

CDEA News



NEW YORK STATE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION, INC.

FEBRUARY 2024

Cover Photo

Korey R. Evarts, Washington County SWCD Natural Resources Conservation Technician Intern, spotted this porcupine while implementing field work. Cute and prickly!



The CDEA Corner

Caitlin Stewart, President, NYS CDEA, Inc.

February greetings! Please take a few minutes to refill your mug or water bottle and enjoy the February CDEA News.

CDEA Annual Meeting

I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming CDEA Annual Meeting on **March 13, 7:00 p.m.** at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel Syracuse <6301 NY-298, East Syracuse, NY 13057 >. CDEA members from across the state have the opportunity for an open discussion on employee issues and concerns. Nominations and election of officers and Division Representatives will take place. This is also the forum where policies and resolutions are reviewed and adopted. Each member (a full time or part time employee of a legally organized NYS SWCD) is entitled to one vote.

Any District staff member can submit a resolution that will be adopted by majority vote of all members present at the Annual Meeting. While I did not receive any resolutions in advance, staff can bring them forward from the floor the day of the Annual Meeting with the requirement of 100 hard copies.

[Annual Meeting packet \(Agenda on page 3\)](#)

[CDEA By-Laws, Policy, and Procedure Manual](#)

Summary of changes

- Spelling, grammar, punctuation, formatting
- Updates to Officer Guidelines and responsibilities
- Addition of Division map
- Policy additions and revisions
- Policy for Use of Funds Generated from the New York State DEC Endorsed 4-Hour Erosion and Sediment Control Online Training
- Frank Bratt
- Investment
- 4-Way Partnership MOA
-

January CDEA Meeting Recap

CDEA and representatives from the 4-Way Partnership met in Syracuse to discuss new initiatives like DEC's NYS Reforestation Plan and finalized plans for the rapidly approaching Water Quality Symposium. CDEA has done a beautiful job with organizing this event, and we are excited to see you there for educational trainings



*After the January CDEA meeting, the board
went to a Syracuse basketball game.
Let's go, Orange!*

See Corner, Page 3.

Corner (from page 2)

and incomparable networking! The CDEA By-Laws have been an agenda item since November 2023, and we reviewed them during this meeting. A horrific stomach bug prevented me from joining the meeting in person, but I joined via Zoom and was super bummed to miss the Syracuse basketball game that Division Rep Shawn Murphy organized.

President's Report

- Hosted the December 12 and January 10 Managers' Meeting and emailed a recap to all SWCDs
- Hosted the January CDEA meeting and 2 CDEA special meetings
- Attended 2 SWCC State Programs Advisory Committee meetings
- Attended 2 SWCC monthly and staff call meetings
- Attended a SWCC Technical Advisory Committee meeting
- Attended 1 NYACD meeting
- DEC Bridge and Culvert Guidance
 - Hosted a meeting with DEC's Corbin Gosier, who provided additional context and a brief overview of the document to SWCDs before discussion ensued
 - Requested and received an extension for the public comment deadline
 - Created a survey to collect SWCD feedback on DEC permits
 - Gathered and submitted SWCD feedback on the guidance document to DEC
- Assembled the 2023 CDEA Annual Meeting packet and disseminated the agenda
- Focusing on a new Non-Ag NPS Program
- Civil Service - I have a contact and am working to coordinate job descriptions and increase the frequency of exams
- CDEA News
- Answered many inquiries from District staff



How many CDEA board members does it take to figure out a parking meter? The world may never know.

Upcoming Events

- [Water Quality Symposium](#) - March 12 - 15, 2024, DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Syracuse

Please contact your Division Representative or me with questions or concerns. I very much look forward to seeing you at the Water Quality Symposium, and wish you the very best for your upcoming tree sales and spring projects!

Kindest regards,
Caitlin Stewart, President, NYS CDEA Inc.





