuss their key challenges, along with ideas and questions to the speakers. There will also be time to network over snacks provided by Riverwards Produce. Guests are also encouraged to join a happy hour immediately following the program.