

## Grant Work

### Laurel Marsh Ecological Restoration

The District has been implementing a plan to remove invasive plants from Laurel Marsh in Manchester, using a [Long Island Sound Fund](#) grant. The project primarily targets *Phragmites Australis*, an invasive aquatic plant that has formed a monoculture throughout much of the marsh. The District has completed two years of a three year treatment plan, involving both mowing and aquatic herbicide treatment. The treatment is intended to allow native plants to re-inhabit the area and better support wildlife. With one year of treatment remaining, we have observed impressive results.



*Laurel Marsh following two years of mowing and spraying.*

### Clean Water Act, Non-Point Source 319 Grants

The District, in cooperation with the Town of Manchester, completed a stormwater project, with primary funding through the EPA Clean Water Act Section 319 nonpoint source program, locally administered through the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The District oversaw construction of a stormwater quality pond along West Middle Turnpike in Manchester, intended to treat polluted stormwater before it discharges into Bigelow Brook, a tributary of the Hockanum River. New pipes, outfalls, forebay, spillway, and grasses were also installed. The District identified this project during a previous 319-funded watershed-based plan for the Hockanum River Watershed in Manchester. The District also made progress on several other 319 Projects during the fiscal year, including North Branch Park River watershed management, with an implementation grant to follow, and applying for and developing future 319 projects.



### Agriculture Grants

#### Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) Grant—NRCS

Working in conjunction with the Council on Soil and Water, all five CT Conservation Districts have continued their assistance to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through the Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) Partnership agreement. This District has completed many tasks ahead of schedule, completing four [Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans](#), five [Irrigation Water Management Plans](#), purchasing a [manure composting tumbler](#) to test its capacity to manage nutrients at equine facilities, sponsoring a horse best management practice [workshop](#), and providing over one hundred hours of technical assistance throughout the District. The District is eager to continue its partnership with NRCS and expand upon the skills and experience gained from the CTA Partnership.

#### Farmland Restoration Grant—CT DoAG

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DoAG) has contracted with the District to assist with the Farmland Restoration Program. The Farmland Restoration Program is a grant available to farmers and land-owners who are working to reclaim former production farmland. The grant can be used for various related costs, including tree removal, well development, stump removal, and fence installation. The District's role in the program is to provide technical assistance and create [Restoration Plans](#) for each farmer that utilizes the District's assistance. The District is also assisting the Connecticut Department of Agriculture with monitoring over 200 conservation easements, and has completed several monitoring reports and site investigations. The District has further helped the DoAG in digitizing hundreds of easement parcel boundary maps. The District will also be applying for several Agriculture Viability grants in the next fiscal year.

