

CDEA News

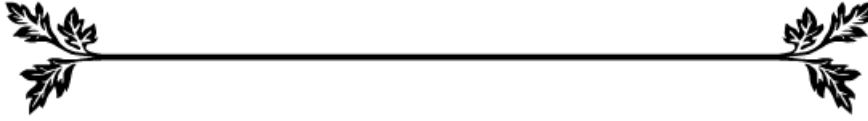


NEW YORK STATE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION, INC.

JANUARY 2023

Cover Photo

Rye cover crop protecting soil in Tioga County, NY during the winter months. Photo by Alex Marks, Tioga County Soil and Water Conservation District.



The Water Quality Symposium returns to in person, better than ever

Caitlin Stewart, Vice President, NYS CDEA, Inc.

The New York State Conservation District Employees' Association and Soil and Water Conservation Committee enthusiastically announce the 2023 Water Quality Symposium and the NYS CDEA Annual Training Session March 14 – 17, 2023 at the Double Tree Hotel, 6301 NY-298, East Syracuse, NY 13057.

[Registration is due no later than January 27.](#)

The partnership between CDEA and SWCC makes the annual Water Quality Symposium possible. It takes the cooperation and dedication of many partners to make an event of this scale successful. Each year, the Symposium provides an invigorating and affordable forum to share ideas and learn science-based skills to advance natural resource conservation, climate resiliency, and watershed protection to all corners of New York State. While education and training efforts remain a high priority, identifying alternative resources for future Symposiums is an ongoing and challenging process. Partnerships that blend consistent funding with staff capable of delivering technical instruction are essential to the continuation of an event as unique as the Water Quality Symposium.

Event organization began in June 2022, and included meetings, discussions about class topics and instructors, and entertainment. I thank the Track Chairs and sub-committee members who coordinate classes for Agriculture, Non-Agriculture, Forestry, Education, and Clerk / Admin. I extend a special thank you to Chastity Miller, CDEA Treasurer and Franklin County SWCD Manager, for her steadfast guidance and support. Dozens of people are involved with planning the Water Quality Symposium, and I am grateful for everyone involved. This year's event will be better than ever, with an offering of 35 classes instructed by professionals.

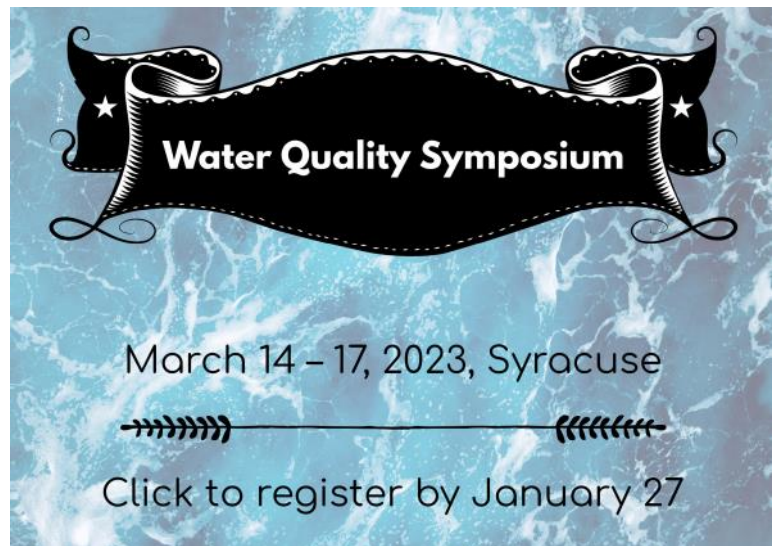
We need YOUR help! Volunteers are needed to organize classes and entertainment for the 2024 Water Quality Symposium. If interested, contact me at caitlinstewart@hamiltoncountyswcd.org, 518-548-3991.

As we look ahead to March, I hope you immerse yourself in four days of professional development, networking, and fun, and return to your SWCD or organization with a reinvigorated perspective on conservation.

See you in Syracuse!

With gratitude,

Caitlin Stewart
CDEA Vice President



A reason to be thankful

Mark E. Burger, Executive Director and Jessi Lyons, Member-at-Large, Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District

A simple phone call on Tuesday, November 15, 2022, to conduct business with some of our area farmers led to a better Thanksgiving for many families in the City of Syracuse.

