



# Newsletter

## Inside this Issue

Brash Receives National Recognition.....page 1  
Spring Photos.....page 2  
Fall Meeting Details.....page 3  
South Branch Watershed Receives EPA Award.....page 4  
Elections! Vote!.....page 5  
History and Celebrations of Thanksgiving.....page 6  
What is the Snyder Farm, Anyway?.....page 7  
Calendar of Events.....page 8

## SWCS Mission Statement

**The Soil and Water Conservation Society fosters the science and the art of soil, water and related natural resource management to achieve sustainability.**

**We promote and practice an ethic recognizing the interdependence of people and the environment.**

Firman E. Bear Chapter  
220 Davidson Ave 4th Floor  
Somerset NJ 08873  
<http://www.njswcs.org>  
Email [njswcs@yahoo.com](mailto:njswcs@yahoo.com)

## Brash Wins National SWCS Award

*By Tim Dunne*

**B**ill Brash, Mercer County Soil Conservation District Manager and former Firman E. Bear Chapter of SWCS President, was recently announced as a recipient of the national SWCS Commendation Award for 2007. In making the announcement last April national SWCS Awards Committee Chairman Don Baloun said, "SWCS is proud of the awards program and is honored to have someone of Mr. Brash's caliber to represent the Commendation Award in 2007".



The Commendation Award is given annually by SWCS to provide international recognition to SWCS members for service to SWCS and furthering the soil and water conservation movement. Bill's achievements while local chapter president included significantly increasing the chapter's local visibility in the conservation community.

These achievements took considerable personal time and effort. The award was formally presented in July in Tampa, Florida at the SWCS national conference "Conservation Challenges in a Changing Landscape".

# Spring Meeting Highlights



This past May, Chapter members listened intently to the explanations provided by tour guide Ron Jacobson during our visit to the state Fish Hatchery in Hackettstown. After touring the site and enjoying a delicious lunch, Beth Styler Barry, Executive Director of the Musconetcong Watershed Association talked on the recent Wild & Scenic Rivers declaration for the Musconetcong, and the activities and goals of the association.



The original concrete outdoor raceways were abandoned in the 1970's in favor of new indoor facilities. Fish are now grown in fully contained, controlled, and monitored systems, with the resulting increase in productivity and decrease in disease.

## Reminder

Chapter dues are \$6 annually, and regular members are billed as part of their annual renewals with SWCS.

Life members are asked to forward their \$6 annual dues payment directly to the Chapter Treasurer, Dan Mull, at 220 Davidson Ave 4th Floor, Somerset NJ 08873.

## 2007 CHAPTER OFFICERS

President—Evan Madlinger (908) 782-4614 [evan.madlinger@nj.usda.gov](mailto:evan.madlinger@nj.usda.gov)  
 Pres.-Elect—Dave Schaff (908) 852-2579 [wcsd@verizon.net](mailto:wcsd@verizon.net)  
 Past Pres.—Angelo Caruso (201) 261-4407 [bergenscd@attglobal.net](mailto:bergenscd@attglobal.net)  
 Secretary—Ernie Thurlow (908) 526-2701 [thurlow@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:thurlow@co.somerset.nj.us)  
 Treasurer—Dan Mull (856) 678-5104 [danmull@comcast.net](mailto:danmull@comcast.net)  
 Council—Tom Morgart (908) 782-4614 [thomas.morgart@nj.usda.gov](mailto:thomas.morgart@nj.usda.gov)  
           Laura Coover (732) 462-0075 [laura.coover@nj.usda.gov](mailto:laura.coover@nj.usda.gov)  
           Meg Scott (732) [mikemegscott@yahoo.com](mailto:mikemegscott@yahoo.com)