Donations Needed for Annual Bucket Raffle & Silent Auction

Beginning on March 12th the annual NYSCDEA Bucket Raffle and Silent Auction will be held at the 2024 Water Quality Symposium in Syracuse to benefit the Frank Bratt Scholarship.

Please show your support of this program:

Each District: please bring in at least one raffle item and if possible, a silent auction item.

Each Division: needs to have at least one silent auction item (your division rep will be reaching out).

Attached please find the silent auction bidding sheet. If you'd like to complete this ahead of time, feel free to email Shawn or Carla or bring a copy with you and the item to the WQS.

Please note: There is no freezer available to store frozen food, if you bring an item that needs refrigeration it will need to be kept in the refrigerator in your room.

If you have any questions, you can reach out to

Shawn Murphy at (607) 345-5527 - smurphyswcd@gmail.com

or Carla Yaw at (315) 263-5613 - carlayaw@lewiscounty.ny.gov

Partners are welcome to provide items as well and participation is open to everyone!

CDEA News needs YOUR news!

Email your stories, photos, save the dates,
and fun moments
to caitlin@hamcoswcd.org

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

Wise Words from our District Family

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

Nichelle Swisher, Lewis County SWCD

17 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've worked at the Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District as the District Manager for 17 years. Prior to that, I worked briefly (about 2 years-2004-2006) for the USDA/NRCS as a Soil Con Tech in Jefferson County. But my first position was District Field Manager at the Orleans County Soil and Water Conservation District from 1999 to 2004.*

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

A. *Honestly, my most valuable accomplishment is the team that we have built at the district. There is nothing more valuable than employees that work for you that care deeply about what they do and the quality with which they do it. I'm proud of my team and their abilities that keep expanding, their ability to work independently and come up with new ideas for our programming and provide ways of how we can accomplish those goals. We have a small, but very well rounded crew that knows how to get the job done and I'm very proud of them.*

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

A. *There are very few places where you can tailor your program to your county's needs and what you and your team are capable of achieving. Most other agencies are mandated what their programs will be and how they will be rolled out. The gray area, "the realm of soil and water conservation districts", suits us and allows us to morph and change (or roll with the punches) with our county needs. There is not a day that I come in to work and do exactly what I planned to do. Some might not like the disruption or unpredictability, but again, it makes us flexible and demands we have the ability to adapt. I am never bored, there are only things I would rather do than others. Our jobs are challenging, no one comes into the soil and water knowing answers to all of our natural resource concerns. What might have been the answer to a problem 10 years ago, is not the same answer to the problem today. There's a constant need for learning and challenging yourself to solve a problem you may not have*



See Wise, page 6.

Wise (from page 5)

been formally trained to do, so its on the job training to fill a need. If you think a soil and water conservation district can't do it, think again. If we don't know how to do something, we will figure it out and do it well.

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

A. While the focus of programs, water quality, hasn't changed too much over the years, other than the addition of climate grants, the execution has changed and for the better. AEM Planning used to be solely competitive through the AGNPS grant program, and thankfully we can now utilize AEM Base to plan on farms as opposed to writing competitive grants. Also, when I started in 1999, state reimbursement was \$30,000 for Part A if the District had \$60,000 of eligible expenditures, no part B or C. State reimbursement has grown exponentially and districts can now tailor their programs to their county needs with this funding.

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

A. Attend every training that you can, get involved in the employees association and network at events such as Conservation Skills Workshop and the Water Quality Symposium. Build a trusting relationship with your employees, directors, community and municipalities and go out of your way to help your community.

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

A. I learned about Districts in my Conservation Biology Course at SUNY Brockport.

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

A. A fellow graduate student at SUNY Brockport, Alan Boekhout, interned at the Orleans County Soil and Water Conservation District. They were advertising for a District Field Manager and they asked if he knew of anyone that would be interested in applying. He mentioned my name and gave them my contact information. I was working for Cornell's Enology (wine lab) in Geneva when Judy Bennett called me to see if I was interested in applying for the position. So I applied and got the job.

