




Quarterly


NEWSLETTER




DATES TO REMEMBER

 **June:**
30 - BMP Verification and Data Entry Deadline

 **July:**
30 - Bi-monthly USC Meeting

 **August:**
3-5 - Empire Farm Days
4 - Start of Watershed Wednesday Webinars
31 - Deadline for Fall T4T Request

 **October**
1 - Deadline for Invoices and Reports for Buffer Steward Program

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Fall Trees for Tributaries Program

Submitted By: Taylor Held
USC Buffer Team

The USC will be implementing a Fall Trees for Tributaries this year! Every spring, the USC partners with the DEC and helps coordinate the Trees for Tributaries program throughout the Upper Susquehanna Watershed. The deadline to send your request form for the upcoming fall is **Tuesday, August 31st**. Project eligibility is dependent on a stream being present. The species that are available to order can be found at:

<https://www.u-s-c.org/treesfortributaries>.

You can find the application for the program by clicking:

<https://www.u-s-c.org/T4TApplication>, this application must be signed by the landowner and submitted by **December 1st** along with a map. If you have any further questions please contact Taylor Held (heldt@tiogacountyny.gov) or Lydia Brinkley (lbrinkley@u-s-c.org). Thank you!

Key Dates/ Program Requirements:

- Deadline to submit plant requests for T4T: **August 31st**
- Deadline to submit the signed application for T4T: **Dec. 1**
- Must include map of the planted area
- Pictures are optional but recommended



Finger Lakes Land Trust and Partners Plant Along Chemung River

Submitted By: Kris West

The Finger Lakes Land Trust (FLLT) recently began an ambitious restoration effort at its Kehoe Nature Preserve in Big Flats, Chemung County, by planting 1,200 native trees and shrubs in partnership with the Upper Susquehanna Coalition (USC). The establishment of native plants at this site, which includes 1,480 feet of frontage on the Chemung River, will enhance wildlife habitat, promote native plant diversity, and create an important forest buffer.

The USC, which works with partner organizations to improve water quality in the Upper Susquehanna River Basin, took the lead on restoring a 5-acre field adjacent to the river by removing non-native invasive species such as knotweed, European buckthorn, honeysuckle, and tree of heaven—a preferred host plant for the invasive spotted lanternfly. They then planted native trees and shrubs such as sugar maple, oak, hickory, elderberry, and dogwood. Staff and volunteers from the FLLT and USC will continue to steward and monitor the site until the new plantings are established.

“This project moved forward thanks to the unique capabilities of the Upper Susquehanna Coalition brought to bear by their Riparian Buffer Coordinator, Lydia Brinkley,” said FLLT Senior Field Representative Kris West. “We are thankful for her leadership in all aspects of the planning, coordination, and implementation of the restoration planting.”

The 42-acre Kehoe Nature Preserve was acquired by the FLLT in 2016 as a donation from Phyllis Kehoe, a resident of Pine City. The property, once slated for residential development including more than 30 homes, is now permanently protected as a wildlife refuge. Nearby, the FLLT owns and manages the Plymouth Woods and Steege Hill nature preserves. The organization also recently partnered with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to acquire 315 acres on both sides of the Chemung River to add to the Big Flats Wildlife Management Area.



Meet Our Buffer Stewards!



Madison County - Madison County's Buffer Steward, Andy Haslauer, has done an exceptional job complimenting the district team with assisting customers at the annual 2021 tree sale, planting over 855 trees and shrubs in buffer projects and performing monitoring and maintenance work. He's also using his farmer work-ethic in building fences, installing water systems, taking soil samples and overseeing projects making him an invaluable resource to the district.

Cortland County - Cheyenne Nowalk is from Cincinnatus, NY. This spring, she graduated from Wells College where she double majored in Environmental Science and Sustainability. After working with the Cortland County SWCD, she plans to go to grad school to further her education in Conservation.



Jeanne Beveridge is from McGraw, New York. She currently studies environmental engineering at Clarkson University. After graduating, she would like to pursue a career in renewable energy.

Avery Barber graduated high school in Marathon, NY and then traveled to Green Mountain College in Vermont, then Chatham University in Pittsburgh for her bachelor's degree in sustainability and food systems. She is excited to have the opportunity to apply what she learned from her college education to conservation work. Avery hopes to help pave the way for a more sustainable future- particularly in regard to what we eat.



