

Quarterly **MANNER**

DATES TO REMEMBER

February:

- 11 Broome SWCD Application Due
- 16 Emergency Stream Intervention Virtual Training
- 18 Water Quality Symposium Registration Deadline
- 23 USC Wetland Committee Meeting



9 - USC Outreach Committee Meeting @ 9am 14 - 25 - Virtual Water Quality Symposium 15 - USC Buffer Steward Application Due



April:

4 - Trees 4 Tributaries Order Deadline 15 - Spring Newsletter Submission Deadline 22 - Earth Day 28 - Arbor Dav

USC Water Quality Program applications are accepted on a rolling basis at this time

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From Earth Day to Arbor Day and more

Every day is a good day to participate in conservation practices, but some days are dedicated to it. This year we are planning to hold several events held around Earth Day (April 22) and Arbor Day (April 28). From trees plantings to river cleans up, join us at one of our events, and take action in protecting our natural resources. Do you or a partnering organization have an event that you are hosting for Earth Day or Arbor Day? Let us know in advanced so we can help promote all of your good doing. If you are interested in partnering with the USC and need support or materials for one of your events please contact Ranier Lucas -Lucasr@tiogacountyny.gov Keep an eye out for updates, exact dates and times are TBD.

One of the many retention ponds built by the Schuyler County SWCD



James Barrett (left), & Michael Manwaring (right), Schuyler County **SWCD Equipment Operators**



Cover Cropping Season



Multi-Barrier Approach to Conservation

By Jerry Verrigni - Director, Schuyler County SWCD The Schuyler County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) focuses on implementation of common sense cost effective conservation projects to preserve and enhance our areas pristine water quality while working to protect and enhance millions of dollars of public and private infrastructure annually. The Schuyler County SWCD builds 50 to 75 projects every May to November with its own equipment and highly qualified equipment operators. The Schuyler County SWCD has two equipment operators from May to November. James Barrett and Michael Manwaring have a combined 75 years experience in operating equipment. The Schuyler County SWCD only has one full time permanent employee. All conservation projects implemented are paid for through highly competitive grant funding obtained by the District each year. Each year the Schuyler County SWCD implements over 2 million dollars in conservation projects. These projects have a documented \$7 multiplier effect on our regions economy. Giving the Schuyler County SWCD a \$14 million dollar impact on its County and the surrounding region. The efficiency of the Schuyler County SWCD starts with its equipment operators and persists at high level due to its extensive shared services efforts with its municipal highway departments.

The Schuyler County SWCD works on a multitude of various conservation efforts annually but our focus remains the same each year. We focus on a multi-barrier approach to conservation. We first work to retain water on the land through several concerted efforts. Once is the construction of retention ponds in the upper sub reaches of flood prone watersheds. We have all seen the impacts of more frequent high intensity short duration storm events that have devastated our region and our country. Retention ponds help to store that intense stormwater runoff reducing peak curve numbers during these storm events and elongating time of concentration overall. These ponds have a primary spillway con-structed of an inline control structure that allows us to build permanent free board into the pond creating significant volumes of storage.

Multi-Barrier Approach continued...

The second focus of our retention/infiltration efforts is to create as much permanent cover as possible through the implementation of cover crops. Cover crops aid in the reduction of compaction and allow increased infiltration. They improve soil health, reduce erosion, build organic matter and reduce the need for commercial fertilizers. Cover crops are one of the best bang for your buck conservation practices we can have across a broad landscape. Annually the Schuyler County SWCD implements and helps to cost share over 2,000 acres of cover crops. This project alone aids in the reduction of nearly 6,000 tons of sediment from reaching our surface waterbodies. This effort wouldn't be possible with-out the buy in and belief of our areas farmers. They are the backbone of this program each year.

The next step in our multi-barrier approach is to upsize and replace failing and undersized infrastructure. Much of our nation, like our county, is facing a need for upsized infrastructure to handle the short duration high intensity storm events we are now facing. What should not be overlooked is how this need is increased exponentially as we see just a small increase in impervious surface in small sub watershed areas. We work hand in hand with our municipalities to upsize smaller culverts into larger culverts, and larger undersized or failing culverts into substantial box culverts. We complete dozens of these annually.



We finally focus on stabilization. This stabilization can occur in many forms from the implementation of buffers, to stream stabilization with rock rip rap. We also work to stabilize road ditches utilizing hydro-seeding, flexi-mat, and rock rip rap. Stabilization of erosion can also be accomplished by breaking up slope length. As slope length increases so does velocity and overall volume of flow. A simple conservation project like a diversion to break up the slope can help to alleviate severe head cutting issues that may occur with a longer slope. Installing more cross culverts to not allow a longer flow path also aids in the reduction of erosion. The Schuyler County SWCD implements thousands of feet of road ditch, and stream stabilization annually.