## 2007 Committee Chairs

Awards - Tim Dunne (908) 735-0733 [tim.dunne@nj.usda.gov](mailto:tim.dunne@nj.usda.gov)  
 CPESC - Ernest Thurlow (908) 526-2701 [thurlow@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:thurlow@co.somerset.nj.us)  
 Chapter Display - Meg Scott (732) 462-1079 [mikemegscott@yahoo.com](mailto:mikemegscott@yahoo.com)  
 Fund Raising - vacant  
 Member Development - Carl DuPoldt [cdupoldt@yahoo.com](mailto:cdupoldt@yahoo.com)  
 Newsletter - Janice Reid (732) 462-1079 [jrunthrow@comcast.net](mailto:jrunthrow@comcast.net)  
 Recruitment - Victor DeVasto (609) 582-9027 [vic@zeus.jersey.net](mailto:vic@zeus.jersey.net)  
 Scholarship - Betsy Clarke (609) 561-3223 [elizabeth.clarke@nj.usda.gov](mailto:elizabeth.clarke@nj.usda.gov)  
 Webmaster - Nancy Paolini (732) 537-6056 [npaolini@comcast.net](mailto:npaolini@comcast.net)

# FALL MEETING and Annual Elections

## Firman E. Bear Chapter-SWCS



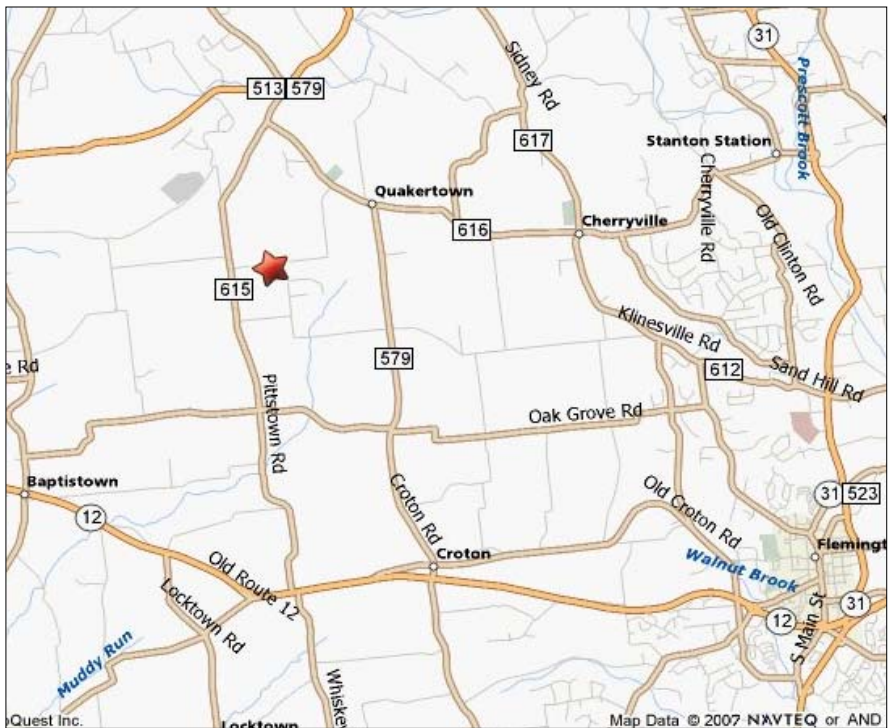
Friday December 7, 2007  
Rutgers Snyder Farm, Pittstown NJ  
9:00 am—2:30 pm

- 8:30 – 9:00 Registration/Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 – 10:00 NJ Ag Waste Rules, presentation by Frank Minch, NJDA
- 10:00 – 11:00 Invasive Species in NJ presentation by Michael Van Cleef, Ecological Solutions LLC
- 11:00 – 12:30 Guided tour of the Snyder Farm research projects (outside if weather permits, inside talk otherwise)
- 12:30 – 1:30 Enjoy a catered lunch inside
- 1:30 – 2:30 Chapter business meeting

Cost:  
**\$20** for members,  
**\$22** for non-members

**FROM NORTH:** Take I-78 to Exit 15. Turn left (south) at bottom of exit ramp onto Pittstown Road (Route 513S). Stay on Pittstown Road for approximately 6 miles (DO NOT TURN WHEN ROUTE 513 BEARS RIGHT). Turn left onto Locust Grove Road at Rutgers sign. Snyder Farm is 1/2 mile on the left.