Otsego County - Devin Kiser, a Milford native, is an Otsego County SWCD Buffer Steward this year. Devin is a 2018 graduate of SUNY Oneonta where she earned a bachelor's degree in biology. During her time there she developed an interest in bettering the natural environment, narrowing her career perspective to opportunities where she can enjoy the outdoors and have a positive impact on it.

John Fowler grew up in northern New York and went to high school at Indian River Central School District. A 2021 graduate from SUNY Cobleskill, receiving a bachelor's degree in Wildlife Management, John is interested in environmental restoration and stream restoration. Come fall, he plans on searching for a job related to this position and is considering continuing his education to attain a master's degree.



Continued... Meet Our Buffer Stewards!

Delaware County - Hannah Wood grew up fishing, walking down, floating down, and jumpin' into the Susquehanna River! She graduated from Sidney High School and went on to earn a Bachelor of Science in Geoscience, and a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies from William Smith College in Geneva, NY. While in college, she participated in many extracurricular activities; including representing William Smith as a varsity student athlete all four years, joining an A CAPELLA group, interning at the college farm, and enjoying the beautiful Seneca Lake! She served in AmeriCorps NCCC for 10 months after graduation, where she volunteered with several Bureau of Land Management Field Offices in California. Hannah is a huge fan of van livin', camping, hiking, kayaking, avocados, sushi, and her doggie Esus (who we call "Sus," "sus bear," etc.) She is very excited to learn as much as she can about the Delaware County watershed this summer!

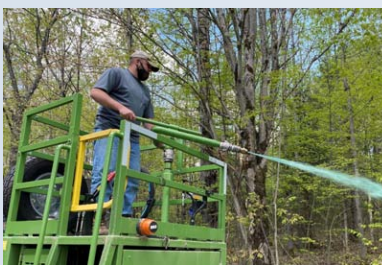


Joe Ermeti is a buffer steward with the Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District. He is a resident of Delaware County from the town of Sidney. Joe graduated with a bachelor's degree in wildlife management from SUNY Cobleskill. He enjoys hunting/fishing and he volunteers with both Ducks Unlimited and the National Wild Turkey Federation.

Tioga County - Rachael Holden has taken the role of the Riparian Buffer Steward in Tioga County this summer. She will be visiting riparian forest buffers throughout the county to monitor their success rates and perform maintenance. Rachael graduated from Binghamton University in 2019, where she received her Bachelor's in Environmental Planning. She's looking forward to working in the field and learning more about conservation practices implemented by the USC.



Thomas Flynn works for the Upper Susquehanna Coalition as a Riparian Buffer Steward for Tioga County Soil and Water Conservation District. His passion for understanding relationships between people and place is reflected in his degree in Environmental Sustainability and Geographic Information Systems. He's eager to learn more and to see the work the USC team will accomplish during the coming season.



Chenango County - Keegan Richie is currently finishing his Bachelor of Technology in Environmental and Natural Resource Management Degree at SUNY Morrisville. As a buffer steward, he is learning the ins and outs of District life while earning credit toward his degree. He enjoys spending his time outside and really enjoys talking to and helping out our clientele. Keegan began working for the District in April, allowing us to stay ahead of schedule on our previously planted forest buffers.



Bradford County Conservation District Welcomes Adam Chorba as the New Forest Specialist

Submitted By: Joseph Quatrini
Bradford County SWCD

With forest land being the dominant land cover of Bradford County, the need for someone to be available to assist landowners with questions on how to manage that land is critical. To fill that need, BCCD recently hired Adam Chorba. Adam is a Penn State graduate with an associate degree in wildlife technologies and a bachelor's degree in wildlife & fisheries management with successful completion of extensive forestry related coursework. Adam is an avid outdoorsman who enjoys hunting, fishing, and most any other outdoor recreation, but he favors waterfowl hunting most. Adam also helps manage his family's beef farm with a focus on wildlife habitat improvement. Adam's favorite part about working in this field is being able to help improve the quality of nature and to help others do the same. Adam feels "the forest is a key component of nature and an important resource that must be managed wisely because without it, life couldn't sustain".

