



Meeting Minutes

June 23, 2026

C-Way Resort Motel • 37067 NYS Route 12 • Clayton, NY
13624

Zoom

Executive Committee Members

Jessica Armstrong, President

Nicholas Klemczak, Vice President

Joann Burke, Secretary

Mikaela Perham, Treasurer

Alice Halloran, Member at Large

Partners and Guests

Bethany Bzduch, SWCC

Dianna Stanton, NRCS

Brittany Ward, Seneca County SWCD

Danielle Singer, Tioga County SWCD

Jason Cuddeback, Cayuga County SWCD

Kim Seymour, Chemung County SWCD

Chris Deets, NRCS

Lydia Brinkley, USC

Jennifer Kelly, Chenango County SWCD

Division Representatives

Rebecca Campbell, Division I

Curtis Davis, Division II

Carla Yaw, Division III

Jim Diederich, Division IV

Katie WhitKovits, Division V

Scott Davis, Division VI

Amber Gray, Division VII

Olivia Cunningham, Division VIII

Absent

Blanche Hurlbutt, NYACD



Minutes

I. Call to order – President Armstrong called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. Introductions – Conducted.

III. Reading and approval of January 21-22, 2026, regular meeting, and January 29, 2026, January 30, 2026, February 1, 2026, February 3, 2026, February 18, 2026, and February 24, 2026, and April 7, 2026, special meeting minutes – The minutes were provided in advance of the meeting for review.

- A motion was made by Halloran, seconded by Yaw to approve the January 21-22,

2026, regular meeting, and January 29, 2026, January 30, 2026, February 1, 2026, February 3, 2026, February 18, 2026, and February 24, 2026, and April 7, 2026, special meeting minutes. All in favor. Carried.

IV. Treasurer Report – Armstrong reported there will not be an official report due to the transfer of the records from White to Perham. She reviewed what is expected from the Treasurer and what reports the Board would like to see monthly. Discussion ensued.

- **A motion was made by Yaw, seconded by Diederich to purchase a cellphone for the Treasurer. All in favor. Carried.**
- **A motion was made by C. Davis, seconded by Klemczak to purchase Microsoft Outlook email account for CDEA Treasurer. All in favor. Carried.**

V. Partnership Reports

- a. New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee** – Bzduch shared her report, appended to the minutes.
- b. New York Association of Conservation Districts** – Armstrong shared Hurlbutt's report, appended to the minutes.
- c. Natural Resources Conservation Service** – Dianna Stanton, NRCS reported that NRCS has a new chief, Colton Buckley. Secretary of Agriculture visited a farm in Tompkins County, participated in a roundtable discussion with producers and met with FSA and NRCS staff at the LaFayette field office. Low on staffing, 102 employees for NY but have been approved to fill District Conservationists positions and an Area Engineer. For 2026, CSP, EQIP, and easement programs are moving along. Applications are ranked, approved and list is out. Staff are busy contacting producers and getting contracts out. Budget is steady with the opportunity to go to National for additional funds for specific needs. There is TSP funding for projects that involve TSP. CIG is out and available now.

VI. Division Representative Reports

- a. Division I** – Campbell shared her report, appended to the minutes. Discussion ensued on rising costs for transportation to NYS Envirothon concerns for schools and CDEA Talent Pool. Campbell and Yaw will work together to update the CDEA Talent Pool.
- b. Division II** – C. Davis shared his report, appended to the minutes. He recognized Erica Schreiner from Oswego County SWCD on her retirement.
- c. Division III** – Yaw shared her report, appended to the minutes.
- d. Division IV** – Diederich shared his report, appended to the minutes. He recognized Hailey Feusner on receiving her CCA certification.

- e. **Division V** – Whitkovits shared her report, appended to the minutes.
- f. **Division VI** – S. Davis shared his report, appended to the minutes.
- g. **Division VII** – Gray shared her report, appended to the minutes.
- h. **Division VIII** – Cunningham shared her report, appended to the minutes.

VII. Executive Committee Reports

- a. **President** – Armstrong reported she met with two of the 4-Way Partners, Hurlbutt and Bzduch. Discussion was made on communication between the partners and how to work with each other moving forward. Next meeting will be later summer/early fall. She participated in a TAC meeting, SWCC meeting, Engineering meeting, NYACD meeting, and was an oral presentation judge at the NYS Envirothon. She and Klemczak met with all the new members of the board.
- b. **Vice President** – Klemczak reported he is planning for Water Quality Symposium. He is happy to help with as needed. Close by Fulton County SWCD if he is needed to attend any meetings.
- c. **Secretary** – Nothing to report.
- d. **Member at Large** – Halloran reported that the 4-Hour Funds for district employee trainings are underutilized and it would be great for people to take advantage of these funds to offer trainings for District staff. She participated in SWCC meeting, SPAC meeting, and NYS Envirothon.

VIII. Standing Committees- *Update Standing Committees and Appoints for 2026-27*

- o Erosion and Sediment Control Certificate Program- S. Davis alternate
- o Civil Service Committee – Armstrong chair
- o TAC – Armstrong is representative with Diederich and C. Davis as alternates.
- o SPAC – Kelly is representative with Armstrong and any Division Representative as alternates.
- **A motion was made by S. Curtis, seconded by Yaw to approve the Standing Committees and Appointments for 2026-27. All in favor. Carried.**
- a. **New York State Fair/New York State Farm Show Committee** – No report. Armstrong received an email from Kelly Emerick stating that Erica Schreiner, who has been on the NYS Fair committee for a long time, is retiring and they would like to get her a gift in appreciation of all her time and effort on board.

- **A motion was made by Yaw, seconded by Halloran to approve the purchase of a gift up to \$250 for Erica Schreiner. All in favor. Carried.**
- b. NYS DEC Endorsed 4-Hour Erosion & Sediment Control Online Training** – No report. White emailed board that iSpring is up for renewal.
- **A motion was made by C. Davis, seconded by WhitKovits to approve 1 year renewal of iSpring for \$1,170. All in favor. Carried.**
- c. NYS Erosion and Sediment Control Certificate Program** – Verrigni emailed her report, appended to the minutes.
- **A motion was made by Yaw, seconded by Campbell to renew contract for administrative services contract with Schuyler County SWCD for \$9,000. All in favor. Carried.**
- d. Conservation Skills Workshop** – Eskildsen emailed a report, appended to the minutes. C. Curtis reported that RFPs have been sent out to hotels for the first or second week of October. Some classes have been planned. Discussion ensued on the date of the event.
- e. Administrative Conference** – Armstrong reported she received an update from Bemis that the date has been set for October 28th & 29th. RFPs have been sent out to hotels and are due early July. Contact Diana Thorn and Kaitlyn Bemis with class ideas.
- f. Legislative Committee** – Armstrong reported at the annual meeting in March hiring a Lobbyist was approved. The legislative committee is up and running with a meeting planned for tomorrow morning to go over their purpose, by-laws, election of officers and CDEA RFP. Armstrong and Klemczak are members of this committee. Anyone interested in joining this committee please contact Dustin Lewis or Caitlin Stewart.
- g. Frank Bratt Scholarship** – Campbell shared her report, appended to the minutes. Discussion ensued.
- **A motion was made by Yaw, seconded by Gray to approve the Frank Bratt Memorial Scholarship applications for \$850; Kaia Madigan, \$100 and Ishika Joshi, \$750. All in favor. Carried.**
 - **A motion was made by Klemczak, seconded by Diederich to approve raising the Frank Bratt Memorial Scholarship to \$2250 per quarter starting in September 2026 quarter. All in favor. Carried.**

Meeting suspended at 10:38 a.m.

Meeting reconvened at 10:50 a.m.

- h. Water Quality Symposium** – Klemczak reported he has received a quote from Whova platform that manages events online. He has used this platform for other events he has attended. Discussion ensued. Gun raffle, resource fair, and hockey game were also discussed.
- i. New York State Envirothon Committee** – Lewis emailed a report, appended to the minutes.
- j. Environmental Education Foundation Committee** – Burke reported that the next meeting is July 7th. Seeking a Treasurer to take over Lisa Miller's position. Have one opening on the board, at large. Campbell added that the NCF funds that were approved to be transferred to EEF has not been done and there is lots of confusion on what can and cannot be done with these funds. She explained to the committee that the treasurer's duties were being transferred, and it had not been done. Discussion ensued.
- k. Civil Service Committee** – Armstrong reported that Stewart stepped down as the chair of the committee and she has stepped up. She plans this to be a topic of discussion at the managers' meetings in July.
- l. New York State Invasive Species Advisory Committee** – WhitKovits reported that Stewart is the Secretary of this committee and they met July 9th. Two committee members were approved, NY Farm Bureau and NY Forest Owners Association. NYSDEC invasive species grant program is offered every 2 years. Round 4 closed in December 2025 and awards were announced in March 2026. iMap invasives oversight has been transitioned from NY National Heritage Program to Cornell IPM through an MOU. ISAC is developing a review process for part 575 prohibited and regulated invasive species.
- m. Municipal Assistance Subcommittee** – PJ Emerick emailed his report that Armstrong shared. Emerick and Cunningham are working with partners at the NYSDEC to update the current NYS DEC 4 hour course. Work is ongoing and they have a call on June 4th to review and incorporate the group's final changes to the presentation. At this time, they are not aware of any immediate items that would necessitate the Municipal Assistance Sub Committee to meet in the near future. However, if the CDEA has any items that should be brought to the committee's attention please let Emerick or Cunningham know and they will arrange a meeting to address them. Bzduch stated the committee usually meets once a year to bring districts together to discuss their Municipal Assistance Program.
- n. Technical Advisory Committee** – Bzduch reported the committee met in April. Tim Clarke presented the draft Conservation Approval Authority policy that was approved by State Committee in May. Jennifer Clifford reviewed proposed changes to CRF Round 10

RFP that was approved by State Committee in May. They gave the SWCC advisory members an overview presentation on covered heavy use protection areas and bedded packs to help these members understand what they are when they are reviewing grant applications. No meeting has been scheduled yet. They meet four times a year. Armstrong stated that she is a representative for CDEA but is looking for others to be alternates. Diederich and C. Davis volunteered to be alternates. Bzduch stated all board members can sit in at the meeting.

- o. CDEA State Programs Advisory Committee** – Kelly emailed her report, appended to the minutes.
- p. Northeast Association of Conservation District Employees** – Parker emailed her report, appended to the minutes. Armstrong stated the Northeast annual meeting will be held in Delaware August 24-27, 2026, if anyone on the board is interested in attending. Halloran stated she is attending. National event will be held in Las Vegas on February 6-10, 2027, if any board members are interested in attending.
- q. Leadership Institute** – Singer reported they have started to plan the event and will have an update for the next meeting.

Meeting suspended at 12:09 p.m.

Meeting reconvened at 12:40 p.m.

IX. CDEA Activities

- a. Attorney update** – Armstrong reported that the attorney's contract expires July 1, 2026. She has not received a new agreement and will email him.
- b. CDEA Associate Manager/GIS** - Armstrong reported that there is money in the budget for this and Maren Stoddard was leading this until she recently took another job. She will reach out to Stoddard to see what her visions were. In previous discussions the board was going to hire a GIS guru and potentially pay for GIS licenses for districts.
- c. Annual Audit RFP** – Armstrong reported that an external audit has been done in the past and there is money in the budget. Diederich stated a performance audit is needed. Armstrong will send out RFP she has developed for her district and one that Ryan Cunningham shared with her.
- d. CDEA Bylaws update** – Armstrong reported that the last updates did not pass at the annual meeting. A new subcommittee has been formed consisting of Armstrong, Halloran, Klemczak, and Whitkovits. A meeting will be set up with Steve Lorraine and Mark Burger to discuss questions and comments they had with the revisions.

- e. **Management Development Certification Program** – Halloran stated nothing new has happened and questioned whether to eliminate the program. Discussion ensued and consensus agreed to keep the program.
- f. **Ronny Raindrop®** - Armstrong reported that Stoddard took a different job and WhitKovits stated she has no files from her. Armstrong stated the old costume shoes need to be replaced and some districts wanted to purchase their own costumes.
- g. **CDEA Golf Tournament** – Cuddeback stated the CDEA Gold Tournament is scheduled for August 6th at Casolwood Golf Course in Canastota, NY. Flier will be sent out soon.
- h. **Fish On Challenge** – Hayleigh Gates, Chuck Susick and Emily Edmunds have taken over this program from WhitKovits. A flier has been sent out for signups.

