



SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION NEWS

United We Stand



TOMPKINS COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
1771 HANSHAW ROAD • ITHACA • NEW YORK • 14850
PHONE 607-257-2340 FAX 607-257-7896

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SWCD's: Helping the Environment and the Economy!

The following article is an excerpt from the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) spring newsletter, Vol. 32, Issue 2 written by Barbara Silvestri from the New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee.

Agriculture, natural resources and tourism are leading parts of the economic engine in rural and upstate communities. For decades, County Soil & Water Conservation Districts have worked with residents, municipalities and industry to ensure the health and viability of all three of these areas. Conservation projects like soil erosion control, public water supply, flood prevention, stream restoration and stormwater management provide multiple benefits. They protect farm viability and the natural resources enjoyed by residents and tourists alike, while improving the local tax base, protecting public health and safety, and saving landowners and communities time and money.

Soil & Water Districts provide a significant return on their county's investment by leveraging funds from multiple sources for conservation projects that maintain and create green jobs and support local business. Since the inception of New York's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) in 1994, Soil and Water Districts have put over \$81 million in cost-share grants to work on over 2000 farms involving more than 5000 conservation projects across 50 counties. For their share, farmers have contributed over \$25 million toward these State funded projects that protect water quality and natural resources for all New Yorkers.

Well over 90 percent of the grant dollars spent on conservation projects in 2010 were reinvested back into the local and regional economy, according to a survey by the Soil and Water. Local contractors are hired to implement the projects and supplies are purchased from area businesses that spend this money locally on labor, materials and equipment.

"If it were not for agriculture projects funded by the State, our Construction Division that employs ten people would not exist," said Don Ford of RMS Gravel. "Roughly 80% of the work completed by our Construction Division comes from funding for conservation projects, and we spend 95% of these funds right here in the county and the surrounding area."

County appropriations are the cornerstone of support necessary for Soil & Water Districts to bring in additional funding and provide the programs and services that are more critical now than they have ever been. Together, these dollars strengthen capacity and maintain jobs at Soil and Water Districts, doing as much for the local economy as they do for the environment. Clearly the benefits of funding Soil & Water Districts go much further than the initial investment, ensuring that the economic engine of rural and upstate economies is fueled into the future.



The Tompkins County SWCD has RPM trees available for conservation practices. Many species available, first come, first serve. Please stop by the office at 1771 Hanshaw Rd., or call the office for details at 257-2340.

2011 Southern Tier Regional Envirothon / NYS Envirothon

By Seth Dennis, Education Coordinator

The Southern Tier Regional Envirothon was held on May 5th, 2011 at the Tioga County Sportsman's Association in Owego. A total of 32 teams participated from Broome, Chemung, Schuyler, Tioga and Tompkins Counties. The Envirothon is an outdoor, hands-on, environmental competition for high school students. Teams of up to five members test in the areas of aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, and a current issue topic. This year's current issue topic was *Salt and Fresh Water Estuaries*.

The overall winners of the Southern Tier Regional Envirothon included Union Endicott from Broome County taking first place; Candor from Tioga County with second place, and GST BOCES from Chemung County placing third. The winners from Tompkins County included the "Lansing Envirocrats" from Lansing High School taking first, "Trumansburg Aquatards" from Trumansburg High School grabbing second place, and "Walsh's Wetland Warriors" from George Jr. Republic taking third.

For the first time in six years there was a new champion at the New York State Envirothon. Congratulations to Academy at Fox Hill from Orange County! The NYS Envirothon was held on May 25th & 26th at Hobart & William Smith Colleges in Geneva. Fox Hill will now represent NY State and compete at the Canon Envirothon July 24th-29th at Mt. Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada. The Lansing High School team did very well this year at the NY State Envirothon placing 13th out of 47 teams.

The Envirothon program is sponsored and supported by Soil & Water Conservation Districts nationwide. For more information about the Envirothon Program, please visit www.nysenvirothon.net, or www.envirothon.org. To create a team at your Tompkins County school, please contact Seth Dennis at the SWCD office.



SWCD lends a hand and a Big Foot to help with recycling.

The Tompkins Soil & Water Conservation District recently volunteered its Big Foot Plastics Baler and it's time as part of Cornell Cooperative Extension's

Gardener's Pot Swap & Recycling Event. After a week of collecting pots and plastic trays, a group of volunteers and the SWCD got together on June 30th. The volunteers gathered all the plastic together and moved it close to the baler, and the trained SWCD staff tossed it in, and squashed it down. After a few hours of hard work, it came out with 7 bales to be recycled! Normally, all the pots & plastics would have to be loaded by hand into a truck to be shipped to Palmyra then recycled, but on this day the driver was excited to see everything in neat bales, and ready to go.



