

CDEA News

NEW YORK STATE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION, INC.

SEPTEMBER 2022



Cover Photo

Commissioner of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets Richard Ball and New York State Governor Kathy Hochul hold a miniature Ronny Raindrop at the Great New York State Fair. This photo was team effort between Kristin White and Erica Schreiner. They cornered the Commissioner and the Governor at the butter sculpture and the rest is history!

A Message from Dean Moore, former CDEA Member at Large

Dear CDEA members,

It is amazing to think 15 year have snuck by since the District hired me and time spent on the EEF and NYS Envirothon, and most recently the CDEA board flew by. It has been more of a family experience than a job to be honest. I have successfully applied for the Director of Parks & Recreation position with Warren County. My last day at the District will be Thursday August 18th. Jim will have my new contact information when it becomes available if needed. Again, thank you all for all of the great experiences.

Sincerely,
Deano



In Honor of Doug P. Fisher

Troy Bishopp, Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District

South Onondaga, N.Y.--- It is said that, "The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit." Doug Fisher's hard work planting those trees for the next generations and the positive contributions to his family, community and agriculture in the watersheds of Central New York will live on, well past his journey to the heavens with his family by his side on August 21st, 2022.

For those in the conservation and agriculture family, you may have overlooked that Doug had an affinity for raising Peacocks. Upon waxing on such a spirit animal, it completes Doug's legacy.



"Many ancient learned men believed that peacocks were blessed with immortality. The peacocks are symbolic of re-growth and rejuvenation, royalty, respect, honor, and integrity. They are also a symbol of beauty, love, and passion. The Peacock's spirit helps you to see the beauty in the smallest and simplest things and show you to walk the path with gratitude. People with the Peacock totem stand up for their beliefs and live by them. The Peacock meaning reminds you to have a light-hearted approach to all things that come our way. Moreover, this spirit animal teaches that laughter is the best medicine to keep us healthy and happy."

At Doug's service hosted by the South Onondaga Fire Department, guests witnessed, through pictures and acco-

lades, his overwhelming joy in his family and to the service of his community, large and small. And the guy showed off his many "fun sides", Peacock and John Wayne references, SU swag and unbeknown to many, his favorite night-time dram: Crown Royal Salted Carmel Whiskey. Doug lived by a certain creed that related well to folks in the field but not so much with politicians 😊. Doug wrote most of his own obituary, saying in part, "Thanks to all the farmers that have continued to farm the land and feed the world under such extreme challenges. "I lived a good life and accomplished many things along the way. However, I had my share of regrets as well, and for those I apologize."

I'd like to thank Doug for being on our annual rousing Envirothon judging team, his "reality conservation" counsel and for his uncanny timing to write something nice and support you in the endeavors and goals you took on. Think back to when you received such a note and in honor of Doug, pay it forward. RIP Mr. Fisher.

Continued on page 4.

Doug was a graduate of Onondaga Central and SUNY Morrisville. He spent his whole life living and farming in South Onondaga, with most of that supporting agriculture and farming throughout Onondaga County as a stalwart team member of the Onondaga Soil & Water Conservation District. The highly respected 2020 Willard F. Croney Award for Distinguished Service in NYS Conservation award recipient is credited with the sale and distribution of over 11,750,000 seedlings, planted on 18,500 acres of land.

Fisher developed a county wide Agricultural Spill Response and Recovery Team, worked on stream enhancement and stabilization projects, collaborated with farmers to implement 3500 acres of strip cropping, led the county's Ms4 stormwater management program, provided instruction for erosion and sediment control at 128 courses, totaling nearly 3,500 students, carried out the County's Graze-NY Program, judged Envirothon contests and organized annual farm safety classes. He was recognized for his field work and partnership with local agriculture in receiving the coveted Silver Cow Award.

He has helped protect the residents and visitors of South Onondaga by being an active member of the Fire Department for over 50 years as Chief, Assistant Chief, Temporary Assistant Chief, Chief Cook and Bottle Washer, Executive Committee, Vice President and most recently, President.

Doug is survived by: His beautiful wife Susan, daughters Erica (Ray) Durant, Jessica (Brian) Dzuro, and stepson Matthew DeLany, along with five wonderful grandchildren Greta, Giles, Noah, Bryson, and Jozlynn. Also, brothers Donald and David, and sister Charlene, and their families. Thank you for sharing life's adventures with him. To his many cherished extended family and friends – Thank you for sharing your life with him.

His final affirmation provided to loved ones at his funeral reads as follows: "Fill not your hearts with pain and sorrow, but remember me in every tomorrow. Remember the joy, the laughter, the smiles. I've only gone to rest for a while. Although my leaving causes pain and grief, my going has eased my hurt and given me relief. So dry your eyes and remember me, not as I am but as I used to be. Because, I will remember you all and look on with a smile. Understand in your hearts, I've only gone to rest a while. As long as I have the love of you, I can live my life in the hearts of all of you."

Donations to honor Doug Fisher can be made to the SPCA, CNY Cat Coalition, The Friends of Marcellus Park, the South Onondaga Fire Department, or you can support the wonderful doctors at Boston Medical Center so that they can continue to research the cause and cure for Amyloidosis.



NY Commissioners: Working with farmers to ensure climate resiliency for the future

Commissioner Richard Ball of AGM and Commissioner Basil Seggos of DEC

This piece was published August 30, 2022 by the *Auburn Citizen*.

America's farmers have long pioneered conservation measures in response to environmental challenges. Now farmers are on the frontlines in our battle against the climate crisis.

Unprecedented, climate-driven severe weather across America and in New York has delivered some major blows over the last decade: Widespread drought. Devastating flooding. Debilitating heat and cold, and the migration of invasive pests.