X. Other –

- a. **CDEA Apparel** – Armstrong stated that there is money in the budget for new board members to order apparel and have it embroidered with the CDEA logo. Apparel will be sent to Yaw, and she will have it embroidered by a local business who was used previously.
 - **A motion was made by Armstrong, seconded by Klemczak to approve each new board member reimbursed up to \$100 in apparel to be embroidered for CDEA. All in favor. Carried.**
- b. **CDEA owned equipment** – Armstrong stated that Stewart suggested there be a list of all CDEA owned equipment. Burke volunteered to compile the list.
- c. **Afforestation Subcommittee**- Armstrong reported that Lydia Brinkley discussed this briefly at the January meeting and recently reached out to her and Diederich on forming a subcommittee for Afforestation. She will invite Brinkley to the next meeting.

XI. Correspondence –

- i. Cuddeback shared that Jim Hotaling passed away and he will forward the obituary to Armstrong.
- ii. Campbell's managers' meeting notes.
- iii. EPF

XII. Next Meeting – August 27th at Oneida County SWCD 121 Second St Oriskany, NY or virtual.

XIII. Adjournment

- **A motion was made by Diederich, seconded by S. Davis to adjourn meeting at 1:55 p.m. Carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Burke

Joann Burke



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

June 2026

Report for the CDEA June meeting.

A recap of what NYACD has been doing in the first half of 2026.

Blanche sent out a request to districts for emails, addresses, and phone numbers of their full SWCD Board members. We are trying to have better communication between the board members and feel that being able to reach out to each other is the best way to make this happen. Blanche has received information back from some but not all the districts at present.

Blanche participated in a 4-Way Partner meeting to discuss programs, projects, concerns, other pertinent matters related to SWCDs. Another session is scheduled for the coming months. These meetings provide valuable opportunities for partners to share information and collaborate effectively for the benefit of all involved parties.

Sam and Blanche attended the 2026 CDEA Annual business meeting on March 11, 2026. We welcome the new officers and will be happy to see them at our monthly NYACD meetings and collaborate with them as we move forward.

NYACD informed the Governor about SWCDs' use of EPF funds. Sam Casella also spoke to the Governor's staff, who noted that while many groups contact the Governor about the EPF, the Governor strongly supports SWCDs.

Legislative Days were successful once again with over fifty (50) Legislative meetings and fourteen (14) districts participating in the meetings. It was great meeting new Legislators and educating them on what districts are doing and gathering their support as well as meeting with those that know and support SWCD's. Folks provided feedback and this information was shared during our monthly NYACD meeting. Blanche had additional Zoom meeting appointments scheduled to meet with additional Legislators that could not meet with folks during Legislative days. We would like to take this time to **THANK** all the districts that participated in this year's Legislative Days. We appreciate your help and support in educating our Legislators, sharing your story, and gathering support for SWCD's at the state level.

Over the past month, Blanche contacted legislators about concerns regarding a possible \$7 million carve-out for Cornell from the EPF line-item Climate Resilient Farms Program. The Executive Budget also continued the longstanding \$500,000 allocation to the Cornell Soil Health Program that has been included for several years.

The NYS Assembly and Senate have different FY26-27 budget figures. The Assembly suggests keeping the CRF budget at \$19.1 million and adding three Cornell programs: Forest Preservation on Ag Land for Carbon Sequestration, Cornell Agrivoltaics Study, and Cornell Satellite Research Farms and Forest. This worksheet was sent in March.

The State is still negotiating the budget, aiming for final proposals in May. The Senate and Assembly are debating whether to increase total funding or remove the carve out from the \$19.1 million, which could reduce CRF program funds for Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The Senate would like to have the line item for CRF increased to provide the necessary funding for the three additional programs.

As you know the 2026-2027 budget passed with the following updates on EPF:

This year, the overall EPF remains at **\$425 million**. A full EPF breakdown is attached and a brief highlight of particular line items is below.

Environmental Protection Fund

Overall appropriations for the FY 2027 EPF are approved to be \$425 million. Appropriations of interest to AGM/SWCC/SWCDs:

- \$500,000 for the Regenerate NY Program
- \$20.5 million for the Climate Resilient Farms Program, including \$700,000 for the Cornell Soil Health program, \$500,000 to maintain forests and woodlands located on agricultural land for the purpose of carbon sequestration, \$1 million for Cornell University CALS to study the ecological impacts of agrivoltaics, and \$2 million for Cornell University CALS for satellite research farms and forests
- \$18.7 million for Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Projects, including \$250,000 for Cornell Pesticide Management Education Program (PMEP)
- \$27 million for Farmland Protection, including up to \$1,000,000 for capacity grants, \$150,000 for the Cornell Land Classification and Master List of Soils
- \$1.85 million for Biodiversity Stewardship, including \$500,000 for pollinator protection, \$200,000 for the Cary Institute, \$200,000 for Paul Smiths College for the Watershed Institute, and \$200,000 for UAlbany Atmospheric Sciences Research Center
- \$4 million for Finger Lakes Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance
- \$250,000 for Lake Erie Watershed Protection
- \$28 million for the Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP), including \$1.2 million for the Eastern Finger Lakes Watershed Coalition
- \$26 million for the Oceans and Great Lakes Program – the Ecosystem Based Management Program is supported by this funding.
- \$18.55 million for Invasive Species
- \$19 million for Soil and Water Conservation Districts – **this represents a \$1 million increase. With this increase to State Aid, Districts that receive full Part A reimbursement, Part B funding, and meet all performance measures could receive approximately \$323,000.00!**
- \$14.275 million for the Waterfront Revitalization Program

The Great Lakes Commission Committee survey was sent out to district directors and staff for their completion of the survey. This study identifies the obstacles and opportunities impacting the effectiveness of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in the Great Lakes states, focusing on recruitment, training, retention, and collaboration among conservation professionals. Participation was voluntary and response was confidential. To protect anonymity, your responses were not associated with a specific district name. The survey was completed and it has helped determine the next step in the process to help and support districts in moving forward. The final step has been completed and will be presented at the GL Commission Committee meeting in August.

The NYACD Annual meeting will be held Monday, October 26th and Tuesday, October 27th, 2026, at The Hampton Inn, Penn Yan. Blanche is presently working on potential training sessions, so if you have any ideas or something you think we should consider, PLEASE let me know. Information will be provided soon for registration.

Sam Casella, NYACD President attended the annual NACD Fly-In in Washington, DC on March 25, 2026, where he met with several federal Legislators. Sam provided the US Legislators with what SWCD's are doing to protect NY's soil and water. The feedback from the Legislators was very positive for Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Sam attended the 2026 NACD Annual event in February in San Antonio, Texas. Sam shared with the NYACD Board at our February meeting that this was a major event, with great training sessions, evening discussions, and he shared with folks what NY has been doing.

Blanche provided districts with the "New York Water Data Bill" A10199 and S9280 that passed in both houses on February 24, 2026, regarding the goal is to improve transparency and decision making by ensuring that key water data sets are identified, integrated, and made available in a unified format. These bills will move forward in the bill making process to find their way onto the Governor's desk.

Blanche met with Jessica Armstrong, the new CDEA President in April. They discussed the importance of communication and working together moving forward.

The Delaware Association of Conservation Districts is excited to host the 2026 NACD Northeast Region Meeting on August 24-27 in Wilmington. We wanted to share the [meeting website](#) and ask for your help in spreading the word about our open Call for Presentations among your state associations, state conservation agencies, district employees, etc. A tremendous amount of magnificent work is being done throughout the region, and this is an opportunity to share that work and support the success of districts and partners. Please share this information in an upcoming monthly report, newsletter, or email out to your members.

Blanche has been reaching out to the different districts within Divisions III, V, VI, VII, and VIII Directors and Managers requesting their help in finding a division director representative on the NYACD board. She hopes to meet in person or by zoom with the above divisions to share what NYACD is doing on their behalf. She has created a director's brochure that will be forward to potential Directors, that she has contact information for. This brochure provides information on what the director's duties and responsibilities would be.

NYACD Board by-laws subcommittee met in April and May to review the by-laws. The committee began reviewing and making necessary changes, clarified statements, and will have them ready for review in advance of our annual meeting.

NYACD Board meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Directors and staff are welcome to attend and will receive the meeting link if we have their contact information. FYI once NYACD board members approve the minutes they will be uploaded to our website www.nyacd.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Blanche

Blanche L Hurlbutt,
NYACD Executive Director



**Department of
Agriculture and Markets**
**Soil and Water
Conservation Committee**

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

RICHARD A. BALL
Commissioner

MATT BROWER
Chair

**NYS Conservation Districts Employee's Association
June 23, 2026**

NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee Report

Program Updates:

- Round 10 Climate Resilient Farming Program RFP DRAFT RFP was approved by the NYS SWCC at the June 16th meeting. The RFP was approved with two different funding options. A new Track 5 will be included ONLY if we are able to access additional funding to grow the program offering.
- Round 31 Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution Abatement and Control Program scoring will wrap up soon. Ranked List of projects will be presented to the NYS SWCC at the July meeting.

Other Projects/Initiatives

- Finalizing the 2025 SWCC/AEM Annual Report. We are hoping to publish the report this summer.
- Recently wrapped up our Regional Managers' Meeting series. Thank you CDEA Reps for sharing reports at each meeting!
 - As a follow up to these meetings, SWCC Program staff will be preparing some statistics for the AGNPS and CRF Programs and providing the information to Districts. These statistics can be used when preparing information to share with local legislators.
- Currently going through the process to hire a backfill for Lauren Prezorski who serves at the Ecosystems Based Management Program Coordinator.
- Recently announced a job opening for a State Aid to Districts Program Manager and District Operations Specialist. The due date for applications is July 6, 2026.

Upcoming Meetings

- NYS SWCC State Programs Advisory Committee – June 25, 2026
- NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee – July 21, 2026, locations in Albany, Syracuse and WebEx

Division I Report

In lieu of my typical report, I would like to submit comments and updates that surfaced from the 2026 Regional Managers Meeting. The meeting was held in Batavia on June 2nd, with representatives from Allegany (3), Chataqua (1), Cattaraugus (1), Erie (2), Genesee(2), Monroe (1), Niagara (1), Orleans (1), Wyoming (3), NRCS(1), NYACD (1), and SWCC(2).

- Permit struggles with DEC in Region 8 and 9, we proposed the possibility for DEC office staff to see an in-the-ground streambank stabilization project. Many staff feel the relationship between SWCDs and DEC has deteriorated. The new permitting staff would rather halt construction/stream work than allowing us to implement in an environmentally conscious way. This is not improving the relationship or allowing the SWCDs (as a partner agency) to spend down funds efficiently and get projects implemented.
- Prevailing wage changes – Mark Gaston from Erie brought up that contracting agencies need a PRC # to provide to contractors, there is some confusion as to how to obtain the PRC number. We may want to blast out an informational message on that since many managers were not informed <https://dol.ny.gov/public-work-contractor-and-subcontractor-registry-dashboard>
- Cattaraugus County is working on potentially hosting a “What do SWCDs offer Municipalities” Workshop
- Districts expressed concerns with rising costs of transportation when county teams attend the state event – wondering if there’s any way to tap into NCF money for that or CDEA stipend? Or increase Envirothon Budget with a stipend?
- Request to update CDEA Talent Pool – have the Division Reps make them specific to each Region
- Seeking update on Legislative Committee Status
- Request for assistance in finding EEF Treasurer vacancy to replace Lisa Miller
- Other partnership opportunities – Hunter Safety Course, Chainsaw Safety/Game of Logging, New Technicians Forum with AEA (a field setting)