Dryden Central Schools wins Green Schools Challenge

Dryden Central School District was recently recognized by the Department of Environmental Conservation receiving the "Most Innovative School" award for the 2009-2010 year's Green School Challenge. Since May 2008, Dryden Central School District has composted more than 103 tons of food waste, recycled 7.5 tons of mixed containers (milk and juice cartons, glass, plastic and metal containers), and they recycled more than 25 tons of paper in 2010. They will be receiving a \$250 award to support their recycling/composting initiatives. The Green Schools Challenge is a program to recognize schools that are working to improve solid waste management by developing waste reduction, reuse, recycling, composting and recycled product purchasing and packaging programs. The program is a tool for school recycling coordinators, student environmental clubs and facility service professionals to engage their school community in recycling and waste reduction in a fun and friendly way. Many congrats to the Dryden Central School District, and keep up the great work!





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DISTRICT SERVICES

- Hydro-seeder (fee)
- No-till Drill (fee for rental)
- Broadcast Seeder (loaned out for free)
- Soil Sampling (fee)
- Pond Site Evaluations (fee)
- Streambank Erosion, Technical Assistance
- Drainage Problems, Technical Assistance
- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans
- Grazing Plans
- Pasture Improvement
- Educational Presentations and Resources
- Ag-Plastics Baler

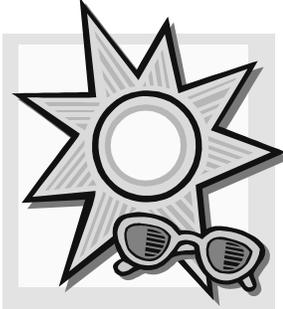
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Soil & Water Conservation Districts
in New York State



Providing Today, Protecting Tomorrow



SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2011

**ITEMS FOR SALE AT THE
SWCD OFFICE**

- BLUEBIRD BOXES \$ 14.04 *
- BAT ROOSTING BOXES 17.28 *
- WOOD DUCK BOXES - PINE 38.88 *
- KESTREL/SCREECH OWL BOXES 27.00 *
- RAIN BARRELS 48.60 *
- FERTILIZER TABLETS15/EACH
- MARKING FLAGS13/EA. OR 100/\$8.64 *
- TREE PROTECTORS - AVAILABLE AT TREE ORDER TIME ONLY
- RAIN GAUGES 14.04 *
- NYS STANDARDS & SPECIFICATIONS FOR EROSION &
SEDIMENT CONTROL 65.00
- NYS STORMWATER MANAGEMENT DESIGN MANUAL
HARD COPY 50.00
- SOIL GROUP WORKSHEETS - NEW 35.00
REVISED 35.00
- TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS 7.00*
- TREE & SHRUB PROGRAM VARIES
- FISH STOCKING PROGRAM VARIES
- BARLEY STRAW (PER BALE) VARIES
- GIFT CARDS ANY AMOUNT!

* 8 % SALES TAX INCLUDED

Board of Directors

- Ron Updike Chair, Member at Large
- Dan Carey Vice-Chair, Farm Bureau
- Alan Teeter Grange
- Frank Proto County Legislator
- Pat Pryor County Legislator

District Staff

- Craig Schutt Conservation District Manager
- Jennifer Case District Secretary/Treasurer
- Vacant Resource Cons. Specialist
- Gene Aarnio Grazing Technician
- Seth Dennis Education Coordinator
- Jon Negley Conservation Technician
- Aaron Ristow Natural Resources Program Specialist/
Ag-Team Coordinator (USC)

USDA-NRCS

- Patrick Barry District Conservationist
(Schuyler & Tompkins Counties)
- Lori Beach Civil Engineer Technician (Area III)
- Josh Hornesky Soil Conservationist

***Board meetings are held monthly on the 2nd
Monday at 12:30 P.M. in the District office. The
public is always invited.***

Tompkins County Soil & Water Conservation District
1771 Hanshaw Road
Ithaca, NY 14850

Phone 607-257-2340 Fax 607-257-7896

www.tcsxcd.org

The Tompkins County Soil & Water Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service prohibit discrimination in all their programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.

NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service

Continuous Program Signups

Many times, particularly it seems like during the early to late winter time periods, we put out press releases, write up news articles for publication in local newspapers and send reminders via the SWCD "e-news letter" on signup deadline dates for different NRCS conservation programs. If you follow things closely you will notice there are a whole slew of different conservation programs available to private landowners. These different conservation programs in New York include agricultural waste management practices (waste storage facilities, barnyards, etc), cropland practices (cover crops, stripcropping, diversions, etc), grazing management practices (fence, laneways, pipeline, etc), and high tunnels (hoop house). There are also programs that help private landowners restore degraded wetlands through low berm and pothole construction. For the private landowner who either has just a woodlot or an overgrown field outback and wants to manage these for either timber production or wildlife there are programs available to assist them.

While you may only hear about these programs during that early-late winter time period when you read the notice about application deadline dates, they are actually open year round for continuous signup. When we put out an "application deadline" date for a particular program we look at and evaluate every application we have received for that particular program and year up until that point in time. Any applications received after the deadline cutoff date are saved for the following years signup.

