

Introducing the South Jersey RC&D Council and Staff



Jack Sworaski
Chair
Camden County

Education:
BS, Biology, Rutgers University

Experience:

- **Camden County Director** of the Division of Environmental Affairs and Division of Open Space and Farmland Preservation. His duties include *County Solid Waste Coordinator, Administrator to the Camden County Agricultural Development Board, liaison to the Environmental Commission and Camden County Solid Waste Advisory Council, and oversees the County Mosquito Extermination Commission*
- **Member** of the New Jersey Clean Communities Council Board of Trustees and the Camden Greenways Inc. Board of Trustees

About Me: I've lived in New Jersey all my life and have had an interest in science and the environment from an early age. I'm currently working as part of a team to create a greenway network and trail system that will link all areas of Camden County. I enjoy music, history and bike riding.



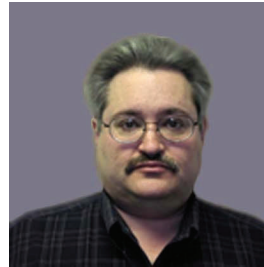
Mike Hill
Treasurer
Freehold SCD

Education:
BS, Environmental Studies, Stockton State College
Professional Certification in GIS
Rutgers University

Experience:

- **Assistant District Manager**, Freehold Soil Conservation District since 1998, championing the use of geographic information systems (GIS) and global position systems (GPS) to aid in plan review, watershed management and data collection. He also serves as the SCD Intern Coordinator guiding over 45 college students during their internships
- **Serves** on the State Soil Conservation Committee's GIS Advisory Committee and on Monmouth County's sub-committee for GIS metadata and the Manasquan Watershed project and Middlesex WRA

About Me: I enjoy working with the public at the Monmouth County Fair, at the New Jersey Conservation Partnership display at the NJ Flower and Patio Show, and Tour des Farms.



Vic DeVasto
Vice-Chair
Gloucester County SCD

Education:
BS, Environmental Science,
Elmira College

Experience:

- **District Manager**, Gloucester Soil Conservation District (1987 to present), The Gloucester Soil Conservation District is one of only 2 Regional Conservation Assistance Program Districts in NJ providing agricultural assistance in Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties
- **District Scout Executive** Boy Scouts of America with the Sullivan Trail Council, New York
- **Member** of the National Association of Conservation Districts, National Association of Conservation District Employees, Soil & Water Conservation Society, and the Pitman-Glassboro Kiwanis Club

About Me: I live in Pitman, New Jersey with my wife and I enjoy gardening, home improvement projects, travel, wines, and football and baseball.



Peggy McNeill,
2nd Vice-Chair
Mercer SCD

Education:
BS, Bacteriology, Penn State University
MS, Environmental Sciences,
Rutgers University

Experience:

- **Chair** of the Mercer County Soil Conservation District
- **President** of the New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts (1983 – 1985)
- **Past President** of the Mid Atlantic RC&D Association, where her involvement led to the formation of the National Association of RC&D Councils

About Me: I take particular pride in my work in the early development of our RISE weather station program, watershed programs, and Team Habitat.



Dominick Cassetta, Jr.
Secretary
CapeAtlantic SCD

Education:
BS, Environmental Studies,
Stockton State College

Experience:

- **District Manager**, Cape Atlantic Conservation District (1979 to present)
- **Member** Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and the New Jersey Federation of Sportsman's Clubs

About Me: I enjoy hunting, fishing, flying remote control planes and gardening. I also enjoy spending time with my four grandchildren, family and friends.



Sen. Catherine A. Costa
Member
Burlington County SCD

Experience

- **Chair: Burlington County SCD**
- **President NJ Association of Conservation Districts***
- **Director** - Alcoholic Beverage Control Division & Commissioner of Amusement Games*
- **NJ State Senator:** Senate Assistant Majority Leader *
- **NJ State Assemblywoman**
- **Burlington County Freeholders:** Served 12 years*

*First woman to serve in these capacities.