Respectfully Submitted by:
Rebecca Campbell
Division I Representative



Division II Report

June 2026

Monroe County –

- New Planning Technician starting July 13th;
- NYS Fair Committee Member – NYS Fair is being held August 26th to September 7th at the NYS Fairgrounds. For more information contact Kristin White, kristinwhite@monroecounty.gov Employees can sign-up here to work a shift: [2026-2027 State Fair Booth Schedule](#); We still have 24 shifts open; Each employee will receive a free polo shirt, ticket for entrance and a parking pass;
- The NYS Fair Committee would like to recognize Erica Schreiner from Oswego County SWCD for her decades of service to the committee as she will be retiring on July 4, 2026! We will all miss her and all the laughs we have had over the years. Congratulations Erica!
- Held our 2026 Conservation Tree & Shrub Program –697 pre-orders distributed April 23rd & 24th; 74 orders for the overstock sale on Saturday April 25th;
- Monroe County Envirothon held May 19th at Monroe County's Ellison Park with 23 teams (112 students) competing from 7 schools with Eastridge High School Team 1 taking 1st place and advancing to the State competition in Cortland;
- Maintaining the CDEA website as a Division II member <https://www.nyscdea.com>; If you have updates, please reach out;
- Continue as the Treasurer and member of the Genesee River Watershed Coalition of Conservation Districts (GRWCCD) and interim coordinator – next Coalition meeting is being held June 24th. The MCSWCD just executed a contract with NYS DEC for \$525,000 to build coalition capacity where we will be distributing an announcement to hire a Watershed Agricultural Coordinator for the coalition; MCSWCD will give a presentation on the coalition at the NYS SWCC meeting on June 16th;
- Continue to work with NYS DEC on a watershed strategy/implementation plan for the Genesee River;
- Working with our Stormwater Coalition on the new MS4 permit requirements focusing on developing new training modules for our MS4s in 2026; hosting a Living Next to Stormwater Ponds presentation for residents in the Town of Pittsford on June 16th;
- Continue to serve as a Steering Committee Member for the NYS Erosion and Sediment Control Certificate Program – continuous recruitment of instructors to teach the review course; details regarding the program and the upcoming events can be found on the NYS CDEA website <https://www.nyscdea.com/nysesccp/>; a review course is being held August 4th at the Saratoga SWCD office – announcement coming out soon for registrations!
- Continue to maintain an updated list of instructors from SWCDs throughout NYS for the 4 Hour E&SC Course – check out the CDEA website for updated list of instructors <https://www.nyscdea.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/NYS-DEC-Endorsed-4-Hour-ESC-Trainers-2026.pdf>;
- Continue managing the NYS CDEA online 4-hour E&SC course;
- NYS DEC Endorsed 4 Hour E&SC Training updates are nearly set to be released – our workgroup has finalized many last details since the March debut and hope to release it by the end of June; Reminder that SWCD employees can attend the online version of this course for free through the CDEA <https://www.nyscdea.com/nys-dec-endorsed-4-hour-erosion-sediment-control-online-training/>;



Division II Report

June 2026

the MCSWCD hosted 3 live virtual trainings with 216 attendees from January to May;

- The 2026 WNY Stormwater Management Training Series is completed for the year where we hosted 5 training courses from February through May and trained over 300 stormwater professionals including 41 of our own municipal staff that are members of the Stormwater Coalition;
- Continue to serve on the Urban Ag Working Group in Monroe County - our spring Urban Ag Conference in the City of Rochester was held March 22nd with over 300 attendees;
- Closing out a WQIP Round 12 contract for a regional stormwater pond facility and two streambank restoration projects;
- Part of an AEM Urban Ag working group that is initiating development of worksheet (s) and a process for urban farms and community gardens; Next meeting TBD;
- Prepping for an AEM Tier 4 Cost-Share project submittal for a Prescribed Rotational Grazing System;
- Our Urban Agriculture project under NYS Part B is underway for 2026 where we are working with 3 community gardens in the City of Rochester;
- Continue the Planning and design for two streambank restoration projects using FLOWPA funding;
- Partnering once again with Finger Lakes Institute to hire and manage watercraft stewards in Monroe County at 3 of our high priority boat launches;
- Spring tree planting under our USFS GLRI grant – 2,691 trees were planted at across the County in partnership with 6 different organizations.

(Submitted by, Kelly Emerick, Executive Director, Monroe County SWCD)

Livingston County –

- No Report

Wayne County –

- No Report

Yates County –

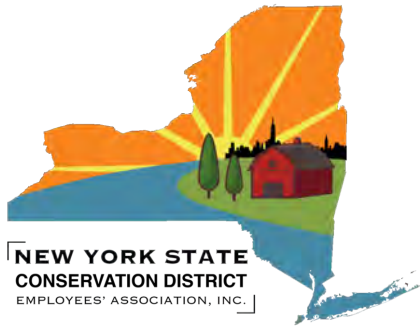
- No Report
- Hired a new technician, started on June 3rd

Ontario County –

- See attached Spring Newsletter

Seneca County –

- Hired a new ag technician, currently hiring a non-ag technician
- Working through project designs and procurement for the year
- [NY Ag Showcase](#) at Rodman Lott & Son Farms (Seneca Falls) August 12-13th
 - o August 12th – NY Corn & Soybean Growers Association
 - o August 13th – NY Soil Health, Seneca, Cayuga, & Tompkins SWCD, Seneca CCE, & NRCS
 - o \$20 per day, if you attend both you get one day for \$10



Division II Report

June 2026

Cayuga County –

- No Report

Onondaga County –

- No Report

Question(s):

- None

Ontario County SWCD
480 North Main Street
Canandaigua, NY 14424
(585)396-1450
ontariocountyswcd.gov
info@ontariocountyswcd.gov

Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District Newsletter



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Tree Planting at Kashong Conservation Area



We had a beautiful day for our May 1st planting event at Kashong Conservation Area. The vernal pool project that was installed in fall 2025, with support from the United States Fish & Wildlife Service and the Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario

Watershed Protection Alliance, got an infusion of native trees and shrubs to further enhance habitat. 160 trees and shrubs were planted through the hard work of volunteers affiliated with the Town of Geneva's Kashong Conservation Area Committee, Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association, the Eaton Birding Society, Hobart & William Smith Colleges, Bejo Seeds, Ontario County SWCD, and members of the public who enjoy the Kashong Conservation Area's trails.

Planting materials were provided by White Oak Nursery and Ontario County SWCD through our annual tree & shrub sale offerings.

It is rewarding to see these vernal pools providing essential habitat while also slowing down stormwater runoff and improving water quality in the Seneca Lake watershed. Many hands make light work and that was certainly true of this event. Plan a hike around Kashong Conservation Area to discover a true gem in our backyard.



State of Oak Wilt in the Canandaigua Lake Watershed

Guest Article from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)

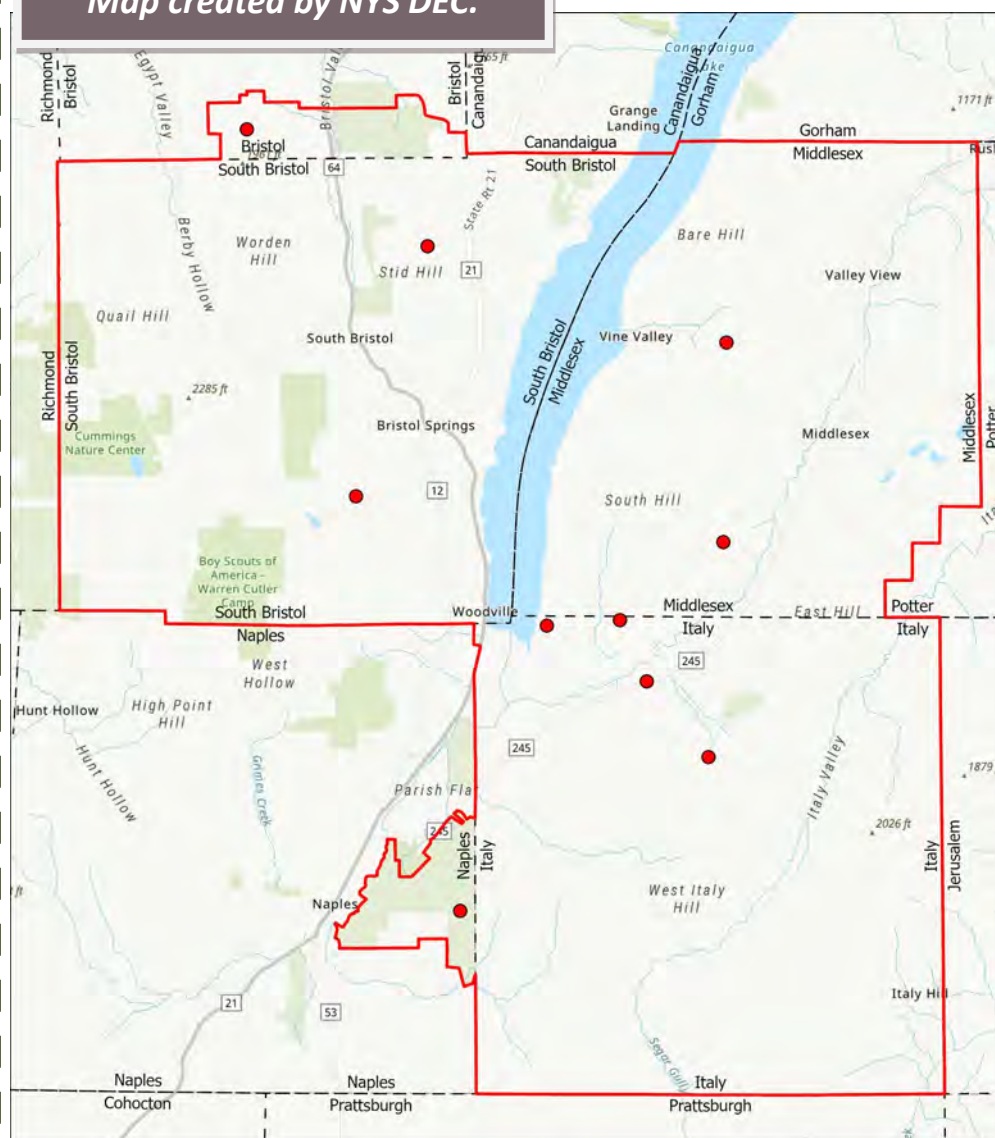


DEC discovered oak wilt at seven new locations around the south end of Canandaigua Lake during the summer of 2025. Infections were discovered through a variety of efforts including aerial and ground surveys. Across all seven locations, 8 trees were confirmed to have oak

Map 1. Active oak wilt infection centers and quarantine district.
Map created by NYS DEC.

wilt, all of which were analyzed and reported back to DEC by Cornell University Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic (CUPDDC). All infected trees were cut down and destroyed. At some locations, neighboring oaks were also removed as a buffer to prevent the potential for belowground spread of the disease.

Oak wilt was originally detected near Canandaigua Lake by a homeowner in the Town of Canandaigua in 2016. Aerial surveys, ground surveys, and public reports led DEC to discover seven additional infections between 2017 and 2022. Trees at these sites were cut and destroyed during the winter following detections, and monitoring is still ongoing. No additional trees have been found at previously managed sites. In addition to the seven new locations discovered in 2025, three of the previous locations where oak wilt was discovered in 2021 (1) and 2022 (2) are still considered "active" infection centers (Map 1). Infection centers are 0.5-mile buffers created



Articles continues on
next page...

State of Oak Wilt in the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Continued...

around any infected trees that DEC considers active for 5 years due to the potential for the belowground spread of the disease through root grafting. These areas are monitored for 5 consecutive years before being deemed inactive.

Due to the increase in the number of oak wilt infections in 2025, DEC expanded two Protective Zones/Quarantine Districts (PZQDs) that had previously been in place in parts of Ontario and Yates Counties. These PZQDs were put in place to restrict the movement of oak wood outside of the quarantined area. Now one continuous PZQD (Map 1), this area includes the entire Towns of South Bristol, Middlesex, and Italy. Additionally, the PZQD extends into the Town of Bristol and the Town of Naples, the latter of which primarily surrounds the DEC Hi Tor Wildlife Management Area.



As a result of the recent expansion of oak wilt detections in this area, DEC will be expanding their aerial survey efforts in 2026. Aerial surveys will now extend beyond towns currently in the PZQD to provide greater Finger Lakes coverage where red oak density is near the highest in the state. DEC recommends that any trees showing symptoms of oak wilt be reported to the DEC Forest Health email at foresthealth@dec.ny.gov.

