



Cayuga County SWCD

2014 Annual Report

Conservation In Action



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Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District to enhance and protect the natural resources of Cayuga County through "hands-on" implementation of best management practices.

Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District

STAFF

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Doug Kierst, CPESC, CPSWQ | <i>Executive Director</i> |
| Sandy Huey | <i>Watershed Program Manager</i> |
| John Fraser, CPESC, CCA | <i>Nutrient Management Specialist</i> |
| Jason Cuddeback, CCA | <i>Grazing Specialist</i> |
| Valerie Horning | <i>Conservation District Technician</i> |
| Wanda Jakaub | <i>Principal Account Clerk</i> |
| Lisa Miller | <i>Senior Typist</i> |
| Karl Radcliffe | <i>Working Foreman</i> |
| Pat DeVoe | <i>Motor Equipment Operator</i> |
| Tim Lozier | <i>Motor Equipment Operator</i> |
| Sean McCarthy | <i>Motor Equipment Operator</i> |
| Denise Dixon | <i>Cleaner</i> |
| Mike Riley | <i>Working Foreman</i> |
| Al Noga | <i>Motor Equipment Operator</i> |

Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection Program

| | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Andrew Snell | <i>Watershed Specialist</i> |
|--------------|-----------------------------|

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Katherine Schor | <i>District Conservationist</i> |
| Shannon Bozeat | <i>Soil Conservation Technician</i> |



About Cayuga County SWCD

As the result of petitions and resolutions submitted to the Cayuga County Board of Supervisors (today the County Legislature) by the Farm Bureau, Grange, Dairymen's League, and other farm organizations the Cayuga County Soil Conservation District was formed on August 8, 1944. Cayuga County is well known for its abundance of productive farmland and high quality water. The foresight of the governing body to protect the natural resource needs located within the County proved to be a good investment. Agriculture is the predominant economic engine of the County.

Over the past 70 years, we have expanded to include Wastewater Management, Nutrient Management, Stormwater Management, and Erosion and Sediment Control Programs.

Today we are the local agency that many community members and government agencies "go to first" with their environmental related problems and concerns. We take pride in not only listening, but getting things solved.

Board of Directors

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Ray Lockwood | <i>Chairman, Farm Bureau</i> |
| James Young | <i>Vice Chairman, Member at Large</i> |
| Terry Baxter | <i>County Legislator</i> |
| Roger Conner | <i>Member, Grange</i> |
| Dale Kehoe | <i>Member at Large</i> |
| Steve Nemec | <i>Member at Large</i> |
| Paul Pinckney | <i>County Legislator</i> |
| Charles Roberts, Jr. | <i>Retired Member, Grange as of June 2014</i> |

"This country will not be a permanently good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a reasonably good place for all of us to live in."

- Theodore Roosevelt

A message from Executive Director, Doug Kierst

The protection of our Natural Resources has grown increasingly important and 2014 was no exception. Unpredictable climatic conditions and a varying landscape have created situations that have significant environmental impacts throughout the County.

The Cayuga SWCD has experienced a decrease in local funding support for our programs, yet we continue with our mission. We are the **LOCAL** go to agency for residents that have erosion, drainage and other environmental concerns.

The carrying out of our diverse program takes a lot of effort, coordination and follow through by dedicated professional staff. The combination and commitment of our full time, part time and seasonal staff make it possible to have the valuable impact on our resources that our County residents have come to expect and deserve.

Lastly, the Cayuga SWCD saw the end of an era when Charlie Roberts retired from our Board of Directors in June. Charlie has served as the Grange Representative for 17 years. As a former farmer, his attention to detail and common sense approach leaves a lasting impact. We wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors. I welcome Roger Conner and look forward to his contributions while serving on the Board.