The Bradford County Forest Specialist will be responding to landowner requests for planning assistance related to forest management for timber harvest, habitat improvement, water quality, and sustainability. The Forest Specialist will advise on proper erosion and sedimentation controls on active logging sites and will be the point of contact for logging related complaints and navigating local, state, and federal authorization requirements. This position will be responsible for implementing current and future County forest related programs including education and outreach activities for youth, adults, and industry professionals.

Furthermore, the Forest Specialist will be responsible for coordinating riparian forest buffer implementation efforts between Pennsylvania and New York Upper Susquehanna Coalition (USC) member Conservation Districts to contribute to the development of cohesive and sustainable riparian buffer implementation and maintenance programs. The Forest Specialist will be responsible for engaging landowners throughout the USC watershed in an effort to promote and increase establishment of forested riparian buffers and reforestation across the landscape. This position was made possible by funding from USC through a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant as well as funding from BCCD.



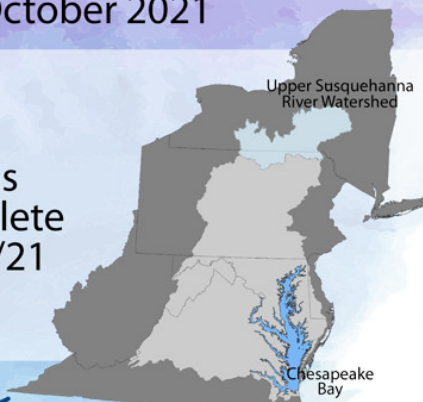
Announcing the Return of Watershed Wednesdays

With the success of the 2020 series of Watershed Wednesday Webinars, we plan to continue the series from August to October 2021

Call for Presentations

We would like to develop a diverse series of presentations for this year's watershed wednesdays calendar. Please complete our online form if you are interested in presenting by 6/28/21

www.u-s-c.org/webinartopics



Underwater Drone Aquatic Education

Submitted By: Joeseeph Quatrini
Bradford County SWCD

This project uses a novel approach to aquatic education by providing people of all ages with a first person view of the often never before seen underwater world in their own backyards. People often watch educational content highlighting underwater marine wildlife in ocean environments, but sadly miss out on the fascinating plants, animals and habitats found within the familiar lakes, streams, ponds, rivers and creeks in rural PA. By highlighting the beautiful underwater scenery that can be found within local waterways, along with fascinating species of fish, aquatic reptiles, amphibians, insects and even birds and mammals within their own habitats, we can highlight how unique these places are and why they are important to conserve.

Watershed organizations, lake/pond associations, conservation districts, etc...that are interested in collaborating on an underwater filming opportunity may contact Dan Rhodes, education coordinator from the Bradford County Conservation District for more information on drone rental fees. (570) 485-3125 or Daniel.Rhodes@pa.nacdnet.net



The John Wayne of New York State Conservation

Submitted By: Troy Bishopp
Madison County SWCD

Hamilton, NY--- At the 2021 New York State Conservation District Employees' Association (NYS CDEA) annual training symposium and awards banquet, a big man and maverick of sorts, was honored with the prestigious Willard F. Croney Distinguished Service Award for excelling as the outstanding Conservation District Employee in the State.

According to last year's honoree and this year's presenter, Douglas Fisher, "Like John Wayne is to westerns, Madison County's Soil and Water Conservation District Manager, Steve Lorraine, is the John Wayne of Conservation". "Steve has done it all for NYS and Northeast Conservation" said Fisher. He exhibits Wayne's "true grit" and "doing what must be done". He is an individual who has never sought this type of recognition, but has always been at the forefront of policy and programs beneficial to conservation and customers."

Lorraine has served as NYS CDEA Division Rep, Committee Chairman, Symposium and Skills Workshop Instructor, CDEA Vice President and CDEA President---twice, as well as being a Madison County District Manager and valuable employee over 19 years. "I have seen firsthand the commitment Steve has exhibited throughout the years. He has a genuine concern for mentoring district employees as well as his unrelenting service to the agricultural community, said Madison County SWCD Board Chairman, Doug Holdridge. The Madison County SWCD has garnered millions of dollars for customer projects and initiatives, added a diverse staff of certified professionals and has been recognized nationally for its achievements, all under the leadership of Mr. Lorraine."

