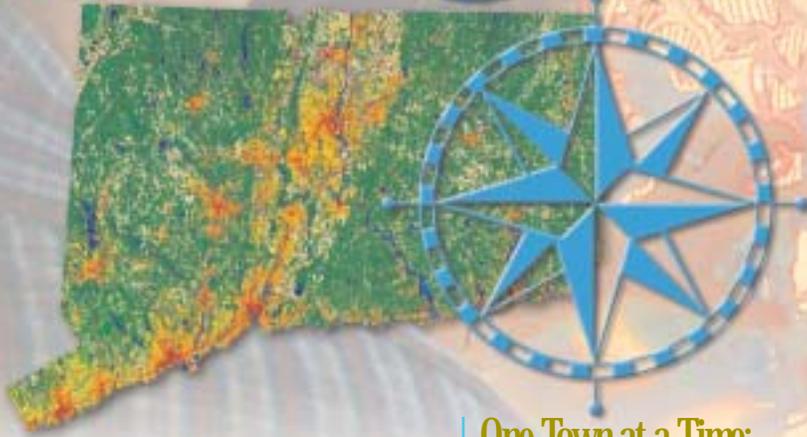


Connecticut NEMO Newsletter

Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials
Volume 1, Issue 1 Fall 2002



A New Newsletter

This is the inaugural newsletter of the **Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO)** Project, an educational effort at the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension System (CES) that is dedicated to helping the state's communities embark on resource-based planning as a first step toward sustainable development protective of CT's water resources. After a decade of existence, we finally gave in to the urge to produce a newsletter to keep our friends and colleagues up to date on all things NEMO, whether they be local triumphs, new educational materials, upcoming events or "other". We intend to issue this 4-page newsletter twice a year. Comments, from the ecstatic to the scathing, are encouraged, and can be submitted through the Comments and Suggestions Form on the NEMO website at: nemo.uconn.edu/contact or by calling (860) 345-4511. ☁

Laurie Giannotti, AICP
CT NEMO Programs Coordinator

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One Town at a Time: The Municipal Initiative

Several years ago, NEMO began a new chapter in the way that the project delivers educational programs. The new modus operandi, called the Municipal Initiative, allows the NEMO Team to focus more resources on fewer municipalities, establishing relationships with these towns that exist from the initial educational program through to implementation of on-the-ground changes.

The "Muni" was created in 1999 by project staff, in collaboration with the Nonpoint Source Section of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CT DEP). Each September, NEMO distributes a Request for Proposals (RFP) to all 169 towns in Connecticut, soliciting admission into the program (this year's deadline is October 10). The RFP consists of a one-page application form and a one-page letter of intent (visit the **What's New** section of our website to obtain the RFP form and letter online). The RFP is short but powerful in that it requires community leaders to commit

to the process of working with the University as partners on a long-term educational program with specific goals. Up to five municipalities, each in a different major Connecticut watershed, are chosen each year.

Selected towns must create a "NEMO Task Force," a group that includes representatives from planning, zoning, inland wetlands and conservation commissions, as well as the office of the chief elected official and any other groups deemed desirable by the town (examples include land trusts, economic development commissions, town engineer's office).

The Task Force works closely with the NEMO Team to determine project goals, educational programming and implementation. The Task Force designates a "contact person" who is a member of the Task Force and is responsible

for facilitating communication between the NEMO Team, the Task Force and the town. Municipalities that have had the most success in this initiative have had a contact person who also provides leadership.

The Task Force develops a "laundry list" of specific objectives to be pursued by the town, with support by the NEMO Team. The general categories are:
(1) changes to their **administrative**



NEMO Municipal Initiative Communities. Year One towns in orange, and Year Two towns are in green.

... continued on pg 4



Spotlight On . . .

Old Saybrook Town Update

Old Saybrook is a beautiful town that lies at the confluence of the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound. Based on our latest satellite-derived land cover information, we can estimate that the town's landscape is approximately 35% developed, with much of the undeveloped land in either forest or tidal marsh. Old Saybrook has a long history with the NEMO Project, extending back to 1992, when it was one of NEMO's original pilot communities. And, while some positive developments came out of that relationship, since the addition of a full time planner and the inclusion of the town in the Municipal Initiative things have begun to happen at a more rapid pace.

The Old Saybrook NEMO Task Force had their first meeting in January of 2001. Town officials were beginning to update their Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), and were concerned about both topical

issues (water resource protection) and process issues (communication between boards and commissions). Follow up meetings with NEMO staff, and the resultant educational programs, have helped the town's NEMO Task Force to move forward on a number of exciting initiatives.

The town Conservation Commission has conducted a Community Resource Inventory (CRI), and is working on an open space plan that incorporates the inventory information (photo 1). The Conservation Commission will work with the Planning and Zoning Commission to then incorporate the open space plan

into the updated POCD. In addition to planning initiatives, there are several projects that address development design that is more protection of water resources. In 2001, the Board of Selectman drafted and issued an Official Policy Statement that incorporates NEMO's nonpoint source management strategies and supports

alternative design standards for site development.