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

A. Yes and no. I received my Master's Degree in Aquatic Ecology which emphasized water chemistry, water quality, watershed and wetland science and hydrogeology. I did my master's thesis utilizing macroinvertebrates to assess stream health in Irondequoit Creek, electrofished in the Lake Ontario tributaries and prepared an Environmental Impact Statement for an independent study. But there are many other areas that I needed training in including surveying, CAD, soils, permitting, tile design, SHPO, pond management, culvert sizing, grant writing and managing difficult people. All of these skills were obtained via on the job training.

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

A. So many memorable moments...but for me...

- the first grant that I applied for and was awarded*
- the first best management practice that I had signed off on by an engineer and closing out the grant*
- my first Division Merit Award*
- closing out a very problematic grant at the symposium with John Wildeman, the NYSSWCC Director, in the aftermath of the hospitality room at the symposium! Ouch!*
- the day I recognized that employees across the state were more like family members who cared and showed their support for you when tragedy strikes at home*

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

A. The most epic memory from a Water Quality Symposium was a talent contest when Phil Griswold was Whistling Willy! He was dressed up in a huge top hat and suit that covered the top half of his body, making his torso the character's head, while pretending to whistle "Bridge Over the River Kwai" through his lipstick painted naval. You can't make this stuff up. I stomach hurt so bad from laughing!

See Wise, page 7.

Wise (from page 6)

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

A. *Within the first six months of this new employee working at the district, we received a very serious phone call. The person was requesting the District Manager and the employee came to me with a very concerned look on their face saying that the caller was referring to himself as Tony Soprano. Clearly, HBO was not on the list of things they watched and the Sopranos were not on their name recognition list. I said, "Really, Tony Soprano....huh." This person was taking their job very seriously. At that moment, I knew exactly who was on the other line, and asked if they would patch Jim Lieberum through. You could hear the laughter on the line without even having my phone up to my ear. That was Carla's introduction to Jim Lieberum, aka Tony Soprano.*

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. *There are so many people that would be fun to be snowed in with especially Carla, Alexis and Mike. If we were talking who in the state soil and water world would I want to be snowed in with...I have to say the people that come to mind first with the biggest sense of humor: Jim Lieberum, Tom Eskildsen, John Persch and Chastity Miller. They will keep you entertained with useless trivia, witty comments, songs that would make some ears burn and we'd likely end up in a snowball fight. My top 3 survival items would be chocolate, wine and a radio.*

Q. Do you have a hidden talent?

A. *A stupid party trick. I can roll quarters off of my nose and make a "shot" most every time. I also crochet items for friends and family.*

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

A. *The people...the hardworking, caring, passionate, smart aleck, sarcasm dripping people of the soil and water that would do just about anything for someone in need and crack a joke at your expense after a crisis is over. There are no other organizations that care so much about the environment, agriculture, community and their fellow employees as this group of people. I'll miss the work hard, play hard folks of the soil and water the most.*

Q. Any concluding remarks?

A. *I feel very fortunate to fall into the career that I did with Districts and I wouldn't trade my experience for any higher paying job anywhere. I love what I do, and so do most people that work for Districts, and that is why Districts do so well. I am very proud to be one of the many folks who make up one of New York State's Soil and Water Conservation Districts. It is a great group of people to be associated with.*

Practicing Gratitude

Troy Bishopp, Grazing Specialist, Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District

Morrisville, N.Y.--- Psychology Professor and Gratitude Researcher, Robert Emmons, from the University of California -Davis, says practicing gratitude “affirms the good things we’ve received while acknowledging the role other people play in providing our lives with goodness”. The sentiment is apropos in the relationship business of putting conservation on the ground.

For the 13th year of practicing gratitude, The Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District, its Board of Directors, and staff, held their annual customer appreciation luncheon at the Madison County CCE Event Center in Morrisville, New York. With over 70 guests in attendance, the casual get-together showcased an extensive

slideshow of projects implemented. The day serves to appreciate the families of farmers, contractors, local businesses, county highway staff, county supervisors, engineering support, area legislators, state and federal conservation partners and funding organizations who partner to support local conservation practices, initiatives and projects.