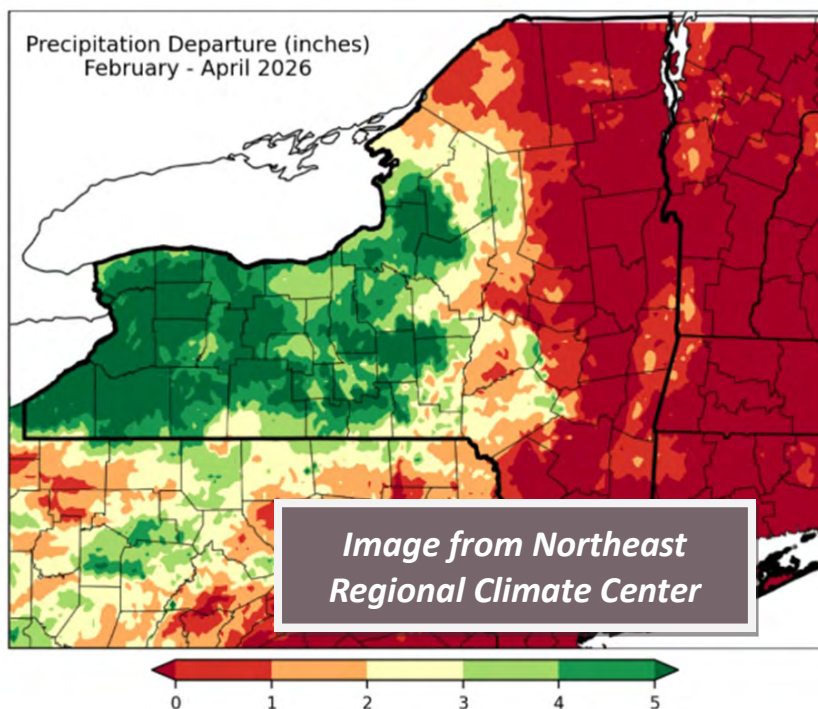
***Picture 1. Sudden leaf drop from a tree infected with oak wilt.
Photo Credit: NYS DEC***

Oak wilt is a disease caused by the fungus *Bretziella fagacearum*, that blocks the flow of water and nutrients in oaks, often leading to sudden mortality. Oaks in the red oak group (such as northern red oak, scarlet oak, pin oak, and black oak) are most susceptible to the disease and can die within a few weeks after initial symptoms. Symptoms of oak wilt are less noticeable in oaks in the white oak group (such as white oak, bur oak, chestnut oak, and swamp white oak), and these species can often live for multiple years before potentially succumbing to the disease. The most distinguishing symptom of oak wilt is rapid leaf loss of more than 50% of a tree's canopy, often falling to the ground while there is still some green on them (Picture 1). For more information on oak wilt, visit [DEC's webpage](#).

Water, Water, Everywhere

This spring has been a VERY wet time for the Finger Lakes Region. Between snow melt and the subsequent above average rainfall in both March and April, the region is facing some very difficult issues related to dealing with large amounts of water.

According to the Northeast Regional Climate Center, the data from both the Syracuse Airport and the Rochester Airport indicates that both March and April had well above average values for recorded rainfall. Syracuse received more than 3" of rainfall over the average for March and over 1" of rainfall over the average for April; while Rochester received more than 3" of rainfall over the average for March and over 1.5" of rainfall over the average for April.



Here at the District, we provide technical assistance to landowners and municipalities for drainage issues during times of significant rainfall. Needless to say, we have been very busy the past two months with site visits, permitting assistance, flood resiliency planning, and flood mitigation projects throughout the County. We will continue to work with municipalities and landowners to implement best management practices to deal with all of this water.



New Hydroseeder for Ontario County

Stabilizing soil with plant material is one of the most cost-effective and efficient ways to prevent erosion. Hydroseeding applies a mix of water, seed, mulch, and tackifier together to quickly stabilize and protect exposed areas. It works great on larger areas or steeper slopes.



Over the years, the District has been partnering with Ontario County



Department of Public Works to hydroseed newly cleaned roadside ditches as well as other conservation projects to improve water quality. This was made possible with funding from New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP) funding. WQIP Round 19 recently supported the purchase of a new Finn Hydroseeder and we are excited to put it into action this spring!

Ecosystem Based Management Stream Corridor Management Program Funding Awarded

A recent funding opportunity through NYS Ag & Markets focuses on stream corridor management to improve water quality, reduce erosion and sedimentation, improve wildlife habitat, and support the long-term health of our natural riparian ecosystems.

Ontario County SWCD was awarded funding for two projects under this program.

Kashong Creek Streambank Stabilization Project was awarded \$100,000 towards streambank stabilization using a combination of stone toe protection and bioengineering practices. In partnership with NYS Department of Transportation and the Town of Geneva, the District has identified this project as a priority to protect water quality while also stabilizing the roadside of a critical transportation corridor, NY State Route 14. This project is approximately 2,000 feet upstream of Seneca Lake. Funding has also been secured through the Ontario County Water Resources Council.



Cross Road Culvert Replacement Project was awarded \$100,000 to enhance aquatic connectivity in a trout stream by replacing an undersized roadway culvert, appropriately sizing the conveyance for hydraulic capacity to increase flood resiliency and protect water quality. The District will be partnering with the Town of Canadice on the culvert replacement on this section of the Honeoye Inlet, a critical tributary to Honeoye Lake.

Ontario County Board of Supervisors Tour

A recent tour arranged by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County with participation from Ontario County SWCD, brought the Ontario County Board of Supervisors to a variety of stops highlighting agriculture in the County.

Participants were able to check out the Ontario Produce Auction in the Town of Gorham and learn about the variety of fruits, vegetables, flowers, groceries, crafts, and farm equipment that passes through the auction site to our local community.



Lawnhurst Farms hosted a tour of their dairy operation and bio-digester while discussing a recent manure transfer project completed with support from the District. Guests were able to fuel up with milk and cookies along the way!



The group then visited Cornell AgriTech in Geneva where a talk highlighted programming and recent advancements in agriculture and food research at the campus.

The trip concluded with a visit to Canandaigua Stockyards, which is a regional powerhouse for livestock auctions with their weekly hay, and feeder and beef replacement sales drawing buyers and sellers from around the state and beyond. The tour was a great opportunity to highlight all the energy and expertise around agriculture in Ontario County.



Climate Resilient Farm Grant Awards

Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District received funding through the Climate Resilient Farming (CRF) Program Round 9 Awards.

Funded projects help New York's farmers reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect water quality, protect and enhance soil health, and increase on-farm resiliency to the effects of a changing climate.

The first award is for \$109,420 and we will be working with 4 farms in the Genesee River watershed to increase farm resiliency to storm events, while reducing sediment and phosphorus loading to the Genesee River and Lake Ontario. The project will install structural erosion control and water management systems.



The second project is for \$705,920 where we will be working with a large dairy farm in the Canandaigua Lake and Upper Susquehanna watersheds to collect and utilize over 6 million gallons of stormwater runoff each year for irrigation, greatly impacting the farm's water management resiliency. The project will create a system to capture and repurpose stormwater runoff from 8 acres of impervious feed and commodity storage area on the farm.

The third project is for \$170,420 and we will be working with a farm in the Canandaigua Lake watershed to implement site-specific structural erosion control and water volume management systems that will address areas of known erosion and stormwater runoff issues on cropland in the Sucker Brook watershed. It will be a combination of upland water storage, underground outlets, and stable grass waterways to



convey water volume, providing resiliency to the farm and surrounding landscape.

The final award is for \$915,920 and we will be working with two dairy farms on irrigation projects in the Canandaigua Outlet watershed, repurposing high flow stormwater runoff from 7 acres of impervious feed and commodity storage area. The system will collect and recycle stormwater runoff to be efficiently applied to 700 acres of cropland using pump and irrigation pipeline, improving the farms' resiliency in managing water resources.

Welcome to the Farm: Soil Testing

Managing nutrient content is the key to providing optimum performance of any plant species whether in a commercial crop field or your own garden. Soil health is analyzed on a physical, chemical, and biological level. Soil testing can be completed in the spring or fall. Testing is recommended to be conducted at least every three years but it is highly recommended to do yearly. If you perform soil testing on a regular basis, it should be captured at the same time of year to avoid seasonal variation.

When collecting the samples, a clean plastic bucket or plastic bag will be required to mix multiple core samples for a single composite sample of a specific field. A soil probe, soil auger, or a shovel are the tools of choice for collecting.

For a commercial field, collect 15-20 plow depth core sub-samples using a zig-zag pattern. Mix the core samples in a bucket and collect one composite sample. Record the field information on the submission form and bag. For home landscape samples, you want to represent one area per sample, such as your lawn, vegetable garden, or landscape with at least 10-12 core samples. Any areas of concern should be sampled separately. Once all of the composite samples are collected and recorded on the correct submission worksheet, samples can be submitted to a credited lab for chemical analysis to determine the current pH and nutrient levels.

At Ontario County SWCD we utilize Dairy One's services in Ithaca, NY with the Morgan and Modified Morgan tests, which meets the requirements of a local land grant university. Dairy One Nutrient Guidelines are generated by Cornell University. The Morgan extraction method tests the soil's pH, buffer pH (lime requirement), organic matter, phosphorous, calcium, magnesium, aluminum, iron, zinc, and manganese. The information gained from each soil test will help a farm or landowner plan for future needs. The ability to determine nutrient availability can help predict a crop response without over-fertilizing. This is a key tool in soil conservation management, especially with phosphorus and nitrogen recommendations.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding sampling or filling out the submission form, please contact our office at (585)396-1450 or email at info@ontariocountyswcd.gov.



Manure Separation: What is it?

Manure storages are common conservation practices used on larger dairy farms. Storing the waste generated throughout the year allows a farm to apply when it is best suited for soil conditions, weather conditions, and crop needs.

Separating solids and liquids can benefit the farm in a variety of ways. Separated solids can allow liquid manure to be stored under a covered lagoon which helps manage methane and excludes rainwater from the liquid manure, therefore reducing the overall amount of manure to manage.



As farms transition to covered manure storages, they often need to also incorporate manure separation into their management practices.



This is a very expensive undertaking, and the District is currently working with a number of local dairy farms on both building new manure solids separation systems, or updating old systems with modern separation technology.

Fresh cow manure produced in a modern freestall dairy barn often has about 5-15% solids immediately after excretion. A manure separation system will collect this fresh manure from a reception pit, and filter and press these solid fibers out of the manure, creating a stackable manure solids product that ends up at about 35%-40% dry matter.

These solids can then be treated and reused as a quality bedding product for on-farm use, among other uses.

This neat recycling process helps improve the overall mass nutrient balance on a farm, reduces the total manure volume that needs to be field-applied, and greatly reduces the farm bedding material cost!

Manure separation facilities are complex systems requiring a lot of engineering, maintenance, and management, but ultimately can have huge benefits to the farm and also to the community.



2026 Western Finger Lakes Regional Envirothon

The 2026 Western Finger Lakes Regional Envirothon was held on April 28, 2026 at Finger Lakes Community College. We had 8 teams competing this year from Ontario, Seneca, and Yates Counties. The Envirothon is



a competition for high school students designed to test students' understanding of natural resource issues and to cultivate students' desire to learn more about nature, conservation, and environmental issues. Teams consist of five students and an



alternate. Winning teams from each county are eligible to participate in the NYS Envirothon at SUNY Cortland in May. The winner of the State competition will then be eligible for participation in the International 2026 NCF Envirothon in Mississippi.



The five test topics are Soils & Land Use, Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Wildlife, and the Current Issue. The 2026 current issue topic is "Non-Point Source Pollution Mitigation: It Begins at Home." ***The overall winner was a team from Victor Central Schools!***

Thank you to FLCC for hosting the event and for providing amazing staff to help with coordination, test creation, FLCC tours, Woodsmen's team demos, and much more. Thank you to the all of the amazing partners, test creators, and proctors from FLCC, NYS DEC, Ontario County SWCD, and Finger Lakes Institute. We could not pull off this event without all of these outstanding experts. Wegmans sponsored the healthy snacks for the students and the lunches for the volunteers. Wildlife Rockstars arrived after the tests were complete and did an amazing presentation with live animals for all of the students. Their time was so appreciated!



Recent Outreach in the Community

Macroinvertebrates with
Naples Elementary



Ag Career
Presentation with 4-H



Hemdale Farms Event



Storm Drain Marking with Cub Scouts



2026 Tree & Shrub Sale is in the Books

We had a great 2026 Tree and Shrub Sale and sold over 7,500 trees and shrubs. Thank you to the Ontario County Fair Board for the use of the Dairy Barn for preparing all of the orders, and for the Carriage Barn where all of the customers came to pick up their plants. Stay tuned in January 2027 for our next Tree & Shrub Sale Order Form. [Here is the link](#) to our Tree & Shrub Seedling Planting Guide for reference.



Rain Barrel Workshops

On May 13, 2026 we held a rain barrel workshop at Star Cider in Canandaigua, sponsored by the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Association and in partnership with the Ontario-Wayne Stormwater Coalition. Over 30 barrels were sold and everyone walked away with a few healthy stormwater tips as well as a fully built rain barrel ready to catch this



spring rain! If you missed this event, we have another workshop on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at Victor Municipal Park. Registration is through our office; please call (585)396-1450 or email info@ontariocountyswcd.gov. The event is at 6:30pm and each barrel is \$30. Installing a rain barrel is an easy way to protect our environment and save money. A rain barrel collects and stores rainwater from your roof that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains or streams. The water from your barrel can be used for watering gardens and lawns, washing cars, cleaning outdoor furniture, and the list goes on...



Tire Recycling



The Ontario County SWCD helps with the tire recycling program funded by Ontario County's Department of Sustainability and Solid Waste Management. The registration is all on-line and we help on the day of the event checking people in and making sure the proper tires are recycled.