(Read the Official Policy Statement on our website, the **Initiatives** section, Town Updates.) In response to this statement, the Task Force is working with the Town Engineer and others to revise the town's road ordinance to allow for alternative storm water management practices that are more in line with NEMO principles and the state/federal Phase II Storm Water Management Program.

In addition, the Planning & Zoning Commission, in collaboration with the Task Force, Town Engineer and a local developer, has

implemented a "model subdivision" in town (photo 2). The subdivision incorporates vegetated swales and narrow road widths to help manage stormwater runoff and reduce nonpoint source pollution.



(photo 1) Old Saybrook Conservation Commission using their CRI to develop an Open Space Plan.



(photo 2) Old Saybrook model stormwater subdivision, showing grassed swale drainage system.



(photo 3) The Old Saybrook NEMO Task Force poses at subdivision site.

Planning and Zoning is also updating its regulations to incorporate impervious surface limits in their business districts, in order to minimize impacts from development to their coastal resources and Long Island Sound. Finally, the Commission will be considering incorporating nonpoint source management strategies in the update of its zoning regulations.

The Old Saybrook Economic Development Commission hosted NEMO's *Economic Development Planning* workshop, May 2002, as a kickoff to their planning initiative. Old Saybrook was also the first to host NEMO's new educational program, *Focus on the Coast*. This new program discusses priority coastal habitat areas and how to protect them (see related article on page 3). We keep track of any progress made by our Municipal Initiative communities on our website (the **Initiatives** section, Town Updates).

Kudos from the NEMO Team to the town officials, commission members, and Old Saybrook NEMO Task Force (photo 3) for their progressive efforts to implement resource-based community planning in their town! 🌊

Events Calendar

NEMO Workshops

October 29

"Linking Land Use to Water Quality"
Middlebury CNVCOG regional meeting.

November 7 & 8

LWV Phase II Storm Water Management,
UConn Stamford

For more information contact Laurie
Giannotti at (860) 345-4511 or email
lgiannotti@canr.uconn.edu

New & Noteworthy

Reducing Runoff Website Debuts

The NEMO Website has a new primary destination! In collaboration with the CT DEP's NPS Program, Reducing Runoff (R2) provides you with innovative techniques and development materials for keeping stormwater runoff on site. The R2 site contains photographs, information sheets, case studies, links to manufacturers and more. Whether you're pondering a green roof or a gravel driveway, this is the place for you to start. This information will be especially useful for those communities and developers affected by the state's upcoming Stormwater Phase II program. Please visit:

nemo.uconn.edu/reducing_runoff ❄️



Focus on the Coast is a multi-media project that educates local decision makers about the priority coastal resources of the Connecticut coastline. The program will include a PowerPoint™ presentation, fact sheets, and website complete with map information. Focus on the Coast is a collaboration of the NEMO Project, the Connecticut Sea Grant College Program, The Nature Conservancy Connecticut Chapter Coastal Program, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection Office of Long Island Sound Programs and NOAA Coastal Services Center.

For more information on any of these programs, please contact Laurie Giannotti at (860) 345-4511 or email lgiannot@canr.uconn.edu ❄️

of ways to keep yourself from bogging down or blowing up when tackling your local watershed. The Kit can be ordered through the Publications section of the NEMO website (cost is \$5) at: nemo.uconn.edu/publications. ❄️

National Network Burgeons to 23 States

You may not know it, but you are the inspiration for a national network of projects. The National NEMO Network is a group of affiliated projects adapted from the Connecticut original. Member projects, which now number 25 in 23 states and territories, agree to share educational tools, materials and experiences, to create a network that is more than the sum of its parts.



Communication and coordination services for the Network are provided by the UConn project, with support from EPA, NOAA and USDA. The Network has an annual conference NEMO University (NEMO U)—in its third year—and this summer had its first training session, on open space planning. For more information, see the National website at: nemo.uconn.edu/national. ❄️

Two New Educational Presentations Hit the Street

Conducting a Community Resource Inventory, a recent addition to the NEMO stable of presentations, is now available. As all true NEMOids know, a resource inventory is an essential first step toward all natural resource-based planning initiatives. This presentation goes over the process, and describes a basic inventory that can be cobbled together from existing state data layers, in your spare time and using only tools to be found in your basement.

Watershed Booklet Spells Out the Process

Natural Resource-Based Planning for Watersheds: A Practical Starter Kit, is a joint publication of the NEMO Project and the UConn Forestry Extension Program. The 27 page booklet, heavy on illustrations and mercifully light on text, is meant to demystify the process of planning to protect multi-town resources like watersheds. Along the way, it relates simple tips, and examples



Check This Out!