These dramatic changes have impacted all New Yorkers, but are often felt most acutely by those tending the land. Climate change increases the risks of soil erosion, reduces soil quality, and exacerbates pollution that threatens agricultural productivity. This raises major questions about the future of food security.

New York's farmers are fighting back and leading. Working with the State, County Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Cornell Cooperative Extension, USDA-NRCS and non-profit partners, they are deploying the latest agricultural strategies, sustainable practices, critical soil and water conservation efforts, and carbon reduction strategies designed to improve the health and resiliency of the State's farms, ecosystems, and communities.

It is a shift in momentum decades in the making that will prove critical to preserving our natural resources and achieving our aggressive, nation-leading climate targets.

We witnessed this leadership firsthand this summer at the 1,400-acre Greenfield Farms in Skaneateles, NY.

Greenfield Farms, recipient of this year's prestigious New York Leopold Conservation Award for its extraordinary environmental protection efforts, uses healthy soil practices that enhance water quality and

strengthen carbon sequestration. The Greenfield Family has established a proven model for other farms by partnering with County Soil and Water Conservation Districts, non-profits, and the State to position itself at the cutting-edge of best agricultural environmental practices at a time when our planet demands them most. It works for the planet and their bottom line.

New York State is at the forefront of giving the agricultural industry and the State's farmers, like Greenfield Farms, the tools they need in our shared fight against climate change.

Take, for instance, New York State's innovative Climate Resilient Farming Program championed by Governor Kathy Hochul. This program assists farmers who proactively tackle climate concerns by providing cost-shared grants to incentivize transformative management practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, draw down carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and increase carbon storage in soils and woody plants. At the same time, it helps protect at-risk agricultural land across the State.

Two hundred farms have received \$12 million in grants awarded under the program. Farmers planted an estimated 26,000 acres of cover crops, reducing carbon dioxide by 6,845 metric tons. And Climate Resilient Farming projects have sequestered or reduced approximately 320,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year.

With more than 6.9 million acres of agricultural lands across the State, maximizing the potential for carbon sequestration is critical toward helping New York State achieve its goal of net-zero emissions across all sectors of the economy by 2050, as set by the State's ambitious and nation-leading Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA).

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Over the last decade, New York State's agricultural community has made significant advances in environmental sustainability and efficiency with the assistance of new and expanded initiatives to cut emissions and increase carbon sequestration. Employing the innovative Agricultural Environmental Management framework, as overseen by New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and the New York Soil and Water Conservation Committee, and delivered by County Soil and Water Conservation Districts, will continue helping farms use best management practices to conserve our resources and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Greenfield Farms is testament to that. These collaborative approaches work.

All this progress with climate-focused agriculture has positioned New York's farmers to take advantage of the historic funding now made available

under President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The IRA provides \$19.5 billion for conservation agriculture through various programs including Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), among others. As many of these funding programs are competitive, the New York agriculture community can thank itself for its proactive and visionary commitments.

Working with farms to reduce emissions and improve resiliency through these approaches will assure New York achieves its ambitious climate goals, protects the environment, preserves farmland, and grows sustainable agriculture, resources, and technologies statewide for future generations.

For more information on agricultural conservation in

Ronny Raindrop goes to the Tioga County Fair

Danielle Singer, Tioga County Soil & Water Conservation District

Tioga County SWCD employees took a break from the field and hosted fun activities throughout the Tioga County Fair in August. We taught children about the nutrient cycle on farms and then let them create their own total mixed rations (TMR) snack mix where each edible component represented something found in real TMR mixes on dairy farms. Children and adults alike enjoyed milking Maggie Moo (borrowed from Chemung County) and had lots of questions about how farmers use automatic milkers. We also engaged children by making origami frogs while we discussed why wetlands are important. In partnership with the Tioga County Agriculture Resource Group, the District passed out donated Chobani yogurts to promote dairy. Ronny the Raindrop also made an appearance to quiz fairgoers about water quality!



Rural Roads Active Management Program Field Training



October 7, 2022
8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Wells Pavilion, 1382 NY-30, Wells NY, 12190

Concepts Covered

- ➡ RRAMP overview
- ➡ In-field app training to collect roadside erosion data
- ➡ Cutting edge technology to add to your erosion control toolbox

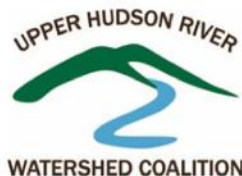
Free lunch and registration

Register online: www.hamiltoncountyswcd.com

Registration due September 23, 2022

For more information, contact Hamilton County Soil and Water
Conservation District Manager Caitlin Stewart
caitlinstewart@frontier.com • 518-548-3991

This event is part of the Community Resiliency Training Program sponsored by the Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition of New York, LLC and the Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition, with funding provided by New York State through the Soil and Water Conservation Committee.



Soil Health Seminar at Rodman Lott Farm

Jason Cuddeback, Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District

A Soil Health Seminar, one in a series, was held at Rodman Lott Farm on July 13.. We had about 60-65 farmers, district staff, agency folks and others participating.



Dry Weather Provides a Backdrop for Learning

Troy Bishopp, Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District

Two “cool” pasture walks were hosted by New York dairy farmers, Richard Nolt of Yates County and Martin Schlabach of Tioga County as part of a series offered by Danone North America/ Horizon Organic.

Led by Danone’s North America Regenerative Project team of Katherine Staiger and Caitlin Dillon, Madison County Grazing Specialist, Troy Bishopp and Sustainable Environmental Consultant’s Agronomist, Katie Catron, they brought farmers together to highlight resilient indicators and practices that hold moisture during these drier periods. Tom Eskildsen from Yates County Soil & Water Conservation District and Tioga Coun-

ty’s Danielle Singer and Heather Scott were on hand to highlight soils and mapping information, pass out grazing sticks and provide farmers with technical knowledge for resilient conservation practices.