Senator Seward Secures Funding For Dutch Hollow Brook Project

New York State Senator James L. Seward (51st District) announced that the new 2014-15 state budget includes at his insistence, \$200,000 to implement the Dutch Hollow Brook Watershed Restoration Project. The Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and the Owasco Watershed Lake Association (OWLA) proposed to work in partnership and implement a local initiative that collaborates with municipalities, farmers, and rural landowners. Our objective is to improve water quality in Owasco Lake through the implementation of Watershed Quality Improvement Best Management Practices throughout the Dutch Hollow Brook Watershed. The SWCD and the OWLA will manage and monitor the selection, design, and construction of structural and nonstructural BMPs that will most likely reduce the movement of sediment, nutrients, pesticides, and other pollutants from the Dutch Hollow Brook landscape into Owasco Lake.



Dutch Hollow Proposal Announcement

BMP'S to be implemented.

- Site 1
 - prescribed grazing plan, exclusion fence, watering system, grassed waterway
- Site 2
 - underground outlet, water & sediment control basin, access road, critical area seeding.
- Site 3
 - underground outlet, water & sediment control basin.
- Site 4
 - grassed waterway, critical area seeding, cover crops.
- Site 5-9
 - rock rip-rap, bio-engineering plantings.



Estimating Sediment Loss, Site 2



Streambank Erosion, Site 9



Estimating Sediment Loss, Site 3



Water weir with auto sampler, Site 3



Water Sampler, Site 1

A fawn hiding at one of the District's wildlife seeding sites.



District Services

No-Till Conservation Seeding

The District uses a tractor with a Truax no-till drill to seed pasture, hay, wildlife habitat, pollinator habitat (wildflowers), and cover crops. The Truax drill is capable of handling the wide variety of seed sizes and textures necessary for all of these projects. The seedings provide a variety of benefits to landowners, including reduced erosion, better soil health, and improved habitat. **In 2014 District**

staff planted 31 acres of wildlife habitat, 9 acres of pollinator habitat, and 13 acres of cover crops. If you are interested in seeding, you should contact Jason Cuddeback or John Fraser.

Conservation Mowing

The CCSWCD owns two mowers that are used in our conservation mowing program. The boom mower has a floating brush-hog style head on an arm that gives it a reach of over 15 feet. It is best for trimming back overgrown hedgerows, ditches and roadsides. The "bat-wing" deck mower can mow 15 feet in one pass, making it ideal for overgrown pastures and field conservation programs. Over the last few years, the District has been increasing the number of acres mowed and trimmed. **In 2014, the Cayuga SWCD mowed 45 acres of pasture and wildlife habitat and approximately 395 miles of conservation ditches, field edges and roadsides.**



Bat Wing Deck can cut 15 feet in one pass.

Our Tubgrinder travels around the CNY region turning excess wood into mulch.



Wood Waste Recycling

Municipal and commercial wood waste piles can often be difficult to dispose of. With the District's tubgrinder and hydraulic shears, large quantities of wood waste can be quickly and efficiently processed into readily usable wood mulch. Many of the municipalities utilize the mulch that is generated, as a resource to give back to their residents for landscaping. **In 2014, the Cayuga SWCD used its' wood waste recycling services to recycle approximately 23,000 cubic yards of wood waste for 19 municipal organizations.**

Critical Area Seeding

Soil erosion and sedimentation are one of the leading causes of water quality degradation. The CCSWCD uses many tools to establish grass cover on bare soils, from road-side drainage ditches to erosion control on slopes and even establishing athletic fields. Our technicians work with local seed distributors to create formulas that work for any type of situation. With our 1,000 gallon hydroseeder to hand seeding, the District can quickly respond to requests for assistance. The Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District provides hydroseeding for county, town and village governmental departments. **In 2014, the Cayuga SWCD completed critical area seeding on 8 miles of eroding roadbanks and disturbed areas.**



CCSWCD Staff hydroseeding a grass waterway.



Calibrating a manure spreader for a CNMP involves weighing the spreader when it's full and when it's empty in order to determine the application rate.

Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning

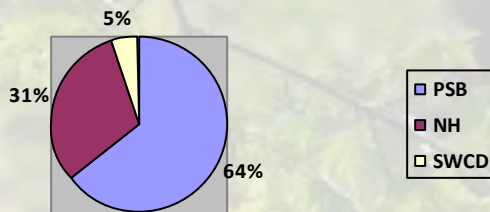
Nutrient management plans help farmers balance their nutrient applications (manure and fertilizer) with the needs of the crops. Soil samples are taken on all of the fields to help determine this balance. The nutrient management plan also prescribes crop rotations that will keep soil erosion rates below a defined "tolerable" level. By following this plan, a farm can reduce erosion and nutrient losses from their fields, thereby helping to improve water quality and reduce fertilizer costs. A nutrient management planner must also look at the farmstead facilities. Barnyards, feed storage areas, and milking centers are all potential sources of nutrients that need to be addressed. A plan that covers both the agronomic (field) practices, as well as the farmstead, is called a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP). CNMP's must be updated annually. **In 2014 the District developed two new CNMP's and updated two existing CNMP's, totaling 2,208 acres.**

Cayuga County Regional Methane Digester

The Regional Digester was fully operational during the 2014 calendar year. The unique project used a combination of FOG (fats, oil and grease), fruit waste by-product and cow manure to produce electricity. The electricity that was produced was, in turn, utilized by the buildings located on the County campus adjacent to the Cayuga SWCD facility.

In 2014 the digester produced 1,128,600 kWh of electricity. The digested manure was returned to the farms for field application. As with the previous year, the facility was a popular spot for people to visit. For the second year in a row, we had over 100 visitors, a number of whom were engineers from around New York as well as other states. Our plant is even being used as a model for possible digester construction at other locations.

We also feel that it is important to stress the many economic benefits that affect local businesses. We create and use the electricity from locally produced products. We keep the money paid for the electricity local; purchasing supplies from local businesses and hiring local contractors as needed. We also can sustain a number of jobs locally. That is good for the local economy as well as supporting future sustainable development in New York State.



The pie chart to the left shows the percentage of electricity in kWh used by each facility on our campus. The facilities that encompass our campus are the Public Safety Bldg. (PSB), Nursing Home (NH) and the District (SWCD).



The Digester is currently open for tours. Contact the District for more information

Community Recycling Events

The Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District works with the Cayuga County Planning Department and Cornell Cooperative Extension, who act as coordinators of these events. The District assists by making facilities, equipment and staff available.

- **HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE CLEANUP DAY-** Is an opportunity for county residents to responsibly dispose of substances that do not belong in normal garbage, such as batteries, oil based paints, and household chemicals.
- **HOUSEHOLD ELECTRONICS RECYCLING DAY-** Geared towards the collection and recycling of electronic devices found around the home, such as televisions and computers. These are banned from regular trash due to heavy metals inside these devices that can contaminate ground water. **This past year three events were held for household electronics and 212,779 pounds of electronics waste were brought to be properly recycled.**
- **TIRE ROUNDUP-** Old tires can be brought in by county residents for a small fee. Tires are then used as an alternative carbon source for the production of steel at Nucor Steel Auburn, Inc. **Over 3,700 tires were recycled in June 2014.**
- **TRADE-A-TREE-** County residents have the chance to drop off Christmas trees from the holiday season in exchange for a voucher granting them a free seedling. The trees are chipped with the District's tubgrinder and used as mulch. **Over 400 trees were traded and recycled in winter 2014.**

Be on the lookout for dates of the upcoming 2015 recycling events.



Tire Roundup



Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection Program

New Staff Join the Owasco Watershed Inspection Program

Full Time Staff

The Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection Program created a new Watershed Specialist position in 2014.