On Saturday, May 2, 2026 the Town of Farmington Highway Department hosted the tire recycling event and provided us with Farmington employees to unload tires from vehicles/trailers and load the tires into the roll off containers. Thanks to the staff and their outstanding support, we were able to recycle around 748 tires. The next opportunities will be in the Town of Seneca on July 18 and the Town of Manchester on September 12, both from 8am-11am. Pre-registration is required. We can only accept car/light truck tires from Ontario County residents. For more info, please go to: ontariocountyrecycles.org/150/Events.



Backyard Conservation Conversation



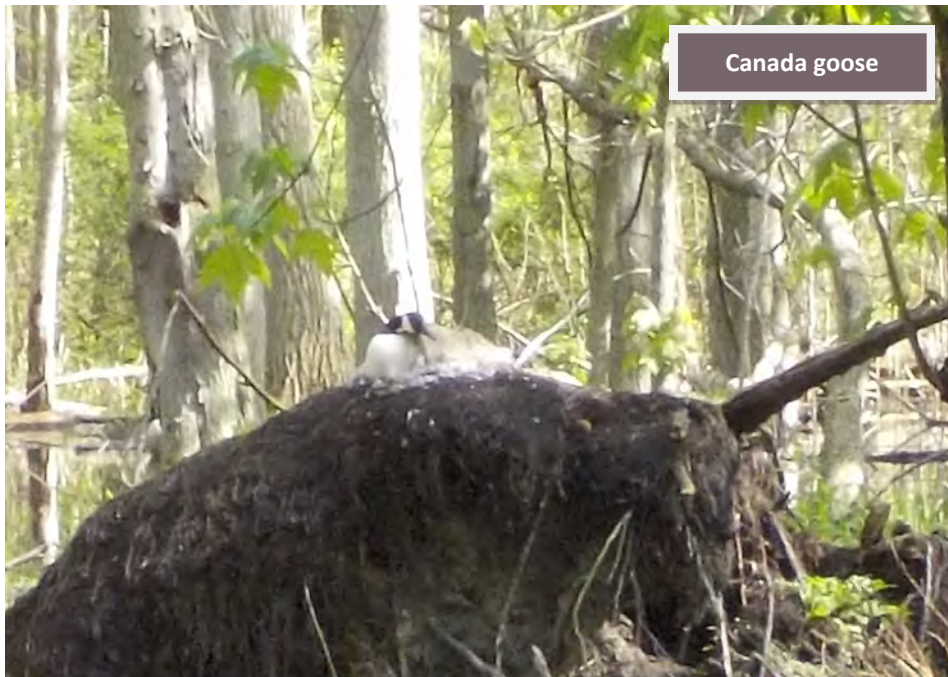
Wonderful Waterfowl

“Look, a duck!” is not something every backyard conservation enthusiast can say. However, especially at this time of year, it is very possible to see a variety of species of waterfowl in your own backyard.

A pair of mallard ducks could be attempting to build a nest under a bush, or under your parked trailer or boat. During the nesting season, mallards can appear very brave and end up in unusual places.

There is a chance a pair of

Canada geese may be exploring your area in search of a nesting spot. If you happen to have a pond, a creek, a vernal pool, or a flooded field at the moment, it is possible to see a species in the merganser family. Common mergansers and red-breasted mergansers migrate through our area. Hooded mergansers are often spotted on secluded water bodies and will nest there if provided a proper nesting box on or near the edge of a wet area.



Canada goose

Red-throated loons



Are you near the north or south end of one of our Finger Lakes? You could certainly see any number of other waterfowl. For instance, a pair of rare red-throated loons have been hanging out in the shallow canals of northern Canandaigua Lake recently. Other possibilities include coots, common loons, redhead ducks, black ducks, and common golden eye.

Perfect conditions are not always necessary for seeing wildlife in nature. Waterfowl can be seen even in your own personal sanctuary if you look hard and often. So, keep your eyes open for exciting sightings year-round and enjoy it all every day.



RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP

MAY 19, 2026 AT
6:30PM

VICTOR MUNICIPAL PARK
6680 PAPARONE DRIVE
VICTOR, NY

PRE-REGISTRATION
REQUIRED



**CALL ONTARIO COUNTY SWCD AT (585)396-1450 OR EMAIL
INFO@ONTARIOCOUNTYSWCD.GOV TO PRE-REGISTER.**

**BRING \$30 IN CASH OR CHECK TO THE EVENT OR MAIL IT
TO 480 N MAIN ST, CANANDAIGUA, NY 14424**

Join the Town of Victor, the Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), and the Ontario-Wayne Stormwater Coalition for a rain barrel workshop on May 19, 2026 at 6:30pm. We will start with a short presentation and will follow with a demo on how to build your barrel. We will then help you build your own 55 gallon rain barrel.

Installing a rain barrel is an easy way to protect our environment and save money. A rain barrel collects and stores rainwater from your roof that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains or streams. The water from your barrel can be used for watering gardens and lawns, washing cars, cleaning outdoor furniture, and the list goes on.

2026 SPECIAL COLLECTION EVENTS SCHEDULE



*For Details on Pre-registration,
Visit the Events Page at: OntarioCountyRecycles.org
Click "Notify Me" at the bottom to sign up to receive
registration information via email.



Household Hazardous Waste 	Event Date	Location	Time	Registration
	4/25	Landfill Site / Casella Recycling Facility	7am to 3pm	3/30-4/23
	9/19	T. Farmington Highway Facility	7am to 3pm	8/24-9/17
Electronic Waste 	Event Date	Location	Time	Registration
	5/16	T. Bristol Highway Facility	8am to 12pm	4/20-5/13
	10/10	Landfill Site / Casella Recycling Facility	8am to 12pm	9/14-10/7
Tires 	Event Date	Location	Time	Registration
	5/2	T. Farmington Highway Facility	8am to 11am	4/13-4/29
	7/18	T. Seneca Highway Facility	8am to 11am	6/29-7/15
	9/12	T. Manchester Highway Facility	8am to 11am	8/24-9/9
Paper Shredding 	Event Date	Location	Time	Registration
	5/15	T. East Bloomfield Veterans Park	11am to 1:30pm	4/27-5/12
	10/17	County Complex	8am to 10:30am	9/28-10/14
Mattress 	Event Date	Location	Time	Registration
	4/18	T. Geneva Highway Facility	8am to 11am	3/30-4/15
	6/6	T. Victor Highway Department	8am to 11am	5/18-6/3
	8/29	T. Canandaigua Highway Facility	8am to 11am	8/10-8/26
Rigid Plastic	Event Date	Location	Time	Registration
	9/26	Landfill Site / Casella Recycling Facility	8am to 11am	8/31-9/23
Freon Appliances 	Event Date	Location	Time	Registration
	10/3	T. Canandaigua Highway Facility	8am to 11am	9/14-9/30
Pumpkin 	Event Date	Location	Time	Registration
	11/7	Canandaigua, Geneva, Victor	8am to 11am	N/A

ONTARIO COUNTY Agriculture Enhancement Board

MINI-GRANT OPPORTUNITY



APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 18, 2026

MINI-GRANT APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR PROJECTS THAT PROMOTE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION, VIABILITY, AND PROTECTION

The Ontario County Board of Supervisors makes available funds for small projects that implement the strategies included in the Ontario County Agricultural Enhancement Plan (AEP).

Applications are being accepted through May 18, 2026 at 4 PM. Eligible applicants include Ontario County agencies, their program partners, schools, community gardens, farmers markets, and related organizations. Project review and selection will be completed by the Ontario County Agriculture Enhancement Board. It is anticipated that awards will be made during the fourth quarter of 2026 with project activities and reimbursement in 2027.

The mini-grant application, guidelines, and AEP strategies can be found here:

<https://ontariocountyny.gov/1784/Agricultural-Enhancement-Plan>.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 585-396-4455
OR EMAIL AEB@ONTARIOCOUNTYNY.GOV.**





ONTARIO COUNTY

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

www.ontariocountyswcd.gov

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- Field Manager: **Tucker Kautz**
- Conservation District Technician: **Tad Gerace**
- Conservation District Technician: **Jenny May**
- Conservation District Educator: **Alaina Robarge**
- Senior Conservation District Technician: **Jeremy Paris**
- Canandaigua Lake Watershed Inspector: **Tyler Ohle**
- Canandaigua Lake Watershed Administrative Assistant: **Jamie Noga**

Ontario County SWCD Board of Directors:

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- Jim Malyj**, Vice-Chairman, NYS Farm Bureau
- Kenneth Livermore**, NYS Grange
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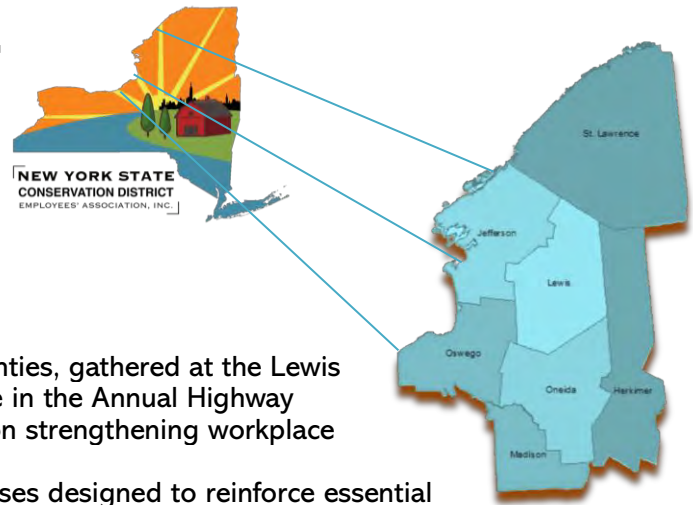
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NYS CDEA DIVISION III REPORT

June 23, 2026

Carla Yaw, Division III Representative



Division III Attended Safety Training Event

Twelve staff members, representing four Division III counties, gathered at the Lewis County Highway Department on May 14th to participate in the Annual Highway Safety Day, a training and collaboration event focused on strengthening workplace safety practices across the region.

Participants took part in a series of targeted safety courses designed to reinforce essential skills and promote safer field operations. Training sessions included Utility Damage Prevention and Response, Trailering and Towing, Digging Safely, Caught-In & Struck-By Hazards, Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) & Confined Spaces, and Sexual Harassment, Workplace Violence, and Right-to-Know.

Following the morning training sessions, attendees visited with vendors then enjoyed a fully catered chicken barbecue lunch, providing an opportunity for staff from multiple counties to connect and share experiences.

In the afternoon, the group reconvened at the Lewis County SWCD office for an open-discussion Division meeting. The meeting offered space for updates from each county, current CDEA happenings, future Division III training opportunities, discussion about the EPF and continued dialogue on improving safety throughout the Division.

Herkimer County SWCD

Submitted by Gerry Smithson

- o Backfilled 2 technician positions in February and April
- o Envirothon wrap-up
- o Conservation Field Day planning and soil erosion presentation by technicians
- o Assemble summer newsletter
- o AGNPS Round 29: Covered HUA and waste storage in the bidding process
- o AGNPS Round 30: Concrete Waste Storage excavation has started
- o AGNPS Round 31: Waiting on ranking
- o AEM Tier 4 projects in various stages
- o Japanese knotweed treatment planning has started
- o Pesticide technician exam/certification
- o RRAMP assessments
- o Hydroseeding
- o Numerous watershed coalition meetings & activities
- o FLOWPA projects
- o 30-year celebration in August – submitted several project photos
- o Black River Coalition planning
- o Conference June 3rd – assembled a tabletop display
- o WQCC meeting prep and project requests
- o USC cover crop program field visits & planning
- o Hosted a Mohawk River Coalition RRAMP training
- o NAACC trainings and certifications

Jefferson County SWCD

Submitted by Katie Spaulding

Staff Updates: Lucas, our summer intern, started on May 18th and we will have another joining on June 24th! Lucas has already been such a huge help during this busy season!

Forestry:

- o Distributed just under 9,000 tree seedlings/transplants through our annual tree sale!
- o We have been super busy with our tree plantings through The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and CRF 8. We have been working with Williams Forestry & Associates tree planting crew since early May to get 120 acres planted. The crew just finished up on 6/8/2026.
- o Sam, District Forester, provided a presentation on the tree planting programs at the Black River Watershed Conference in early June.
- o We're working on clearing the Jefferson County trails and cleaning up the park areas as well.