Mark Burger, Executive Director of Onondaga County SWCD called Mr. Tim Leubner of Maple Lane Farms to discuss some upcoming agricultural / environmental conservation opportunities. That led to Mr. Leubner stating that he had 30 bushels of squash available and asked if we knew of any groups interested in the food. Burger immediately called his contacts in Syracuse. Jessie Lyons of the Brady Farm sent a truck and crew to Leubner's Maple Lane Dairy Farm to pick up the squash. She then delivered some of it to Mike Atkins of C-CAP for him to add to the food and turkey boxes that he was giving out to 281 families on Saturday, November 19 at New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church. The Brady Farm gave the remaining squash to the Brady Market for 190 families, and to Eastern Farm Workers for their Thanksgiving Box giveaways.



(L-R) Emanuel Atkins, Cynthia Shruggs, Gwen Muck, Leslie Stevens, and Michael Atkins ready for the food and turkey box distribution to 281 families at the New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church on Saturday, November 19, 2022.

After that, Burger made calls to Brian Reeves of Reeves Farms. He had food to contribute to holiday generosity. Reeves farms donated a pallet of pie pumpkins. The truck from Brady Farm also picked up the food from Reeves to distribute so that more people would have a holiday meal to remember. Over 350 families received squash or pumpkins for Thanksgiving!

THANK YOU TO: Leubner's Maple Lane Dairy Farm, Reeves Farms, and Brady Farm for their great work and generosity to help make sure members in our communities had a healthy meal on their table for Thanksgiving dinner!



Emanuel Atkins standing with squash ready to be distributed with 281 food and turkey boxes on Saturday, November 19, 2022, at New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church.



Kayo Green of Brady Farm and Claudia Leubner sort and box squash at Leubner's Maple Lane Dairy Farm.

Wise Words from our District Family

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

Jim Lieberum, Manager
Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District
26 years



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

A. 1995.

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

A. I actually applied in 1995 to Broom County SWCD. I didn't get an interview and didn't realize that I had dealt with a SWCD until I worked with a few folks from the Warren County SWCD in 1997.

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

A. In general yes. However it goes beyond anything that I ever anticipated or ever would have thought about. I mean I can't say "dreamt about" as no one dreams of developing the NYSSWCC reports.....sorry Ben, LOL.....

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

A. Working with a special needs school to install plants in a rain garden and around a pond. The students were challenged in various ways, but all of them were able to communicate (verbally or no-verbally) about how excited and PROUD they were for weeks

See Wise, page 5.

Wise (from page 4)

afterwards. One of them that I was helping smiled, and that wasn't something that ever happened to often. We made a huge impact on those students that day.

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

A. Maybe this is a bit egotistical but for me it was myself, Dave Wick and John Persch all decked out in kilts for St Paddy's day at a WQS in Auburn...it took some you know what...booze..., to do this. Otherwise the mechanical bull was pretty sweet.

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

A. I can't pick one out, every day you have to have humor. To take some of what former NC State basketball coach Jim Valvano said in his truly touching and heartfelt ESPY's award speech as he was succumbing to cancer - "I just got one last thing. I urge all of you, all of you, to enjoy your life, the precious moments you have to spend each day with some laughter and some thought, to get your emotions going, to be enthusiastic every day."

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. The original MacGyver of course. Whatever three items he would think we need to survive- maybe a gum wrapper, an old sole off a shoe and a bottle cap. I'm sure with those we'd last for a year.

Q. Do you have a hidden talent?

A. Dogs and small children flock to me and we get along great, maybe that's my talent. Similar mentalities.

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

A. The camaraderie of the SWCD employees and meeting new hires. I like talking to folks and getting to know them beyond, hey that's Biff who works at XYZ SWCD.

Q. Any concluding remarks?

A. Everything works on paper.





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

CDEA January 2023 Report

Stream C Bills the Governor vetoed the Stream C bill last week. We are thrilled to make that announcement. Now here's to hoping it will be put to rest and not represented. Senator Peter Harckham is not happy with this and we will be watching him to see if he rewrites the bill or pushes to have the Governor's decision over ruled.