Andrew Snell came aboard as the new Specialist, equipped with a wealth of experience including many years with Soil and Water Conservation Districts throughout New York State, and previously as Program Coordinator for Lake Champlain's watershed of New York. Andrew (Drew) is excited to join the efforts to protect Owasco Lake and looks forward to working with watershed residents to avoid violations, provide guidance, and discuss remedies. Drew plans to focus on and address the numerous issues and concerns negatively impacting the integrity of the water throughout the Owasco basin. Please contact him at any time with concerns or for assistance.

Seasonal Staff

Two seasonal Watershed Inspectors, Nicole Pionteck and Eli Vitale, joined the Inspection Program during 2014.

Eli is a recent graduate from Hobart & William Smith College in Geneva. He enjoyed the experience of working for the program in 2013 so much that he decided to return for his second season as an Inspector. A recent graduate from SUNY ESF, Nicole not only provided assistance to the Inspection Program, but also used her experience for her Capstone Project required for graduation. The Seasonal Inspectors were terrific additions to the program, assimilating quickly and integrating their knowledge and skills into the program goals. Combined, their efforts resulted in high quantity and quality of work completed throughout the watershed in 2014.

Watershed Violations

The Inspection Program staff has observed many landowners utilizing best management practices both for Ag and non-Ag operations. The majority of folks throughout the watershed are doing their part to protect the drinking water of Owasco Lake. *We commend those efforts!* However, there are still a tremendous number of unacceptable practices and actions that continuously occur, violating the rules and regulations created to protect the drinking water for nearly 45,000 people. From failing septic systems, to allowing animals access to streams, poor application and timing of nutrients on crop lands, and not utilizing erosion and sediment controls on construction sites. We can do better!



Shoreline construction adjacent to West Lake Road during the summer of 2014. The contractor failed to utilize sediment control which resulted in a plume of sediments into the Lake.



This steep slope was not vegetated after clearing in late 2013, resulting in severe erosion during the spring of 2014, transporting tons of soil offsite, directly to Owasco Inlet. Acting with urgency, the landowner, SWCD, and Inspection Program staff took measurable, timely steps towards stabilizing the site and eliminating the damaging sedimentation created by the erosion.

Aquatic Vegetation Control Program

The AVC program seeks to provide relief to the County's waterbodies where usability has become impaired by dense vegetative growth. Due to nutrient inputs and sunlight, aquatic vegetation is an unavoidable reality in these natural ecosystems. From hindering navigation and swimming, to creating water and air quality issues during mass die off events, aquatic vegetation can dramatically interfere with people's use of the lakes. The Cayuga County Aquatic Vegetation Control Program's objectives are to increase the accessibility and usability of the County's waterbodies, while seeking to leave the lakes as ecologically intact as possible.

The District's AVC program consists of two boats, an on-shore conveyor, and a small dump truck. The largest boat is a paddlewheel type boat that is designed to access heavy vegetation and shallow water. This boat cuts and picks up the weeds. The second boat is a transport boat which is used on the larger lakes to cut down transport time from the cutting area to the truck, increasing the efficiency of the program. The weeds are off-loaded onto the dump truck using the conveyor, and taken to nearby farms where the vegetation is used as compost to enrich the soil.

The water bodies that our program covers are Owasco Lake, Cayuga Lake, Otter Lake, Lake Como and Fair Haven Bay. Some of the common weeds found in our lakes include: Common Elodea, Starry Stonewort, Nitella, Eel Grass, Milfoil, and European Frogbit.

