

Turfgrass Advocacy 2023

New York State Turfgrass Association



THE TURFGRASS ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP FUND

REQUEST

We respectfully request that a line item of \$200,000 be appropriated for the New York Greengrass Association in the 2023-2024 budget for the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund.

BACKGROUND

The turfgrass industry is an important industry in New York State. According to the New York State Turfgrass Survey, close to 3.5 million acres in the state are covered with turfgrass, consisting of lawns, parks, golf courses, sports fields, sod farms, industrial and institutional grounds, rights of way, etc. Five billion dollars of turf maintenance expenses contributed to the State's economy.

Turfgrass has a major impact on the quality of life, as was evident as citizens enjoyed outdoor activities during Covid. Healthy turfgrass provides countless environmental benefits such as storing carbon, holding rainfall for groundwater recharge, reducing erosion, filtering pollutants, absorbing sound, cooling the air temperature, and providing plentiful, clean oxygen. Dense, healthy turfgrass provides a safe playing surface for our children and athletes of all ages as well as beautifies and softens our urban landscapes.

A \$200,000 appropriation for the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund provides for education and outreach promoting environmentally sustainable and safe practices of turfgrass management. The 2022-2023 State Budget's Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund appropriation provided funding for the following nine projects:

Best Management Practices for NYS Golf Courses:

Continued Implementation of Golf Course Environmental Stewardship Efforts

Workforce Development: Apprenticeship Program – Phase II

Green Industry Educational Webinars – Development & Implementation (*see reverse*)

Promote Professionalism Through Research and Education – Phase VI

Regional Hydrogeological Assessment for Long Island Golf Courses and Best Management Practices Evaluation for Irrigation Conservation

Environmental Stewardship Education for the Hudson Valley Golf Course Superintendents Association

Environmental Stewardship Education for the Northeastern Golf Course Superintendents Association

Environmental Stewardship Virtual Education for the Long Island Golf Course Superintendents Association

New York Greengrass Association Outreach

NYSTA PERSPECTIVE

It is the mission of NYSTA to promote professionalism through education and research while advocating environmentally responsible management. Supporting the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund assists in providing education to turfgrass professionals who are constantly challenged to meet expectations for quality, safety, and environmental sustainability.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

Green Industry Educational Webinars – Development & Implementation

The goal of this project was to provide quality educational programs for professionals in our industry and enhance turfgrass environmental stewardship in New York State. An online platform was developed and eleven educational webinars for pesticide applicators were facilitated. These webinars were focused on golf, sports turf, lawn/landscape, and health, safety, and compliance topics for industry professionals.

- Education was provided to over 1,200 registrants
- 90% of registrants received NYS Department of Environmental Conservation pesticide recertification credits
- Webinar topics included:
 - High Grass Area and Fine Fescue Establishment and Management for Golf Courses on Long Island
 - Are there Opportunities to adjust calendar-based pesticide programs for sports fields and grounds?
 - A Quest for Resilience: Adaptive strategies for sustaining planting design
 - Understanding tools to combat bacterial diseases in cool season turfgrass
 - The Answer Was Right Below Our Feet: Using biologicals to control pests and disease
 - Managing ants, earthworm casts, and other nuisance pests on golf courses
 - Water Quality on the Course: Keep it a hazard to golfers only
 - Bees, Pesticides and Politics: Challenges and opportunities for sustainable urban landscapes
 - Disease or Drought: Diagnostic Tips to Reduce your Fungicide Inputs.
- Archived versions of live webinars are available for NYSDEC credit on the NYSTA website