CDEA District Law Meeting I attended the zoom CDEA meeting held last Friday regarding the potential District Law changes. Dustin Lewis, CDEA President did a great job covering each potential change and provided reasons for districts to support the push to prevent this Watershed Health group from moving forward. Some districts have written to their county Legislators & state Legislators regarding this. These letters have been shared with everyone to help each district reach out to their county & state Legislators. I'm working on a packet to be shared with your Legislators. It will provide districts with information that will help them state the reasons not to have Legislators support this. This should be completed and emailed to everyone (I have emails for) next week.

Legislative Days..... **IMPORTANT** information is the Legislative Days have been changed to February 27th & February 28th, 2023, due to the Legislators changing their session calendar. NYACD will be setting up a table at the Farm Bureau reception on Monday evening February 27th. The Farm Bureau was as surprised as I was when the NYS Legislative Session calendar came out with the changes because they too had scheduled their Legislative days the same as ours.

I have been busy working on the Legislative Day booklet. Presently I have eighteen (18) districts that have provided projects with before and after photos. I'd really like to see all the districts provide something for the booklet. We really need to showcase what districts do to the Legislators and this is one great way to do it, in photos. This way they see at a glance what districts do with the funds they support.

NYS Envirothon is moving along as expected this time of the year. We are working on funding for this event along with the team registration fees. All necessary information is online www.nysenvirothon.org.

2024 NCF-Envirothon New York is moving along, and our biggest concern is the funding. We have been reaching out to a number of businesses and foundations for funding. I will be meeting with Chobani Yogurt folks on January 5th, 2023. I will be setting up a meeting with NYCM Insurance in January as well in hopes they will be a major sponsor for this event. It is my hope that they will give big and come on board with the project as well as send volunteers during the weeklong event. We've had only fifteen (15) districts donate to this event so far, which is surprising at this point, but it is our hope they will do their part and provide the funding requested next year. This will help us know just how we should move forward. If your district hasn't donated presently, please discuss this at your next board meeting and consider donating the requested amount.

We have many things already set for the event, campus, training & testing sites, bus company, and much more. Activities are in the works for a fun day, during the event advisor tours and team fun stuff. We are working on the current issue topic and will have our final requests made to NCF by January.

Rare Bumble Bee Sighting Sparks New Collaboration

Amanda Cabanillas, Education & Outreach Coordinator, Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District

Every year since 2019, Jennifer Carchidi has gone hunting for bumble bee observations in and around Greene County, and she's become particularly drawn to a most unexpected location – a pull off between Schoharie Creek and 23A in the Town of Jewett. Jennifer's bumble-hunting hobby involves searching for the bees, photographing them, and reporting her findings to the iNaturalist app and bumblebeewatch.org. "I found many species of bumbles there. It became a sort of bumble bee hotspot. Of all the places I've hunted bumbles, all over the country (and even Canada), this spot had the most diversity and sheer numbers", she says.



American bumble bee enjoying a purple aster. Photo by Jennifer Carchidi.

Then, in July of 2020, she found a different looking bumble bee and posted it to iNaturalist. The special bee ended up being the very rare *Bombus flavidus appalachiensis* – a cuckoo bumble bee that was thought to be extinct in New York until 2017 when observations began to reemerge. Cuckoo bumble bees lack a worker caste and are unable to produce their own nests, so they have perfected the art of taking over the nests of other bumbles. Some species do so by taking on the scent of the targeted bees, and some do so by brute force – either way, the cuckoos eventually succeed in exploiting the other colonies and tricking the workers into raising their young.

Once Jennifer made this discovery she began visiting this site every spring, summer, and fall to see who she might encounter. In September 2021, Jennifer and her husband, Bill, stopped for their last hunt of the year and were excited to come across the gyne (new queen that will breed in the fall, overwinter,

and start a new colony in the spring) of the American bumble bee (*Bombus pensylvanicus*)!

American bumble bees are vital pollinators that have completely vanished from eight states – with populations down 50% in the Midwest and Southeast and 99% in New York (Smithsonian Magazine). This 2021 observation was one of only two in the whole state (the other was observed on Governor's Island), and is the first for the area in approximately 2-3 decades. Yet, despite these dwindling numbers, the American bumble bee has not been protected under any state or federal law. And so, Jennifer took matters into her own hands and contacted the NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) – the owners of the pull off – to see if anything could be done to improve habitat conditions at the site.