Assistant Director of the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee, Brian Steinmuller, says that he could always rely on Steve to give an unvarnished opinion on a proposed direction even if it was not popular or contrary to the course that the state was heading. Warren County SWCD District Manager, Jim Liebrum said, "Steve asks the hard questions, offers sound advice and solutions and is a terrific person to have as a representative of Conservation Districts in New York. In John Wayne fashion he also gets right to the point and holds people accountable".



Douglas Fisher presents Steve Lorraine with the 2021 Willard F. Croney Distinguished Service Award for outstanding Conservation District Employee in NYS



Continued: The John Wayne of New York State Conservation

Submitted By: Troy Bishopp
Madison County SWCD

Franklin County SWCD Manager Chasity Miller adds: "Steve has always been involved and dedicated to improving the 58 NYS Conservation Districts in any way possible. As a long time active member of the NYS CDEA, he has provided valuable on-the-ground knowledge and practical leadership to the NYS Conservation Committee, NY-NRCS, NY Ag & Mkts., NYACD and a multitude of NGOs and legislators".

Wendy Walsh, District Manager of Tioga County SWCD credits Lorraine as bringing insights and value to the Upper Susquehanna Coalition meetings and is always working to support soil and watershed programing. "He embodies the tenacious, independent thinker mindset, fairness, stubbornness and a hard-working, rational implementer of conservation that Mr. Croney and farmers are proud of."

"I am humbled to carry out the legacy of work by Mr. Croney and thank you for the recognition", said Lorraine. He shares this honor with his wife Kim, son Greg, daughters Laura and Mattie, and new granddaughter, Octavia, in addition to his District Board and staff.

This year's zoom awards banquet also honored other deserving land stewards: The President's Award was presented to Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District's Account Clerk, Kristin White, for her years of service to the association as treasurer and board member. The Partnership Appreciation Award was bestowed on Greg Albrecht from New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. The District Director Award honored farmer John Wright, District Chair of the Orange County Soil and Water Conservation District for his years of dedicated service.

Division Merit Awards were awarded to Aliana Roberage of Ontario County SWCD, Alexis Lyndaker of Lewis County Soil & Water Conservation District SWCD, Jennifer Kelly of Chenango County SWCD, Maren Alexander from Warren County SWCD and The Special Project Award went to the Urban Ag Fresh Connections out of Cortland County SWCD.



Jennifer Kelly of Chenango SWCD was awarded the Division 4 Merit Award.



Greg Albrecht is the 2021 CDEA Partnership Award recipient



Cortland County SWCD received NYS CDEA Special project award for Fresh Connections - Promoting Urban Agriculture and Natural Resource Conservation

Best Management Practice Tracking for the Chesapeake Bay Program

Submitted By: Emily Dekar
USC Ag Team

Best Management Practices (BMP's), are in the process of being verified and entered into the USC Online Database. All data for the 2021 Progress Year (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021) is due to be entered into the USC's Online Tool by June 30, 2021. This data consists of "multi-year practices" such as riparian buffers, manure storages and heavy use areas, as well as "annual practices" like cover crops, nutrient management and tillage to name a few. Each year, SWCD's across the watershed are assigned verification lists from a random sampling process completed by the USC. These verification lists identify farms with practices chosen for BMP Verification for the year. For the 2021 progress year, the USC was able to provide a funding incentive to for district to complete this verification work. Contracts with verifications lists and information were sent out in April. The BMP Verification process is the way in which the USC certifies with the Chesapeake Bay Program, that the practices that are reporting to the Chesapeake Bay Model are maintained and functioning as intended. It also gives landowners' an opportunity to discuss with their SWCD's any issues or concerns they may have on their farms. For more information or questions about the USC's BMP Verification Program, please contact Emily Dekar at dekare@tiogacountyny.gov.



Farm Water Quality Improvement Project in Tioga County

Submitted By: Danielle Singer
Tioga County SWCD

Tioga County SWCD recently completed a project that addressed all of the identified resource concerns on a dairy farm in the Town of Owego. A covered barnyard with a manure stacking pad was built to house the heifers that traditionally remained in a pasture year-round. Exclusion fencing and a 1 acre riparian forest buffer were installed along the stream that flows through this pasture. A milkhouse waste collection system was constructed to capture that water and allow the farmer to pump it into his manure spreader to spread on fields. Additionally, improvements were made to the access roads and laneways on the farmstead. The project took 3 years to complete the design and implementation of all the practices. The District utilized the NYS Agricultural Non-Point Source Grant Round 23 and USC RCPP Round 1 to fund the project with some landowner cost-share.

