



# New Jersey NRCS FY 2018 Accomplishments



**THE USDA NATURAL RESOURCES  
CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)  
PROVIDES INNOVATIVE CONSERVATION  
SOLUTIONS TO RESTORE, ENHANCE  
AND PROTECT NEW JERSEY’S PRIVATE  
WORKING LANDS.**

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in New Jersey strives to use our conservation tools in creative ways to provide positive environmental uplifts on New Jersey’s private working lands. We strive to demonstrate that agricultural productivity is enhanced by good land stewardship and that good land stewardship not only benefits the farm footprint, but has far reaching benefits for the watershed community.

Because we only work with landowners and operators on a voluntary basis, we pride ourselves on developing respectful relationships and providing good customer service. This report attempts to capture New Jersey NRCS’s accomplishments and successes for fiscal year 2018 which covers October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018.

CARRIE LINDIG, State Conservationist

## Contents

2018: A Year in Review .....	2
Preserving New Jersey’s Working Lands	4
Preserving New Jersey’s Wetlands .....	5
Improving Soil Health .....	6
Championing Soil Health .....	7
Managing Forests & Wildlife .....	8
Aquaculture .....	9
Emergency Watershed Protection .....	10
Other Technical Support from NRCS .....	11
Partnership Highlights.....	12
Civil Rights and Outreach .....	14
Training.....	15

# Preserving New Jersey's Wetlands

**\$637,671 in FY2018**

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, Wetlands Reserve Easement (ACEP-WRE) component is a voluntary program that provides an opportunity for landowners to receive financial assistance to enhance wetlands in exchange for retiring marginal land from agricultural production.

ACEP-WRE provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to address wetland, wildlife habitat, soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on private lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner.

## Family Enjoys Benefits of Wetlands Restored

William and Ann Fox enrolled nearly 30 acres of their retired cranberry operation in NRCS's Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)\* in 2012. A permanent easement was placed on the enrolled acres, and they received technical and financial assistance from NRCS to restore their land to an Atlantic white cedar wetland forest. The restoration involved breaching of dikes, restoration of the native streambed, and the development of microtopography features. With more efficient wetland functions, the land is better able to provide surface and subsurface water storage, nutrient cycling, particulate removal, maintenance of plant and animal communities, water filtration or purification, and groundwater recharge. The restored wetlands are also providing many additional benefits to wildlife, such as beavers, ducks, eagles, and the endangered Pine Barren Tree Frog.

\*Note: The Wetlands Reserve Program has been discontinued; NRCS now offers opportunity for wetland restoration through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) – Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE).



*Every day we see Great Blue Heron and the White Egret out in the bog, and we want to expand that natural habitat.*

*The beavers work to flood certain areas which creates more habitat. It's funny actually; we used to be fighting with Mr. Beaver, constantly having to pull out his dams to make sure our farm didn't suffer. It was a lot of work, and we always felt like we were fighting with him. Now instead, we get to work with him – to work with nature. We actually love the dams he puts up now.*

*--Ann Fox*

## Easements acquired through FY2018 ACEP-WRE

\$637,671

3 easements and restoration, protecting about 95 acres

## Easements obligated in prior years that closed in FY2018

3 easements, over 240 Acres



See ***From Cranberries to Critters*** for more on this project. Link to <https://go.usa.gov/xEVGG>

for the interactive story about William and Ann Fox and the restoration work on their property.