NYSDOT's Region 1 office was quick to respond in developing a concept for converting the large area of mowed grass to a native pollinator habitat, contacting the Catskill Streams Buffer Initiative at GCSWCD for

See bee, page 8.

Bee (from page 7)

technical assistance, and securing funding for project implementation. The project involved tilling; seeding with a special wildflower seed mix for bees; planting 225 native shrubs and other small, flowering, pollinator-friendly plants; and installing bluebird houses as well as specially designed mowing limit markers (to avoid destroying the young plants as they get established). Pollinator signage was also added to educate the public on the importance of — and the reason for — the project. On Arbor Day 2022, NYSDOT and GCSWCD staff were joined by Jennifer for project installation.



NYSDOT & GCSWCD staff were joined by Jennifer Carchidi for the Arbor Day planting.

“Marian [Tompkins] and many other [NYS] DOT employees, and Greene County Soil and Water have all been so amazing. The intent is to offer these bumbles more native plants from which to choose over all the seasons and maybe even offer some potential nesting sites”, reported Jennifer.

This collaboration between a self-proclaimed insect enthusiast, NYSDOT, and GCSWCD is a true testament to the importance of community science – hats off to you, Jennifer!

Education on Agroforestry at SUNY Adirondack

Nick Rowell, Natural Resource Specialist, Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District



Tree planter at workshop.

The Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District partnered with SUNY Adirondack’s Agricultural Business program and The Farm @ SUNY Adirondack on a grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program and Northeast Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission. The grant funded a pilot program to develop education and implementation of an agroforestry plan for 30 acres of the college’s farmland.

To allow the developed agroforestry plan and implementation to continue well into the future, and long after this grant closes out, a key element was the nursery. The District worked with the college’s Sustainable Agriculture class to build the tree nursery and fence it in. The nursery includes

See agroforestry, page 9.

Agroforestry (from page 8)



Air prune beds

air prune beds currently planted with 100 Hazelnuts and 300 Chestnuts that will be grown out for a year and transplanted in fall of 2023. The goal of the nursery is for the students to continue to grow specific tree species to be transplanted as part of the agroforestry plan, and sell as a value-added product to help fund the future tree crops and The Farm @ SUNY Adirondack. Planting trees can be a huge lift, but the District was very fortunate to have been donated a DETCO tree planter to be used for the grant and is also available to farmers and landowners across NYS. If any Districts, farmers or landowners are interested in borrowing the tree planter, please email NickR@warrenswcd.org .

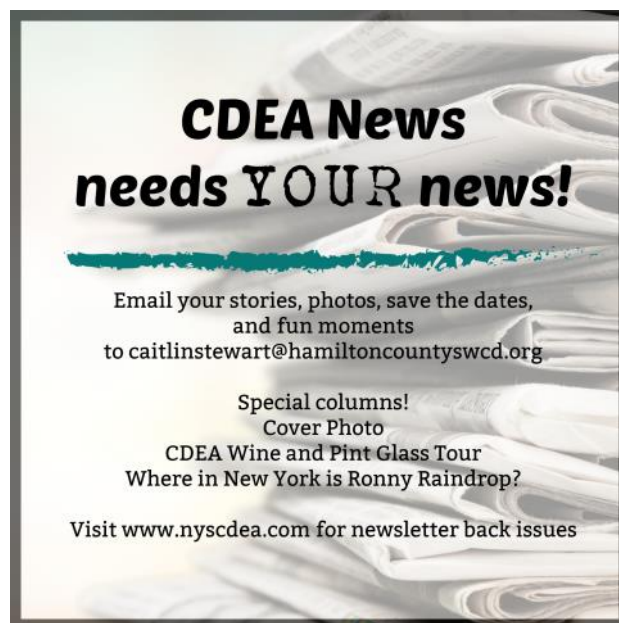


With the grant funds, the District was able to hire a professional in the agroforestry field to develop a plan and work directly with District staff and the college to setup the necessary program infrastructure and expertise on agroforestry implementation. We also developed a webpage for the grant that will soon become a resource page for this form of agroforestry:

Visit our Agroforestry page at <https://warrenswcd.org/agroforestry/> or scan the QR Code:

The goals of the grant are to benefit natural resource conservation on the 30 acres of agricultural fields at the college while increasing production through the implementation of agroforestry practices. A tributary of Halfway Brook runs along the east side of the farm fields which is part of the Lake Champlain Watershed. The agroforestry project we have planned includes agricultural best management practices while installing sections of edible riparian buffers, restoration and reforestation of agricultural fields (afforestation) for ecosystem services, water cycle enhancement and farm production.