The many hands help the district initiate its mission to promote voluntary, economically viable and environmentally conscience agriculture through the continual implementation of diverse projects with planning from a locally led Agricultural Environmental Management Program (AEM).

The effort in 2023 was still challenging due to unpredictable weather, construction material delays, untimely concrete deliveries and finding available contractors who were extremely busy. District Manager, Steve Lorraine and his staff of 8 secured funding opportunities for the design and construction of grade stabilization projects, municipal culvert projects, stream remediation, manure storage projects, pasture systems, fencing, laneways, spring developments, milk-house waste systems, heavy use areas, mortality composting facility, riparian buffers, conservation tillage and planting over 800 acres of cover crops locally.

See Gratitude, page 9.



The Madison County SWCD practicing gratitude

Gratitude (from page 8)

“The timely work of the district and our partners has shown, after the recent flooding events, to help mitigate damage to critical infrastructure on roads and farms,” empathized Lorraine.

Additionally, the district staff managed the construction projects, planted trees, installed fence on stream buffers, consulted on grazing management, developed, and applied nutrient management plans, took soil samples,

delineated watersheds for culvert sizing, secured stream and lake permits, led educational training events and held the popular annual tree sale within their busy work schedule. The district also worked with the Upper Susquehanna Coalition, NYSDEC, NYS Environmental Protection Fund, and the Finger Lakes - Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FL-LOWPA) to secure funding resources through year-round, extensive grant writing.

To learn more about the work the Madison County SWCD does for the community, or to get your 2024 tree sale order form; contact the district at (315) 824-9849 or visit www.madcoswcd.com



Steve Durfee enjoys the luncheon stable of ice-cream and brownies.



From new culverts to planting cover crops a NYS Conservation District is a local asset.



The Madison SWCD District Board: Jim Cunningham, Chairman Cedric Barnes III, Alan Hough Charlie Pace and TJ Stokes.

Partners and USC Teams Collaborate for Successful Stream Corridor Restoration

Lydia Brinkley and Connor Hubbard Tioga County Soil and Water Conservation District

Stream corridor restoration projects take a while to complete, bottom line. In order to address the entire corridor, the bed, banks, and riparian area, many partners, teams, and programs are typically involved. And patience, there is a lot of that involved too! Three projects are worth highlighting this year that took all of the collaboration we could muster.



Otego Creek streambank erosion before work.

Two stream corridor restoration projects took place in Otsego County with funding from NRCS and the USC Water Quality Program. Jeanine Harter (NRCS) and Tony Capraro (NRCS) made navigating the changing Otego Creek projects somewhat painless and provided on site guidance whenever necessary. The USC Stream Engineering team (Connor Hubbard, Brian Reaser and Mike Jura) stepped in to provide streambank stabilization designs using the habitat creating toewood system. The team also



Otego Creek tributary before exclusion and buffer.

facilitated getting the project going (bidding, showing, scheduling) and provided time consuming on-site construction inspections throughout the project. The third stream corridor restoration project took place along the Chenango River in northern Norwich using the Susquehanna River Basin Commission funding. The USC Stream Engineering Team worked to create designs for streambank restoration, while Chenango SWCD created planting plans for riparian and wetland areas. The partners worked together on construction inspections so as to provide project mentorship along the way. The Buffer and Wetland Teams stepped in once the bed and bank were addressed to install more habitat intense practices in the riparian area and beyond.



Otego Creek stream corridor restoration after work is completed.

The first project along Otego Creek excluded livestock from where the stream corridor restoration was taking place and also along a nearby tributary. Both excluded areas were further planted into riparian forest buffers using the Trees for Tributaries Program (T4T). SUNY Oneonta Women's Rugby Team and Environmental Clubs joined for planting about 500 trees on a rainy morning. The landowner and family also planted right along with us!

See Restoration, page 11.



The farm family along the Otego Creek Tributary exclusion fence and riparian buffer.

