



American Sustainable Business Network

Clean Water: Volume 5, July 2023

The American Sustainable Business Network's "[Clean Water is Good for Business](#)" campaign engages businesses in the [Delaware River Watershed](#) and across the U.S. in making the economic case for sensible clean water protections. We are excited to share our collective efforts to protect our water and build a more just and sustainable economy. If you are a business leader concerned about protecting the Delaware River Watershed or other watersheds across the U.S., please join our campaign by contacting [Liza LaManna](#), ASBN's Manager of Regenerative Agriculture and Clean Water.

Delaware River Watershed Forum: Clean Water is Good for Business!

The Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed hosted its 11th annual Delaware River Watershed Forum in September, where members of the Clean Water is Good for Business Steering Committee collaborated with more than 300 watershed stakeholders, tackling issues of environmental preservation and economic development across the region.



Local Business Voices for Clean Water panelists include (L to R) Tamara Earl, owner of Delectablez; Alex Cupo, SBN Philadelphia; Robin Glazer, Delaware Nature Society; Joe Zilcosky, Delaware Division of Small Business; and Michele Deery of LiveRoof & Riverbend Green Roofs (not pictured).

[The Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia](#) led

participants on a field trip to two green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) sites; both sites were partnerships between the Wilmington Department of Public Works and community organizations. The first site, [Cool Spring Park Eco-Trail and Playground](#), utilizes rain gardens, meadows, and reservoir buffers to manage stormwater, enrich green spaces, and store excess drinking water. The second site serves as a cultural and performance center while also addressing the overflow from the combined sewer system. Participants learned that through creative partnerships, cities can leverage state funds to create thriving community spaces that also protect our watersheds.

SBN Philadelphia also led a round table discussion among regional businesses working towards clean water. The panelists shared valuable resources for doing business in Delaware, and learned best practices for advancing the triple bottom line – people, planet, and profit – in their business.



The Wilmington Public Works department leads a tour of the Cool Spring Park Eco-trail, which provides a thriving community space as well as stormwater management.

State and Regional Updates

Clean Water in the Delaware River Basin Depends on Sustainable Funding

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) is a small agency with a big impact. Established in 1961, the DRBC is the first river basin planning, development, and regulatory agency where the federal government and states are equal partners, serving the 14 million people who depend on the basin for drinking, agriculture, business, and industrial use. DRBC protects the watershed through water quality, project review, and flood and drought management, while building partnerships with a range of regional stakeholders.



DRBC staff conduct bacteria monitoring at Palmyra Cove (photo courtesy of DRBC)

From its headwaters in New York State to the Delaware Bay, the Delaware River Basin supports the water needs of roughly 4% of the U.S. population, and drives a \$20 billion water-based economy that supports 600,000 jobs. **Despite its critical role supporting clean water in the basin, DRBC's funding is not reliable** – the agency must work to secure state and federal funding *each year*. In recent years, New Jersey and Delaware have fully funded their share of the DRBC budget, but Pennsylvania and New York have provided only part of their share. Despite Congressional authorization, the federal government has failed to fund the agency for 23 of the last 25 years.

To secure its fair share of federal support, the DRBC is pursuing a \$715,000 community project funding request, led by Reps. Bonnie Watson Coleman of New Jersey and Lisa Blunt Rochester of Delaware. Business leaders can learn more about the DRBC's important work [HERE](#).

Take Action to Protect Soil and Water Health in Pennsylvania



The Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission announced FOUR years of dedicated funding to activate the state Sustainable Agriculture Board and develop a statewide soil health program. This is a big win for soil health as well as the state's natural resources, economy, and farming sector. However, changing soil health takes time – state policymakers **must make this funding permanent**, so that our state will continue to strengthen our economy and reduce agricultural pollution for the next generation.

The Clean Water is Good for Business Steering Committee is sending a letter to Pennsylvania policymakers, urging them to make this funding permanent.

Take Action: If you live or do business in Pennsylvania, please take a moment to add your name [HERE](#).