Staiger shared that “Danone is dedicated to sharing knowledge, introducing new approaches and practices, and partnering with farmers. To succeed in our mission, The Regenerative Agriculture Program is committed to growing food in a way that supports farmers and farm workers, regenerates nature and supports animal welfare.”

Right from the start, inspiration for ah-ha moments came in the form of a simple infrared digital thermometer that showed farmers bare soil was over 100 degrees while plant or trampled residue cover kept the soil cooler at 65 to 70 degrees. This stark observation showed how important pasture residual is to keeping biology and plant growth rates positive during hot, dry times.

The Grass Whisperer helped farmers interpret plant growth rates for the two locations which provided another teachable moment in which 4 inch pasture residuals yielded .3/in/day of growth while 6 inch plant residuals yielded double that in the same time frame. The proof of higher grazing heights substantiated a monitoring program (yardstick in the field) and allowed for future growth projections with dry periods upon us. Both farms recognized the concerns of slower growth and had built in at least a 40 day recovery period for their pasture swards so the cows could keep harvesting fresh forage daily.

Another simple tool to sample soil health during the summertime heat is the often, overlooked soil infiltration test. Using a 6 x 6 circular metal ring driven in the ground 3



Danone-Horizon Organic Regenerative Projects Katherine Staiger demonstrates water infiltration test to farmers.

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Farmers learn how portable shade can benefit the pastures.

inches and a bottle of water, Mrs. Staiger demonstrated to the farmers how to mimic a one and two inch rainfall event. Both farms were able to infiltrate the simulation within 10 minutes; a win for when the quick hitting thunderstorm drops the much-needed moisture. It also gives the practitioner confidence in how improving soil health practices relate back to a farm's resiliency. It not how much rain you get that's important, it's how much you can hold on to.

Diversity of plants and their varied root systems and canopy cover also showed up as a positive to infiltrating water as well as

the importance of providing a good cool home for the microbes, earthworms and dung beetles to thrive. Farmers got to "feel" the temperature difference under a new Shade Haven™ portable grazing shade structure where the 25 cow unit was twenty degrees cooler than the ambient temperature. This structure was a way to keep fertility in the field and build soil health capacity for future grazings.



Grazing dairy cows benefit from building regenerative soil health practices.

Whether it's a thermometer, an infiltration test or maintaining higher forage residuals and longer recovery periods, learning ways a farmer can read the land and improve the water cycle is cool. And when indicators are showing you positive gains, take a break from the heat and celebrate with some ice-cream and a dip in your favorite water-body. You've earned it!

Tioga County Sundaes at the Farm 2022 Event

Danielle Singer, Tioga County Soil and Water Conservation District

After a two year hiatus due to the COVID pandemic, the annual Tioga County Sundaes at the Farm event returned this year on July 24th. The event is hosted by the Tioga County Agricultural Resource Group (ARG), a county association that is made up of representatives from several Tioga County organizations and farmers who collaborate on agricultural initiatives. The event is held at a different dairy farm in the county each year and provides an opportunity to get the public on a working dairy farm that they wouldn't normally have access to. The goal of the event to educate the public about local agriculture and connect them to the farmers in their community that grow their

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food. Tioga SWCD has always taken on the majority of the event's coordination since its inception in 2007 as part of our partnership in the ARG.

We had an amazing event this year at Spencer Farms in Newark Valley with over 800 attendees. Through support from local sponsors, we were able to provide a free event with ice cream sundaes, yogurt, cheese, milk and activities for all. Attendees spent time touring the farm, learning about the style of milking used at this farm, how the cows are fed and children completed the scavenger hunt for a coupon to a local ice cream business for a kiddie cone. The farm family and local partners that participate in ARG provided the educational activities to showcase the dairy industry, how it fits into our food system, the stages of corn growth, practices that improve soil health that farms participate in and the nutrient cycle that takes place on farms. Local Dairy Ambassadors helped kids milk the fake Maggie Moo cow we borrowed from Chemung County and assed out coloring books that show how milk is processed. The farm family provided an equipment display and calf hutch for the kids to play in and pretend to be a calf! We also invited a local band for entertainment and local farmers' market vendors. The local Rotary Club and Fire Station sold food and drinks during the event as fundraisers for their organizations.



Where in New York is **Ronny Raindrop**?



Ronny Raindrop had a ball at the Tioga County Fair.



Ronny made a very special guest appearance at Adirondack Waterfest, Inlet. Here he is with Herkimer County SWCD staff Gabby Lewosko and Katie WhitKovits

Wise Words from our District Family

*Interviewing experienced District employees
who share some words of wisdom*

**Shino Tanikawa, New York City SWCD
25 years**

Q. How long have you been working at your SWCD? If you have worked for more than one District, please let us know the counties, positions, and years worked.

A. I am into my 25th year with the NYC SWCD! Wow. That's a quarter of a century ...

Q. What have you accomplished over the years with your District that you are most proud of?

A. We are all about partnerships here in NYC. I am most proud of the networks and partnerships we have built. We participate in the NY/NJ Harbor & Estuary Program (I'm co-chairing the Water Quality Working Group and involved with the Citizens Advisory Committee), Hudson River Estuary Management Advisory Committee, SWIM Coalition, and the Lower Hudson Coalition of Conservation Districts. Through these partnerships we have built relationships with federal, state, and city agencies as well as national, regional and local non-profits and institutions of higher education.