“This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under assistance agreement (LC00A00707-0) to NEIWPC in partnership with the Lake Champlain Basin Program.”



Meet the Newcomers!

Introducing the newest
Soil and Water Conservation District employees

Amy L. Titcomb, District Technician Dutchess County Soil & Water Conservation District

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

A. I have been working for Dutchess County Soil & Water Conservation District for approx.. 1.5 years

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

A. My boyfriend encouraged me to take the civil service test that got me on the list for this job.

Q. What are your hobbies?

A. Reading, writing, hiking and horseback riding

Q. What's on your bucket list?

A. Visit Alaska

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

A. I don't know, I've never tried it

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

A. Keep an open mind.

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

A. I get to play in dirt to help make streams happy.

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

A. Our new buffer initiative program is pretty epic

Q. Coffee or tea?

A. Both

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

A. Every time I go out into the field with my coworkers it's an adventure.

CDEA Wine and Pint Glass Tour

We all love our CDEA wine and pint glasses. Here they are in action across New York State. Cheers!



Susan Lewis of Albany County SWCD says, "It's 5 o'clock somewhere!"



Nichelle Swisher of Lewis County SWCD replies, "Absolutely!"



A well used CDEA pint glass enjoys National Popcorn Day. Caitlin Stewart of Hamilton County SWCD filled her glass with New York State whole milk.

CLCPA Climate Action Council Scoping Plan

Abigail Edwards, Excelsior Policy Fellow , NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee

On December 19th, the Climate Action Council voted to approve and adopt a final Scoping Plan, which provides a roadmap to achieve New York's aggressive climate targets under the nation-leading Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA).

The Scoping Plan's recommendations will provide the foundation to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, drive critical building and transportation electrification, further climate justice, and advance the State's commitment to economywide carbon neutrality by 2050. The Plan outlines actions needed for New York to achieve a 40-percent reduction in statewide greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels by 2030, an 85-percent reduction from 1990 levels by 2050.

As part of the Climate Action Council, Department of Agriculture and Markets Commissioner Richard Ball was proud to have led the Agriculture and Forestry Advisory Panel. From farm groups and farmers to foresters, conservationists, academics, and environmentalists, convening a number of stakeholders from the agricultural industry came together and found consensus to help meet the targets set in the CLCPA, while recognizing the unique challenges faced by the agriculture and forestry industries.

The incentive-based approach set forth by the agriculture and

forestry chapter will support farmers and foresters while more work is done to fill gaps in research to improve climate smart practices that all producers can adopt on their operations. Recommendations for the agricultural and forestry industries include:

- Mitigate agricultural greenhouse gas emissions, including nitrous oxide and methane through nutrient and manure management practices and precision animal feeding.
- Maximize the carbon sequestration and storage potential in the agriculture and forestry sectors as key strategies for achieving net-zero emissions across all sectors of the economy by 2050.

Forward momentum toward these goals is already underway, largely in part due to the current work of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Many of the agricultural related strategies included in the Agriculture and Forestry, Land Use, and Adaptation and Resiliency chapters of the Scoping Plan highlight and expand current SWCC programs. The continued commitment of SWCDs to furthering the resiliency of New York agriculture in the face of a changing climate will be critical in achieving CLCPA goals.

For more information on the Climate Action Council's Scoping Plan, please visit the [Climate Act website](#).



The climate action council passing the Scoping Plan, December 19, 2022.