Road Ditch Stabilization with Flexamat & Road Ditch Guide for Municipalities

By Karen Tillotson - District Manager, Chemung County SWCD Location: Big Flats, NY

Chemung County SWCD is always looking for different practices to stabilize road ditches within the County. While attending an Upper Susquehanna Coalition meeting, Bradford County SWCD discussed a product called Flexamat. Flexamat is a concrete block poured into a geotextile. Thanks to the USC and other funding avenues, the District was able to install over \$100,000.00 worth of mats within Chemung County.

The District also put together a Road Ditch Guide for Municipalities that was hand delivered to each municipalities within Chemung County. The purpose of the guide is to educate municipalities on how to maintain their road ditches to reduce water flow, decrease landscape routing of stormmwater to roadside ditches, to name a few.

Road Ditch Guide for Municipalities





Cleveland Family Farms Livestock Heavy Use Project

By Jerry Verrigni - Director, *Schuyler County SWCD* The Cleveland Farm is a 50 cow calf pair beef operation that is located in the headwaters of Lamoka and Waneta Lakes Watershed. This joint project involved funding from USDA NRCS through EQIP, New York State AGMKTS through AEM Tier IV funding, and funding from the local Soil and Water Conservation District. The project involved the construction of Livestock Heavy Use Area Runoff Management System. This involved a covered barnyard, access road improvement, drainage, and a clean water diversion. Additionally the farm agreed to fence out all surface water bodies within the pasture system.

Project Partners



NFWF Small Watershed Grant for Expanding Landowner Engagement in Buffer Programs Comes to a Close

By Lydia Brinkley - USC Riparian Forest Buffer Coordinator In 2018 the Buffer Team received funding to expand and engage new partnerships and populations in riparian restoration activities aside from traditional federal programs. The need for this grant stemmed from the growing interest from rural, non-agricultural landowners, and partners in participating in the USC Buffer Program. The grant's goals were to implement 10 acres of grass buffer, 25 acres of forest buffer and engage with 20 volunteers. While several subwatersheds were prioritized because of their I-4 Watershed Assessment status, projects with strong partnerships, land protection, and habitat restoration were funded.

Expiring in December, 2021, this grant provided \$200,000.00 to support 45.65 acres of riparian forest buffer implementation, 4,500' of stream rehabilitation, 15 acres of grazing, and 4 acres of upland tree planting. Close to 95 acres of land was placed in conservation easements with 43 of those acres in specially created "special use zones" within the riparian area to further limit disturbance; grant funding supported transaction costs for those projects. Our major partners involved in the land protection projects included the Finger Lakes Land Trust, Otsego Land Trust, and The Wetland Trust. Many volunteer events were held that engaged with over 150 volunteers, and through newsletters, presentations and other advertisements we reached 12,152 people.

We were able to expand our typical agriculture focused buffer program by working in the Kettle Lakes watershed with the Cortland-Onondaga Federation of Kettle Lake Associations (C-OFOKLA) developing



Tully Lake Shoreline Willow Staking

Happy Landowners along Owego Creek

newsletters, installing small shoreline buffers and helping out with the Tully Lake Boat Launch. We worked along the Chemung River with Finger Lakes Land Trust to restore the riparian area of Kehoe Nature Preserve, a 5- acre restoration area that was overtaken by invasive species. In Tompkins County along Owego Creek's headwaters, we reforested an old riparian pasture adjacent to the already protected Hammond Hill State Forest. Finally, Butternut Valley Alliance helped to spread the word about riparian restoration through hosting a buffer webinar, which attracted around 30 folks and has led to many new customers. Piloting this project and demonstrating the need for flexible funding that isn't specifically geared towards agricultural operations has opened doors for new funding opportunities, so stay on the look out for those non-agriculture or old-ag land projects!

Partnership Success: Water Quality Improvement Project on Dairy Farm in Tioga County, NY

By Brian Reaser, Connor Hubbard, Mike Jura and Danielle Singer

Tioga County Soil and Water Conservation District partnered with USDA NRCS and FSA to utilize the EQIP and CREP programs as match for a NYS the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Grant Program (AgNPS) in Round 25. The proposed project would address several large



resource concerns on this family dairy farm, but in the current economic state of agriculture, the farm family needed assistance with their match to the state grant. EQIP and CREP were able to provide most of that match and made the project financially feasible.

The first phase of the project focused on the stream corridor. This stretch of the Doolittle Creek is a transitional/ depositional area of the stream, where historically, it existed in an alluvial fan/delta type formation, with multiple channels conveying the flow into Owego creek and adjacent floodplain areas. Sometime in the 1950s this stretch of stream was completely straightened and converted into a single channel. Since that time, the stream has attempted to re-create a more natural configuration, with new channels through the adjacent pasture. This has caused numerous entries into the stream corridor over the years to keep the pasture usable and stream in one straight channel. Three stream segments within the existing stream corridor were worked through multiple grant sources to achieve a more natural sinuosity, slope and stream dimension. The more natural sinuosity, slope and stream dimension. The natural stream dimensions were re-built at each of these curved segments, rock rip rap was placed on the bank to reduce erosion, multiple in-stream barbs were installed to funnel the velocity into the center of the channel, and live willow stakes were planted along the bank for added erosion protection. Because of the challenging history of this stream segment, a permanent monitoring cross-section was also installed to measure the effectiveness of the practices, and identify major thresholds for maintenance and repair.