Q. Why have you continued to work at your Soil and Water Conservation District?

A. Because there is so much to be done to conserve soil and water in New York City!

Q. How have you seen District programs, or their focuses, change over the years?



A. We have elevated our urban soil survey program into the Urban Soils Institute, which has a much broader scope of work. We offer low cost soil testing, workshops, technical assistance, and an annual symposium. Because so many people in urban environments do not realize the importance of soils, we are very proud of the work we do in outreach and education!

Q. What words of wisdom do you have for a newly hired District employee?

A. Even if we are conserving soil, water and other natural resources, people make the world go around. Building relationships and collaborating with diverse rights-holders are the way to successful conservation.

Continued on page 14.

Q. When did you first learn or hear about Soil and Water Conservation Districts?

A. When I was working as a part time research assistant at the Hudson River Foundation. The Chair of the Board of NYCSWCD frequented the Foundation for a variety of meetings. She told me about a position opening up.

Q. What made you decide to apply for a job with your District?

A. I was looking for a full time job. Sorry, this is a very cut-n-dry answer ...

Q. Did your education prepare you for your job as a District employee?

A. Yes it did. I have a Master of Science in marine environmental sciences but I also worked as a graphic designer for four years prior to getting my Master's degree. So I had experience working in an office and collaborating in a project team setting.

Q. Please share with us a memorable conservation moment while working for your District.

A. When I built stormwater capture planters pretty much all by myself (largely because the grant was not large enough for me to hire a contractor for the construction phase). I'm quite proud of the carpentry skills I acquired by necessity (I had built several stormwater capture planter systems prior to this project but I always had a few folks to help me).

Q. What is your most epic memory from a Water Quality Symposium?

A. Phil Griswold entertaining us in the bar. I can't even remember what he was doing (singing??) but he was hysterical!

Q. Please share with us a humorous moment from your time at your Dis-

trict.

A. I have too many to count ... but nothing specific comes to mind. I believe in humor as an antidote to challenges of life. So, I try to bring humor into my work whenever I can!

Q. If you were snowed in at your District office for a week with no hope of evacuating, who would you want to be snowed in with and what would be your top 3 survival items?

A. My husband and my two daughters (who are both grown) just so that I can be sure they are safe (or at least they are with me). Oh, and my 3 cats. So, 1) food for humans, 2) food for cats and 3) comfy pillows for watching Netflix.

Q. Do you have a hidden talent?

A. Yes, but it's hidden.

Q. Tell us about what you will miss when you retire.

A. I can't retire until I figure out our retirement benefits. But if I were to retire, I would miss the people I work with.

Q. Any concluding remarks?

A. Please stay safe and healthy. And, make time for rest and relaxation!!



CDEA News needs YOUR news!

Email your stories, photos, save the dates,
and fun moments
to caitlinstewart@frontier.com

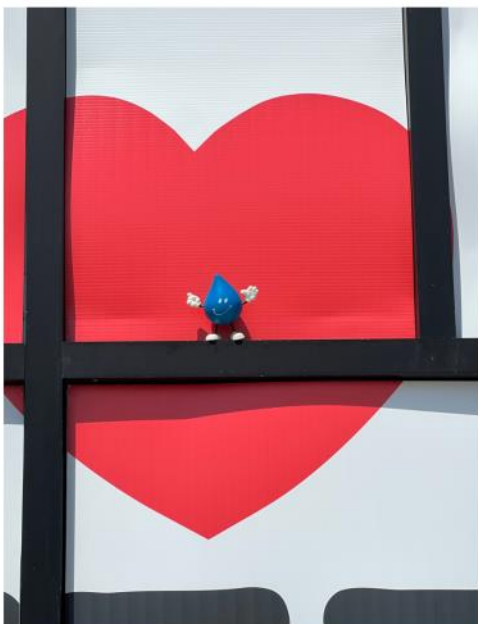
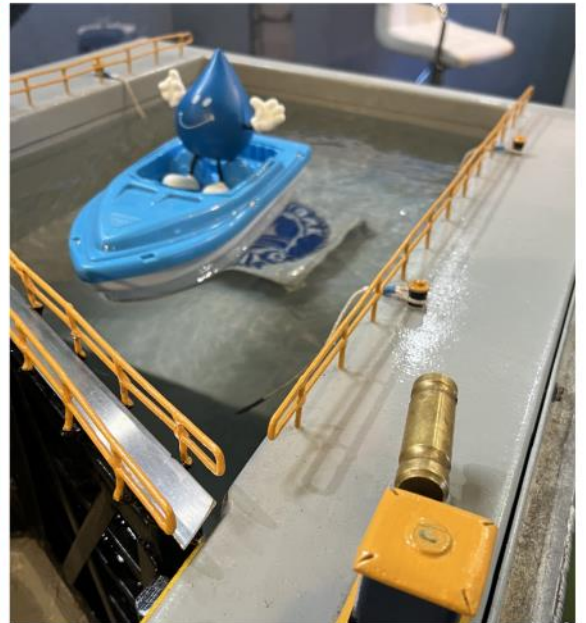
Special columns!

Cover Photo

CDEA Wine and Pint Glass Tour

Where in New York is Ronny Raindrop?

Visit www.nyscdea.com for newsletter back issues



Meet the Newcomers!