Skaneateles Lake Watershed Agricultural Program annual meeting

Mark E. Burger and staff, SLWAP

The Skaneateles Lake Watershed Agricultural Program held their 28th annual meeting on Monday, December 5, 2022, at Grace Chapel in Skaneateles, NY. Guest speakers included Dr. Frank Rossi of Cornell University and Rick Jordan of CNY Drone Services.

farmers. It was very interesting to learn that many of the Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are required by farmers to protect the environment and water quality can also be used by golf courses. Dr. Rossi emphasized that the difference between the two industries is that currently agriculture “shall” use these BMP’s and golf courses “should” use these BMPs. Also of interest were the statistics, that once again indicate that the northeast portions of the United States are seeing 55% more downpours (increase in heaviest

precipitation events) while other portions of the United States are only seeing a 9% increase in downpours. Another interesting comparison was that golf courses have to address the effects of shade on golf course turf care just as farmers have to address shade as it reduces crop production; “farmers farm the sunshine”.

Eric Jensen from the SLWAP delivered a review of the first year of cover crop seeding using a drone. Rick Jordan of CNY Drone Services spoke after lunch. Rick presented the results of a drone cover crop seeding project recently completed in the watershed. This was one of the first drone cover



Dr. Rossi addressing the audience.

Dr. Frank Rossi, the Richard C. Call Director at Cornell University was this year’s speaker. Dr. Rossi began his presentation with an update on Agricultural Sciences at the University. He continued his presentation by comparing the similarities between practices employed by golf courses to preserve water quality on golf courses and lawns to the preservation practices of

crop projects done in the area. At the conclusion of the annual meeting CNY Drone Services performed a drone demonstration and answered questions for future applications and potential future projects.

Megan Vandewarker from the Onondaga County SWCD presented data on the two-year study comparing tile outlet water from an agricultural field to water coming naturally out of a nearby woods. Her results showed that water coming out of the tile lines had an overall lower concentration of Total Phosphorous, Total Dissolved Phosphorous, and Nitrogen Oxides, as compared to the water coming from the woods.

Additionally, concentrations of the analytes were very low. She also updated the audience with data on seven years of sampling two Denitrifying Bio-Reactors. Results of that study showed that the



Rick Jordan answers questions about the drone.



Kim Clark and Eric Jensen welcoming farmers to meeting.

See meeting, page 14.

Meeting (from page 13)

Denitrifying Bio-Reactors are performing their purpose at further reducing low Nitrate as Nitrogen concentrations coming from the tile lines.

In support of our local vendors, Byrne Dairy milk, cookies and brownies from The Patisserie, and soup, salad, and sandwiches from Wegman's comprised the refreshments for the luncheon. A total of 35 people



Prg Mgr Burger Introducing E Jensen and R Jordan.

attended the annual meeting. These folks were primarily the agricultural producers in the watershed and those agency representatives that assist them with conservation opportunities throughout the year. Fifteen farms representing 67% of the agricultural land base in the watershed were in attendance. Five of those farms brought "the next generation" so that they can learn more about the City of Syracuse's Filtration



Drone in sky.

Avoidance

Program and why it is so important to keep the programming going into the future. To conclude the meeting, Program Manager Mark Burger reiterated Dr. Rossi's comments that we need, in all of our industries, to do all we can to protect water quality and the environment "until our good is better and our better is best!"



Rick Jordan and audience w drone.

Community Resiliency Trainings bolster flood resiliency, protect watershed health

Caitlin Stewart, President, Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition

Over one hundred people attended Community Resiliency Trainings throughout the Champlain and Upper Hudson River Watersheds. Ten events bolstered flood resiliency toolboxes for highway departments, prepared communities for climate change, and instructed Soil and Water Conservation District staff how to protect watershed health through erosion prevention.

“Soil and Water Conservation Districts partnered with Watershed Coalitions to host trainings that were laser focused on climate resiliency,” said Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition president Caitlin Stewart. “Our target audience was municipalities, departments of public works, contractors, SWCD staff, environmental and conservation groups, and the public.”

Trainings included classroom and field components. Participants applied concepts, took measurements, and toured completed projects in real-world scenarios.

Emergency Stream Intervention trainings detailed how streams become unstable, why flooding occurs, and how communities can address impacts.

North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative trainings certified participants to identify bridges and culverts that are difficult for aquatic organisms (fish) to pass through. Participants learned how to assess road-stream crossings using a standardized, online scoring system.