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The project further addressed the on-going conflicts between the stream and farm by converting the adjacent pasture to riparian forested buffer. The reduced maintenance costs of repairing fence coupled with the CREP incentives made this viable for the farm. The 7.4 acre riparian forest buffer was planted in May 2021. CREP was utilized to its maximum extent of 180ft from top of bank to cover some buffer costs (4.81 acres). The remaining 2.5 acres were covered by the AgNPS grant to plant the rest field that the farm retired which is entirely in the floodplain.

Partnership success continued...

The second phase of the project focused on farmstead practices. The farmstead is located directly adjacent to Doolittle Creek and uphill of the newly planted riparian buffer. A 43'x80 covered barnyard with a drive through feed alley was built through

EQIP and AgNP grants to reduce unstable livestock heavy use areas on the farm near the streams. The grant work also included replacing the waste transfer system that was beginning to fail. The farm's existing piston pump in the waste transfer system had surpassed its lifespan and was causing multiple resource concerns. The new waste transfer system consists of two components. The first is a milkhouse waste transfer system that collects wash water from the farm's milking parlor and pumps it into the storage. The second component is a series of covered manure scrape alleys that connect the new covered barnyard and the farm's existing barns to the existing manure storage. The project also addressed rehabilitation of access roads on the farm with stone and underlying geotextile and drain trenches under the roof lines in lieu of gutters to control runoff water. Grading was also done at numerous points on the farm to protect access roads. Traction milling on new surfaces where cows would be walking from barn to barn was also included in the project. Traction milling is a method of cutting a variegated texture into the concrete to help prevent livestock from slipping. This also provides a better surface to livestock to walk across, leading to better foot health for the animals.

The project brought together multiple partners and funding sources to fully address resource concerns on the farm. Without the partnership and ability to match up grant programs, the farm may not have moved forward with the full project because of the financial commitment. This is also a perfect example of how the conservation planning process is used by the District to have solutions to each resource concern that can work together simultaneously even if not installed at the same time. Each of the components are great improvements to water quality alone, but working together and installed in conjunction with one another, they make for a more complete water quality improvement project.



The stream work had been completed for over a year and the buffer was 6 months old in fall 2021



Manager Changes in the Watershed



Justin Puglisi, Broome County SWCD District Manager

Justin has recently been hired as the District Manager for the Broome County Soil & Water Conservation District. He has been with the District since 2008; originally as a Natural Resource Assistant and was soon promoted to the Grazing Specialist position. He is a graduate of SUNY Cortland, with a bachelor's degree in Biology and a concentration in Environmental Science.

Justin resides in Greene NY, where he was born and raised on a small farm. He and his family manage a few beef cattle and honey bees on their 30-acre farm. He is passionate about conservation, and is an avid outdoorsman that enjoys hunting and fishing. He has a love and respect for the "family farm" and believes in its ideals and values. Justin is open minded, approachable, and easy to work with.

Justin was quoted as saying "I am thankful and grateful for the opportunity I have been given. It is an honor to lead the Soil & Water District in focusing on Conservation, Water Quality, Flooding, and Sustainable Agriculture in Broome County. I look forward to working with local leaders, farmers, landowners, municipalities, colleagues, and staff in addressing these dynamic issues."



Karen Tillotson, Chemung County SWCD District Manager

I started with the Chemung County SWCD in February of 1999, training with Linda Cossaboon, the Secretary/Asst. Treasurer to the Board, who planned to retire in September of 1999. After Linda's retirement, I became the new Secretary/Asst. Treasurer to the Board.

Besides doing office work, I assisted where needed, hydro-seeding, mulching, planting

willows, catering events, helping with District Tree/Fish Programs, staffing a booth at events, doing what I could to help the District.

When Mark Watts, District Manager from 1990, employed with the District since 1984, announced his retirement in 2021, he encouraged me to apply for the position. I took over in January of this year.

I enjoy spending time with my daughter, son-in-law, granddaughter, step-grandson, and son. Fishing is my favorite pastime, and I enjoy hunting as well. My husband, Bob Pierce, and I are residents in the Town of Catlin with our animal kids, two dogs, and two cats, Ben, Sweetie, Bo, and Frankie!

As I start this new position with the District, I look forward to working with other Districts, Chemung County municipalities, the Upper Susquehanna Coalition, District staff, and our Stormwater Team.



Jennifer Kelly, Chenango County SWCD District Manager

In October of 2021, Jennifer Kelly was promoted to the District Manager position after the retirement of Lance Lockwood, her mentor. Jennifer began her career as a Technician in October of 2004 and has enjoyed working at the Soil and Water Conservation District every day since. When Jennifer started, she had the pleasure to learn and work alongside esteemed conservationists; Lance Lockwood, Robert DeClue and long-time NRCS employee Lauren Johnson. Jennifer resides in Norwich with her husband, Ewen, and two children Amelia and Will and two dogs, Clyde and Wolfie.