Introducing the newest
Soil and Water Conservation District employees

Chuck Susick, Steuben County SWCD

Q. How long have you been working for your Soil and Water Conservation District?

A. I have been with Steuben Soil and Water since May of 2022.

Q. Who inspired you to pursue the career you have today?

A. My inspiration for this career path can be attributed to my high school science teacher Chrissandra Palermo. Mrs. Palermo is an excellent educator with an outstanding knowledge of environmental practices. Whilst in my college years my inspiration derived from Jessica Hutchinson, Professor Hutchinson's interest in botany and soil sciences very much so intrigued my questioning mind. I can attribute my pasture and animal science interests in sustainable agricultural practices to a great number of people including professors Mrs. Bolton, Mr. Thompson, and Dr. Schroeder, as well as my many friends and peers within agriculture.

Q. What are your hobbies?

A. My main hobby is what I am best known for.... Poultry! I am absolutely obsessed with heritage and exhibition poultry. Poultry are the bread and butter of my life from diminutive quail to the ever-stately turkey. Aside from poultry, I quite enjoy gardening, especially cucurbits (Pumpkins, gourds, and winter squash primarily). My life revolves around chicks hatching in the spring and harvesting pumpkins in the fall.

Q. What's on your bucket list?

A. I would love to someday travel for a few weeks with a team of oxen pulling a small, covered wagon.

Q. Hawaiian pizza with ham and pineapple: super gross or supersize my pie?

A. I would say 5 out of 10 I am a traditional New York pizza guy, but a slice of Hawaiian is okay in the summer.

Q. What is the best advice you give to other new District employees?

A. Be like a stream at its best, meander until you find your way, don't let things pile up or run too dry, and always keep your path balanced.

Q. How would you describe your job to a group of 5-year-olds?

A. I help producers do the best things for the earth and their farm!

Q. What's the most epic thing you're working on right now at work?

A. I am currently working on a very nice Prescribed Grazing Plan with NRCS. I am very excited to see the end product of all of the work that's going into it.

Q. Coffee or tea?

A. Black Coffee for sure, but I do enjoy a nice Irish Breakfast tea occasionally.

Q. Share a humorous or memorable moment you have experienced while working at your District.

A. One of my favorite memories thus far working at my district would be seeing native Brook Trout doing their best to eke out a living in the tiniest babbling brook.

Tyler Levy, Schenectady County SWCD

Q. How long have you been working for your Soil and Water Conservation District?

A. I've been working for the district for a little over a year now.

Q. Who inspired you to pursue the career you have today?



Glenville Tree Care Training.

A. I've always enjoyed working outdoors and from a young age I saw myself doing something with environmental conservation, but I do have a few people to give credit to... First off is my Mom. She helped me find The Ranger School (satellite campus to SUNY ESF) and that really kick-started my path through college. I also have Steve Ovitt to thank. Steve is a former NYS DEC Forest Ranger who I went on a backpacking trip with through the Siamese Ponds Wilderness. I told him my plans to attend The Ranger School and, as an alumni, he solidified my plans to continue my education there. Finally there is Scott Moxham, a DEC Forester who was also my supervisor during an internship. Scott has been a great mentor throughout my career and is actually the person who forwarded me the job posting at Schenectady County SWCD.

Q. What are your hobbies?

A. My hobbies include almost anything to do with the outdoors. Some to note include hunting, fishing, camping, snowboarding, hiking, and canoeing.

Q. What's on your bucket list?

A. I'd like to go on a guided moose hunt someday.

Q. Hawaiian pizza with ham and pineapple: super gross or supersize my pie?

A. I've never had hawaiian pizza, but I'm sure I would love it. Supersize my pie!

Q. What is the best advice you give to other new District employees?

A. Do not hesitate to reach out to other districts for advice. Everyone is extremely helpful and nice. I come from more of a forestry background, but have been able to develop agricultural focused conservation plans with the guidance of other SWCD professionals.

Q. How would you describe your job to a group of 5-year-olds?

A. I am the Lorax, I speak for the trees. I speak for the trees for the trees have no tongues.

Q. What's the most epic thing you're working on right now at work?

A. After developing my first CNMP, we received DAP funds to help pay for engineering costs to design my planned BMPs. We will be applying for implementation funds next spring and this will be the first agricultural implementation project our district has done in many years.

Q. Coffee or tea?

A. Coffee

Q. Share a humorous or memorable moment you have experienced while working at your District.



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A. I can remember a time last fall when some of the other district employees and I were replacing a beaver deceiver at a culvert. We had waders on and were getting the metal fencing in place. I remember I felt like I was starting to get a little wet but couldn't quite feel it enough to really notice. After we got out of the water, I could definitely tell water had gotten into my waders. I took them off and poured out at least a 5-gallon bucket worth of water. I was soaked from the waist down!



Gabrielle Lewosko , Herkimer County SWCD

Q. How long have you been working for your Soil and Water Conservation District?

A. I have been here almost a year, on October 18th!

Q. Who inspired you to pursue the career you have today?

A. I did! (Along with my family pushing me along the way) Ever since I was a young girl, I've had a love for the outdoors.

Q. What are your hobbies?

A. Some of my hobbies include kayaking, gardening, and cooking.

Q. What's on your bucket list?

A. I would like to do as much possible in my life, I really want to see every state in the country! Only 40 more states to go... (HAHA)

Q. Hawaiian pizza with ham and pineapple: super gross or supersize my pie?

A. I wouldn't consider it one of my favorites, but I don't hate it.

Q. What is the best advice you give to other new District employees?

A. Come in with an open mind, the work districts can do is endless!



Continued on page 19.



Q. How would you describe your job to a group of 5-year-olds?

A. I work to help people keep their land healthy and clean.

Q. What's the most epic thing you're working on right now at work?

A. I have been running our hydroseeding program this summer, which has been super fun! I am also very excited to be adding the agriculture plastics program to my workload.