Restoration (from page 10)

The second Otego Creek project is just down the road from the first, mentioned above. After stream work was completed, Trees for Tributaries was utilized to plant the riparian area into a young forest. This project removed cropland pressure on stream banks and enhanced riparian habitat.

Work is still ongoing on the “Chenango Greenway” project while the USC wetland team finishes up restoring wetlands, returning hydrology to large areas. To finish that project up, Chenango SWCD will facilitate

any remaining planting work on site. In addition to achieving large restoration deliverables with SRBC funding, the Chenango SWCD and the USC were able to help a local conservation organization obtain the property for permanent protection of the restored areas.

These projects took a lot of time and staff effort to complete, and there was smooth partnership and program coordination to help them along. In total, 1,380 feet of stream corridor has been restored throughout these three projects. Thank you to our NRCS, SWCD, and SRBC partners. When we work together, awesome conservation results!



Before picture of the Otego Creek site two project.



Otego Creek site two project complete with riparian forest buffer.



USC Buffer Team staff and family helping plant on a rainy Saturday.



Mike Jura along the completed Chenango Greenway toewood project.

Frank Bratt Memorial Scholarship

Requesting Applications!
Deadline: **MARCH 1ST, 2024**

The Frank Bratt Memorial Scholarship was initiated in 1990 to assist District employees with furthering their professional development and education. This scholarship can encompass a broad range of topics, with emphasis placed upon conservation related topics and subjects related to District function.

Send To:
Rebecca Campbell -
Wyoming County SWCD

36 Center Street—Suite D
Warsaw, NY 14569
rcampbell@wcd.onmicrosoft.com
585-786-3675

2024 Hot Training Topics:

- ♦ Global E Training—Autodesk Civ3D (self paced)
- ♦ Cornell Pro Dairy Training
- ♦ National I Deer Association—Deer Steward I Online
- ♦ ESRI—Arc GIS Pro Trainings

Conservation Farm of the Year

Mark E. Burger, Executive Director, Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District

Onondaga SWCD awarded its 2023 Conservation Farm of the Year award last week. It was the very first time that it was awarded to an urban farm in our County, in the 48-year history of the award! We are so proud of the Brady Farm for ALL of their accomplishments! A true pleasure working with their team! And, it was great to have County Executive Ryan McMahon present the award, along with representatives joining us from Senator May's office and Assembly Woman Pam Hunter's office!

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=891454629436340&set=pcb.891454686103001>



Seneca County Farm Tour

Erin Peruzzini, District Manager, Seneca County Soil and Water Conservation District

Seneca County SWCD Technician Christopher Creelman is presented to farm tour attendees and Spectrum News about a WASCoB installed on Boundary Breaks Vineyard on Seneca Lake. Although the District was not awarded CRF funds, like many other Districts we changed courses and utilized FLOWPA funds and partnered with the Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association to receive funds from their Sediment Nutrient Reduction Program. Along with funding from the landowner the WASCoB was installed to help alleviate vineyard erosion and downstream flooding to lakeshore residents. Managing the water in the vineyard will now allow for vineyard expansion with vines planted right through the WASCoB without losing valuable acreage. This project was part of a tour stop for our annual tour with NRCS, FSA, CCE and Farm Bureau partners.



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

Erica Schreiner, Senior Technician, Oswego County SWCD took Ronny® on a road trip in August 2023 that included Sioux Falls, Iowa and the Fargo-Moorhead Visitors Center in Fargo, ND. Inside the Visitors Center is the woodchipper from the movie Fargo.





2024

Wednesday, May 22 &
Thursday May 23, 2024

The State University
of New York at Cortland
Cortland, NY

Hosted by the New York
State Envirothon
Committee

A subcommittee of the New
York State Conservation
District Employees
Association

7413 County House Road
Auburn, NY 13021

Blanche Hurlbutt, Chair
JoAnn Kurtis, Co-Chair
Katy Kemmeren, Treasurer
Susan O'Dell-Pepe,
Secretary

FROM: Danielle Parker & Ryan Cunningham,
Volunteer Coordinators

The New York State Envirothon Committee is pleased to announce that we will host the 2024 New York State Envirothon at the State University of New York in Cortland, NY May 22 and 23. We are excited to continue the Envirothon's mission to promote environmental literacy among North America's youth, and we need your help!