**FROM SOUTH:** Take Route 202/31 North to the Flemington traffic circle. Take Route 12 West at circle. Go approximately 5 miles to Pittstown Road (second right after Shell Gas Station). Turn right (north) and go 3.5 miles to Locust Grove Road (look for Rutgers sign) and turn right. Snyder Farm is 1/2 mile on the left.



Rutgers Snyder Farm is located at 140 Locust Grove Rd, Pittstown, NJ 08867

### Registration must be received by November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Registration form and check should be sent to: Dan Mull, 198 Lincoln Drive, Pennsville NJ, 08070

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ Included: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one:  SWCS Member  District Emp. Assoc. Member  Guest

# South Branch Watershed Association Receives EPA Environmental Quality Award

*by Danielle Donkersloot*

*NJDEP Volunteer Monitoring Program Coordinator*

April 21, 2007 FLEMINGTON, NJ

The South Branch Watershed Association has been selected to receive the Environmental Protection Agency's prestigious Environmental Quality Award for 2007. In making the announcement, Alan J. Steinberg, EPA Regional Administrator, said "The Environmental Quality Award is the highest recognition presented to the public by our office."

SBWA President Jim Hill said, "The SBWA is being honored for its outstanding commitment to protecting and enhancing environmental quality in the watershed of the South Branch of the Raritan River." Bill Kibler, SBWA's Executive Director, added "We're a small organization with a large watershed, but we've accomplished great things because of the dedication of our members, trustees, and staff. We're very fortunate to have many great partners like the EPA." The EPA selects



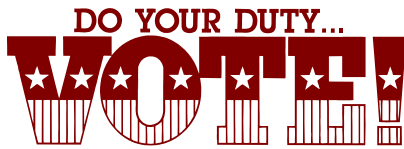
*Left to right: Newark Mayor Cory Booker; SBWA Executive Director Bill Kibler; SBWA Education and Outreach Program Director Nicole Rahman; EPA Regional Administrator Alan J. Steinberg (Region 2)*

Environmental Quality Award winners from non-profit, environmental, and community groups, individual citizens, educators, business organizations, and members of the news media. The honor is given to those individuals or organizations that have made significant contributions to improving the environment in EPA Region 2, which covers New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and seven federally-recognized Indian Nations. The Agency receives nominations for the awards from both inside and outside EPA. The award ceremony is scheduled Thursday, April 26, 2007 at EPA's Region 2 offices in New York City.

The South Branch Watershed Association is a membership based non-profit organization that protects and enhances the water

resources of the South Branch of the Raritan River and its watershed. The watershed covers 276 square miles in Morris, Hunterdon, and Somerset Counties. The Association conducts programs that provide environmental education to elementary and middle school age children, land use professionals, municipal officials and the general public. Other programs include municipal land use planning assistance to promote low impact development and the preservation of critical resources; biological sampling to monitor the health of the South Branch of the Raritan River and its tributaries; research and guidance on stormwater runoff and non-point source pollution issues; well testing programs; stream clean-up projects; stream restoration; and the Hunterdon County Green Table.

For more information about the South Branch Watershed Association, please call 908-782-0422 or visit the Association's website at [www.sbwa.org](http://www.sbwa.org).



# 2007 Council Elections

All active dues-paying members are eligible to vote for officers of the chapter. Ballots can be returned at the Fall Meeting (12/7) or returned by mail prior to that date. Mail ballots to: SWCS, c/o USDA-NRCS, 220 Davidson Ave 4th Floor, Somerset NJ 08873. This fall, the Chapter will elect members to serve in the following positions:

**President-Elect**, to serve for one year, and to automatically rise to position of President in 2008. The President-Elect is responsible for organizing the spring meeting and assisting the President as needed.