In 2014, the Aquatic Vegetation Control Program removed from Cayuga County waterbodies: •2,209 cubic yards (Yd³) Aquatic Vegetation •287,170 dry pounds Aquatic Vegetation •6,051 pounds of Nitrogen •512 pounds of Phosphorus •3,223 pounds of Potassium



Harvester Boat Operated by Tim Lozier



Sean McCarthy using the conveyor to empty a full boat of weeds

| Volume (Yd ³) | Owasco Lake | Cayuga Lake | Fair-Haven Bay | Lake Como |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|
| 2014 | 940 | 742 | 306 | 122 |
| 2013 | 1,162 | 428 | 413 | 76 |
| 2012 | 535 | 887 | 1,224 | 137 |
| 2011 | 646 | 708 | 492 | 46 |
| 2010 | 660 | 280 | 260 | 25 |

Community Discussion about Manure Management

A community discussion on manure and manure runoff in County watersheds was held on October 29, 2014 at the Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES in Auburn where over 150 people attended. The event was organized by County Legislators Keith Batman and Mike Didio, along with our District staff, County Planning, Health Department and Cornell Cooperative Extension representatives. The moderated discussion allowed for the public to comment on a possible local law or resolution to limit the spread of manure on frozen ground and the establishment of a buffer for manure application near ditches and waterways. While manure handling and spreading is regulated by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, organizers stressed the importance of local input and opinion.



Countywide Forum on Manure Runoff in our Watersheds .



Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM)

The AEM program helps farmers implement environmentally and agriculturally beneficial practices. Through the AEM process our District is able to document the importance of farming in Cayuga County, provide technical assistance to farms, and help put local farmers in touch with grant funding available for conservation practices.

Some of the conservation practices applied in Cayuga County include: Animal Trails and Walkways, Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans, Cover Crops, Critical Area Planting, Subsurface Drainage, Waste Storage Facilities, Fencing, Filter Strips, and Grazing Plans.



Manure Waste Storage Facility



Cover Crop



Grazing Horse Fence



Agricultural Mixing & Loading Facility

AEM aims to:

- Provide environmental stewardship
- Protect our food supply
- Maintain the rural economy
- Improve water quality
- Improve fish & wildlife habitat
- Open space, and scenic vistas
- Impact air quality and energy
- Improve/maintain viability/ competitiveness
- Promote good neighbor relationships
- Implement a comprehensive farming plan

2014 AEM Accomplishments

| | |
|-------------------|----------|
| Tier I- | 6 |
| Tier II- | 7 |
| Tier IIIA- | 7 |
| Tier IIIB- | 4 |
| Tier IV- | 1 |
| Tier VA- | 9 |

Funded Round 20 Ag Nonpoint Source Projects for Farms:

- Cover Crop Seeding in the Owasco & Cayuga Lk. Watershed- \$244,690.00
- Erosion Control Structural Systems, in the Owasco Lk. Watershed- \$72,244.00
- Composting & Silage Leachate Control, in the Cayuga Lk. Watershed- \$121,775.00
- Barnyard Runoff Management, Erosion Control Structure, in the Owasco Lk. Watershed- \$293,720.00
- Silage Leachate Control & Treatment, Waste Storage & Transfer, in the Owasco Lk. Watershed- \$565,398.00

SOIL HEALTH SEMINAR AT CUDDEBACK FARMS



Farmers oversee a tillage demo



Frank Gibbs talks soil organisms

Natural biological processes in the soil are responsible for about 60% of the available nitrogen and 50% of the available phosphorus in soil.



Eban Weil explains Aerway systems

Interested party looking over Zone builder



Cornell Soil Health farm visit



Assistance to Municipalities & Organizations

In 2014, the district helped design and install five roadside drainage projects for four different town highway departments. These projects all improved existing roadside drainage in order to convey current storm flows in a non-erosive manner and to provide better drainage for the residents living along the roads. A district technician surveyed and designed each project. Then the technician, district equipment operators, town highway staff, and/or a private contractor would work together to install each drainage system. The projects involved installing a total of 810 feet of double wall high density polyethylene pipe, 10 concrete catch basins, and 450 feet of stone lined waterway.