We truly appreciate your support of past NYS Envirothons. Volunteers are at the heart of this event, and we couldn't do it without your efforts. We are reaching out to you again this year for your continued support. It is our hope that you will be willing to volunteer your time.

Please see the list of available volunteer positions. You may volunteer for one or more positions. If your time allows you may volunteer for both days or come for one day.

Overnight accommodations on campus, housing, and meals will be provided for our volunteers. You will receive a volunteer t-shirt to wear during the event.

The Envirothon affords our high school students hands-on learning experience that may open doors to careers in natural resources. On behalf of the NYS Envirothon Committee, I want to express my gratitude and appreciation for your consideration to volunteer and make this an incredible event for our students.

When completing the volunteer registration form, participants will be asked to upload a copy of their medical insurance cards in case of emergency on site.

Please let us know if you are willing to volunteer by completing the volunteer registration below:

Online Registration: [Volunteer Registration Form](#)
Volunteer Descriptions: [Envirothon Volunteer descriptions](#)

New York will also be hosting the 2024 NCF Envirothon! This week-long event will be held at Hobart & William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY from Sunday, July 28, 2024 to Saturday, August 3, 2024. We will be sending out information on ways to volunteer soon!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at nysenvirothon@gmail.com or leave a message for Danielle Parker at (607)267-2099.

Thank you!

Meet the Newcomers!

Introducing the newest
Soil and Water Conservation District employees

Rebecca Olsen, District Technician
Genesee County Soil & Water Conservation District

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

A. I've been working for Genesee County SWCD for almost a year now. I started February 6th, 2023 (only 4 more days!).

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

A. My dad inspired me to pursue the environmental career. Growing up he always had us outside doing different activities (even if it was yard work) like camping, hiking, fishing, hunting, etc. A lot of my favorite memories with him involved these things and I want to be able to do that for my future family. Plus, working outdoors is a very freeing feeling so that's a plus!

Q. What are your hobbies?

A. My hobbies fluctuate quite often, typically dependent on the season. They include wildlife/landscape photography, hiking (including annual ADK trips with my cousin and siblings), kayaking, fishing, gardening, reading, and small crafts like needle point, resin, and sewing!

Q. What's on your bucket list?

A. I don't have a set bucket list but there are 2 things that usually continuously come up – visit Alaska and to see/swim in crystal clear blue waters!

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

A. Super, Super Gross!!

Q. What is the best advice you give to other



new District employees?

A. Be patient!! There's a lot of new information thrown your way & it can seem daunting. Eventually you will come to understand things and learn where you thrive! Don't be afraid to ask for help or clarifications and make sure to ask lots of questions!

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

A. I think I would try to describe it as an extension of a food pyramid (something they should be familiar with)? That I work with the people who produce their favorite foods and help to ensure they can keep producing them in the future / be sustainable. Maybe even try to incorporate rainfall/streams/creeks in there as well as something needed to grow their foods.

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

A. We will be conducting an invasive monitoring program for Spotted Lanternfly throughout the county. No confirmed sightings but I think it's really great to be working with neighboring counties to keep ahead of this!

Q. Coffee or tea?

A. Tea!

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

A. We often find very interesting things while conducting field work or water samples. It's always fun to see what we come across – personally, I have a habit of finding 4 leaf clovers!

Meet the Newcomers!