Q. Coffee or tea?

A. Tea

Q. Share a humorous or memorable moment you have experienced while working at your District.

A. I was fairly new at this point and was feeling very nervous about tree program. We all went down to our pole barn to pack trees and Gerry screamed "THIS IS MY HOUSE!" They also saw me jump over a hay bale, and my new nickname was born: "Gabby the Gazelle" It was absolutely hilarious, and I knew I'd fit in just fine.



Photo Album



Jason Cuddeback, Cayuga County SWCD, enjoys cookies from Just Desserts, Auburn NY.



Photo Album



A cool pic from High Falls Conservation Area in Columbia County. Photo by Tonnie Sauca Jr, Albany County Soil & Water Conservation District.

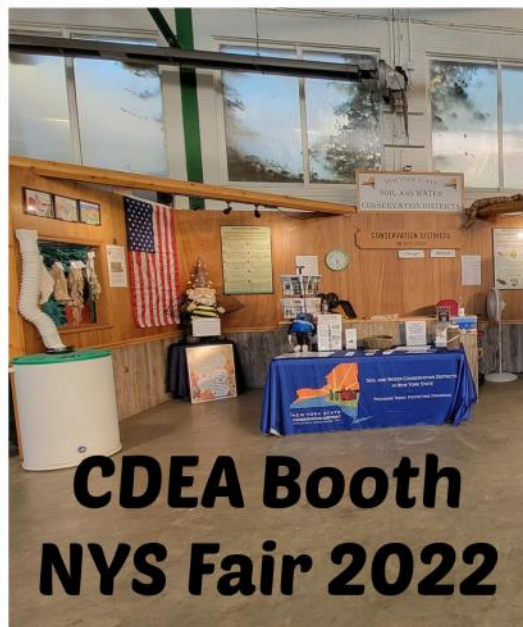


Wyoming County SWCD utilized a Board Member's vintage wagon at the 2022 Wyoming County Fair's Grand Parade. Fun was had by all throwing candy, potato chips, and t-shirts to the crowd, while promoting the District's mission and goals.. To top it off, our float took 3rd place in the "Commercial Ag Home" category. We didn't even know there was a competition!



Sunsets over a no-till corn field. Photos were taken in Valley Falls, NY . Amber Luke Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District.





Electro-net Fishing

Corrina Aldrich, Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District

Washington County SWCD provided assistance to DEC and Trout Unlimited folks to do this labor intensive fish inventory on a 300' stretch of the Battenkill River in the area known as Pook's Bridge in Shushan NY.



Summer intern Alyssa Freegard is second from the left, and SWCD Natural Resources Technician Lyndsy Hilder is second from the right.



Lyndsy Hilder center in image



Lyndsy Hilder far right in image



2022 CDEA Golf Tournament

Adirondack Waterfest: a splash of a good time

Caitlin Stewart, Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District

Adirondack Waterfest was a splash of a good time that drew over 400 visitors to the Town of Inlet's Arrowhead Park on Aug. 4. The Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District organized the day-long celebration of water with support from the Finer Lakes – Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance.

Storm clouds and a few rain showers dampened no one's spirits at Waterfest. The celebration made learning about the importance of clean water fun and exciting.

THE EXHIBITORS

Fourteen exhibitors hosted activities and information booths that showcased small but mighty steps people can take to keep water clean. The Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program's Tammara Van Ryn spoke with visitors about how to prevent the spread of invasive species and the Adirondack Council's Blake Neumann shared a clean water framework for Raquette Lake.

Paul Smith's College Adirondack Watershed Institute Tom Collins ran the Junior Watershed Stewardship Program and Katie WhitKovits and Gabby Lewosko of Herkimer County SWCD taught about bank erosion with a stream table. Jen Denny represented Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation, and RaChelle



Martz and Christy Wilt of Hamilton County Tourism highlighted the Waterfall Hiking Challenge.

Jamila Page of Cornell Cooperative Extension Hamilton County shared climate change education through cold-water fish and the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department showcased boater safety.



Jennifer Temple of the Department of Environmental Conservation came with an air boat, and Gail Morehouse of the Raquette Lake Preservation Foundation shared information about invasive species. Paige Lamb and Olivia Sayre of Essex County SWCD showcased water testing.

WATER FUN FOR EVERYONE

KC Morrison of CampStore! popped kettle corn, squeezed lemonade, and offered a free kayak experience for Waterfest goers. Tom Bielli of the USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service displayed a ginormous inflated soil health tunnel. Kids

Continued on page 25.



lined up for face painting and balloon art with Victor the Clown and Bumble Dee. Visitors cooled off zooming down the water slide and enjoyed the bounce house. Hamilton County SWCD taught about the Japanese art of Gyotaku, and showed people how to make a fish print on rice paper.

WITH THANKS

There are many to thank for helping make Adirondack Waterfest a tremendous success. This event would not have been possible without support from the Finger Lakes – Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance. I extend my sincere gratitude to the Town of Inlet for hosting Adirondack Waterfest, especially Inlet Tourism Director Adele Burnett and Parks and Buildings Department Head Michael Bartolotti. Hamilton County Tourism assisted with event promotion. Finally, the indefatigable SWCD team dedicated time and energy to ensuring visitors had an incredible experience.

To view a slideshow of the event, visit www.hamiltoncountyswcd.org.

The District has been working to manage and promote the wise use of natural resources in Hamilton County since 1965. For more information go to www.hamiltoncountyswcd.org or call 518-548-3991.