Take Action in New York

The New York State Legislature passed the [Birds and Bees Protection Act](#), a first-in-the-nation bill that would limit the use of neurotoxic neonicotinoid pesticides (“neonics”), which persist in soil and are easily carried long distances by rain or irrigation water. The bill will protect pollinators and the farmers who depend on them, while also safeguarding New York’s economy. **However, Gov. Hochul has not yet signed this bill into law, and must do so by the end of 2023 in order for the law to take effect.**

Take Action: Please call Gov. Hochul at 518-474-8390, press 2 to speak to a person. (If you are left on hold you can press 1 to leave a message.)

SAMPLE SCRIPT: “Hello, my name is ___ and I live in _____. I’m calling to urge Gov. Hochul to sign the Birds and the Bees Protection Act (S1856-A Hoylman-Sigal/A7640 Glick), which would curb wasteful use of neurotoxic neonic (knee-OH-nick) pesticides that cause mass losses of bees and other pollinators we depend on for food. These chemicals also extensively pollute our water, risking our health as well as the jobs and businesses that depend on clean water. I strongly urge Gov. Hochul to sign this bill into law today.”

Read more about the economic impact in the last issue 5 of CleanWater [here!](#)

NJ Farmers Protecting the Watershed



[The River Friendly Farms certification](#) program recognizes farmers who are stewards of their land and surrounding water resources, and implement practices that limit pollution from excess nutrients, bacteria, and pesticides. [Over 30 Northern New Jersey farms](#) have been certified, including those profiled [here](#). For more information on the program, please contact [North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development](#) at (908) 574-5368. Do you know a business that is working to protect clean water in the watershed? Nominate them to be our featured quarterly business protecting the watershed [HERE](#).

National Story

ASBN Advocates For Federal Clean Water Protections



As we celebrate the 51st anniversary of the Clean Water Act, the future of our nation’s water supply is still under threat. Congressional leaders recently invited Colton Fagundes, ASBN’s Policy Director for Regenerative Agriculture and Clean Water, to testify at a House hearing called, “Murky Waters: Navigating a Post-Sackett World.”

Colton testified that clean water benefits both the environment and the prosperity of our businesses and communities. He noted that industries such as beverage manufacturing, seafood, outdoor recreation, and agriculture are directly dependent on clean water, but any weakening of the Clean Water Act will hurt businesses across the economy.

Following the hearing, Congress introduced the Clean Water Act of 2023 which begins to restore some of the water protections that were lost in the Supreme Court's *Sackett* decision. Read more about the Clean Water Act of 2023 [here](#).

Events



You are invited to join the Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia for their annual Holiday Party on Thursday, Dec. 14, where values-driven businesses, allies, and supporters from Greater Philadelphia will celebrate the successes of 2023 and build for the year ahead . RSVP [HERE](#).

JOIN US FOR AN INFORMATIVE EVENT

HUGO NEU

HUGO NEU SUSTAINABILITY SEMINAR SERIES

December 5, 2023; 5:00 p.m. via Zoom



Distinguished Guest Speaker Robert Bilott

“Environmental Law, Corporate Accountability, and PFAS Contamination”

We cordially invite you to attend an engaging lecture by Robert Bilott, the distinguished guest speaker for the Hugo Neu Sustainability Seminar Series, sponsored by Hugo Neu and hosted by the Stevens Institute of Technology Sustainability Management MS and MS-MBA Programs.

Robert Bilott is a distinguished lawyer, whose life story is chronicled in the book "Exposure" and the movie "Dark Waters." He spent two decades building a case against DuPont for their use of the unregulated and hazardous chemical PFOA, uncovering one of the most severe environmental contaminations in history. This is a rare opportunity to hear from Mr. Bilott, a celebrated figure and expert in environmental litigation, public health protection, and environmental advocacy.

Please join us for this inspiring event!

Stevens Institute of Technology
Sustainability Management MS and MS-MBA Programs



<https://www.stevens.edu/sustainability-seminar-series>

Zoom Link: <https://bit.ly/3RiGQmZ>

The Hugo Neu Corporation Sustainability Seminar Series is a weekly lecture organized by the Stevens' sustainability management master's program. On Dec. 5, join Robert Bilott of Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP to learn about environmental law, corporate accountability, and PFAS contamination. RSVP [HERE](#).