Introducing the newest
Soil and Water Conservation District employees

Kelly Reynolds, Account Clerk
Wayne County Soil & Water Conservation District

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

A. *I started November 1, 2023.*

Q. What are your hobbies?

A. *I enjoy keeping vegetable and herb gardens, making bread and yogurt, preserving our produce, and making scrapbooks for my family.*



Q. What's on your bucket list?

A. *A long trip out west on Route 66 with my husband.*

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

A. *Replace the ham with onions and supersize it!*

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

A. *Don't be afraid to reach out to other Districts with questions. Everyone has been*

very friendly and helpful.

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

A. *I play with numbers and do scavenger hunts and puzzles.*

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

A. *The Annual Treasurer's Report.*

Q. Coffee or tea?

A. *Both! I'm not good with favorites. There are so many wonderful things in the world I can't pick favorites.*

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

A. *When I first received the job posting I mistakenly thought it was for the Water & Sewer Department. Countless people have made that same mistake since I started, which makes me feel a bit better.*



Good Eats



4-Way Partners travel all over the state, and we get hungry! These ice cream parlors, pizza joints, diners, food trucks, ethnic restaurants, dive bars, and farm to table establishments come highly recommended. Stop in for a bite the next time you're in the area.



The CDEA board enjoyed dinner before heading to the Syracuse basketball game.

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!



Nothing like a bloody Mary with homegrown horseradish! Katie WhitKovits, Hamilton County SWCD.



One of the first in-person CDEA meetings post Covid was at spectacular Marjim Manor Winery. Scott Collins gifted Caitlin Stewart, Hamilton County SWCD, a custom bottle of their red wine. February 14 was a perfect night to uncork it!



Photo Album



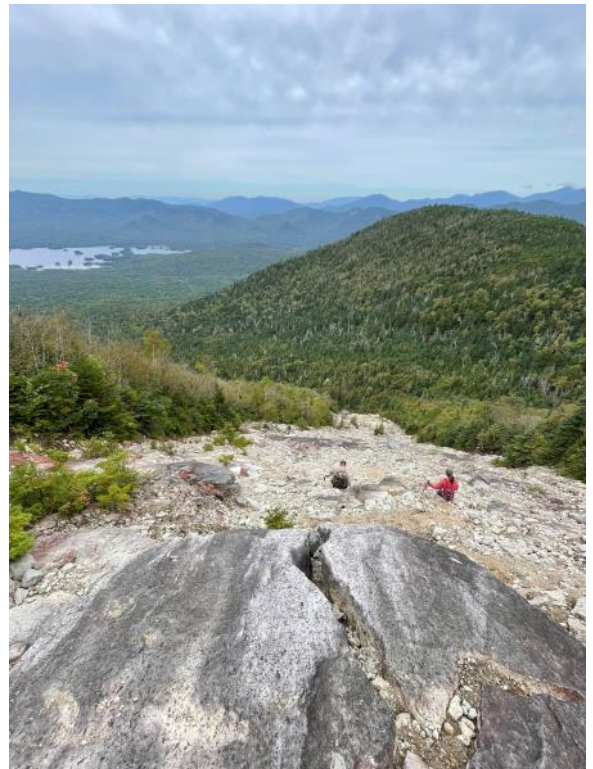
New Castle Island, New Hampshire where Nick Rowell Bob bombard, Warren County SWCD, presented on aquatic filming at the Northeast Aquatic Plant Management Society (NEAPMS) Annual Conference.



Clovers. Photo by Rebecca Olsen, Genesee County SWCD.



In November, Joann Burke, Madison County SWCD, visited her host parents in Australia. “One town (city) had cows painted up. Not sure how many pictures of cows or farm scenery I took! I took my CDEA glass but didn’t take a picture with it but gave it to my host parents instead.”



Genesee County SWCD’s Rebecca Olsen hikes the Dix Range.

Annual NYS CDEA Fish On Challenge

The NYSCDEA is sponsoring a fishing challenge to all the Soil & Water Conservation District 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. CASH Preferred!

Register [HERE](#) for the Fish On Challenge by May 31, 2023

****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, 2023 – February 28, 2024*

Examples for pictures:



Winners of all categories will be announced at the 2024 WQS Banquet.

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

CASH Preferred!

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



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