With a continuous sign up period for all of our programs you don't have to monitor things so closely and wait for the next application deadline date to be announced. Contact your local NRCS field office at anytime and put in an application so it's on file for the next time they are evaluated. Information about all of the different programs that are offered can be found here:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/>



Welcomes and Goodbyes

The Tompkins County SWCD would like to welcome to the office Eugene Aarnio as the new Grazing Specialist.

"I graduated Spencer Van-etten High school in 1999, graduated from Juniata College in 2004 with a Bachelor's in Physiological ecology, and currently am finishing up a second Bachelors degree in Conservation biology from SUNY Cortland. I have has spent 5 years (2005-2010) working as fish and wildlife tech and environmental analyst for the Cortland office of the DEC. During my down time, I teach a Martial arts self-defense class at GIAC in downtown Ithaca, and hike the various natural areas associated with but not frequented by patrons of the state park system, as well as conducting private herpetology research. I am also gathering materials necessary to apply for grad school (again). I look forward to a long and productive run at the TCSWCD."

We are also welcoming in our Summer Intern Katie Wratten who is diligently working on our AEM program.



Agricultural
Environmental
Management

By: Katie Wratten, Intern, TCSWCD

"This summer, I have been working on updating Tier 1 and Tier 2 surveys of farms in the Town of Dryden as part of the Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Program. Tier 1 surveys gather basic information about a farm such as type of operation, acreage, animal numbers, and basic practices used. A Tier 2 survey is used to further analyze some of the basic practices that a farmer is using as well as the effects that these practices have on water quality. Participation in the AEM program is completely voluntary but can make a farm eligible for funding and/or technical assistance. So far this summer, I have visited ten farms with plans to see many more. If you have not been contacted about participating in the AEM program and wish to do so, please contact our office at 607-257-2340 to set up an appointment."

The TCSWCD office is sad to be saying goodbye to our Resource Conservation Specialist, Darrel Sturgess. Darrel was with the TCSWCD for two years, handled the majority of stormwater work, and taught the Erosion and Sediment Control (E&SC) Training. His hard work at the office will definitely be missed. His new position is the Watershed Inspector for the Schuyler County Watershed Protection Agency. He will be working on program administration, new and replacement wastewater treatment systems, billing, complaints, and regulated facility water quality monitoring for Schuyler County.



Save Paper! Save Postage!

Would you like to receive our newsletter through your e-mail, instead of in your mailbox? Let us know that you would like to conserve! E-mail sethdennis@tcsxcd.org to sign up or call our office and ask for Seth, 257-2340.

Agricultural Nonpoint Source grants funded!

The Tompkins County Soil & Water Conservation District is pleased to announce that it recently received notification of funding for two proposals under the Round 17 Ag-Nonpoint Source program. The first is in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed involving the Susquehanna River and West Branch Owego Creek. The second is for Pine Ridge Farm, a CAFO (Confined Animal Feeding Operations) farm, involving improvements to protect Taughannock Creek. This is pleasing news considering the past reductions of funding to this program, and also the overall financial struggles of New York State.



Tompkins County Soil & Water District Manager Craig Schutt was recently honored by the District Board Members and his fellow employees for his 15 years at the District. Congratulations Craig!

NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service

NOTICE TO HISPANIC AND/OR WOMEN FARMERS AND RANCHERS

COMPENSATION FOR CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

If you believe that USDA improperly denied farm loan benefits to you for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000 because you are a female or because you are Hispanic, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

This means you may be eligible if:

- *You sought a farm loan or farm-loan servicing during that period;
- *The loan was denied, provided late, approved for a lesser amount than requested, approved with restrictive conditions, or
- *USDA failed to provide an appropriate loan service; and
- You believe these actions were based on your being Hispanic or your being female.

To request a claims package by phone, call: **1-888-508-4429** To request a claims package online, please visit: **www.farmerclaims.gov**



The Tompkins County Soil & Water Conservation District is in the process of organizing a Tire Collection Day some time in the fall. Please check our website for updates in the future (www.tcswcd.org) or call our office at 257-2340.



2011 Fall Barley Straw Order Form

The Tompkins County Soil & Water Conservation District will be accepting barley straw orders now through October 7th. Pick up date will be on **Friday, October 14th, from 8:00am-4:00pm** at 1771 Hanshaw Rd., Ithaca, NY. Price is **\$9.72** per bale. Recommended 5 bales per surface acre. Payment is due with the order form, and checks can be made out to TCSWCD, and sent to 1771 Hanshaw Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850. - \$30 delivery charge within a 30 mile radius.

Name: _____
 Mailing Address: _____
 Daytime Phone: _____
 Payment method: check or money order cash credit card
 Credit Card #: _____
 Exp Date: _____ CVC#: _____
 Signature: _____

Quantity	Total \$



The Tompkins County SWCD also has RPM (Root Production Method) Trees for sale. Many species are available, at a first come, first serve basis. Please call 257-2340 for more information, or better yet, stop in to our office at 1771 Hanshaw Rd. We also are selling rain barrels, bluebird & bat boxes, marking flags, tree protectors, fertilizer tablets, gift cards, and various other conservational items.