The District also tried a new floor grooving technique on this covered barnyard called traction milling. It provides a rough texture to 95% of the floor surface and the increased traction eliminates cows slipping on the concrete. Other grooving styles are a "slip & catch" type of fall prevention. The traction milling is supposed to increase cow health and comfort by reducing de-lamination and hoof trauma to the cows since they never slip on it. The technique was used on two covered barnyards built in 2020 and so far the District and farmers are very happy with the results.



The finished covered barnyard and manure stacking pad.



Traction milling technique on the concrete floor.



The one acre buffer (before the exclusion fence was built).

USC Water Quality Program Funding Available

By: Lydia Brinkley
USC Buffer Team

Funding is available for water quality projects through the USC Water Quality Program. This program, currently funded through several grant sources, has some big deliverables to accomplish by 2024. Our deliverable goals are to implement 114 acres of riparian buffer, 400 acres of grazing, 3,800' of stream corridor restoration, and 39 acres of wetland restoration. Through our projects contracted to date, we are on track to meet our stream corridor and wetland deliverables, leaving grazing and riparian buffer projects yet to be identified to meet grant deliverables. Applications for the program are accepted on a rolling basis and will be reviewed in a timely manner. All projects require a site visit prior to award so that projects can be ranked, a method approved by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for disbursement of this funding. Please contact Emily Dekar (dekare@tiogacountyny.gov), Lydia Brinkley (lbrinkley@u-s-c.org), or Wendy Walsh (walshw@tiogacountyny.gov) with project and program inquiries.

The USC Water Quality Program was developed to accelerate the improvement of water quality within the watershed with special consideration for habitat restoration. This program traditionally fills gaps within existing local, state, and federal programs in key focus areas, accelerating BMP implementation efforts. All projects considered for funding must be completed by November, 2023.

Project ready for review



Pasture Regrowth and Monitoring Project

Submitted By: Troy Bishopp
Madison County SWCD

Troy Bishopp, Madison County SWCD / USC
Betsy Hicks, Cornell Cooperative Extension SCNY Dairy Team



Objective:

Graziers who participate will fine tune their grazing skills to help improve pasture output by learning how weather conditions (rainfall, temperature) interact with management decisions (residue height, rest) to affect regrowth in their pastures

Target Audience:

Graziers throughout NY state utilizing rotational grazing strategies

The Plan:

Participants will identify 1-2 pastures to record weekly measurements of grass height, as well as rainfall amounts for their location

Cornell Cooperative Extension

South Central NY Dairy and Field Crops Program



Questions?

Betsy Hicks -
bjh246@cornell.edu

Troy Bishopp -
troy-bishopp@verizon.net

To enroll, farms should send Betsy or Troy :

- o Name, email, phone number
- o Location of pasture (GPS coordinates)
- o Elevation of pasture
- o Nearest town
- o What you're grazing (beef steers, beef cow/calf, dairy heifers, dairy cows, etc)
- o Starting height of pasture for that week

Each week, send Betsy or Troy by Thursday at NOON:

- o Rainfall for the week (inches)
- o Height of pasture (inches)
- o Date pasture was grazed or clipped
- o If pasture was grazed or clipped, height of residual (inches)
- o Measure on the same day each week, but choose any day

Each Friday, a report will be sent out with measurements, regrowth rates and growing degree data compiled by location.

Monthly, there will be an informal grazing call to compare how your grazing season is progressing.

Our own Troy Bishopp and Betsy Hicks have implemented a weekly NYS grazing regrowth and monitoring pilot project that will help graziers fine tune their grazing skills and improve pasture output by learning how weather conditions (rainfall, temperature) interact with management decisions (residue height, rest) that affect regrowth in their pastures.