Vote for **ONE**:

**Zeyuan Qiu**

Zeyuan currently is Assistant Professor of Environmental Economics and Management at the NJ Institute of Technology (NJIT). He teaches and conducts research in the principle of economics, environmental economics and watershed management. Zeyuan joined SWCS in 1997. He has made numerous presentations at 5 SWCS annual conferences. He was an invited expert in two SWCS workshops on science and policy issues and the SWCS response related to conservation buffers and the LESA tool in 2001 and 2003. He has organized and chaired two symposiums at the 2005 and 2006 annual conferences on the variable source area hydrology and its practical implications in soil and water conservation. Zeyuan received his Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from the University of Missouri-Columbia (MU) in 1996.

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Treasurer**, to serve for two years. The Treasurer is responsible for handling all the financial reports, transactions, and IRS filings for the Chapter.

Vote for **ONE**:

**Dan Mull**

Dan is currently a Resource Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservationist Service (NRCS) for the Woodstown NJ field office. He is completing his first two-year term as the SWCS chapter treasurer. Dan holds a BS degree in General Agriculture from Purdue University. He has 10 years experience working for NRCS as a conservationist. His experience revolves around implementing Farm Bill programs such as EQIP, WHIP, AMA, CTA, CRP and CREP. Dan has worked throughout the state implementing a variety of conservation practices.

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Council Member**, to serve for three years. Council Members bring ideas and energy to the council, and assist with all aspects of Chapter management.

Vote for **TWO**:

**David Clapp**

Dave works for the New Jersey Department of Agriculture as an Agricultural Resource Specialist covering northern New Jersey. He develops and implements conservation plans and acts as a liaison for the farm community. Prior to working with NJDA Dave was a student intern with NRCS. Dave graduated from Cook College, Rutgers University with a degree in Natural Resource Management. He is also on the Board of Trustees of the South Branch Watershed Association and a canoe instructor for the Hunterdon County Park System. He remains an active alumnus in the Cook Chapter of Alpha Zeta, an honors agricultural fraternity that he was president of in 2004.

**Jonathan Fox**

Jonathan has over eight years of experience in environmental consulting, land use regulations, and natural resource management. His experience includes wetland delineations; Environmental Site Assessments; habitat assessments for threatened and endangered species; soil and water sampling for site investigation and remediation activities, and construction site management. He is a graduate of Delaware Valley College of Science and Agriculture, with a B.S. in Ornamental Horticulture/ Environmental Design.

**James Hill**

Jim has over 20 years experience as a licensed engineer. He is currently the Engineering Department Manager for Thomas L. Yager & Associates providing land surveying and civil engineering services to municipal and private clients. He is a graduate of the State University of New York at Syracuse with a B.S. in Forest Engineering. Jim worked for NRCS (then SCS) as an Area Engineer in New York state before relocating to NJ.

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

# The History of Thanksgiving and its Celebrations

Throughout history mankind has celebrated the bountiful harvest with thanksgiving ceremonies.

Many ancient farmers believed that their crops contained spirits which caused the crops to grow and die. Many believed that these spirits would be released when the crops were harvested so they had to be destroyed or they would take revenge on the farmers who harvested them. Some of the harvest festivals celebrated the defeat of these spirits.

Harvest festivals and thanksgiving celebrations were held by the ancient Greeks, the Romans, the Hebrews, the Chinese, and the Egyptians.

## The Greeks

The ancient Greeks worshipped many gods and goddesses. Their goddess of all grains was *Demeter* who was honored at the festival of *Thesmophoria* held each autumn.

On the first day of the festival married women would build leafy shelters and furnish them with couches made with plants. On the second day they fasted. On the third day a feast was held and offerings to the goddess Demeter were made - gifts of seed corn, cakes, fruit, and pigs. It was hoped that Demeter's gratitude would grant them a good harvest.

