

# VOLUNTEERS

*Helping People Help the Land*

## Volunteer Comes Full Circle with Relief Projects

Salvatore “Sal” Donzella, an Earth Team volunteer for NRCS in Connecticut since 1991, has come full circle with his volunteer projects. He began by helping the Soil Conservation Service (SCS - now NRCS) conduct flood audits, and today Sal assists with Hurricane Sandy relief projects.

In 1991, SCS conducted flood audits to identify homes and properties within flood-prone areas in various Connecticut towns. As an Earth Team volunteer with 40 years of experience in the heating and air conditioning business, Sal provided technical assistance that helped homeowners protect their furnaces and reduce potential flood damage to their homes. His extensive customer service experience proved invaluable in conducting outreach and educational activities for homeowners.

Now semi-retired, Sal is again using those same skills as an Earth Team volunteer. This time working with victims of Hurricane Sandy who want to place their land into floodplain easements. With these easements, NRCS will restore their land to natural conditions, which will help prevent future storm damage in flood-prone areas. In addition to providing one-on-one assistance, Sal works with groups as well, teaching them how to monitor conditions on their easement lands.

“My volunteer experience working with the USDA has been, and still is, rewarding,” says Sal. “The work that is being done benefits us all, now and into the future.”

And Sal’s Earth Team contributions haven’t been limited to assisting with relief efforts. Since 1991, he has contributed more than 2,500 hours of volunteer time in a wide variety of NRCS activities, including Earth Day events, horse shows, Plant Science Days, Career Fairs, the Eastern States Exposition, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebrations, and Solar Youth events. Sal set up displays, distributed NRCS materials, led hands-on activities, and assisted the public.



*Sal Donzella*

Sal’s patience and customer service skills allow him to work easily with all groups and ages.

“There is nothing as rewarding as the smiles on the young and old when you have been able to help them,” said Sal. “Volunteering at NRCS has given me that opportunity.”

The Earth Team is the volunteer component of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



If you are interested in volunteering, contact the National Earth Team office at (888) 526- 3227 or visit

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/people/volunteers/>