Cornell Cooperative Extension
South Central NY Dairy and Field Crops Program



2021 Pasture Regrowth Monitoring Project

5/28/2021

Town	Elevation	Rainfall in the last week	Cumulative GDD	GDD in the last week	Date grazed/clipped	Days since last grazed/clipped	Residual Height	Last Week's Height	This week's Height	Total height gain	Regrowth Rate (average gain/day)
Deansboro	965	0.2	995	149	4/26/2021	25	3	13	16	3	0.4
McGraw	1400	0.2	856	228	5/14/2021	7	10	12	20	8	1.1
Remsen	1255	0	840	232	5/12/2021	9	9	9	20	11	1.6
Brookfield	1520	0.1	797	227	-	-	-	10	14	4	0.6
Norwich	1400	0.25	835	221	5/5/2021	16	4	11	16	5	0.7
Canastota	1336	0.1	1049	296	5/10/2021	11	-	12	16	4	0.6
Hudson	310	0.27	1256	257	5/14/2021	7	8	13	20	7	1.0
Alpine	1287	0	939	239	5/11/2021	10	-	8	12	4	0.6
Canton	400	0.1	1087	249	5/10/2021	11	-	7	10	3	0.4
Schoharie	560	0	1065	243	5/4/2021	17	-	9	11.5	2.5	0.4
Groton	1315	0.2	949	242	5/21/2021	0	-	0	7.5	7.5	1.1
Groton	1331	0.2	949	242	5/16/2021	5	-	6	12	6	0.9
Truxton	1343	0.25	878	229	5/8/2021	13	6	10	15	5	0.7
Truxton	1173	0.25	878	229	5/17/2021	4	8	9	12.3	3.3	0.5
Schuyler Falls	470	0.1	1016	253	5/12/2021	9	-	6	12	6	0.9
Naples	1480	0.1	954	248	-	-	-	30	43	13	1.9
Naples	1470	0.1	954	248	5/1/2021	20	2	20	32	12	1.7
Keeseville	400	0	974	289	5/24/2021	-3	-	14	24	10	1.4



A New and Improved Riparian Buffer Weed Management and Site Preparation Tool

Submitted By: Jennifer Kelly
Chenango County SWCD

The Chenango County Soil and Water Conservation District buffer steward program is now in its third year and we've learned a few things. First, maintenance activities and site monitoring really depend on good brush management. Second, weed trimmers and hand loppers fail to stand the test of time weed control on forest buffers. Third, it's best to stay ahead of weeds and brush before they accumulated so much mass that the effectiveness of the equipment is diminished.

For the 2021 season, the District decided to purchase a DR Pro XL30 field and brush mower. With a 30" deck, power steering, and a cutting capability of up to 2" saplings, we can manage brush safely, quickly and without too much grunt work. The time spent on weed maintenance of the buffer sites have been reduced from days to hours. Our method of mowing a strip on each side of the tubes makes it easy to stay ahead of woody growth and tall grasses. This machine works well in part because a novice is able to operate the mower, get it to the job site, and begin working almost immediately. The extremely wet, steep, or exceptionally rough areas are really the only areas that pose a challenge to the mower. The brush mats are also a bit of an obstacle.

As for our CREP projects, the District contracted with Williams Forestry and Associates to plant all three of our projects, all close to 10 acres each. Each site will require significant mowing to ensure viability of the seedlings and to optimize growth. This mower should fit the bill nicely. We also hope to use our new equipment to help with site preparations for tree and shrub plantings on Trees for Tribes projects or other small buffer projects in the future.

The investment in this new piece of equipment has already paid dividends. We are thinking about buying a second one!



USC Cover Crop Implementation Program

Submitted By: Emily Dekar
USC Ag Team

It's hard to believe that it is June already, and it's the time of year where farmers are already planning out their Cover Crop planting for the fall. For 2021, the USC was able to provide \$350,000.00 in funding across 14 Soil and Water Conservation Districts in NY through our USC Cover Crop Implementation Program. This program is funded by NYS DEC, and will implement approximately 3,200 "New" acres, and 5,100 "Continued" acres this fall. This is the 5th year that the USC has been able to provide funding assistance for cover crop implementation, and each year our requested acreage numbers are higher. This year, we were able to fund approximately 50% of our total requested acres. We hope to continue Cover Crop Implementation support in future years.



Upper Susquehanna Coalition Honored for Work in Agriculture

Submitted By: Troy Bishopp
Madison County SWCD

Albany, NY---Earth Day 2021 received a helping hand from your family of New York and Pennsylvania Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Basil Seggos once again recognized the USC Coalition of 22 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (18 in NY and 4 in PA) who work within the headwaters of the Susquehanna River as a recipient of the 17th annual Environmental Excellence Award. "This year's winners of the 17th annual Environmental Excellence Award are committed to reducing energy use, combating climate change, and implementing environmentally sustainable practices that support economic growth," said Commissioner Seggos.