## The Romans

The Romans also celebrated a harvest festival called *Cerelia*, which honored *Ceres* their goddess of corn (from which the word cereal comes). The festival was held each year on October 4th and offerings of the first fruits of the harvest and pigs were offered to *Ceres*. Their celebration included music, parades, games and sports and a thanksgiving feast.

## The Chinese

The ancient Chinese celebrated their harvest festival, *Chung Ch'ui*, with the full moon that fell on the 15th day of the 8th month. This day was considered the birthday of the moon and special round and yellow "moon cakes" would be baked. Each cake

was stamped with the picture of a rabbit - as it was a rabbit which the Chinese saw on the face of the moon.

The families ate a thanksgiving meal and feasted on roasted pig, harvested fruits and "moon cakes". It was believed that during the festival flowers would fall from the moon and those who saw them would be rewarded with good fortune.

*Chung Ch'ui* is also celebrated for another reason. China had been conquered by enemy armies who took control of Chinese homes and food. In order to free themselves they decided to attack the invaders. The women baked special moon cakes, distributed to every family. In each cake was a secret message - the time for the attack. When the time came the invaders were surprised and easily defeated. Every year moon cakes are eaten in memory of this victory.

## The Hebrews

Jewish families also celebrate a harvest festival called *Sukkoth*. Taking place each autumn, *Sukkoth* has been celebrated for over 3000 years.

*Sukkoth* begins on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of *Tishri*, 5 days after *Yom Kippur*. *Sukkoth* is named for the huts (succots) that Moses and the Israelites lived in as they wandered the desert for 40 years before they reached the Promised Land. These huts were made of branches and were easy to assemble, take apart, and carry as the Israelites wandered through the desert.

When celebrating the 8 days of *Sukkoth*, Jewish people build huts of branches which recall the tabernacles of their ancestors. These huts are constructed as temporary shelters, as the branches are not driven into the ground and the roof is covered with foliage which is spaced to let the light in. Inside the huts are hung fruits and vegetables. On the first 2 nights of *Sukkoth* the families eat their meals in the huts under the evening sky.

## The Egyptians

The ancient Egyptians celebrated their harvest festival in honor of *Min*,

their god of vegetation and fertility. The festival was held in the springtime, the Egyptian's harvest season.

The festival of *Min* featured a parade in which the Pharaoh took part. After the parade a great feast was held. Music, dancing, and sports were also part of the celebration.

When Egyptian farmers harvested their corn, they wept and pretended to be grief-stricken. This was to deceive the spirit which they believed lived in the corn. They feared the spirit would become angry when the farmers cut down the corn where it lived.

## The United States

In 1621, after a devastating first year in the New World, the Pilgrim's fall harvest was very successful and plentiful. There was corn, fruits, vegetables, along with fish which was packed in salt, and meat that was smoke cured over fires. They found they had enough food to put away for the winter.

The Pilgrims had beaten the odds. They built homes in the wilderness, they raised enough crops to keep them alive during the long coming winter, and they were at peace with their Indian neighbors. Their Governor, William Bradford, proclaimed a day of thanksgiving that was to be shared by all the colonists and the neighboring Native American Indians.

The custom of an annually celebrated thanksgiving, held after the harvest, continued through the years. A day of national thanksgiving was suggested by the Continental Congress, and President Washington declared a holiday in 1789.

In 1817 New York State adopted Thanksgiving Day as a state holiday. By the middle of the 19th century many other states had followed suit. In 1863 President Abraham Lincoln appointed a national day of thanksgiving. Since then each president has issued a Thanksgiving Day proclamation. It took an act of Congress in 1941 to designate the fourth Thursday of each November as the holiday.

Happy Thanksgiving!

# About the Snyder Farm

The Snyder Research and Extension Farm near Pittstown (Hunterdon County) is Rutgers' center for sustainable agriculture.

Snyder Farm initiates and disseminates research applicable to the production of a variety of food and fiber products, including grain crops, tree and small fruits, turfgrass, and ornamentals. The farm's 390 acres provide a valuable capacity to research soil and climate conditions and crops of northern New Jersey.