District Additions in the Watershed

The Chenango County Soil and Water is excited to announce the addition of two District Technicians to our team! Jacob Welsh and Riley Krupitza both joined our staff in January and eagerly dove into their positions. Jacob along with his girlfriend, Kayla, recently moved from Dundee to Laurens, New York. Jacob was charmed by the Otsego County area after working at Gilbert Lake for a summer in 2019. Before coming to the District Jacob worked for a land surveying company in Canandaigua and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Conservation Biology from SUNY ESF. In his spare time, Jacob is an outdoorsman with a love of hunting and fishing. Riley, a native of Binghamton, joins us after previously working for as a forester for a private forestry company. Riley earned a bachelor's degree from SUNY ESF in Natural Resource

Jacob Ulelsh

Management after spending a grueling year at the Ranger School in Wanakena. Additionally, Riley is currently working on becoming a NYS Certified Pesticide Applicator.



Heather is an Agricultural Environmental Management Specialist for Tioga County Soil & Water. The Agricultural Environmental Management program connects interested local farmers to conservation practices that significantly benefit their farm land and the environment. Heather aids the farmers in navigating the planning and grant application process required to make these practices a reality. In January of 2021, Heather and her partner Jared moved to Owego, NY from Howard County Maryland along with Jared's older brother Adam. Heather served in the U.S. Navy and began her career in conservation following her service. She worked as a Frederick County Park Ranger and then worked for several years with Maryland State Parks in their Conservation Corps Programs. In her free time, Heather enjoys spending time hiking outdoors, practicing plant, tree and mushroom identification, as well as studying wild medicines and foraging. Heather is elated to work for the community of Tioga County and desires to eserve the farmers and the environment by implementing pragmatic and dually beneficial agricultural solutions.

Spring 2022 Trees for Tributaries Program

As many of you look out your window being overwhelmed with cold temperatures and the sight of a new white blanket of snow that you still have to shovel, thinking about how you embrace the thought of that warm refreshing spring air. This is exactly what I have been thinking about since our Fall Trees for Tributaries plantings came to a wrap. Being able to go outside leaving your winter jacket behind, and get your hands dirty. Well I have some good news for you! The Spring Trees for Tributaries planting season is just right around the corner. We are still accepting spring plant orders until April 4th. So grab your tools, planting gloves, and send in those orders!

Visit: www.u-s-c.org/T4T

Contact Ranier Lucas - Lucasr@tiogacountyny.gov



Calhoun Creek after the flood



Calhoun Creek after the cleanup



Following the flood, ag plastic festooned the trees like Spanish Moss

Morris resident Alan Springett works aloft to detangle plastic

Calhoun Creek Cleanup

By Maggie Brenner, Co-Chair, Butternut Valley Alliance

Among the extensive damages caused by the flash flooding in the Butternut Valley on July 17, 2021, Calhoun Creek was draped in miles of plastic agricultural wrap when over 700 hay bales were washed into the water. Calhoun Creek, in Morris, New York, is located near the headwaters of the Susquehanna River and is a major tributary of Butternut Creek which flows to the Susquehanna after merging with the Unadilla River.

Recognizing the environmental risk the plastic posed, and the enormity of the task of removing it, members of the Butternut Valley Alliance sprang into action. BVA is a small, not-for-profit organization committed to "making the Butternut Valley an even better place to live, work and play" that relies on the dedication of its members to support its efforts.

Volunteers organized a series of cleanup events. Over the course of three Saturdays, 45 area residents, 33 students from the SUNY Oneonta Geology Club led by Carlene Eaton, 11 students from Morris Central School chaperoned by Environmental Sciences teacher Heather Grant and BVA volunteers removed nearly three tons of plastic from the waterway and surrounding creek bed. "As a new resident of Morris, I was very moved to see how quickly, and with what perseverance, a diverse group of volunteers concerned about the health and beauty of our watershed responded to the call," commented BVA's volunteer coordinator Andrea Hull. "The effects of the flooding were larger than any one person could manage," explained board member and geology professor Les Hasbargen. "Looking to the future, it will require joint efforts from the community to address other such events. Unfortunately, this kind of flood is in line with future predictions from river and climate scientists." "It was an enormous task," acknowledged BVA Cochair Maggie Brenner, "but thanks to these volunteers, the creek is essentially clean again."

The volunteers cut and dug and pulled streamers of the plastic that were twined around tree roots, buried under gravel beds and covered with muck and mud. They carried the plastic to carts and then hauled the loaded carts to waiting garden tractors where it was loaded into wagons and transported to a central location. Following each event, Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District baled the plastic for future recycling. Support from Morris Central School and the Village and Town of Morris gave the volunteers access to the entire stretch of the creek and a site to store the plastic bales. Following the SUNY Oneonta event, student volunteers were

> treated to lunch provided by the school and Weaver's Farm Market.