DEC established the Environmental Excellence Awards program in 2004 which recognizes those who are implementing innovative, sustainable actions or working in creative partnerships to improve and protect New York State's environment and contribute to a healthier economy. Successful candidates demonstrate significant and measurable environmental, economic and social benefits as a result of new and unique projects or programs that go beyond standard techniques or regulatory requirements.

The organization was recognized for its work with farmers and ongoing implementation of best management practices (BMPs) in agriculture, flood plain management and wildlife/habitat restoration. Using the Coalition's suite of water quality improvement options in 2018 to reduce and prevent pollution in local waterways within 18 New York counties, the program has implemented over 200 acres of riparian buffer, more than 12 acres of wetland, and 440 acres of rotational grazing.

"Within our USC Water Quality Program, we have accelerated implementation of riparian forest buffers, rotational grazing, and wetland restoration on agricultural land throughout the watershed by filling gaps in existing programs, as one program is often not sufficient to fund water quality and habitat restoration projects," said USC Watershed Coordinator & Tioga County SWCD District Manager, Wendy Walsh.

"Many thanks for all that you do and a big congratulations to the entire Upper Susquehanna Coalition Team," said Jim Tierney, NYSDEC Deputy Commissioner for Water Resources.

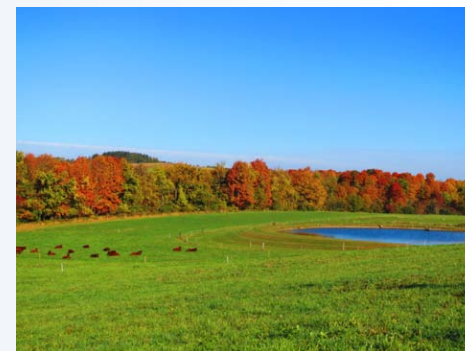
The recent trifecta recognition bolsters the effort to work with the many stakeholders concerned with water quality. The Upper Susquehanna Coalition's Stream Team Flood Response Training Program was honored in 2015 with the Environmental Excellence Award and the Upper Susquehanna Wetland Coalition's (USC) Wetland Program was awarded in 2014, as an outstanding model of collaboration for wetland protection and restoration.



A rock lined waterway with associated livestock exclusion fence installed by Madison County SWCD. This stems soil erosion and improves water quality.



A buffer, alternative watering site and organic pasture system.



Published in Lee Newspapers



Upper Susquehanna Coalition - 183 Corporate Drive Owego, New York 13827 - 607-687-3553

Pilot Landowner Cost Share Program for AgNPS

Submitted By: Emily Dekar
USC Ag Team

This year, the USC was able to provide funding support for projects contracted through the NYS Ag Non-Point Source program. This funding was made available through NYS DEC. The pilot program was designed to assist landowners with their out of pocket portion of AgNPS projects, to help offset some of the costs of good conservation work. To date, the USC has contracted for 7 projects in 2 counties, with a total contracted amount of \$192,676.65. As this year is our first year of the pilot program, we plan to review the program when projects are completed in September 2021, and hope to have the ability to provide funding support in the future for similar projects.

Spring Plantings Throughout the Watershed!

Submitted By: Taylor Held
USC Buffer Team

The USC, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Partners kicked off the spring season by getting their hands dirty while re-establishing riparian buffers along bodies of water in the Upper Susquehanna Watershed. As the warm weather approached, so did the bare-root seedlings. By mid-April native plants started being delivered to soil and water conservation districts to be planted in various counties by USC/SWCD employees, volunteers, landowners and contractors. By partnering and utilizing funding through DEC, NRCS, and NFWF there were 27,420 native trees and shrubs planted throughout 137 acres. These plantings will help reduce excess nutrient runoff into the stream, improve the stabilization of the banks, provide shade to the streams for in-stream habitat, and create habitat for wildlife. The USC is looking forward to another successful planting season in the fall!



Landowners and their family in front of their riparian buffer planting.



Volunteers planting a riparian buffer in Tioga County.



Volunteers planting a riparian buffer in Broome County.

