



Eastern North America

UNITE
FOR
GOOD

We are delighted to share the first issue of the ESRAG Eastern North America Newsletter. This edition highlights how Rotary clubs and districts across our region are leading inspiring environmental sustainability projects. Together, we celebrate collective action that protects our planet, strengthens communities, and reflects Rotary's enduring spirit of service.

October 2025

TOGETHER WE
CONNECT AT RICON IN
CALGARY



CALL FOR SPEAKERS, PAPERS AND PROJECTS

Share your expertise! Submit papers or propose a talk, share your projects for our upcoming sessions. Join us on the third Monday per month to connect, learn, and inspire action. caroline.dewitt@esrag.org



CONNECTED WATERSHED COMMUNITIES

Author: Brian Braginton-Smith

Where water in the natural world is concerned, the watershed is the boundary for the waters flowing through our communities. The truth is that all our communities are connected by these water resources on a global scale. The world watershed is comprised of all these interconnected areas determined by topography, geography and ocean-sheds. Scientifically given enough time something poured into one watershed could eventually end up in a diluted state everywhere. What we do in our community will eventually be felt everywhere.

For Rotary International, Our 7th Platform for Action, ESRAGs and every Rotarian this means doing what we can individually and as a global network this is the core vision for the Connected Communities Platform, to seek solutions that can be shared with the vision that due to the waters that sustain us and the air we breathe we are all connected and that connection is what gives us the opportunity to have an important global impact as quickly as possible. This is critical, in boots on the ground doing the work and in funding.

STRONGER TOGETHER

Protecting Watersheds

Safeguarding our
shared resources

One Planet

Building bonds through
service

Inspiring Action

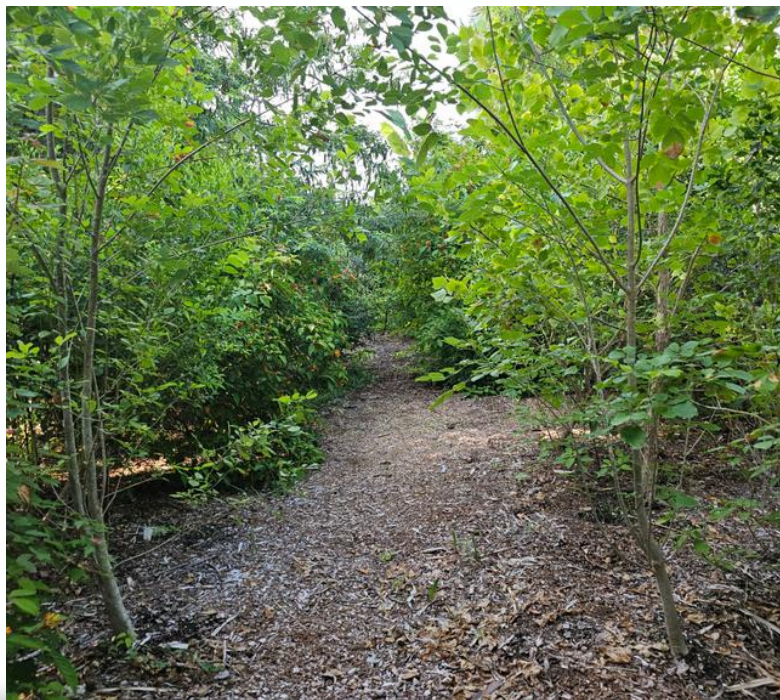
Turning commitment
into impact



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2021 Stoney Brook 2025

ROTARY-LED REFORESTATION FOR CLIMATE ADAPTATION IN SOUTH FLORIDA

Author: Charles C. Reith

Greener Urban Spaces

Since October of 2020, the Rotary Club of Sarasota Bay has spearheaded a multi-organizational initiative to plant microforests in neighborhoods around Greater Sarasota. The club is reversing the vulnerability of our host neighborhoods to the effects of climate change, particularly higher temperatures, stronger winds, and Inland flooding by stalled tropical systems. The Club further seeks to offset the regional risk resulting from the destruction of native forests by overdevelopment.

The Rotary Club of Sarasota Bay has worked with other Rotary clubs, Interact clubs, veterans organizations, and environmental nonprofits to plan and plant eight microforests. Another half dozen microforests have been planted in Greater Sarasota by a local college and several neighborhoods. We are also pleased that thanks to an ESRAG broadcast, microforests were planted in New York and Michigan.

We believe that restoration of the urban forest is the most important resilience-enhancing strategy available today.

FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

Key Elements

Site assessment
Permaculture soil
preparation and
Miyawaki plant
placements

Volunteers

Rotary Clubs and
Districts, Rotaractors,
and Interactors,
community groups and
city officials

Training /Workshop

Tracking, recording and
assessing impact in the
community



rotarysarasota.org



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FOOD WASTE

Author: Joe Richardson

Food Waste is a leading source of greenhouse gas emissions and, as we face the existential threat of climate change, it remains one of the most solvable. Education and changing daily behaviors around what we throw away can “drawdown” methane emissions while also preventing hunger.

Schools are the ideal place to begin. As the nation’s largest food service providers, they face the daunting task of feeding hundreds of children in limited time. Yet they also have the opportunity to model waste-reducing behaviors and recover “shareable” food.

Students have already led efforts with dramatic results. Up to 85% of cafeteria waste can be diverted, and over 500 million pounds of unopened food—milk, yogurt, fruit, vegetables, and prepackaged items—can be recovered annually through share tables in the U.S. Interact and student environmental clubs have educated peers, implemented food recovery programs, and mentored younger students while earning community service hours.

Student-led nonprofits like **Compostology** and the **Rise and Shine Foundation** run compost and food recovery programs in 25+ Maryland schools. In North Carolina, A Simple Gesture recovers 1.2 million pounds of food annually by providing refrigerators for share tables in 126 public schools.

The need is enormous, but the solutions are simple. Empowering students is key. Rotary Clubs can help by funding refrigerators, compost bins, and bags. Through partnerships such as Lunch out of Landfills with WWF Food Waste Warriors, HD Supply, and EcoSafe, we can promote food recovery programs nationwide.

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS

Food Security

Food recovery starts at the share table

Donations are welcome

Refrigerators , compost bins and bags

Inspiring Action

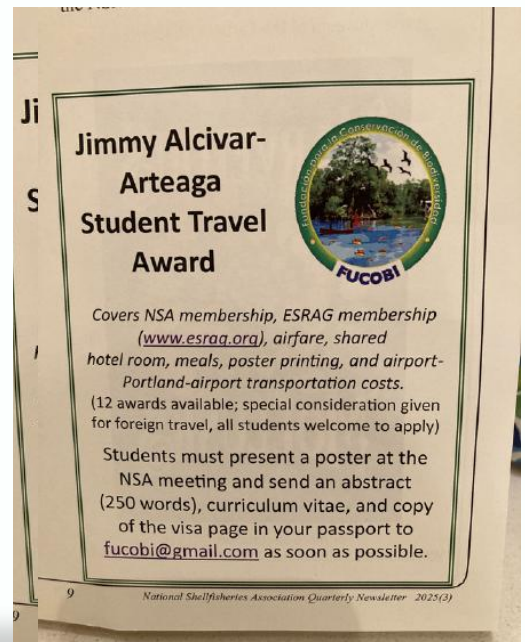
Celebrate: 140 schools in Montgomery county



lunchoutoflandfills.org



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SUSTAINING SEAS, SUSTAINING LIVES

Author: Caroline DeWitt

Mangroves are among the world's most productive ecosystems. They act as storm barriers, nurseries for marine life, and powerful carbon sinks. Yet they remain under threat from development, pollution, and unsustainable fishing. Rotary and ESRAG members are taking action to conserve and restore these critical forests while supporting the communities that rely on them.

Responsible fish farming and sustainable food systems are central to this work. By advancing aquaculture methods that ease pressure on wild stocks, Rotarians can help fishers adopt practices that protect biodiversity while strengthening their livelihoods. When paired with mangrove restoration, these practices ensure healthier coastal waters and more resilient marine resources.

Economic opportunity is at the heart of Rotary's mission. In coastal regions, families depend on mangroves not only for food but also for protection and raw materials. ESRAG projects connect Rotary Clubs with partners to provide training, resources, and market access—helping local economies grow without compromising ecosystems.

These initiatives reflect Rotary's Areas of Focus: protecting the environment, supporting economic development, and strengthening food security. By restoring mangroves, promoting responsible aquaculture, and fostering circular food systems, we build resilience for both people and planet. These conversations will continue at the **National Shellfisheries Association Annual Meeting, March 22-26, 2026**, Portland, Oregon, USA, where ESRAG will join colleagues to advance sustainable resource management.

STUDENT TRAVEL AWARD

Restore Coastal Habitats

Support Local Fishers

Build Food Security



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Resources and Opportunities

Explore these resources to learn, connect,
and lead with ESRAAG.

Seminars and Workshops go to esrag.org
events calendar

ESRAAG Regional Chapter Meeting ENA
is scheduled on
the Third Monday per month

Call for Papers & Speakers

Submit articles, case studies, or speaking
interests via our Speaker Interest Form:
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