



Conservation Highlights

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Message from the Manager



"I encourage you to keep in contact with the District whenever you need to make a decision that will impact the natural resources in the County."

It doesn't seem like we should be striving to keep our New Year's resolutions and settling in for the cold winter months once again, but here we are and it's a good time to reflect on what has happened in 2015. The Conservation District has been very busy in 2015 with implementation of Best Management practices on farms, workshops and trainings to aid municipalities in their efforts to control extreme weather events, recycling events and conservation related educational activities through the Envirothon program. The District has also been very busy applying for

numerous grants that will benefit the County and preserve our natural resources. We were recently awarded 3 grants for work related to hydroseeding of roadside ditches, innovative stormwater control practices utilizing compost materials, and infrastructure mapping of culverts/catch basins and ditch lines throughout the County. These awards were funded by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. The District was also awarded a grant to implement a silage leachate collection and treatment system on a farm in the Town of Dryden. This award was

funded through the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. We have also welcomed aboard two new staff members to the Soil and Water Conservation District. Kym Jackson was hired in July as our new Senior Account Clerk and Paul Gier was hired in December as our new Natural Resources Program Specialist working with Ag producers in the County.

As we all dive into 2016 activities I encourage you to keep in contact with the District whenever you need to make a decision that will impact the natural resources in the County. Our staff and resources are here to help.



It's *Envirothon* time again. The *Envirothon* is one of the most successful and fastest growing educational programs sponsored by the Soil & Water Conservation Districts in New York State. It is a hands-on, outdoor competition for high school students that tests students' knowledge in the subjects of aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife and a current issue topic. We raise money through the year to help support the costs of this event, There is absolutely *no cost* to the students who participate in this event. Please consider making a contribution to the TCSWCD and support our local youth!

Learn more about the New York State Envirothon at www.nysenvirothon.net



Southern Tier Agricultural Industry Enhancement Program

Attention Tompkins County Farmers!

The Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District has partnered with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to deliver a grants program to support agricultural projects in the county.

Funding is now available through the Southern Tier Agricultural Industry Enhancement Program to eligible farm landowners to complete projects that increase farm production, advance on-farm conservation/ environmental goals, and enhance profitability.

Funding is available to address a variety of projects:

***\$20,000 - \$50,000: 90% state cost share rate (applicants provide 10% match)**

*** \$50,001 - \$100,000: 75% state cost share rate (applicants provide 25% match)**

For additional information and to obtain an application, please visit our website at:

<http://tompkinscountyny.gov/swcd/Grants>

or

the Tompkins SWCD offices at 170 Bostwick Road (second floor)

Projects must implement part(s) of a farm business or environmental plan. Farms must meet all eligibility requirements and participate in the Agricultural Environmental Management program.

General information about this opportunity is also available at:

<http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/RFPS.html>



“Flash flooding events have become all too familiar in Tompkins County over the last few years “

Workshops to Address Emergency Stream Intervention

By Angel Hinickle

Flash flooding events have become all too familiar in Tompkins County over the last few years, with upwards of four inches of rain falling within an hour or two. After these enormous rain events (flash floods), sediment and debris pile up behind bridges and culverts. Typically, the response after these storm events has been to dredge the stream to remove sediment, resulting in a deepening of the channel and possibly widening of the channel. However, stream science and field experience has shown that altering a stream channels

dimension can cause excessive deposition (if channel is too wide) or excessive erosion (if the channel is too deep). To address this issue Delaware County SWCD, USGS, New York City DEP, and the NYSDEC worked together to develop what is called “Post-Flood Emergency Stream Intervention Training.” This training provides those that typically respond to flood damage with a method to determine proper channel dimensions that are necessary to stabilize the stream. Given the applicability of this topic, a three-day training was offered in the Town of Newfield this past

August. The training was held by the Upper Susquehanna Coalition and TCSWCD with Town of Newfield highway staff operating the equipment. Participants included municipal highway staff, NYS DOT, municipal staff (code enforcement, planning), Cornell Cooperative Extension, municipal engineers, and private landowners. A big thank you goes to the Town of Newfield highway for their involvement in this training and the effort they put forth to improve our vital water resources.