About Me: My interest in soil erosion and sediment control came about by observing the loss of top soil as contractors raped the earth on large projects such as schools and developments, with no thought of keeping the soil in place. Not only were we losing our precious top soil, but our waters would get polluted by the sediment. Further, I noted that no sooner was macadam put on roads, in no time there were large potholes causing accidents and much damage to cars. I had become a Burlington County Freeholder and found a book on soils in the office. Reading through it, I realized why our waters become polluted – sediment pollutes, and the reason for potholes was that we have clay in our soils and thereby rain water could not percolate through the soil. I spearheaded the Soil Erosion & Sediment Control Act – Chapter 251, which regulates erosion control on all development.



Gina Berg
Member
Burlington County

Education:
BS, Soil Science, Univ. of Wisconsin
Grad studies, Marine Science,
University of Southern Mississippi

Experience

- **Water Resources Coordinator** for Burlington County Department of Resource Conservation
- **Co-chair**, the Burlington County Stormwater Management Committee of the County Planning Board
- **Member** of Burl Co Solid Waste Advisory Committee, Southampton Plan Endorsement Advisory Committee
- **Secretary**, NJ section of the American Water Resources Association

About Me: I first became involved in environmental work as a teenager doing stream bank and habitat restoration with the Youth Conservation Corps. I aspired to a broad understanding of environmental issues and worked on a dairy farm, a soil analysis lab, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Naval Oceanographic Office, the NJ Pinelands Commission and then volunteered for my Township Environmental Commission for a few years. Here at the County, I first coordinated the Rancocas Watershed Public Advisory Committee and wrote/compiled the Rancocas Watershed Management Plan. When I'm not involved with work, other organizations or kids' activities, I rejuvenate with outdoor activities, Sudoku, scrapbooking, or reading.



Rick Westergaard
Member
Gloucester County

Education:
BS, Environmental Studies,
Stockton State College
MA, Environmental Studies,
Bemidji State University

Experience.

- **Acting Assistant Planning Director** Gloucester County, Responsible for watershed, stormwater, and water resources projects
- Gloucester County Mitigation Officer
- **Member** Gloucester County Emergency Management Council of the American Institute of Certified Planners
- Gloucester County Representative to the Pinelands

About Me: I have always been active at the municipal level. I am the former Mayor of the Borough of Newfield and Past President of the Newfield Recreation Commission.



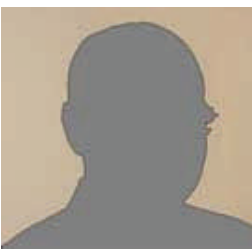
Dave Friedman
Member
Ocean County SCD

Education:
 BS, Stockton State College
 Certified Professional Soil Erosion
 and Sediment Control (CPESC)

Experience:

- **Director** of Ocean County Soil Conservation District
- **Program Associate** Rutgers University
- **Council Member**- since its inception
- **Member** Ocean County Agricultural Development Board, Barnegat Bay National Estuary Program Advisory Committee and Science and Technical Advisory Committee
- **Chairman** of Finance Committee, Island Heights Methodist Church

About Me: I'm proudest of Ocean County Soil Conservation District's lead efforts in restoring soil health in lawns, rain gardens and stormwater basins. I reside in Island Heights with wife Jean, three children Brett, Tricia and Gregg; and one wonderful loving grandson Nathaniel! I enjoy kayaking, reading, fishing, and woodworking.



Robert K. Dobbs
Member
Camden County SCD

Education:
 BS, BS Horticulture, Delaware Valley College of Science & Agriculture
 MS, Electrical Engineering,
 Northwestern University

Experience:

- **District Manager**, Camden County Soil Conservation District
- **President**, Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions
- **President**, National Conservation District Employees Association
- **Treasurer**, Camden County Ag Development Board
- **Member**, Camden County Open Space Trust Fund Board and the Voorhees Environmental and Cultural Education Foundation

About Me:

I have lived in New Jersey my entire life and have a keen interest in conservation and land use issues. I enjoy travel, gardening, good food and wine.