SUNY Oneonta Geology Club students after the haul



USC Member County FACEBOOK Pages

Since the start of the pandemic, many districts have increased emphasis on online outreach, both about local programs, and with regards to environmental education. Because so many of our members have expanded facebook posts, our outreach committee thought we should compile a list of member facebook pages to encourage cross posting and sharing. Be sure to Like/Follow them for ideas and to support our Member counties:

Bradford: https://www.facebook.com/BradfordCountyConservationDistrict/ Broome: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064164806454&fref=nf Chenango: https://www.facebook.com/chenangoswcd Cortland: https://www.facebook.com/cortlandswcd Herkimer: https://www.facebook.com/HerkimerCountySWCD Madison: https://www.facebook.com/Madison-County-Soil-Water-Conservation-District-630375536982131/ Oneida: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100065038943172 **Onondaga:** https://www.facebook.com/OnondagaCountySWCD/ Otsego: https://www.facebook.com/OtsegoSWCD Potter: https://www.facebook.com/pottercounservationdistrict Schoharie: https://www.facebook.com/Schoharie-County-Soil-Water-Conservation-District-110036807270279 Steuben: https://www.facebook.com/SteubenSWCD Susquehanna: https://www.facebook.com/SusqConDistrict Tioga, NY: https://www.facebook.com/TiogaSWCD Tioga, PA: <u>https://www.facebook.com/TiogaConservation</u> Tompkins: https://www.facebook.com/TompkinsSWCD Yates: https://www.facebook.com/Yates-County-Soil-and-Water-Conservation-District-2218442305061629/

Loader Tire Waterer

By: Troy Bishopp, USC Grass Whisperer

I got to help one of our customers install their first loader tire waterer for 50 beef cows. Depending on the tire you must remove the top and bottom inside rib to allow for water capacity and so the animals don't have to stretch to drink. We used a plastic culvert pipe buried 5 feet in the ground to provide ground heat to keep the tank from freezing and it

also protects the water valve and gives you access to the plumbing. View these video links from my friend, Greg Judy for reference: <u>Installing a winter proof tire tank</u>, <u>step by step, Part 1. - YouTube</u> <u>Winter proof tire tank</u> <u>installation part 2. - YouTube</u> <u>The ABC's of installing</u> <u>your own tire tank on your farm. - YouTube</u>

The key, as we are learning, is to size these on the smaller side so the cows drink more and move warmer water in and keep the flow going so they don't freeze

up. Another tactic is to use a water bubbler device to keep the water moving. The farmer needs to keep a closer eye on the tub during really cold weather and snow events when the cows hunker down along shelterbelts and don't go to water as often. This kind of tank when installed well provides a low cost, virtually indestructible watering facility for all seasons.



Town of Tyrone Retention Project



Tobehanna Creek Retention Project

By Jerry Verrigni - Director, *Schuyler County SWCD* This project allowed for the construction of a retention pond in the very headwaters of Tobehanna Creek. Retention ponds aid in the reduction of peak flow during high intensity short duration storm events. They are constructed in the upper sub-reaches of flood-prone watersheds. They are built with additional free board through the use of an in-line structure that acts as the primary spillway. This is would allows for the retention. This pond is able to retain over 700,000 gallons of stormwater.

It's Gardening Time! (for those of us who don't like to work very hard at doing it)

By: Kevin Brown, Ag Team Leader, Bradford County Conservation District For those of you out there who like to be controlled all summer long by your garden, feel free to only read the

next sentence. If your routine for gardening every year is to rototill it two or three times, then pick rock, and then pick weeds all summer long; not to mention watering every couple days, this article is not for you. This article is for us lazy people who really like to have a garden, but like to do things other than continually tending to it. I met a person yesterday at our Green Career Day at Sunfish Pond who heard my talk and wanted to know more. She wanted a garden, but not all the hard work that came with it. I said, "Problem solved". But, if you want to really do a great job with it, the time to start is NOW.

I have written about this before, but I thought it was worth a refresher course as right now is the perfect time of year to get started. Let's start out with the process of what we are going to do. In the next week or so I will cut down all my plants from this year, and anything that is not diseased in any way will get thrown right on top of the hay mulch that is already there. I am not going to carry them off anywhere and dispose of them "properly". When they decompose, they form mulch, just like any other form of organic matter you can put out there. Then, I will get and old hay bale from someone that has one setting in a hedgerow somewhere that is half rotted already and roll that out on top of it. Make the layer good and thick- 12". I may be exaggerating on the condition of the hay a little bit, but I am trying to make the point that it does not need to be anything special. My bales usually do have some kind of rotten hay in them already. You don't need to buy anything special. Just find a junk bale of hay that no one else can use for animals and use that. I am done now until next year.