Don't forget to visit the NEMO website @

nemo.uconn.edu

- Watershed map sets are available for your town on the NEMO Publications section. Visit nemo.uconn.edu/publications.
- NEMO recently installed a Rain Garden Demonstration Site! The rain garden is located at the Cooperative Extension Center in Haddam, CT. Photos and information from our Rain Garden Workshop will be available online this fall. For more information on raingardens visit www.raingardens.org.
- Visit the CT DEP website at dep.state.ct.us/.
- NEMO also recently installed a Green Roof Demonstration Site at our Haddam location. Information and photos are available online at nemo.uconn.edu/reducing_runoff/garden_roof.
- Visit our partners at The Center for Watershed Protection to download specifications for Phase II. www.stormwatercenter.net
- Visit www.kurumi.com/roads/ct for information on all numbered Connecticut highways, "living, extinct or proposed".

Haddam Sustainable Land Use Demonstration Project

Come visit us in Haddam! The Cooperative Extension System and the Landscape Architecture Program—two arms of UConn's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources—are collaborating to transform the Middlesex County Extension Center grounds, located in Haddam, CT, into an educational demonstration site. Our demonstration site will serve as a model for municipalities, homeowners, businesses and other organizations to follow when implementing sustainable landscape plans on their properties.

The NEMO Team, the Master Gardeners, an Extension Forester and a Sea Grant Educator are on the premises to facilitate the educational experience of those visiting. Dr. Mark Westa and Dr. Kristen Schwab, of UConn's Landscape Architecture Program, and their students, from the 1999 and 2000 semesters, developed the site plan.

Two elements of the site plan have recently been installed. In September, NEMO collaborated with Weston Solutions, Inc.—a leading environmental and infrastructure redevelopment firm located in Glastonbury, CT.—to install a demonstration green roof. The roof is made with modular units that can be installed on small buildings like houses and garages.

On October 3rd, Dr. Jack Clausen of UConn's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) held a workshop on Rain Gardens, sponsored by the UConn Institute of Water Resources and the LIS License Plate Fund. Attendees participated in the installation of this second element of our site plan. Our rain garden will be collecting and treating rain water and will be monitored by Dr. Clausen and his graduate student Mike Dietz.

Photographs, updates and other information on our Sustainable Land Use Demonstration Project are on the **Case Studies** section of our website. ❄️



The NEMO Municipal Initiative is funded in part by CT DEP's Nonpoint Source Program.

One Town at a Time: The Municipal Initiative continued from pg 1 . . .

procedures (2) foundational **research and information gathering**; (3) changes to **planning documents**; (4) changes to **regulations**; and (5) changes to town **policies**. Less than two years into the Initiative, many of our partner towns are making strides in all of these categories, and we are convinced that the "Muni" is a major improvement over our former, reactive mode of operation. Go to our website, **Initiatives** section, **Town Updates**, for some examples.

Philosophically and practically, we think helping communities change their land use decision-making process "one town at a time" is the only way to go. ❄️

The Center for Land use Education And Research

In April, the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees approved the creation of a new University center, the Center for Land use Education And Research (CLEAR). CLEAR's mission is to provide information, education and assistance to land use decision makers on how better to protect natural resources while accommodating economic growth. To achieve this goal, CLEAR conducts remote sensing research, develops landscape analysis tools and training and delivers outreach education programs.

CLEAR is a part of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR), and is a partnership between the Department of Natural Resources Management and Engineering (NRME) and the Cooperative Extension System (CES). In addition to NEMO, CLEAR includes a number of other UConn efforts ranging in geographic scope from regional to statewide to national (see blue box). Although the specific topics of these programs vary, all CLEAR efforts target community and private land use decision makers, providing research-based infor-

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The NEMO Newsletter is published twice a year by the UConn Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials Project, to inform land use officials and other interested parties in Connecticut communities about NEMO programs and products.

NEMO is a University of Connecticut educational project that is a collaboration of the Cooperative Extension System, the Connecticut Sea Grant College Program, and the Department of Natural Resources Management and Engineering. Major funding is provided by Cooperative Extension, the CTDEP Nonpoint Source Program, and the Connecticut Sea Grant College Program. NEMO is a program of the UConn Center for Land use Education And Research (CLEAR).

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University of Connecticut
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

mation, education and training on how to protect resources and community character while accommodating economic growth.

A number of new research products and educational programs are planned that will focus on specific areas of the landscape: coastal habitats, urbanizing areas and areas where forests are being fragmented are some examples.

For more information on CLEAR, contact Chet Arnold at (860) 345-4511, or visit the website at clear.uconn.edu. ❄️

CLEAR Programs

- NASA Northeast Regional Earth Science Applications Center
- Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) Project
- Community Land Use Planning Program
- Green Valley Institute
- Earth Grant Geospatial Technology Extension Program
- Forest Resources Extension Program
- National NEMO Network