Ag/AEM:

- o AEM 19 projects were submitted and approved by the state committee. Justin, Executive Director, will be working on the Tier 3 plans and budgets.
- o Completed multiple CNMPs for Jefferson County farms along with Oswego and Franklin Counties.
- o 9,000 acres of cover crops will be planted over the next 3 years through CRF 8.
- o Will be starting construction on 1 manure storage and 1 covered barnyard through AgNPS30 funding.

FWLOWPA/Water Quality/Stormwater:

- o WPBS filmed/interviewed SWCD staff for the water sampling efforts being made. It is expected to be aired in August.
- o Sarah, Environmental Resource Specialist, hosted the Sandy Creek 9E Public Outreach meeting in May; the results of the modeling scenarios were discussed, and feedback on draft goals for the plan was solicited with attendees.
- o Sarah presented at the Indian River Lakes Conservancy Water Quality Conference in early June on the impact of lake soil types on septic system effectiveness.
- o Working on the Stormwater Coalition Municipal Operations Program and new Stormwater Management Plan. Continuing to meet with coalition members to discuss what they need mapped.
- o We were approved for the MS4 mapping grant and two streambank EBM grants, so these projects are getting underway!

Education:

- o Provided the 4-Hour Erosion & Sediment Control training for contractors/municipal employees, and separate training for BOCES students enrolled in heavy equipment, carpentry, HVAC, and electrical wiring technology.
- o Finished our 5th year for SW CARES, reaching 300 elementary students this year.
- o Another great year working with Indian River Central school to plant 75 trees to create a riparian forest buffer with 3 high school classes.
- o Hosted a rain barrel & garden workshop, providing 45 free rain barrels to participants.

Lewis County SWCD

Submitted by Carla Yaw

Educational Programs

- o We hosted our Progressive Agriculture Safety Day on May 20th. 253 fifth graders and 30 teachers and chaperones attended.
- o Technicians provided a learning station at Conservation Field Days
- o Technicians provided a demonstration at River Valley Mennonite School Career Day.
- o We are working on our display for the upcoming Lewis County Fair
- o Co hosted the Black River Watershed Conference with Tug Hill Commission at the Tug Hill Vineyards on 6/3. 58 attended.

In the office

- o Carla will begin preparing the Budget for 2028
- o We will begin working on our Summer Newsletter
- o Water Samples accepted for Converse Labs each Wednesday
- o Nichelle continues to work on SEQR forms for the county trails dept.
- o Techs continue to get requests for Soil Group Worksheets
- o Planning 80 year celebration

Flooding Events

- o Nichelle continues to attend Emergency management and flood mitigation meetings to offer technical assistance

Grants

- o CRF Rounds 8 & 9 in progress
- o AEM Year 18 closed out
- o AgNPS Round 31 applied for 4 farms – awaiting award announcements

Programs

- o Rental equipment is in high demand. We have ordered an additional no-till drill. This one is smaller for easier delivery to farms.
- o 11075 trees were sold to 238 customers at our annual tree sale
- o Techs have many Hydroseeding projects lined up for our municipalities
- o Black River Watershed Coalition will be working on transitioning the Vermont Rivers and Roads Programs to NY Rivers and Roads and will be scheduling training for the Spring of 2027.
- o Nichelle attended the RRAMP Training coordinated by the Mohawk River Watershed Coalition

Madison County SWCD***No Report*****Oneida County SWCD**

Submitted by Jessica Armstrong

We had a highly successful 2026 Envirothon event on May 28, with participation from 193 students (31 teams), 11 schools, and approximately 30 volunteers. In addition, we have been actively preparing for the start of our field season.

We are pleased to welcome Haylee Moore as our new Watershed Conservationist. In this role, she will oversee our invasive species program, Envirothon event coordination, and education and outreach initiatives.

We have also hired two summer interns who have recently joined our team and will be supporting implementation of our buffer and water chestnut programs.

We look forward to a busy, productive, and rewarding summer field season.

Oswego County SWCD***No Report*****St. Lawrence County SWCD**

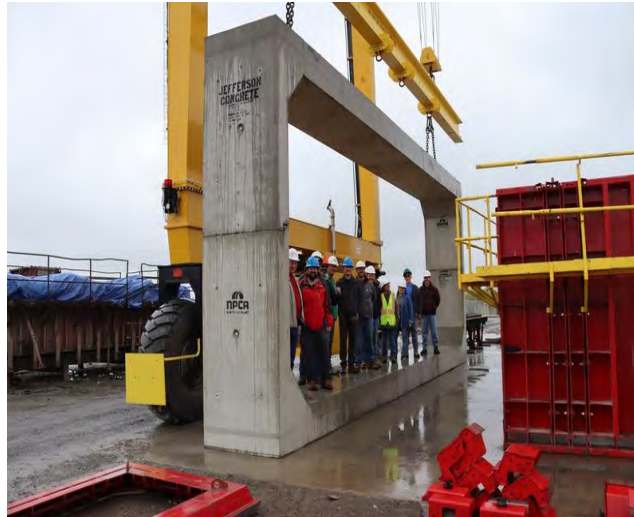
Submitted by Alivia Bleau

St. Lawrence County has been busy with spring/summer work! We did our annual tree sale and hosted an arbor/earth day walk. We hired two wetland reserves program interns to monitor St. Lawrence County NRCS wetland easements. We are busy with different educational and outreach events including attending farmers markets, participating in conservation field days, and holding our Northern Adirondack Regional Envirothon. We started a newsletter with our first edition going out this past month. We are starting to advertise and get applications for our yearly cover crop program. We were awarded two EBM grants and are starting initial planning stages for those! We finished up our multi-year project to remove ash and hazard trees from county roadways and are back on private property doing forest inventory for forestry plans!

CDEA Division IV- June 2026 Report

- Tioga

- Tioga County Utilized 4 Hours Funds to host a Concrete Pre- Cast Plant Tour at Jefferson Concrete.



Tour participants inside the concrete box culvert section being installed in Tompkins County later this summer. The box is 38' W x 12'9" H.

On a rainy Friday in May, SWCD employees toured Jefferson Concrete Precast plant just outside of Watertown, NY. We learned what it takes to make large box culverts and pretensioned bridge beams.

Chemung

Chemung County Conservation Field Days celebrated its 34th Year. We had 772 students from all across the Chemung County join in on the opportunity to visit 14 different stations (Each Trail visited 7 Stations) located at Park Station in Erin, NY. Within each of these trails we had presenters from Chemung County Soil and Water Conservation District, **Chemung County Federation of Sportsmen**, Trout Unlimited - Catherine Creek Chapter, **Upper Susquehanna Coalition**, **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chemung County**, **Friends of the Chemung River Watershed, Inc.**, **Chemung County Stormwater Coalition**, New York State Forest Rangers, Southern Tier Central Regional Planning & Development Board, Department of Environmental Conservation- Forestry Division, and Town of Erin Volunteer Fire Department. Topics included fishing, wetlands, flooding, wildlife identification, forestry, wildfire prevention, recycle relay, and macroinvertebrates. We would not be able to host this event for students if it wasn't for each and every one of our presenters and the following sponsors: Swarthout's Bait and Tackle Shop, Hillard Corporation, Kennedy Valve, Hesselson's, Southern Tier Custom Fabricators, Banfield-Baker Corp., and Porter's Concrete.



Picture: Chemung River Friends educating on macroinvertebrates

Cortland

- o Cortland County SWCD would like to invite all members to their upcoming Pasture walk July 17, 2026 at Twin oaks Dairy



Twin Oaks Dairy Pasture Walk

Friday, July 17
10:30 a.m. ET

3214 State Route 13,
Truxton, NY





NYS CDEA Division V Report

June 23, 2026

Katie WhitKovits, Division V Representative

Division Updates

- I am excited to be joining the CDEA team as the new Division V Representative.

Essex County

Submitted by Alice Halloran, District Manager

- We have three interns doing great work this year.
- We moved to a new building at 6 Fairground Way at the Essex County Fairgrounds in Westport, NY. We're having an open house Thursday, June 25, 3-6.
 - The new office has a great meeting space if anyone wants to hold a meeting around here.

Hamilton County

Submitted by Katie WhitKovits, District Technician

- We are hosting Adirondack Waterfest on July 24th in Speculator and invite any of our partners to table, present, or attend the event
- We hired a seasonal technician, Shannon McPheeters, who is a significant help with our fieldwork

Submitted by Caitlin Stewart, District Manager

I encourage the CDEA Board to consider developing a policy or updating the bylaws to include a rotating county schedule for Division Representatives. This is the 11th consecutive year that a Hamilton County SWCD team member has served on the CDEA Board, excluding Lenny Croote's time as Division Rep years ago. Other employees, former and current, served on the board for a decade or more. District staff across the state have communicated to me that they do not wish to serve on the CDEA Board due to an oversubscribed workload or a lack of experience due to new hires. Our county conservation duties will probably never lighten. The experience, insider's knowledge, and relationship building gained by serving on the CDEA Board is invaluable. It is time for new leadership. It is time to say yes to being a member of the CDEA Board.

Warren County

Submitted by Jim Lieberum, District Manager

- We are down one employee at this time and anticipate putting out an announcement later this fall.
- We have hired a great p/t intern who is focused on our lakes sampling program and is also doing other work that includes invasive species monitoring, culvert assessments.
- We hired Scott Fitscher, retired USDA-NRCS DC one day a week, to assist with AEM program.
- 2027 SWCD budget is looking reasonable at this point.
- We received a NYSDEC Hemlock Woolly Adelgid grant and a NYSDEC WQIP MS4 mapping/new requirements grant through 2029.
- We will likely be submitting a WQIP grant that is for the MS4 area.
- We have secured multiple contracts with 5 municipalities for their MS4 programs, which reduces the need for too many grants.
- We have nearly 100 participants signed up for the Forestry Awareness Day at Pack Forest in Warren County being held today. Thank you for the NYSCDEA support of this event. Katie WhitKovits was kewl by signing up, but then became totally lame by ditching this and becoming the CDEA Division 5 Rep and had a meeting to go to instead....
- Overall very busy but things work out.

Clinton County – no report

Franklin County – no report

CDEA Division VI- June 2026 Report

Albany:

- Recently hired our newest District Technician – Stephen Manning
- Awarded funding through the Hudson Mohawk RC&D Council to create 6 Envirothon Study Kits to loan out to schools – containing Munsell Soil Color Book, Field Guides, Soil Sieve Set and more
- Accepting applications for our Municipality Conservation Assistance Funding
- Hosting an iMapInvasives Training Workshop on July 7th at the District office.
- Collaborated with Montgomery Co. SWCD, Columbia Co. SWCD, Schoharie Co. SWCD, Rensselaer Co. SWCD, and Schenectady Co. SWCD to coordinate and host the Annual Capital Region Envirothon, with 22 teams attending.
- Staff continue to serve on 5 separate municipal DWSP2 Stakeholder Groups.

Fulton:

- Shared services with DPW are going well with (2) culverts going in for the County and (2) for towns. 1 of the town culverts is the Part B project for 2026
- Hired 2 summer interns, with the main goal of NAACC assessments
- Planning for opening of new office in the coming months

Montgomery:

- Field season is in full swing with some projects getting finished up, many projects in the design stage.
- The hydroseeding program has been very busy with road ditches, municipal sites, and even a pollinator project
- Ag tire recycling event was a hit with 72 tons of ag/implement tires collected
- Hosted an intern for 2 weeks through the BOCES program, which we then hired for the summer
- Had a successful implementation of a CREP/AEM tier 4 buffer of 4.1 acres, including 825 trees.
- Accepted and recently ranked applications for the first Montgomery County Farmland Protection Reserve Fund Grant Program, total \$250k in awarded projects
- Assisting with establishing the Grow Amsterdam Farmers Market, with Ribbon cutting on June 19th

Rensselaer:

- **AEM Round 19** – Planning construction on 5 farms for this round and will maximize the funds available.
- **USDA NRCS Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)** – Our District started year 2 of a 3-year contract for \$84,720 for monitoring approximately 30 Wetland Reserve Easements within Rensselaer County.

- **Ecosystem Based Management, Stream Corridor Management Pilot Program** – Awarded two Culvert Replacement Projects for: Town of Poestenkill – Heather Ridge Road & Town of Grafton - Cranberry Pond Road
- **NYS Federation of Lakes Association (NYSFOLA)** –During their Annual Conference in May, NYSFOLA presented Megan with a Lake Steward award.
- **NYS DEC Hunting & Fishing Licenses** – Our District Clerk has become a License Issuing Agent (LIA) and is approved to sell Hunting and Fishing Licenses from our office.
- **Ag Day at Kristy's Barn** – Partnered with CCE on June 9 and educated 150 students on Pollination.
- **Summer Internships** -We've hired an intern for the summer. Matt Angell, a student at SUNY Cobleskill who is majoring in Fisheries & Wildlife Management. He will be conducting a lot of NAACC assessments.
- **Scholarship Awards** - The District awarded two 9th graders with \$500 scholarships each to attend FFA Camp Oswegatchie this summer.