Next spring, actually early summer, I will go out and dig through the mulch, plant my plants, and pull the mulch back in around the plants as close as I dare, and I am done. All that is left is harvest. How is that for easy? Mulch, plant, harvest. That is a year in the life of my gardening. This can also work with seeds or flower beds. If you want to try the seeds, call me and I can walk you through it. There are a couple different ways to do it, but it is still very easy.

A word of caution (for all gardeners)- we have a tendency to plant too early. I am sure it goes back to the psychological need to be the first one to have the garden in, AND you just can't wait to do it. You are just itching to get out there. I hear about it from my own family. I waited until June 12th, or something like that, last year and it worked great. (Except for the constant nagging I heard about, "when are you planting the garden" every couple days). I will explain things a little better in the next article. In the meantime, get out there and mulch. Then, take the whole winter, and even spring, off. We won't do anything else until early summer. Ah, sounds like the easy life to me.

The Bradford County Conservation District is committed to helping people manage resources wisely. You can visit the Bradford County Conservation District at 200 Lake Rd in Wysox across from the Wysox Fire Hall. Contact us at (570) 485-3144 or visit our web page at <u>www.bccdpa.com</u>.

Finger Lakes Land Trust Protects Over 60 Acres Bordering Hammond Hill State Forest

By Edie Jodz - Assistant Director of Development, Finger Lakes Land Trust

Location: Dryden, New York

The Finger Lakes Land Trust permanently protected 64 acres in the town of Dryden, Tompkins County with a conservation easement. Owned by Susan Compton and John Saylor, the property is



nestled in a small valley on the southern side of Hammond Hill State Forest, a popular destination for hikers, mountain bikers, and cross-country skiers.

Sue and John donated the easement to the FLLT, and other associated costs were covered by the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Grant Program for Riparian Buffer Protection and Restoration, funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Their property includes woodlands bordering the state forest, fields maintained for wildlife habitat, and the headwaters of the West Branch of Owego Creek, a high-quality brook trout stream. Sue and John worked with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in 2019 to restore creek habitat and with the Upper Susquehanna Coalition to plant trees on 3.7 acres in 2020.

The conservation easement will protect the property against subdivision and safeguard the restored stream corridor, improving water quality in Owego Creek and further downstream in the Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay watersheds.

"We both strongly support the mission of the Finger Lakes Land Trust and are placing our land in a conservation easement for several reasons," said Sue and John. "Our property is a visual extension of the Hammond Hill State Forest, is home to two streams that feed the Susquehanna River and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay, is a habitat for a variety of wildlife and plants, and contains woodlands that would have been vulnerable to logging. We are grateful the FLLT enables us to protect all of the above for future generations."



Cover Crop Project

By Jerry Verrigni - Director, Schuyler County SWCD

This project allowed for cover crop implementation in Chemung and Schuyler Counties. Continued use of the Schuyler Counties inter-seeder helped to elongate the seeding window. This was especially critical with the wet year, and late harvest. We were able to implement over 2,000 acres of cover crops. Of that over a 1,000 acres was in the USC watershed. Cover crops improve soil health, increase permeability, reduce flooding impacts, reduce erosion, and reduce the need for commercial fertilizers in the following cropping season. This project couldn't be done without the buy in and effort of our area farms.

From Bradford County Conservation District

That Looks Like Crap

By Kevin Brown - Ag Team Leader, Bradford County Conservation District

Have you ever been told that, or maybe even thought that? Do you see places that aren't immaculately manicured as "looking like crap"? Have you ever thought that maybe there was a higher purpose for that? One place I am talking about is pollinator habitat. Sure, some of these areas look beautiful in the summer when everything is blooming and when insects, birds, caterpillars and everything else is visiting the area. However, when it has used up its usefulness, we want to get rid of it as soon as possible. After all, "It looks like crap". I have an area down here at the office that is right by the mailboxes for all the world to see. Sometimes, when I pass by it coming in to work, I even think that. It is old, dead, brown stalks of various flowers still standing 4-6' tall. It takes me a minute to get past it, but I can because I know why it is there. We have another area at the end of the building which looks even "worse". At least to us humans. Again, I know why it is there, so I leave it alone for the most part. Most people understand pollinator gardens for the summer. It is pretty easy to see with all the wildlife that visits them, and they are beautiful, so no one complains. However, most people don't know that this is where a lot of insects overwinter. Because of the way we are trained, it is a lot harder to look at it for the 6 months of winter, standing there dead and all. But it is still serving a purpose.

The insect world has been devastated in recent times. I don't know the numbers, and it probably varies by source, but the population numbers of pollinators are super low from where they once were. Habitat destruction, sprays, probably reasons we can't even understand. Don't care? "They are only insects, and we don't like insects anyway." Insects are extremely important to humans for a number of reasons. Just pollination alone accounts for one out of every three mouthfuls of food you eat. Without pollinators, 1/3 of our food takes a serious hit. Insects have a lot to do with decomposition of organic matter, they control other things we really don't want either (slugs for one). I am sure I could write a number of articles on what they do, but for this article, let's just say that they are extremely important. Plant a pollinator mix, or let some natural flowers (goldenrod is a fantastic one) grow on their own. Get over the hang-up that it looks bad. That is ONLY our opinion. I once heard someone say that the "only creature that likes things nice and manicured is a human". How true of a statement is that? I also joke that insects are the only thing that people can kill in an advertisement on tv and not offend anyone! Think about it. You can't do that with deer, bear, fish, cats, dogs. But be an insecticide and you are a hero.