Rural Roads Active Management Program training attendees piloted a new app developed by Franklin County SWCD for roadside erosion data collection. They learned about erosion prevention technology like coconut blankets and compost socks. Driving tours spotlighted road and streambank stabilization projects, culvert sizing, green armor, hydroseeding, and natural channel design.



During a RRAMP training held in Wells NY, Franklin County SWCD's Chastity Miller (left) explains to District staff how to use a new app for roadside erosion data collection.

See resiliency, page 16.

Resiliency (from page 15)



Hamilton County SWCD's Lenny Croote (left) explains how he used turf reinforcement mats to stabilize the inflow area of a culvert to District staff during a RRAMP training held in Wells NY.

“We appreciate the opportunity to offer these trainings throughout the two watersheds,” said Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition of New York President Kristin Ballou. “All events were well attended, and attendees were impressed with the quality of information provided and grateful to receive instruction on these topics.”

Funding for trainings was provided to the Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition and the Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition by the Soil and Water Conservation Committee in partnership with the Department of Environmental Conservation.

For more about CWICNY, visit www.cwicny.org/.



Hamilton County SWCD's Lenny Croote (right) explains how he used green armor to prevent erosion of a steep roadside bank to municipal staff during a RRAMP training held in Indian Lake NY.



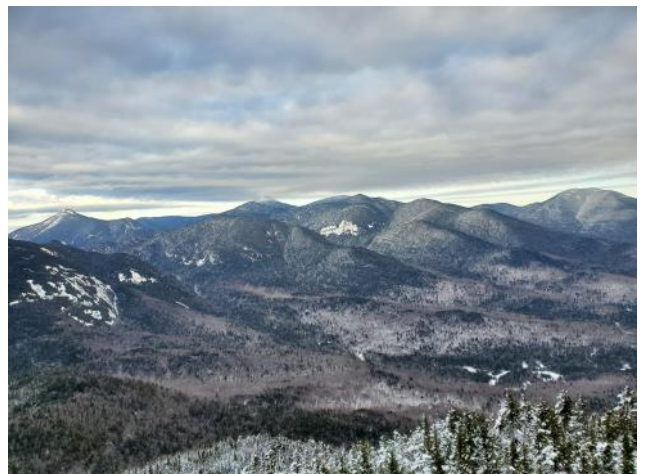
Photo Album



There was standing room only at the November CDEA meeting. Photo by Chastity Miller, CDEA Treasurer.



Photo by Blanche L. Hurlbutt, NY Association Conservation Districts Executive Director.



Views from the Mount Adams fire tower in Newcomb. You can see Marcy is just barely in the clouds. Photo by Teresa Link, Technician, Onondaga County SWCD.

NRCS program sign-ups

Kim Farrell, ASTC-Programs, USDA-NRCS

1st announcement

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's [Natural Resources Conservation Service](#) (NRCS) in New York announces the application deadline for the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) - Conservation Incentive Contracts (EQIP-CIC) as Jan. 27, 2023.

EQIP-CIC in NY expands resource benefits to producers through the following climate friendly conservation practices:

- 340 Cover Crop
- 590 Nutrient Management
- 329 Residue and Tillage Management, No Till
- 345 Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till

EQIP-CIC in NY also offers conservation practices that support the above management practices. NY is offering EQIP-CIC throughout the state with a land use focus of Cropland. EQIP-CIC allows producers to target priority resource concerns on their property by offering incentive payments for a five-year contract without needing to enroll the entire operation into the program. EQIP-CIC is designed to be a stepping-stone between EQIP and the [Conservation Stewardship Program](#) (CSP), to help producers improve their level of conservation and earn benefits of longer-term conservation enhancements.

While applications for EQIP-CIC are accepted throughout the year, interested producers should submit applications to their local NRCS office by January 27 to be considered for the 2023 ranking funding period. Applications accepted after January 27 will be considered in the next signup. All applications are competitive and are ranked based on national, state and locally identified resource priorities and the overall benefit to the environment.

Each applicant must establish themselves as a USDA customer and obtain all Farm Service Agency (FSA) eligibility requirements by March 1, 2023. For more information, please visit our [website](#) or contact your [local service center](#).

2nd Announcement

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announces January 27, 2023 as the application cut-off date for the general signup for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) in New York for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023.

