

Teaching Sustainable Lawn Care Practices to Professionals and Residents

1. CONTACT INFORMATION:

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2. OBJECTIVE AND RATIONALE:

Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association, Tech-Terra Organics, LLC and Plant Health Alternatives, LLC will co-sponsor a two-day educational workshop targeting both professionals (day 1) and residents (day 2). The premise is based on teaching sustainable lawn care practices to a range of audiences resulting in a better understanding of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and overall improved land stewardship practices. Educational materials will be distributed both at the workshops and through a targeted mailing effort. IPM related poster materials will also be displayed in libraries and public kiosks as an educational outreach method for residents. The potential for Continuing Education (CE) credits will be explored for landscape professionals.

The three workshop co-sponsors have successfully hosted two workshops in 2007 on topics related to IPM principles. The first workshop, *Integrating Organic Practices into Your Landscaping Business*, hosted 12 speakers at a daylong workshop designed to educate landscape professionals about organic techniques that compliment their current land care methods. Attendees received pesticide recertification credits in areas of: basic safety and handling, ornamental, and turf. Our second workshop, *Trees and Soils: Biology and Care*, hosted speaker Kevin Smith of the US Forest Service. This hands-on workshop gave participants field experience as they learned practical approaches about the natural processes that lead to healthy trees. Workshop participants received credits through the International Society of Arboriculture. We believe the Green-Blue Grants Program is a wonderful opportunity to continue our workshop series and also broaden our reach by offering a workshop track for residents.

Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association is a member supported non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of the natural environment in the 265-square mile region drained by Stony Brook and the Millstone River. Through our River-Friendly Certification Programs, we work cooperatively with businesses, golf courses and residents to assist them in becoming better stewards of the land and protecting and restoring our local environment. One focus area of the River-Friendly Program is water quality management, in which implementing IPM techniques is key.

Tech-Terra Organics, LLC provides Natural Health Care for trees, shrubs and turf according to the following principles: Treat the cause not just the symptoms, while reducing the usage of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers. We believe most plant problems are due to lack of nutrients and environmental stress. When plants are healthy, they are much better equipped to fight disease and insect problems. Pesticides and synthetic fertilizers do little to improve the health of plants.

Plant Health Alternatives, LLC has the following Mission For Plants: Healing trees and other plants: being proactive by treating both seemingly healthy trees or plants and sick or stressed plants...leaving no sick tree or plant untreated. Treating trees or plants from the inside-out (not the outside-in) always coming from the plant's point of view. Serve trees or plants so that they reach and live to their full potential. Collectively, this will allow trees or plants the opportunity to express their deepest beauty as living beings.

3. HOW YOUR OBJECTIVE AND RATIONALE FIT WITH THE IPM AND WATER QUALITY IDEAS OF THE GREEN-BLUE SUMMIT OF JULY 2007:

By partnering with other organizations with overlapping interests, the co-sponsors have a greater capacity for outreach as stated by the Summit ideas. We are targeting two distinct audiences and providing them with information on basic IPM strategies. The messages that our organizations support are consistent with the Summit ideas for turf related messages: education for proper plant site and selection, promoting aesthetics with positive environmental impacts, and creating buffers to protect water quality. The workshop objective is to raise awareness through education and outreach methods, while also promoting positive environmental behavior changes. As described by the Summit ideas for areas of greatest need for pest management, the workshop will be held in February. This is a key time for promoting effective land management techniques as much landscaping activity happens in early spring. We are also hoping that by talking with both audiences (professional and resident) that we will help connect a communication “gap”. We feel it is important to provide residents an understanding of services their lawn providers are providing and also help the professionals clearly communicate their efforts to residents; relating to the Summit ideas of raising homeowner awareness that services may provide IPM and that lawn professionals can provide homeowner education.

4. YOUR EVALUATION PLAN:

We feel strongly that evaluation and feedback are ways to assess our performance, measure the completion of goals, and strengthen our work. We will create a written evaluation for participants to be completed at the workshop conclusion. The evaluation will help us measure both our effectiveness of workshop logistics as well as effectiveness of material in relation to how it can be applied. A successful workshop will be responded to with positive evaluations. Also by conducting a follow up call with both the professionals and residents we will see how they are incorporating workshop IPM topics into business practice/daily routines. Positive annotated results will help us concur the workshop’s success. Another possible evaluation tool for residents is comparing current versus new enrollment in our River-Friendly program resulting from the workshop and/or outreach- becoming River-Friendly demonstrates a change in resident attitudes, knowledge, and behavior.

5 & 6. A SIMPLE BUDGET, BUDGET NARRATIVE AND LIST OF IN-KIND FUNDS:

The budget is broken into three simple categories for hosting the workshop and providing outreach. Travel expenses are estimated based on finding local or northeast regional speakers traveling short distances. Education materials, the largest expense category, include materials for workshop participants, outreach posters, marketing, mailing, postage, and photocopies of related fact sheets. Food and paper goods for workshop participants make up the remaining allocation of funding. These expenses are based on running similar workshops over this past year. The workshop co-sponsors will provide a 100% match to the requested amount by donating their estimated salary time for event preparation, meetings, marketing, as well as a space for hosting the event.

FUNDS REQUESTED		IN-KIND FUNDS	
Travel	\$500	Stony Brook Staff Time 50 hrs at \$20/hr	\$1000
Materials	\$1500	Tech Terra Staff Time 25 hrs at \$25/hr	\$625
<u>Food</u>	<u>\$500</u>	Plant Health Staff Time 25 hrs at \$25/hr	\$625
Total Requested	\$2500	<u>Workshop space-Kingsford Room Rental</u>	<u>\$250</u>
		Total In-Kind Match	\$2500