

Outreach Education



CLEAR outreach programs work directly with local land use officials, community organizations and citizens. They cover a wide range of topics, but all provide research-based, non-advocacy information on how to better protect natural resources while accommodating economic growth. CLEAR outreach programs include Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO), the Green Valley Institute (GVI), the National NEMO Network, the Land Use Planning Program, the Land Use Academy and the Extension Forestry Program.

For more information, go to clear.uconn.edu and click “Education”.

Basic Training for Land Use Commissioners.

In 2006 CLEAR launched the Connecticut Land Use Academy, which provides basic training for local land use commissioners on statutory responsibilities, legal procedures and site plan review skills. The Academy is supported by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), with funds appropriated by the Connecticut Legislature. In its first two sessions the Academy has trained board members from 33 communities. (Large photo above.)

Statewide Stormwater Training. In 2004 and 2005, the NEMO program partnered with CT DEP to conduct statewide training on the new Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual. The training targeted a wide spectrum of those involved with land use management, including local officials, town professional staff, state agency staff, consultants and landscape architects and planners. Over twenty workshops were given to more than 1,000 participants statewide.

A focus on realtors. The GVI works with the Eastern Connecticut Association of Realtors to conduct training on alternative, conservation-oriented development options. About 100 realtors have attended the training workshop.

Enabling Conservation Commissions. CLEAR outreach programs have helped many Connecticut towns to create more functional Conservation

Commissions. In the northeast corner of the state alone, GVI has assisted 11 towns in creating new Conservation Commissions or revitalizing inactive ones. NEMO also has worked extensively with Conservation Commissions, particularly on the issue of conducting resource inventories and on open space planning and preservation.



A GVI brainstorming session, with University of Connecticut landscape architecture students and townspeople from the communities along the French River. (Photo courtesy of Paula Stahl, GVI.)

Providing leadership to a national network. CLEAR's National NEMO program leads and coordinates the

Outreach Education Impacts

CLEAR outreach education programs are catalyzing changes to local plans, practices and policies in towns across the state.

“Connecticut communities can do amazing things, given a little information and assistance, and ideas for how to tap into the natural talent that resides in every town.”

The statement above, from the national award-winning publication **Putting Communities in Charge** produced by the NEMO program, sums up the experience of all CLEAR outreach programs. These Extension programs have assisted and catalyzed Connecticut communities to undertake a wide range of actions, including changes to comprehensive plans, changes to zoning and subdivision regulations, changes to town road and maintenance policies, incorporation of “low impact development” techniques in new subdivisions, protection of open space and preservation of farmland.



Stonington, CT local officials study the distribution of stormwater outfalls as part of their stormwater Phase II program. (Photo courtesy of John Rozum, NEMO Program.)

Whether it is NEMO helping CT DEP to reach over 1000 state and local officials with Stormwater Quality Manual training, GVI helping northeastern towns to prioritize conservation areas, the Land Use Planning Program guiding a town through an open space planning process or the new Connecticut Land Use Academy providing training on basic responsibilities and skills for new land use commissioners, CLEAR outreach programs are having an impact at the all-important local level. And, through the National NEMO Network, the successes

of CLEAR’s Connecticut outreach education programs are being replicated throughout the country.

“The NEMO Program helped educate Commission members and staff, helping us to focus on smart growth and stormwater treatment related issues. We used a team approach in reviewing and revising our Regulations and City Engineering Standards and Specifications. Even our Mayor became involved in the effort. Working together we made important changes that will be very beneficial in the future in protecting valuable natural resources. We are grateful for the guidance, insight and valuable information the NEMO program brought to us and our City.”

- Martin J. Connor, AICP, City Planner



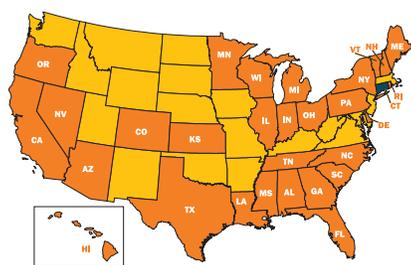
The Candlewood Lake Authority worked with NEMO to develop a special lakeside overlay zone to better protect the lake.



A low impact development subdivision in Old Saybrook, CT incorporating grass swales for handling runoff.

Large photo, left: Local leaders from the metropolitan Hartford region review maps at the Land Use Academy’s *Map Reading for Site Plan Review* workshop. Circle photo, left: Private landowners participate in a Forest Stewardship Short Course field tour. (Photo courtesy of Fred Borman of CT DEP.)

National NEMO Network, with projects in 30 states—all patterned after the original UConn NEMO program. Since CLEAR’s inception the Network has held three national conferences, and added new programs in HI, OR, FL, AZ, CA, IL, MS, NC, NJ, VT, CO and PA.



As of 2007, there are 31 funded NEMO Network programs (in orange) operating in 30 U.S. states. Connecticut is the original NEMO program and home of the Network Hub (in dark blue).

Helping communities care for their trees.

The Urban Forestry Program runs the Tree Warden School, an annual event that trains municipal Tree Wardens on topics such as tree biology, tree care, hazard tree assessment, public participation, tree law and meeting management. To date, 216 Tree Wardens, Deputy Tree Wardens and others have undergone this training, gaining skills that will make them better able to make informed decisions about the care and preservation of public trees, while protect-

ing the public from hazardous ones. The program also is serving as a model for the urban and community forestry program efforts in Maine and Vermont.



Bruce Spaman, Tree Warden for the City of Greenwich, testing for the existence of trunk decay in a red oak tree. (Photo courtesy of Robert Ricard, Forestry Program.)