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## Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund Grant Awarded to Dr. Daniel Peck

**T**he New York State Turfgrass Association Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Dr. Daniel Peck, Assistant Professor of Soil Insect Ecology and Turfgrass Entomology at Cornell University's New York State Experiment Station in Geneva, was the recipient of a Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund grant in the amount of \$105,000. The award will fund his project, "Diagnosis Turf: Expanding New York's Opportunities to Resolve Pest Issues and Reduce Pesticide Use."

According to Dr. Peck, "Turfgrass plays a vital role in the State's economy as well as in the sports and leisure activities of its

Peck hopes to further enhance environmental stewardship through improved diagnostics by implementing a series of objectives designed to build capacity in New York State for the identification of turfgrass pests. These include:

- 1.) Gathering baseline information on current demand, availability and accessibility of diagnostic services through phone interviews and investigations on current services and approaches by other states.
- 2.) Tailoring management information to the environmental and regulatory scenarios in New York State by providing updates for Cornell Pest Management Guidelines for Commercial Turfgrass, developing a series of on-line fact sheets and creating a web page for turf extension information and tools.
- 3.) Expanding opportunities for diagnostic services in New York State by developing an on-line identification key, advancing DNA identification techniques, and conducting a one-day training workshop at the 2010 Empire State Green Industry Show.
- 4.) Building demand for those services within New York State through a series of promotional and instructional publications.
- 5.) Defining the short-term impacts and long-term prospects for a statewide diagnostics program for the insect pests, diseases and weeds of turf. This will be measured in terms of the number of extension contact hours and visits to web-based resources.

According to Peck, "In pest management, diagnosis is the correct identification of the culprit(s) behind a plant health issue. This project is needed because pest management practitioners need to 'nail the culprit' – be it insect, weed or disease – in a reliable, quick and informative fashion. Better diagnosis is a new avenue for reducing pesticide use because it limits applications against



*Daniel C. Peck, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Soil Insect Ecology and Turfgrass Entomology, presents an overview of the turfgrass research facility to the NYSTA Board during a meeting at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva.*

citizens. The primary goal of the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund is to support science-based research aimed at striking a balance among the desires and expectations of turf end-users, sound and integrated management practices, and protection of man and the environment. Improving the accuracy and speeding the delivery of reliable pest identification will lead to a more successful resolution of pest problems while reducing pesticide use."

the wrong target. It will therefore lead to environmental and economic benefits.”

The role of the New York State Turfgrass Association will be to communicate information to our members through diagnostic sessions at our annual and regional conferences, web site postings, training workshops, and announcements in our member newsletters. Elizabeth Seme, NYSTA Executive Director said, “Last March, the New York State Turfgrass Association Board of Directors had the opportunity to tour Cornell University’s New York State Agricultural Experiment Station (NYSAES) and hear presentations by the scientists there. We were especially impressed by the cutting-edge research taking place in the Entomology Department. Dr. Peck has proven to be an authority in the Northeast on the European crane fly and annual bluegrass weevil. We’re proud to be able to award him with an ESF grant for his current project and are confident that NYSAES has the scientists, researchers, cooperative extension agents, laboratory

technicians, and IPM specialists to handle all aspects of this endeavor.”

Dr. Thomas J. Burr, NYSAES Associate Dean and Director expressed his appreciation for the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund grant in a letter sent to NYSTA President, Owen Regan. He wrote, “The support NYSTA has and continues to provide Dan Peck and other researchers in the College is critical for the development of excellent turf research and extension programs. The funding will allow Dan and his laboratory staff to assess the breadth and needs of turf diagnostics across New York and further develop and evaluate key diagnostic methods that will be critical to the future of the turfgrass industry.”

The New York State Turfgrass Association is proud to support the New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences mission to create a “learning community dedicated to wide access, independent learning and new technologies...that will have a local and global impact on the way Earth’s inhabitants live, learn and thrive.”

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## Wright Receives Environmental Stewardship Award

September 1, GSA New York presented its Environmental Stewardship Award to Thomas V. Wright, the Superintendent of Parks and Grounds at the historic Mohonk Mountain House, high on the Shawangunk Ridge in New Paltz, New York. Presented annually, the award is “given to an individual who exemplifies the role of environmental steward in the management of natural resources that support outdoor recreation and sports opportunities.”

Built on the deep-blue waters of Lake Mohonk in 1869, the grand 265-room Mohonk Mountain House is one of America’s oldest family-owned resorts. Tom Wright is responsible for the management of thousands of acres of unspoiled natural beauty that offers guests 85 miles of hiking trails, swimming, boating, ice

skating, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, tennis, horseback riding, rock climbing and a golf course that has been called one of the “Top 10 Environmentally Friendly Courses in the USA” by Links magazine. He has been successful in providing for the recreational needs of Mohonk’s visitors while demonstrating an exceptional commitment to protecting the unique environment of the Shawangunks, called one of Earth’s “Last Great Places” by the Nature Conservancy. In his work he guards the Mohonk tradition of environmentalism - unwavering for 140 years of continuous Smiley family ownership.



Mohonk President Bert Smiley, Thomas Wright, GSA-NY Captain Kevin Trotta