The second area that may look like this is just an area you don't mow anymore, or you have planted trees and are letting things grow. I had a person stop in and talk to me and her mother was complaining about how bad it looked. Well maybe to you and I, but what about every other living creature on the face of the earth? They need protection, shelter, prey, and all the things that "messy" areas provide. If we are really serious about the environment, one of the best things we can do is stop interfering in it. Yes, I have a lawn, and yes, I still mow it. But I have also started leaving a lot more area alone so wildlife can have their own little slice of heaven too.

The Bradford County Conservation District is committed to helping people manage resources wisely. You can visit the Bradford County Conservation District at 200 Lake Rd in Wysox across from the Wysox Fire Hall. Contact us at (570) 485-3144 or visit our web page at <u>www.bccdpa.com</u>.





USC Riparian Buffer Steward Summer Openings

Office Location: Cortland, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego, and Tioga County Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Specify in cover letter the counties in which you would consider working.

This position joins the USC Buffer Team and supports the implementation and management of riparian forest buffers throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed in NY. Stream, wetland, and agriculture team support may also be required. Stewards will work closely with a SWCD supervisor and as part of the Upper Susquehanna Coalition Buffer Team.

Please submit a cover letter and resume to Lydia Brinkley at <u>lbrinkley@u-s-c.org</u> by March 15, 2022.

Broome County SWCD Natural Resource Conservationist Vacancy Announcement

Office Location: Binghamton, NY



This Broome SWCD position will join an interdisciplinary team in administering and implementing Broome County SWCD programming related to the establishment of land

and water conservation practices. For a complete listing of typical work activities and qualifications, view the full job description and Broome County Application on the Broome County Personnel Dept. website (Questions contact J. Puglisi, at Broome SWCD at 607-724-9268 x5). For the job announcement view the <u>Broome SWCD</u> webpage.

Interested candidates must submit a completed Letter of Intent, Broome County Employment Application, a recent Resume and 3 References to: Broome County Soil & Water Conservation District, Attn: J. Puglisi, District Manager, 1163 Upper Front Street, Binghamton, NY 13905 no later than Friday February 11, 2022; 4:30 PM.

Steuben County SWCD Agricultural Environmental Management Specialist

Office Location: Bath, NY

The Steuben SWCD is seeking an enthusiastic, self-motivated employee to perform a variety of duties relating to conservation programs. For a complete listing of minimum qualifications <u>view the full job announcement here</u>.

Interested candidates should send a completed cover letter and resume to Steuben County SWCD, Attn: Jeffrey Parker, District Manager, 415 W Morris Street, Bath, NY 14810. Call 607-776-7398 Ext 5 for information. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.



Grass Whisperer Receives 3 Cap Creal Journalism Awards

By: Troy Bishopp, USC Grass Whisperer Troy Bishopp, farmer and grazing guy from the Madison County Soil & Water Conservation District, received 3 "Cap" Creal Journalism awards from the NYS Agricultural Society in conjunction with the recent 190th annual meeting and agriculture forum held at the OnCenter in Syracuse, N.Y. The statewide honor is designed to recognize and encourage positive and accurate media coverage of events, people and issues related to New York State agriculture.



Troy earned the recognition in three categories for his Country Folks printed news story, "Stress management for women in agriculture" (<u>https://countryfolks.com/stress-management-for-women-in-agriculture/</u>), his online feature, "What is the true meaning of grazing?" at OnPasture.com (<u>https://thegrasswhisperer.com/what-is-the-true-meaning-of-grazing/</u>) and his Country Folks newspaper cover photo of a CNY wheat harvest.

"It seems like a long time ago (15 years) since I enrolled in the NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee's media training program taught by Barb Silvestri (RIP), Bill

Cooke, Beth Meyer and Channel 5 News Anchor Keith Kobland. Who knew learning about effective outreach strategies and practicing interview techniques would have such a profound effect on my life as a farmer, conservationist, freelancer and resident Pop Pop to my family, said Bishopp. I'm forever indebted to my peers, mentors, media outlets, editors and fellow agriculturalists who have supported my practical work over the years".





In Memory of Ronald E. Dougherty

By: Tioga SWCD

The Tioga County SWCD had a great loss recently with the passing of a long term board member Ron Dougherty. Ron was a member of our board for 21 years and also engaged with the USC during this time. He had a passion for conservation and put so much of his time and energy into our work. He contributed many ideas to both the District and the USC's programs and always had a thoughtful comment or question. He was a special person and will be greatly missed.



