



## New Jersey Pinelands Commission **PRESS RELEASE**

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### ***Students test water quality in Pinelands as part of global water monitoring day***

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP, NJ – Dozens of students got a hands-on lesson in gauging Pinelands water quality and learned about the importance of protecting waterways by participating in today's World Water Monitoring Day at the historic Batsto Village here.

The event attracted approximately 105 students who conducted water quality tests while interacting with, and receiving guidance from, staff with the New Jersey Pinelands Commission, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the Rutgers University/Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve.

"It's great to work with these students as they learn firsthand how they can have a positive effect on the environment in which they live and how to avoid negative impacts on Pinelands ecology," said Joel Mott, the Pinelands Commission's Public Programs Specialist.

"These students are tomorrow's environmental and community leaders, and this experience will foster their commitment to environmental stewardship," DEP Commissioner Bradley M. Campbell said. "This is a unique opportunity to give students a hands-on sense of one of the country's most significant ecological resources, the New Jersey Pinelands."

Students from Pinelands Regional Middle School in Ocean County, Manalapan High School in Monmouth County, Monroe Township High School in Monmouth County and Sterling High School in Camden County obtained and tested water samples from Batsto Lake, which is located in the heart of the Pinelands in Wharton State Forest. The students measured the levels of pH or acidity in water, as well as water clarity, temperature and dissolved oxygen. Water in the Pinelands is generally undisturbed, has a low pH and low dissolved solids, enabling it to support uniquely adapted Pinelands plants and animals.

George Young, who teaches life science and biology at Pinelands Regional Middle School, led a group of 7<sup>th</sup> grade students in the school's Gifted and Talented Enrichment Program during the event.

“Education is a three-tier process,” said Young, who also serves on the Pinelands Education Advisory Council. “The learning starts in the classroom and is aided by hands-on experiences in field gathering data, and experiencing the environment firsthand. This process is completed and taken to a higher level of understanding by following up with these memorable experiences in the classroom and beyond. World Water Monitoring Day is a great example of this process.”

After conducting the tests, students reported their findings on the World Water Monitoring Day Web site ([www.worldwatermonitoringday.org](http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org)), where test results can be compared over time.

America’s Clean Water Foundation, in partnership with the International Water Association and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, plans and coordinates World Water Monitoring Day on October 18 of each year to raise public awareness and involvement in the protection of water quality world wide.

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