Keeping Water Clean on the Farm

The District Completed Best Management Practices on 2 farms in the County with funding from the NYS Agricultural Non-Point Source Pollution Abatement Program. A manure storage and transfer system was installed on the Beck Farm property in the Fall Creek watershed to allow them better storage and timing of application of their manure waste.

A silage leachate collection and treatment system was installed on the Sweyolakan farm in the Cayuga Inlet watershed to prevent silage "juice" from running off into nearby Cayuga Inlet. By collecting this water the farm is able to protect the water resources of the county and more efficiently utilize the nutrients where they are needed in the crop fields.

The funding for these projects are available to all farmers in the county that participate in the Agricultural Environmental Program of the District. For more information about the program please contact the District offices.

“Funding for these projects are available to all farmers in the county that participate in AEM”



Manure Storage on Beck Farms



Before silage leachate collection system was installed on Sweyolakan Farm

Silage "juice" now goes into a collection and vegetated treatment area



After silage leachate collection system was installed on Sweyolakan Farm

“Additional information on the Cayuga Lake Watershed Hydrilla Project can be found on the Project website at www.Stophydrilla.org”

District Continues Strong Support of Local Hydrilla Project

By James Balyszak

As a primary stakeholder on the Project, the District has assisted the Hydrilla Task Force (HTF) with Project planning and NYSDEC permitting and compliance activities. With assistance from its numerous stakeholders, the HTF was once again able to implement hydrilla management and eradication activities in Cayuga Inlet, Fall Creek, and the southeast corner of Cayuga Lake in 2015.

One new development in 2015 was a grant awarded to the District through the Finger Lakes PRISM (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management). Funding from this grant helped cover a portion of the hydrilla

monitoring and sampling activities in the southern end of Cayuga Lake. As a primary component of the ongoing Hydrilla Project, extensive monitoring and sampling activities help improve early detection of new hydrilla growth, which in turn allows the HTF to respond rapidly to develop and implement management strategies. This grant award was made possible through

collaborative efforts between the HTF, District, Racine-Johnson Aquatic Ecologists, FL-PRISM, NYSDEC, and Hobart & William Smith Colleges.

Hydrilla monitoring and eradication activities will continue in the upcoming 2016 season. Additional information on the Cayuga Lake Watershed Hydrilla Project can be found on the Project website at www.Stophydrilla.org



Crew members of Racine-Johnson Aquatic Ecologists conduct rake-toss sampling for hydrilla and the overall plant community in southern Cayuga Lake during the 2015 season (Photo: Bob Johnson)



Become a Sponsor Here!

For more information on becoming a sponsor for this newsletter, please contact the Soil and Water Conservation District at 607-257-2340 and speak with Kym Jackson.

L 👁 👁 KING AHEAD.....

TCSWCD has been awarded funding to host two tire collection events in 2016. The events will be held in various municipalities across the county. Tires will be collected and sent to a recycling facility where they will be ground into useful and environmentally sustainable materials. Check our website periodically for our announcement of the upcoming dates and locations.





**Tompkins County Soil and Water
Conservation District**

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*It is the mission of the Tompkins County
Soil and Water Conservation District
(SWCD) to provide assistance to citizens
and units of local government in making
sound decision on the management of
soil, water and related natural resources
based on their needs. The SWCD will
further assist in the implementation of
decisions by seeking and coordinating
technical and financial assistance from
federal, state, and local governments,
and private sources.*

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Kym Jackson. Senior Account Clerk

USDA-NRCS

Patrick Barry District Conservationist
(Schuyler & Tompkins Counties)
Justin Olsen Soil Conservationist
Lori Beach Civil Engineer Technician (Area III)

*Board meetings are held monthly on the 2nd Monday at 3:30
P.M. in the District office. The public is always invited.*

*The Tompkins County Soil & Water Conservation District
and the Natural Resources Conservation Service prohibit
discrimination in all their programs and activities on the
basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age,
disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital
or family status.*

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us know by sending a message to mail@tcsxcd.org .