Stormwater pond at Emerson Park

During the summer of 2014, the District assisted the Cayuga County Parks Department with a stormwater pond retrofit at Emerson Park. The original basin had three cells which treated stormwater runoff from a subdivision before it entered Owasco Lake. Over the years the pond became silted in, which diminished its effectiveness. District equipment operators and technicians dredged out two of the cells. The berms between the cells and the pond outlet were also improved. These improvements included adding another berm to create a new cell with a sand liner to help further treat stormwater runoff before it leaves the pond.



Stone lined waterway in the Town of Brutus.

The SWCD was able to coordinate and work with the City of Auburn to complete a bank stabilization project at the Mill Street Dam. Rock riprap was installed to protect the bank and the disturbed area was seeded down to a mix of conservation grasses. We are also working with the City to seek funds to implement riprap at another critical area at the dam.



Mill Street Dam

Juniper Hill Road was a project that the District worked on in the Town of Sterling. The project consisted of an extremely steep road ditch on Juniper Hill Road which had washed out several times, causing problems for the Sterling Highway Department. After repeated efforts to fix the ditch, the District was called in to work with the Town to find a more permanent solution. The 460' length of the steep ditch was rock lined and stone check dams were installed to slow the velocity of the water and provide erosion control. The Town of Sterling Highway Department and the District worked together to install this project.

Juniper Hill road ditch project



Before



After

Hoopes Park Project

The Cayuga County SWCD worked alongside the City of Auburn to complete a nutrient and sediment removal project at Hoopes Park pond, located within the City. The Cayuga County SWCD provided the equipment and operators, while the City provided personnel that assisted with water control and trucking. The crews worked together to remove approximately 5,400 tons of material that had accumulated throughout the years. The material had been providing nuisance aquatic vegetation, including



Floor of the pond with the material windrow ready for removal.

Eurasian water milfoil, the perfect growing substrate. The nutrient laden material also contributed to algae growth and disrupted the flow of water. The park is a popular destination for local residents who enjoy taking their dogs for a walk, observing the abundant wildlife and enjoying the landscaped flower beds.



SWCD Excavators ready to load trucks with material for disposal.

Moon Beach Shoreline Stabilization Project, Town of Sterling

Moon Beach, on Lake Ontario in the Town of Sterling, is subject to severe erosion and has been an ongoing area of concern for many years. Large amounts of the shoreline have been falling into the Lake, contributing tons of sediment and nutrients. Through grant funds, the District was able to install 260' of shoreline stabilization, consisting of placing very large stone blocks at the toe of the slope, drainage behind the blocks, and re-grading and placing rip-rap stone at the top of the slope. The slope was also reshaped and seeded at the top where it had been disturbed.



Before



After

Emerson Park Sailboat Launch - Town of Fleming

The shoreline of Owasco Lake at the Emerson Park Sailboat launch has been steadily deteriorating. Sediment and nutrients are being washed into the lake as the shore erodes. As this is a public access point to Owasco Lake, not only water quality is being affected by the erosion, but public perception

of the lake as well. The District reshaped and armored 193 linear feet of the bank utilizing stackable riprap stone placed on geo-textile fabric. Stone was keyed 2 feet into the lake bottom to protect the toe from erosion and installed up the bank to the mean high water mark of the lake. The bank was graded to a manageable slope, and seed and mulch were applied to the site.



Before



After

Education

Conservation Field Days

Conservation Field Days is an exciting way to give sixth grade students from around Cayuga County the opportunity to become better acquainted with natural resources and the environment. Professionals from various fields conduct short educational programs, enabling the students to learn not only about the subject matter discussed, but also see nature and conservation occupations in action.



Owasco Lake Watershed Specialist, Andrew Snell, teaching on watershed, tributaries, etc.

In 2014 there were 12 stations for the students to attend. The stations covered subjects such as; Invasive Insects, Soils, Watershed Education, Fish Identification, Birds, Boater & Snowmobile Safety, Bats, Trees of Cayuga County and more. Students from 7 local school districts gathered together at Emerson Park over two days in September. After spending the day at the park, students are asked to write an essay detailing their favorite station at field days. The essays are collected and judged, with the top place winners earning recognition, as well as a voucher for 10 tree seedlings and a bird house to continue their environmental learning.