Saratoga:

- Working with PRISM to manage water chestnut on the Hudson with drone applied herbicides
- Conducting NAACC and roadside assessments
- Hydroseeding
- Galway School District won the Saratoga Regional Envirothon and took 16th place at the State Envirothon
- Organized a cannabis farm visit and fact finding session with SWCC to determine if there is more that Districts can do to protect natural resources on cannabis farms. If you work with cannabis farms and would be willing to help reach out to Scott Fickbohm.
- Still working through the issues with the Farmers for Soil Health grant to be able to implement it smoothly in NY
- Working with PRISM and other groups to monitor and manage HWA around the Sacandaga Reservoir

Schenectady:

- Hired two summer Interns this year along with and a Summer Youth Crew Leader.
- Working with the County Sustainability Coordinator and Recycling educator to submit a grant for a Tool Library.
- Recently applied for and received a Esri Conservation Grant for Arc Online subscription discount.
- Working on AEM Round 19, AGNPS, and CRF projects

Schoharie:

- Hydroseeding town and county roads throughout the Mohawk Watershed through our Coalition grant with DEC
- Completing NAACC, Road Ditch, and Invasive Species assessments throughout the Mohawk Watershed through our Coalition Grant with DEC
- Completing Pond Evaluations throughout the county checking physical/chemical attributes and submitting reports to landowners
- Beginning to implement 8 ag mini-grant projects from covered barnyards to animal trails and fencing
- Starting three CRF projects involving ponds, watering systems, diversion ditches, manure storage, cover and flare, a separator, and vegetative buffers
- Completing a NY Grown and certified project involving fencing and a new spring development/watering system
- Finishing a covered barnyard through Ag Non-point
- Working on a few grants through Resilient Watersheds, WQIP, and Climate Smart Communities

Washington:

- We are finishing up-one a large VTA for a Silage Leachate and Treatment system-the dirt work is completed high/low flow containment areas have been built and seeding has been done. Plumbing will be updated as soon as the seeding is sufficiently established. The aprons on the feed pad were constructed last fall.
- project completed this spring was a farm roadway and erosion control updates for it to complete a grazing system improvement. A pond and gravity flow watering system was installed last summer. This project was done with CRF grant funds.
- Our June SWCD Board meeting on site at this farm to allow the Farm to show the board how the project has improved their grazing operations climate resiliency by having a steady supply of water year round and having pasture access to all the fields that don't require the farmers or the livestock to constantly move through mud. District Directors and staff had lunch at the farm and everyone truly appreciated the opportunity to interact and converse about a pivotal project for the continuing success of the farm.
- We are out doing site visits with landowners about a variety of topics from all manner of invasives to water quality and pond management.
- We are ramping up our water quality testing program in partnership with a couple of lake organizations and a river conservancy organization.
- There are also some planning activities we are involved with for the county, Town of Argyle, Town of Salem, and for the Wood Creek/Champlain Canal Watershed.
- Interns are doing an extensive amount of Invasive Species monitoring and are also getting out for field visits on projects and AEM activities with the rest of the staff.



Sullivan County Soil & Water Conservation District
64 Ferndale-Loomis RD Liberty, NY 12754
845-292-6552

NYSCDEA Division VII Report 6/15/2026

- I attended the SWCC Regional Managers Meeting for Region 6 in Rockland County and gave the NYSCDEA report.
- I am working on planning our annual Division meeting-aiming to host in late fall and hoping to have Chas & Gideon from SWCC attend and provide a training on their programs

Columbia County- No report was sent

Dutchess County- No report was sent

Green County- No report was sent

Orange County- No report was sent

Sullivan County-

- AEM projects are beginning
- CPFA project is underway
- Hosted a new tire recycling event
- Hosting a new electronics recycling event
- Welcomed a new technician
- Have been attending education and outreach events

Ulster County- No report was sent



Olivia Cunningham

Nassau County SWCD

Conservation Technician

1864 Muttontown Rd. Syosset, NY 11791

516-364-5861

Division VIII Updates: June 2026

Nassau County:

- Continue to manage the Nassau County SEPTIC Replacement Program. We have installed 203 nitrogen reducing septic systems on LI. Working with IEC/EFC to secure additional funding and increase the grant awards soon.
- Released RFP to environmental organizations on LI using Part C funding. Funded 11 projects!
- Received the DEC Invasive Species Grant, only organization in Nassau County to receive.
- Water chestnut pulls with the DEC.
- Had our Arbor Day event, 500 people registered. Purchased plants this year with Part B funding to give out.

Rockland County:

- o RCSWCD recently wrapped up **American Eel Research Project** where **88** volunteers counted and relocated **2,862** glass eels over the course of a **12-week** season.
- o **RPLUS** – Staff collaborated with Columbia Climate School's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, RC Planning Department, Rockland County Conservation and Service Corps, and RC Water Advisory Council to plan curriculum and present in class workshops at **8** different high schools to **295** students on sustainable planning and land use development as part of the **Rockland Planning Land Use with Students** program.
- o **Trout Stocking** – **7** different waterways stocked with total of **1,700** brook trout
- o **Regional Envirothon** – RCSWCD helped to write and proctor the aquatics test at the Regional Envirothon held at Croton Point Park in Westchester County where **142** students participated.
- o Education Programs- SWCD staff organized and facilitated a series of education programs where **493** students learned about benthic macroinvertebrates, healthy stream habitat, and the American Eel migratory lifecycle.
- o Recently the 2nd year of Monarch Larvae Monitoring started, utilizing 2 Rockland County Summer Conservation Corps members to monitor milkweed stands at 2 county parks and collect data on number of monarch eggs, larvae and adult butterflies found.
- o ***Have been hearing that the CDEA might potentially cover the cost for the Ag 101 Course – would the CDEA consider this?**

NYC:

- We have been working with the Mayor's Office of Urban Agriculture in an effort to bring more resources to urban farms in NYC.

- We conducted a site visit to Drew Gardens, a community garden/urban farm/food forest in the South Bronx.
- We are also participating in an urban agriculture working group hosted by the Dept of Ag & Markets to revise the AEM Tier 2 worksheets for use on urban farms.
- We started the monthly free soil testing events on Governors Island and are looking forward to a busy summer season with our own soil testing events as well as participating in our partners' events.

Suffolk County:

- Soil sampling is in full swing
- Loan equipment program active
- Gearing up to apply for WQIP – focusing on habitat restoration. Location TBD
- Agriculture in the classroom winners were announced. Projects funded included AG boces programs in high schools, tissue culture in high school labs and robotics work in another high school.

Westchester:

I'm looping in Millie Magraw who is now the District Manager for Westchester County. I recently transitioned into a new role. Here are some items we have been up to.

- Westchester Urban Farm Fund – an effort to help support community farms/gardens by providing funding for raised beds and supplies, and working with them on stewardship needs.
- We wrapped up the 2026 Envirothon with great success. It was the largest yet and we even had a team from Orange County join.
- We are making some headway with AEM planning and developing a template that is uniquely Westchester County.
- We held a number of events including one titled Watersheds of Inspiration, which combines art with the education of our water ways.
- We launched a Westchester County WAVE program in May of this year.

***NO REPORT FROM PUTNAM ***

NYS Erosion and Sediment Control Certificate Program

June 2026 Report to CDEA Board

- Currently there are:
 - 73 Active Certificate Holders
 - 5 Suspended Certificate (2024 & 2025)
 - 16 Terminated Certificates (suspension longer than 2 years and people not renewing due to retirement or new jobs)
 - 6 applicants approved to sit for exam
- The Review Course needed to be resubmitted for review to the Practicing Institute of Engineering (PIE) so that we could continue to offer PDH credits for taking the course. This required the updated Review Course-6 sections, 11 Instructor Bios, all course handouts and practice problems, along with the Review Workbook be submitted for review and approval. The course has been reviewed and granted 11 PDH credits for Licensed Professional Engineers and Registered Landscape Architects. The course will need to be renewed each year and resubmitted for approval every 3 years. An additional fee is charged to these professional individuals seeking credits during review course registration.
- A Review Course has been scheduled for August 4th and 5th in Ballston Spa, NY at the Saratoga County SWCD office. Appreciation goes to Dustin Lewis (Saratoga SWCD), Jim Lieberum and Nick Rowell (Warren SWCD) and Jake Wedemeyer (Ulster SWCD) for offering to instruct this course during the busy field season. The event notice has been sent out to the waiting list and is being posted on the CDEA website.
- The Steering Committee held a meeting in February 2026. Some key discussions were:
 - Updating the review course to make sure that it meets current SPDES permit language. Only Section 1 needs review. This section has since been reviewed and updated.
 - Discussed the number of instructors there are and how to add to that number to build program into the future.
 - Discussed how to make the review course an online version. At this time due to the length of the course (1.5 days), it would be too costly and complicated.
 - Discussed making the Review Course Workbook available online for a cost to help individuals prepare for the exam.
- 2025 Certificate holder Professional Development Hours (PDH) Audits were completed in February. Every year 5% of certificate holders are audited to assure compliance with the Professional Development Policy.

Financial report for the program.

NYSCDEA NYSE&SCCP Account	\$15,361.53 <i>(June 12, 2026 from Mikaela Perham, CDEA Treasurer)</i>
Schuyler SWCD Account	\$18,300.00
Total	\$33,661.53

Please feel free to contact me if there are any questions regarding this program.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Verrigni, CPESC, CPSWQ

NYS Conservation District Employees' Assoc.

6/12/2026 10:49 AM

Register: NYSCDEA General Checking:NYSESCC Program

From 01/01/2025 through 06/12/2026

Sorted by: Date, Type, Number/Ref

Date	Number	Payee	Account	Memo	Payment	C	Deposit	Balance
01/22/2025	4998	Schuyler Co. SWCD	Training Sessions.:NY...	NYS CDEA Er...	8,500.00	X		10,587.03
01/27/2025			Undeposited Funds	Deposit		X	13,975.00	24,562.03
03/31/2025	5028	Schuyler Co SWCD	Training Sessions.:NY...	Copies for class	200.50	X		24,361.53
01/30/2026	5180	Schuyler Co SWCD	Training Sessions.:NY...	Admin Fee	9,000.00	X		15,361.53

**NEW YORK STATE EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL
CERTIFICATE PROGRAM BANK REPORT
As of June 12, 2026**

	Jun 12, 26	Oct 8, 25
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Checking/Savings		
NYSCDEA General Checking		
NYSESCC Program	15,361.53	24,361.53
Total NYSCDEA General Ch...	15,361.53	24,361.53
Total Checking/Savings	15,361.53	24,361.53
Total Current Assets	15,361.53	24,361.53
TOTAL ASSETS	15,361.53	24,361.53
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	0.00	0.00

**NEW YORK STATE EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL
CERTIFICATE PROGRAM BANK REPORT
As of June 12, 2026**

	<u>Jun 12, 26</u>	<u>Jun 11, 26</u>
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Checking/Savings		
NYSCDEA General Checking		
NYSESCC Program	<u>15,361.53</u>	<u>15,361.53</u>
Total NYSCDEA General Ch...	<u>15,361.53</u>	<u>15,361.53</u>
Total Checking/Savings	<u>15,361.53</u>	<u>15,361.53</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>15,361.53</u>	<u>15,361.53</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>15,361.53</u></u>	<u><u>15,361.53</u></u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	0.00	0.00



Soil and Water Conservation Districts in New York State

Protecting Today, Preserving Tomorrow

Yates County Soil & Water Conservation District

417 Liberty Street
Penn Yan, New York 14527
(315) 536-5188
tom@ycsoilwater.com

June 11, 2026

June 2026 Conservation Skills Workshop Report

The planning committee met Friday May 15th in Syracuse & virtually to plan out the 2026 workshop. Planned courses at this time are:

- AEM Tier 3 – Weeklong course
- Basic Forest ID
- Stream basics – Repeat from 2025 – Filled up very quickly
- CRF project tour
- Forest Tier 3a planning
- SWPPP site inspection
- Heavy Use Area Management
- Agroforestry
- Wilderness First Aid Training (expected request for additional funds coming)
- Subsurface drainage
- Silvopasture
- Ponds
- Small farms / Urban Agriculture

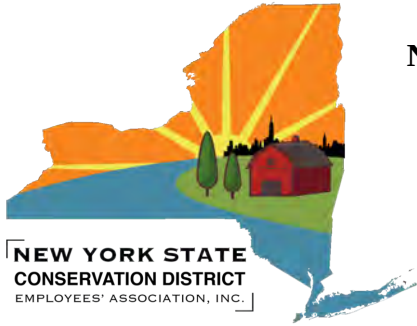
A hotel RFP was put out with the help of Jessica Armstrong (thank you!). This should help with organization of classes. RFP is due June 19th to Tom. Still based in the Auburn area

Significant discussion ensued about the timing of the workshop. The workshop was held in October for many years (late October at times). Around 2020 or so the workshop was moved to September to fit with the NRCS fiscal calendar. The September workshop timing was difficult for Districts to manage around Conservation Field Days. In 2024 the workshop was moved to early October when NRCS was unable to attend. This timing has worked much better for District folks and for field sites as crops have been harvested more. For 2026 Paula Bagley informed us that NRCS is able to attend again. Discussion ensued on the timing and it appears almost impossible for NRCS to attend the workshop if it's held in October which is the timing that works better for Districts.