New York Association of Conservation Districts
c/o Steuben County SWCD
415 W. Morris Street
Bath, NY 14810
www.nyacd.org

by Blanche L. Hurlbutt NYACD Executive Director
September 2022 CDEA News

- **Stream C bills** Assembly #6652 and the SenateS4162 has not moved to the Governor's desk. From the information provided it is on its on its way. We are strongly pushing for it to be vetoed.
- **Division meetings:** If you have not held your division meetings you need to as soon as possible. **NYACD needs Directors** to step-up and fill the following position on the NYACD Board Division III, IV, VI, VII, and VIII. Please reach out to your directors within your division to encourage them to come on to the NYACD board. We meet once a month (4th Wednesday) at 7:00 p.m. for about an hour and a half.
- **NYACD Annual meeting** registration information packet was mailed out a couple of weeks ago. The annual meeting will be held at the Hampton Inn, 25 Lakers Lane, Cazenovia, NY on Tuesday, October 18-Thursday, October 20, 2022. Do not forget to register. It is open to all staff and directors. It is important that directors are present and this counts as a performance measure. There are great training sessions scheduled for this yearly event. Madison County SWCD tour on Tuesday late afternoon. This is always a great tour hosted by the good folks at Madison SWCD.
- **Meetings and Events:** Sam Casella, NYACD President traveled to the NACD winter and summer meetings. Sam came back with information he shared with us. This next week both Sam & I will be traveling to the NE NACD annual meeting in Maryland. These meetings are important to attend, and we can share and promote what SWCD's in New York are doing. It is always great to hear how further along the NY districts are in programs, funding, etc. Retaining & Recurring staff is a big issue throughout the US, so this is a hot topic at these meetings. We are learning more about what how we can improve this area for districts within New York.
- **Legislative Days** will be held the first full week of March 2023 with the dates of Monday, March 6th and Tuesday, March 7th. We are hoping to meet back in Albany this year with the Legislators. Last March we met with 68 Legislators with the help of 14 SWCD's and NYACD Board members. I am hoping we can meet with more next March with more involvement of additional districts. More to come in the near future.

*NEW YORK STATE ENVIROTHON
and 2024 NCF-ENVIROTHON NEW
YORK*



Submitted by Blanche L. Hurlbutt, NYS Envirothon Chair
CDEA September 2022 Report

- **NYS Envirothon:** The NYS Envirothon committee had their yearly reorganizational meeting in August. All officers were reelected, and committee members selected the committees they wanted to be Chair of. We are off to a good start with planning taking place. Our popcorn popper was having issues this year and once again Chemung Co. SWCD Board approved and purchased a new one for us. We are hoping Ernie Swift can repair the old one, but thankfully we have a new one on its way. We are very thankful to Chemung Co. SWCD for helping and supporting the NYS Envirothon in this way.

MARK your calendars!!!!

The Dates for 2023 are set for the NYS Envirothon.

Wednesday, May 24th and Thursday, May 26th, 2023

We are so happy for Dean Moore former Warren Co. SWCD Technician in his new position but are incredibly sad he is not able to be on the NYS Envirothon committee. He has always been a great supporter of the program and was the lead on the oral presentation portion of the program. He also was our crazy loving guy who did trivia games between the top three oral presentations. He will & is missed already. We need folks willing to step-up and commit to this program.

Please consider coming on to the NYS Envirothon committee. You will have fun and learn so much about this great program.

Continued on page 28.

NEW YORK STATE ENVIROTHON took fourth at the 2022 NCF-Envirothon Ohio!!!

We are immensely proud of **The Mount Academy**, Ulster County team and all their challenging work.



L-R: Jenna, Gavin, Joselyn Maendel, Neils Wipf, Leonard Moody
not in photo Advisor Neal Horning

- **2024 NCF-Envirothon New York** the committee is working hard on funding. It is important that we meet our funding goal to provide a great seven day event. We are working on Student and Advisor Activities, a possible fun day, opening and closing programs as well as creating so many other necessary things to make New York be a great host.

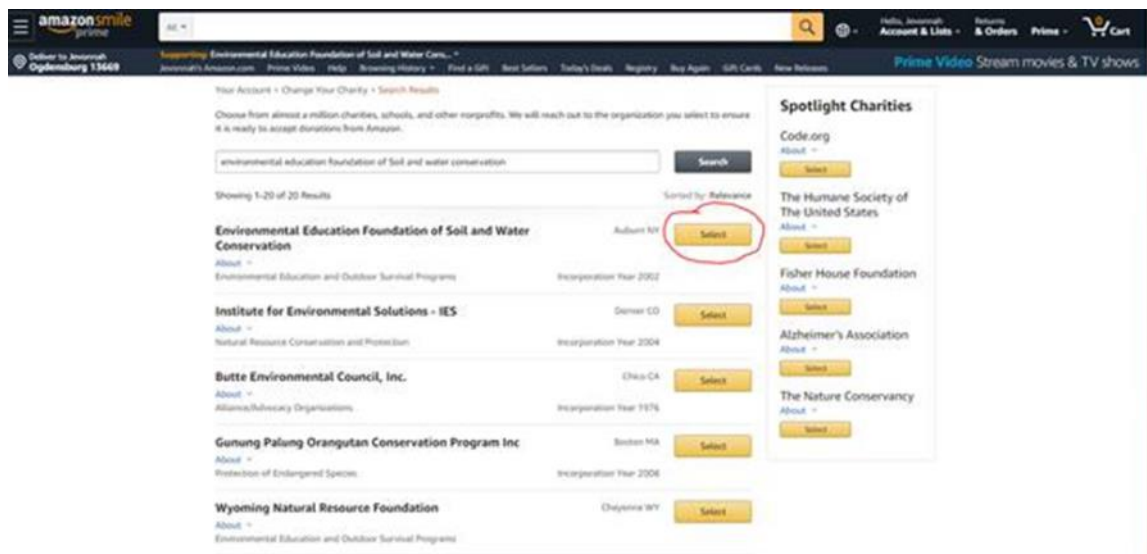
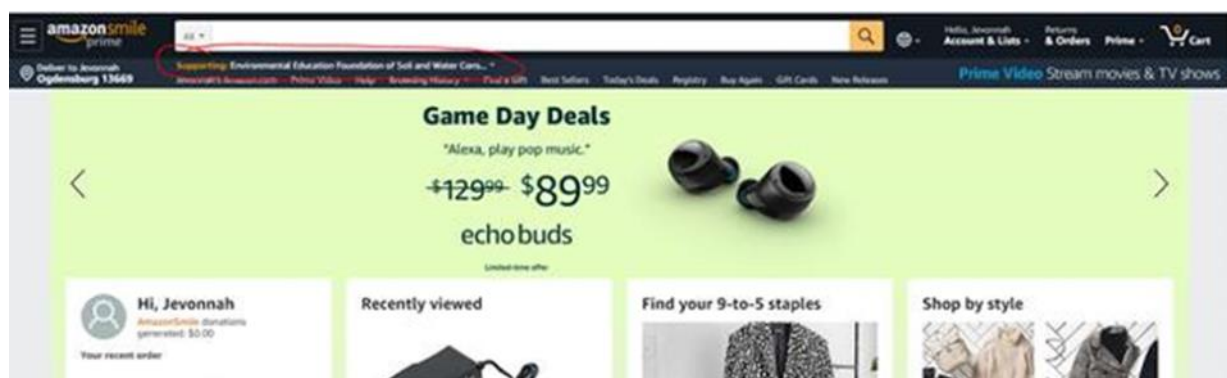
We already have our site location, which is Hobart & William Smith Colleges in Geneva, the training & testing sites selected, bus company selected, and two potential fun day event possibilities.