Through the CSP program, NRCS helps private landowners build their business while implementing conservation practices and enhancements that help ensure the sustainability of their entire operation. NRCS will work with applicants to assess resource concerns on their land to establish a benchmark stewardship condition, then select practices and enhancements that will achieve higher levels of conservation.

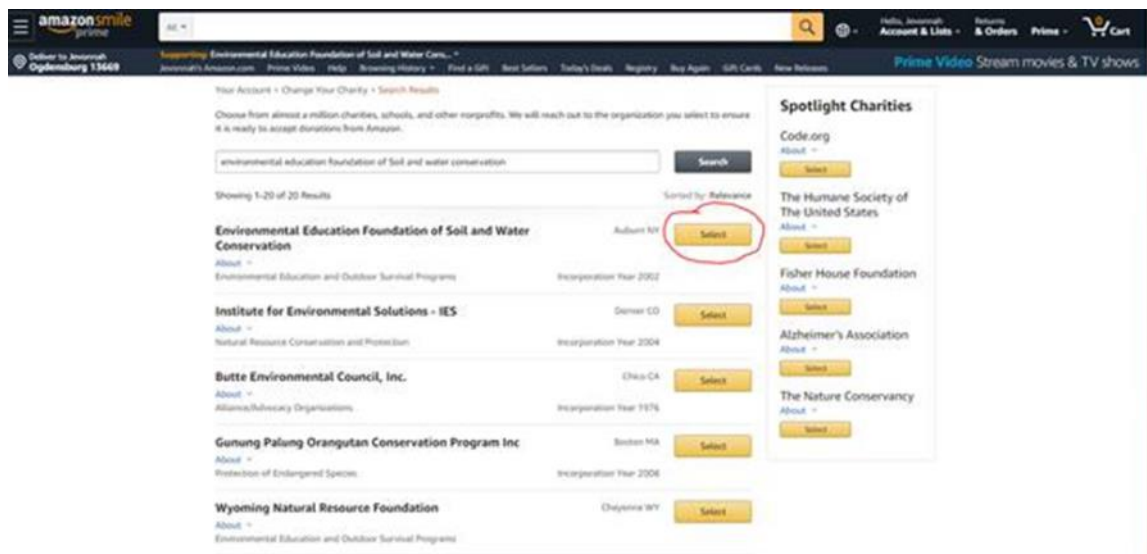
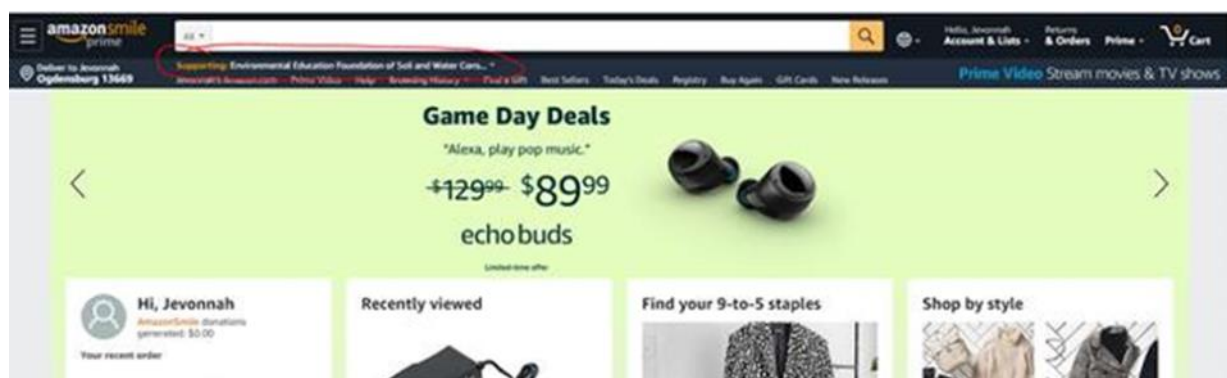
Applications accepted after January 27 will be considered in the next signup. All applications are competitive and are ranked based on national, state and locally identified resource priorities and the overall benefit to the environment.

For more information, please visit our [website](#) or contact your [local service center](#).

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.

New York State Conservation District Employees' Association, Inc.



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