Dan Pace
Member
Mercer County

Education:
 BA, Geography, Rutgers University
 MA, City and Regional Planning,
 Rutgers University

Experience:

- **Principal Planner**, Mercer County
- **Administrator**, Mercer County Agricultural Development Board
- **Member**, Pennington Open Space Committee

About Me:

I am active within my municipality. I enjoy cooking, walking, music, and history.



Mike Kerbowski
Member-at-Large
Camden County

Education:
 "Learning is an ongoing process"

Experience:

- **Founding Member** of the NJ Outdoor Alliance
- **Treasurer** for the Camden County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs
- **Board Member** of the Batsto Citizens Committee
- **Conservation Committee Member** for the Southern NJ BSA Council
- **Founding Member** of the New Jersey Quail Project
- **Executive Committee Member** of the Hutton Hill Rifle and Revolver Club

About Me: I am passionate about the great outdoors. I volunteer many hours for the Outdoor Organizations that I belong to.



Staff Members



Ken Taaffe
RC&D Coordinator
USDA - NRCS

Education:

BS, Botany, Duke University
Masters of Forestry,
Duke University

Experience:

- **South Jersey RC&D Coordinator** (2005 to present)
- **Resource Conservationist, forestry issues & conservation on military Lands.** Wrote the Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan for 31,000 acre Fort Dix
- **District Conservationist** in New Jersey (1985 to 1997)
- **Member** of the Society of American Foresters (SAF), the Soil and Water Conservation Society and New Jersey Forestry Association
- Lumberton township shade tree advisory board
- **SAF Certified Forester** and NJ Shade Tree Commission Core Certified
- **Peace Corps Volunteer** in Paraguay, South America. 1977-1979. Fluent in Spanish

About Me: I enjoy bike riding, gardening, travel, wines, and college basketball.

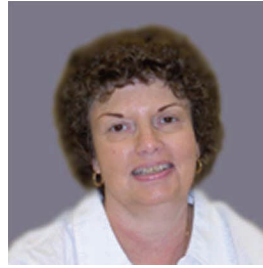


Rick Parenteau
Team Habitat Manager
and Outreach Specialist

Experience:

- **Civil Engineering Technician**, Soil Conservation Service, Delaware (1972 to 1985)
- **Area Civil Engineering Technician**, Natural Resources Conservation Service, New Jersey (1985 to 2007)
- **Past president** of the Pocomoke Chapter of the Soil & Water Conservation Society, and the South Jersey Land and Water Trust
- **Founder and president** of the Bear Creek Conservancy

About Me: Though I relocated my family back to the Eastern Shore of Maryland, I've maintained my conservation relationships here in New Jersey.



Pat Walczak –
Administrative Assistant
USDA - NRCS

Experience:

- **Administrative Assistant** for NRCS South Jersey RC&D Council 1979 to present
- **Prior work experience** for municipal governments and private industry
- **Stay at home Mom** for ten years raising two children.
- **Vice-President** for Edgewood High School marching Band Boosters
- **Teen Queen** of Ellisberg

About Me: I live in Atco with my husband, Ron. I have 4 grandchildren, whom I enjoy very much. (Just look at my screen saver and office photos!!) I enjoy football (Go Eagles!!) and cruises.



KP Kilpatrick
Information Technology
Analyst

Education:

BS, Computer Science, University of Nebraska
MS, Communications, University of Nebraska

Experience:

- **IT Analyst & Webmaster** for RC&D Council
- **Electronic Data Interchange Consultant—** two Fortune 500 companies
- **Software Engineer**, General Dynamics, Programmed the Terminal Maneuver of the Advanced Cruise Missile. Science Applications International Corporation, performed software life-cycle support for the GPS NavStar Satellite program
- **Naval Surface Warfare Officer**, completed three tours of the Western Pacific
- 2006 Earth Team Volunteer of the Year and National Award Nominee

About Me: My primary interest is computers. Programming languages, graphic design, and the latest technology. Past passions include gardening, overseas travel, top-down trips up Pacific Coast Highway, Historic Bed & Breakfasts, and collecting old Cadillac Convertibles. My current passions include water conservation and scenic photography.