Current turfgrass efforts include: Kentucky bluegrass, fine fescue and buffalo grass breeding projects involving genetically improved "low maintenance" varieties; mowing management practices for "low maintenance" turfgrasses; influence of cultural practices on the occurrence of summer patch and necrotic ring spot diseases of Kentucky bluegrass.

In addition, the Snyder Farm hosts an annual turfgrass field day, specifically oriented toward "large lot" rural homeowners. Faculty and staff of Cook College develop turfgrass management demonstrational trials for this field day.

Additional information about the Snyder Research and Extension Farm can be found at: <http://www.cook.rutgers.edu/www/njaes/offcampus/pittstown.html> or <http://snyderfarm.rutgers.edu/index.html>.

Current research projects at the Farm include:

- Managing Wildlife in the Farm Landscape
- Fencing Demo
- Roadside Turf Management
- Wetland Drainage
- Black Fly Control
- Woodlot Management



The Snyder Farm responds to the agricultural and environmental needs of New Jersey. As part of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station it shares the scientific resources of Cook College at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. Our mandate is to improve the quality of life through an integrated program of scientific research, public education, and community outreach.

The Farm is the newest facility of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. It was bequeathed to Rutgers University in 1988 by Melba Snyder, a prominent farmer and member of the Cook College Board of Managers. Turfgrass projects at the Snyder Farm focus on "reduced input" issues, in an effort to combine environmental, economic and aesthetic considerations.



# Calendar of Events

November 9

**Skywatch:** Sunset until midnight  
Belleplain State Forest , Recreation Field (609) 861-2404

November 10

**30-Mile Full Trail Hike**  
Kittatinny Valley State Park , Paulinskill Valley Trail  
Note: Call for details and information (201) 274-9805

November 17

**Winter Waterfowl Walk:** 10 a.m. to Noon  
Pre-registration required (201) 915-3409  
Liberty State Park Interpretive Center

November 18

**Bird Walk:** 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.  
Pre-registration required (908) 236-6355  
Round Valley Recreation Area, South Lot, Bring binoculars

November 25

**Cedar Swamp Hike for Adults:** 1 p.m.  
Cheesequake State Park , Interpretive Center (732) 566-3208

**After the Turkey, Natural History Hike:** 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
Pre-registration required (908) 236-6355  
Round Valley Recreation Area, South Lot  
Burn Thanksgiving calories and explore the habitat of the turkeys

## Greening the Region: Where Green Meets Green

*Nov 30- Dec 1, 2007 at Ramapo College of New Jersey*

Register now at [www.ramapo.edu/news/specialevents/green/](http://www.ramapo.edu/news/specialevents/green/);  
email [greeningtheregion@gmail.com](mailto:greeningtheregion@gmail.com) or call (201) 684-7745.

**The Climate for Change:** An all-day Conference November 30. Features Governor Jon Corzine (invited) on climate leadership, Congressman John Hall (invited) on breaking the federal stalemate, President Jeanne M. Fox of the NJ Board of Public Utilities (invited) on the N.J. State Energy Master Plan, visionary Edward Mazria of Architecture 2030 on rethinking the Built Environment and award-winning author and Step-It-Up activist Bill McKibben on rethinking society.

**The Green Expo:** (Friday and Saturday) showcases renewable energy, green building, and the latest green technology.

December 16

**Bird Walk:** 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.  
Pre-registration required (908) 236-6355  
Round Valley Recreation Area, South Lot; Bring binoculars

December 23

**Solstice Hike 2 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.**  
Pre-registration required (908) 236-6355  
Round Valley Recreation Area, South Lot  
Note: Hike the Water Trail on one of the shortest days of the year

---

**Firman E. Bear Chapter**  
**Soil and Water Conservation Society**  
**220 Davidson Ave 4th Floor**  
**Somerset NJ 08873**

Place  
Stamp  
Here