Conservation Skills Workshop is largely organized and attended by District staff so we kept the date for 2026 to October which also matches our RFP that is out.

- **QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION** – Should we send a letter to NRCS to begin a longer discussion on timing of the workshop? District staff are much happier with an October workshop but NRCS cannot attend as it is the beginning of their fiscal year. Not sure why that means they can't attend however so maybe a longer discussion on that part? Thoughts?

Respectfully submitted
Tom Eskildsen
Senior District Technician



New York State Conservation District Employees' Association, Inc.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts provide ongoing programs and services to conserve, enhance, and protect soil and water resources in communities.

CDEA Legislative Committee Report

- Members include Caitlin Stewart Chairperson and Hamilton County SWCD Manager, Dustin Lewis, Saratoga County SWCD Manager, and Joseph Braun, Schenectady County SWCD Technician
- This committee has been inactive for many years, and we held our first meeting on June 24 at 10 a.m. to discuss the committee's purpose, bylaws, election of officers, and CDEA lobbyist request for proposals
- I thank the CDEA Board for their support, and the committee members for their participation

Respectfully submitted,

Caitlin Stewart, CDEA Legislative Committee Chairperson

The purpose of this scholarship is to assist future conservationists in expanding their education on topics related to natural resources. The Frank Bratt Scholarship is available to Conservation District Employees. The scholarship is also available to selected conservation partners in New York State.

- | Name | Award Date | Amount | Course |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| Nate Woodworth | March 2025 | 744.00 | Beaver Wetland Course |
| Mark Gaston | June 2025 | 450.00 | Basic Wetland Delin. |
| Alex Marks | September 2025 | 345.00 | Trees in all Seasons |
| Reya Mertz | September 2025 | 525.00 | AutoCAD/Civ3D |
| Olivia Cunningham | December 2025 | 249.00 | Trees in all Seasons |
| Jacob Sullivan | December 2025 | 750.00 | 60 Hr. CDL Training |
| Drew Hoag | December 2025 | 500.00 | 39 Hr. Pest Applicator |
| Chris Travis | March 2026 | 399.00 | Fund. Of Engineering |
| Scott Davis | March 2026 | 351.00 | Grindell Leadership |
| <i>Kaia Madigan</i> | <i>June 2026</i> | <i>100.00</i> | <i>What is Eco Land Care</i> |
| <i>Ishika Joshi</i> | <i>June 2026</i> | <i>750.00</i> | <i>Cartography</i> |

- June 1st Round: Received two **pending** applications round totaling **\$850**, this figure is \$650 below the allotted \$1500 for reach round. Therefore, the remaining funds will be rolled over into the pot for the September or December 2026 rounds.

March 2026	June 2026	September 2026	December 2026
\$1,500.00	\$850.00		

Rebecca Campbell
Division I Representative

The 2026 NYS Envirothon was held on July 27th and 28th at SUNY Cortland. We were blessed with great weather, and the event included 38 teams from across New York State. The winning team was from The Mount Academy in Ulster County. They will represent NY at the NCF Envirothon in Mississippi July 19th-25th. Our overall rankings are attached. With the hard work of our committee members along with our volunteers the event went extremely well.

We had 62 volunteers including:

13 Ag and Markets/ SWCC

4 Envirothon Alumni

2 SWCS Members

1 Cornell Representative

Staff from 28 Different Districts

The Opening ceremony on Wednesday night included opening remarks by SUNY Cortland Provost Ann McClellan and a presentation by our keynote speaker SUNY Vice Chancellor of Workforce Development and Upward mobility Chris White who gave a very interesting presentation on the workforce of the future and what students can expect as they move forward with their careers. We would also like to thank SUNY Cortland for its wonderful support in holding this event. We would also like to thank our sponsors who make this event possible:

Kate's Real Food

Brothers All Natural

Roc-Star Ice Cream

Soil and Water Conservation Society

"Big" Scott Fickbohm

GM - General Motors

Chobani

Aqua Valley Spring Water

The New York Chip Company

Cornell University – College of Agriculture & Life Sciences (CALS), Department of Food Science

NYS Conservation District Employees' Association, Inc.

NYS Agriculture and Markets - Soil and Water Conservation Committee

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

The planning for the 2027 NYSEnvirothon begins the day after the 2026 Envirothon ended and we are always looking for new additions to our committee. If you would like to be a part of the Envirothon Committee, please reach out to Dustin Lewis dl@saratogaswcdny.gov.

CDEA State Advisory Sub-Committee Report

Presented by: Jennifer Kelly

June 17, 2026

Review of AgNPSA&CP Round 31:

The Sub-Committee discussed a few procedural aspects of the grant process, including Board Resolutions and SW-5. The Committee will request clarification from Jason Kokkinos. SWCC staff communicated that they are working on creating a grant program manual to clarify the different programs and possibly create more administrative consistency across the various programs.

The Committee recommends that NYACD add a grant administration training program to their Annual Meeting. This would help both District Directors and District staff understand their roles and responsibilities within each program.

CRF Track 2 Working Group:

Members of the CDEA SPAC Sub-Committee met with SWCC staff to specifically brainstorm and discuss Track 2 projects and potential best management practice systems. Track 2 focuses on helping farms adapt to climate change, a concern that is largely not addressed within the traditional AEM or water quality planning framework. As a result, the group has been discussing existing and new practice systems that could help farmers adapt to the impacts of climate change.

One idea that has been suggested is to make improvements to the AEM planning process by formally incorporating climate change as a resource concern. This would involve evaluating a farm's vulnerability to climate-related impacts as well as its capacity and need to adapt. For example, a farm could be assessed before and after a flood event or a drought to determine where additional practices could help them better withstand more frequent and intense extreme weather events.

While this approach expands the potential role of Districts and may create new opportunities for support and funding, it may also exacerbate the demands on already limited staff resources. As we continue to develop these ideas, it'll be important for District staff to weigh in and help define an appropriate and manageable role.

We are currently working to incorporate climate training to District staff as well as training about each CRF track.

CRF Round 10:

In general, the addition of Track 5 is a concern. The program itself is highly over prescribed, and the sub-committee is generally not in favor of adding additional tracks to the program without more funding added to the CRF budget line. We're also interested in understanding what types of projects cannot get approved for funding because they do not fit into one of the established tracks.

Additionally, following the passage of the State Budget, which includes sub-allocations of CRF funding to support Cornell University projects, the sub-committee is interested in collaborating with the legislative committee to draft a letter to NYACD. This letter would request NYACD's

assistance in educating legislators about the implications of redirecting funds from an established grant program, particularly how such changes may affect program stability, consistency and the potential negative implications to farmers.

Basic Technician Training Update

- Submitted Workforce Development Grant request (\$373,262 with \$90,642 match over 3 years) to support training program.
- Training is integrated with WQ Symposium and Conservation Skills Workshop.
- Awards expected July/August 2026.
- Next steps include developing a Level II curriculum and identifying alternative delivery methods if funding is not awarded.

Northeast Association of Conservation District Employees (NACDE)
"Together We Achieve the Extraordinary"

NYSCDEA Meeting
June 2026

Northeast Conference

Delaware Association of Conservation District (DACD) will be hosting the northeast conference at **Chase Center on the Riverfront in Wilmington, DE** from **August 24 – 27, 2026**. The theme for this year conference is **The Adaptive District in a Changing Landscape**. The focus will be on sharing real-life success stories and practical, implementable solutions to the most pressing challenges facing conservation districts today, from securing new revenue and implementing cutting-edge technology to adapting to complex land-use changes like solar development. In addition to our core tracks, we are pleased to offer a dedicated Leadership Training Breakout Track designed specifically for managers. This specialized session will equip current and future leaders with essential skills to develop an effective leadership style that drives overall district performance. Join us to gain the actionable knowledge and connections needed to future-proof your district.

The DACD invites conservation district leaders, partners, and technical experts to submit presentation proposal for the northeast regional conference. they are seeking proposals that detail implementation, measurable results and actionable strategies that can be immediately applied by peers. Area topics included:

- o Funding the Mission: Expanding Revenue & Capacity
- o Adapting to New Land Use; Emerging Conservation Issues in Developed Land Uses
- o Smart Conservation: Innovative Tools & Technologies for Implementation
- o Engaging the Community: Outreach, Education & Urban Growth
- o Policy in Action: The District's Role in Legislative Change

Registration Stipend

I would like to point out that the NACDE will again offer a registration stipend which helps support district employees to attend the northeast region conference. This stipend will cover the registration and tour fees. If interested, please submit a letter to the President of NACDE (michael.kent@ncdea.org) detailing how attendance to the conference will benefit the district, state or region. Include a brief biography and details about your district's programs and activities. An annual report from the district or program information may also be submitted for consideration. **Deadline** to submit is **July 1st** and the criteria will be based on the employee's demonstration of benefit to the district, state or region. The recipient will be expected to provide a written report about the conference to NACDE.

Awards

The NACDE is seeking awards nominations for **District Employee Award (Regional) or the District Employee Award (Local)** shall be a full or part time district employee. A nominee for the **District Leader Award** may be a supervisor, director or other individual who is doing an outstanding job working with district professionals on a regional basis, helps obtain the goals of

NACDE and the regional partnership, and assists in expanding employee professional development. Nomination deadline is **Friday, July 10**. Send your nominations to Michael Kent at michael.kent@ncdea.org. Any questions contact Michael at 609-625-3144. The awards will be presented at the NACDE annual meeting held during the NACD Northeast Regional Meeting.

Strategic Planning

NACDE is in the beginning phase of updating the strategic. A survey has been sent out which will help identify:

- What NACDE is currently doing well
- Areas where the organization can improve or expand
- Key challenges facing conservation district staff
- Priorities and opportunities for the future

The deadline to fill out the survey is **June 26, 2026**.

Listed below is the survey link:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/VHDrYcLiR9>

NCDEA

Listed below, is a training opportunity for district employees that's being sponsored by NCDEA (National Conservation District Employees Association).

[Please see the details for our next webinar below, and join us by registering HERE](#)



National Conservation
District Employees
Association
***FREE* Virtual Training
Series**

Speakers:

BRANDY MYERS

NCDA&CS, NC

CELIA MILLER

Madison SWCD, MS

**Wednesday, June 24th
9am PST/11 am CT**

**Register to secure your spot
and for webinar access info:
www.ncdea.us**

REGISTER AT WWW.NCDEA.US

Strong communication is key to connecting with the audiences you serve. Join Brandy Myers of the NC Department of Ag - Soil & Water Division and Celia Miller of Madison County SWCD in Mississippi to explore how youth and adults learn differently and discover techniques for tailoring your communication and presentations to meet the needs of each audience. Gain insight into what motivates learners, common barriers to engagement, and techniques for creating learning experiences that support your district's outreach and education efforts.

All webinars occur on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 9am PST/11am CST

Please remember you can catch up and/or rewatch prior webinars by visiting the [NCDEA YouTube page HERE](#)

I continue to encourage every conservation district to support sending board & staff to attend the Northeast Region Conference. Conservation districts are the linchpin for local led-conservation and the bridge between producers, communities and business to protect our natural resources. This meeting is one way to add tools/resources to your toolbox. Another great opportunity to meet fellow conservation district staff/directors within our northeast region on the following:

1. Net-working on a broader scale
2. Programs being offered/created
3. Challenges faced and how they persevered
4. Non-traditional funding possibilities
5. Friendships developed

If anyone has any questions, I can reach via email at vparker@steubenswcdny.com or telephone (607) 776-7398, Ext. 5.

Respectively Submitted,
Velynda Parker
Vice President/CDEA Representative