The 2022 Water Quality Symposium will be held **virtually March 14 - 25, 2022.** The partnership between the Conservation District Employees' Association, Inc. and the New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee makes the Water Quality Symposium possible. It takes the cooperation and dedication of many people to make an event of this scale successful. Each year the Symposium provides an excellent and affordable forum to share ideas and skills to advance natural resource conservation across the state. Education and training efforts remain a high priority for all parties involved and locating alternative resources for future symposiums is an ongoing and challenging process. Partnerships that blend consistent funding with people capable of sharing technical know-how are essential to the continuation of an event as unique as the Water Quality Symposium. Check out the class list and descriptions <u>here</u>. **Registration is due no later than February 18, 2022**. Use this link to access the online registration form: <u>https://forms.gle/pdTmhNisVbAWyCEd8</u>. New York State Soil and Water Conservation District employees can attend for free this year! New York State Students are also free. Other attendees: Unlimited access to all classes plus recordings: \$25.00; Half-day class: \$5.00, Full-day class: \$10.00. Contact CDEA Vice President Caitlin Stewart with questions: 518-518-3991 or <u>caitlinstewart@frontier.com</u>.

2022 Water Quality Symposium Class Scheduled

Monday, March 14	Tuesday, March 15	Wednesday, March 16	Thursday, March 17	Friday, March, 18
9 to Noon	9 to Noon	9 to Noon	9 to Noon	9 to Noon
1. AEM Base Program Tier 4 BMP	4. Construct Your Soil Health	8. CropwareNet Nutrient	13. Managers' Forum	18. Master Social Media
Implementation Project	Knowledge (full day)	Management Planning (full day)	14. Specialty farm BMPs and the	19. Hydroseeding Forum
Showcase	5. Alternative Manure	9. Outwintering Livestock	World of HEMP	Reloaded
	Management	10. OSC - Policies and Reporting	15. Intermediate/Advanced Excel	
12 - 1 PM	12 - 1 PM	12 - 1 PM	12 - 1 PM	12 - 1 PM
Division I and II Meeting	Division III and IV Meeting	Division V Meeting	Division IV Meeting	Division VII Meeting
1 to 4 PM	1 to 4 PM	1 to 4 PM	1 to 4 PM	1 to 4 PM
2. Animal Waste Management	4. Construct Your Soil Health	8. CropwareNet Nutrient	16. Self Care for Clerks	20. Watershed Forum
3. Selling Conservation	Knowledge (full day)	Management Planning (full day)	17. Managing for Success	21. Meet the PRISMS:
	6. Understand and Interpret your	11. Clerks' Forum		Partnerships for Regional
	Soil Test	12. Leadership Course: Growing	6:30 Virtual Happy Hour -	Invasive Species Management
	7. Ag BMP Budgeting	Emotional Intelligence through	Wear your	22. Grants for Clerks
		Constructive Communication	St. Patrick's Day attire!	
Monday, March 21	Tuesday, March 22	Wednesday, March 23	Thursday, March 24	Friday, March 25
9 to Noon	9 to Noon	9 to Noon	9 to Noon	9 to Noon
23. Baseline Skills for AutoCAD	25. Introduction to Lidar	26. Tree Sale Forum	27. Afforestation in New York	30. Silvopasture Planning and
(full day)			State (full day)	Implementation
			28. How Mapped Floodways Can	31. ArcGIS Online and Survey123
			Impact Your Stream Projects	
			(And What To Do)	
12 - 1 PM				
Division VIII Meeting				
1 to 4 PM	2 to 4:30 PM	1 to 4 PM	1 to 4 PM	1 to 4 PM
23. Baseline Skills for AutoCAD			27. Afforestation in New York	32. Intro to Stream Stabilization
24. Culvert Design and NYSDEC	Annual Meeting and		State (full day)	and Restoration
Stream Disturbance & Wetland	Awards Ceremony		29. Stormwater MS4	
Permitting	Awards ceremony		Requirements	
1				
	6:30 Virtual Happy Hour			



Emergency Stream Intervention is the method of assessing post-flood conditions to decide where to and where not to work, and to determine the correct approach needed to address problems in an emergency response situation. Join USC Stream Team ESI educators for a virtual training, including a series of training modules and question and answer sessions.

For more ESI information and resources visit our Stream Team page: www.u-s-c.org/ESI

When: February 16, 2022 @ 8:30 am

Location: *Virtual Training.* Login information will be shared with registrants before the training date.

Register: <u>www.u-s-c.org/ESItraining</u> or by email to <u>esi@u-s-c.org</u>

8:30 am: Welcome and Session 1: ESI Introduction and Stream Mechanics

Session 2: Stream Instability DRAFT AGENDA 10:00 am: Break Session 3: Unstable Channels and Flood Response Session 4: Channel Sizing and Examples 12:00 pm: Lunch Break 12:30 pm: Session 5: De-watering and Project Sites Session 6: Bioengineering and Hydraulic Structures 2:00 pm: Break Session 7: Virtual Field Training Session

3:30 pm: Farewell

Contact esi@u-s-c.org with questions