We need support from all the Districts and Partners because there is so much work to be done and *“many hands make light work.”* We want to thank those Districts that have donated to this event and for those who will be. Without your continued support these programs would not happen.

Support the NYS Envirothon with Amazon Smile

Chastity Miller, NYS Conservation District Employees' Association, Inc.

Did you know you can use AMAZON Smile to help the NYS Envirothon! Please use Amazon Smile to give back to the Environmental Education Foundation for the State Envirothon and the National Envirothon in 2023! Here is the link for amazon smile along with some screenshots of what it should look like. Once you have selected them, it works exactly the same as the regular amazon site. Just note that if you go to the regular amazon.com site or use the app the charity will not get any donations, you have to use the smile.amazon.com site. If you forget to go to the smile site and already have stuff in your cart (in app or on regular amazon site), you can still go to the smile site and login and the items in your cart will show up on that site too, I did it just to try! Go to: <https://smile.amazon.com> & Sign in with your amazon account. This account has already done it, so it shows that their supporting the EEF already, but if you haven't yet you should automatically be prompted to pick a charity. Then you just search for "Environmental Education Foundation of Soil and Water Conservation" and hit select. REMEMBER- note that if you go to the regular amazon.com site or use the app the charity will not get any donations; you have to use the smile.amazon.com site. Thank you so much! We need all the help we can get.



Annual NYS CDEA Fish On Challenge

The NYSCDEA is sponsoring a fishing challenge to all anglers out there.



Participation Fee is \$10.00 per person and each participant will receive a NYSCDEA pocket tape measure (**If you haven't received a tape already). Registration is available for NYSCDEA members only.

Register [HERE](#) for the Fish On Challenge by May 31, 2022

***New district employees can sign up anytime!

There are **Six Categories** and prizes in each:

Smallmouth Bass

Largemouth Bass

Northern Pike

Trout Special

→ **Comradery Catch!**
For the spirit of friendship and good times with the family!

Jokers Wild

General Rules

- You are not eligible to enter a fish if you caught it while in a professional tournament.
- Only one prize per fish.
- Entries are limited to those caught from NY waters only (including boundary waters).
- Entries will be scored based on length except for
 - *Jokers Wild* will be judged on uniqueness of species, size and location of catch. Participant will have to specify why they think the fish is unique and why it should win.
 - *Comradery Catch* will be judged based on species, fishing story (optional), location, etc.
 - Trout will be judged based on length, species, and location of catch.

Enter a Fish: the participant is required to submit the following information to [Google Forms](#) or Fishcdea@gmail.com:

1. Name
2. Date caught
3. Species
4. Length
5. Location (waterbody)
6. Picture of fish with you or a measuring tape!
7. If entering the... **Jokers Wild** category you must include why the fish is unique and why it should win the category.

*All entries need to be submitted between
March 1, 2022 – February 28, 2023*

Examples for pictures:



Winners of all categories will be announced at the 2023 WQS Banquet.

Register for the Fish On Challenge [HERE](#)

If you have any questions, comments or if you are interested in registering, contact Maren Stoddard at: Fishcdea@gmail.com.

CDEA News **needs *your* news!**

Please email your stories, photos, save the dates,
and fun moments to
caitlinstewart@frontier.com



Special Columns!

Cover Photo

Your stellar photo could be on the cover of CDEA News. Submit seasonal photos of landscapes or conservation practices through summer, fall, winter, or spring. Include a few sentences describing the photo.

CDEA Wine and Pint Glass Tour

We all love our CDEA wine and pint glasses. Email photos of your glass in action. Cheers!

Where in New York is Ronny Raindrop?

Email your photos of Ronny with a brief description of what he's doing and where he is.

*Back issues are available on the CDEA website:
www.nyscdea.com/newsletter/*

**Thank you for making CDEA News a continued success.
Please keep you news rolling in!**

New York State Conservation District Employees' Association, Inc.



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