



Energy & Environment

Community is at the Core of a Sustainable Future
for South Jersey

Achieving Municipal Public Education and Outreach
Goals for Community Resiliency in New Jersey

The South Jersey Transportation Authority Has a
Growing Environmental Program

NOAA Grant Gives Stockton University Students
Hands-On Training

The CHRONICLE

A SOUTHERN
NEW JERSEY
DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL
PUBLICATION

FIRST QUARTER
2024



The South Jersey Transportation Authority Has a Growing Environmental Program

By South Jersey Transportation Authority

The South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA), through its READI program (Roadway Environmental Advancement Initiative), established an Integrative Roadside Vegetative Management (IRVM) plan. It is the logical application of good information, communication, technology, planning, and research in roadside maintenance. This plan includes the planting of native wildflowers and trees.

The environmental benefits include the creation and restoration of native habitat for bees, butterflies, and birds that are important pollinators in serious decline. Additional benefits of the vegetative management program include the stabilization of roadside soils, filtration of stormwater runoff and silt into streams, enhancing biodiversity and integrity of desirable native plant communities including threatened and endangered species, and reducing the negative effects and spread of invasive plant species.

Carbon sequestration achieved by the flowers and trees along with reduced mowing adds to the benefits of the IRVM plan. A plan to develop solar irrigation is underway to jump start newly planted wildflowers.

Stockton University Environmental Studies student interns are also enthusiastic participants in the program and, not surprisingly, bring the latest academic expertise to the READI program.

Through the Roadway Environmental Advancement Initiative, the SJTA has developed partnerships with NJ Audubon, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, the NJ Pinelands Commission, NJ and US Fish and Wildlife, and is now developing a partnership with the NJ Department of Transportation to establish native wildflower habitats on adjoining roadway intersections.

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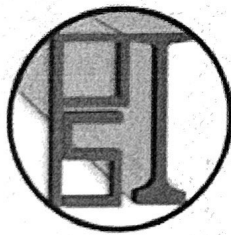
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The READI program has partnered with NJ Fish and Wildlife through their Connecting Habitat Across New Jersey (CHANJ) initiative. The Atlantic City Expressway (ACE) maintains animal crossings in important Pinelands Reserve areas providing safe migration so animals can seek food and territory for diverse breeding to maintain healthy populations. Stockton University students provide assistance to the NJ Fish and Wildlife CHANJ by collecting data, video and photographs for use in the study of habitat fragmentation.

An additional dimension to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection relationship is the establishment of Climate Change Learning/Photo Stations to be placed along the wetlands at the eastern section of the roadway. Again, Stockton University interns will collect data and submit it to NJDEP to note the rate of seasonal sea rise.

The SJTA takes its commitment to the environment very seriously and continues to work together with NJ environmental agencies to improve the Atlantic City Expressway, not only for the traveling public, but for wildlife as well.



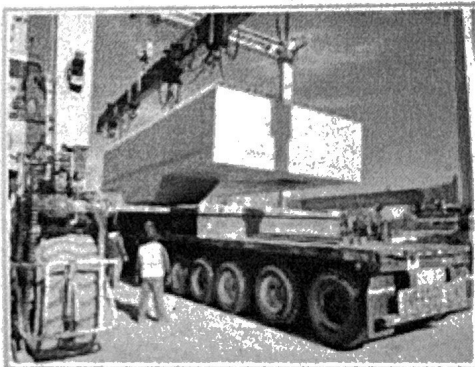
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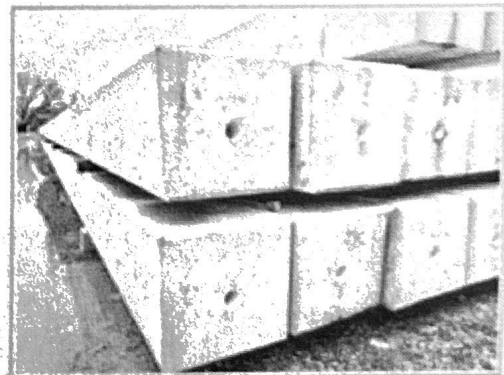
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