District Grazing Specialist, Jason Cuddeback, talks about soils with the kids.

Regional Envirothon

The Envirothon is a fun, outdoor, team-based program designed to help high school students better understand their environment through exploration of ecology, natural resource management, and current environmental issues. The Envirothon combines classroom learning with hands-on field experience focused around five major topics:

•Soil and Land Use •Aquatic Ecology •Forestry •Wildlife •Environmental Issues



2014 Regional Envirothon winners
"The Cottonwood Extremes"
from Moravia.

District Training Sessions

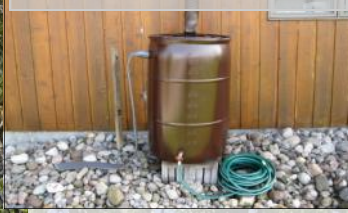
Throughout 2014 the District held nine erosion and sediment control workshops for construction site contractors and operators. Eighty-two trainees attended these workshops, which New York State requires for contractors working on construction sites which disturb at least one acre of soil. The four hour workshops covered permit regulations, contractor responsibilities, construction site inspections, and erosion and sediment control best management practices. The District has several erosion and sediment control workshops scheduled through the spring of 2015 and more classes will likely be held in the late fall.

In June of 2014 the Swamp School held a wetlands delineation course at the Natural Resource Center. Classroom discussion focused on the US Army Corps of Engineers delineation manual and Regional Supplements, Supreme Court decisions in regards to wetlands, wetland indicators (vegetation, hydrology, and soils), and delineation methods. The classroom segment was followed up by two days of looking at wetlands in Central New York. In the field, the participants got experience in recording sampling points and locating the wetland boundaries. The Swamp School plans to return to Auburn in June of 2015.



The Swamp School class looking at soils
along the Seneca River in the Town of
Montezuma.

Rain barrels are an easy way to collect and store water.



Conservation Programs offered at the District

Our staff provides technical assistance directly to the residents of Cayuga County by discussing the concern with the individual, conducting site visits and then, if needed, working with the individual to rectify the concern. Services we provide include site planning, technical guidelines and literature, and permitting assistance. When applicable the CCSWCD seeks grant funding to assist with project implementation.

Rain Barrels– The CCSWCD has 55 gallon rain barrels available to purchase at a minimal cost. A rain barrel is an easy way to collect and store rainwater from rooftops, conserving water and helping to lower costs. Rain barrels collect runoff that could easily travel across paved surfaces, collecting pollution along the way, and into the natural resources.

Barley Rolls– Traditional and chemical methods of controlling the algae in ponds are not always effective or economical. The use of barley straw has been found to be a successful method of algae control. When applied correctly barley rolls do not kill existing algae, but inhibits the growth of new algae. Our barley rolls float near the surface of the water allowing water to flow through the straw, effectively reducing algae levels.

Annual Fish Stocking Sale– The District held an Annual Fish Stocking Sale in May 2014 and September of 2014 to serve landowners in the county. A variety of fish for ponds were available for sale including rainbow trout, largemouth bass, minnows, channel catfish and grass carp. In 2014 the District sold over 3,300 fish including 188 grass carp during the fish stocking sales.



Annual Fish Stocking Sale

Tree, Shrub & Groundcover Sale– The Cayuga County SWCD held their 43rd Annual Spring Tree and Groundcover Sale in May 2014. As in the past, the District offered a variety of conifers, hardwoods, shrubs, groundcovers and perennial plants, fruit trees, and native flowering plants. These seedlings and other plants are a very low-cost way to prevent erosion and to promote wildlife in your area, create noise and visual buffers, and are perfect for creating natural snow and wind breaks. In 2014 the District sold over 11,000 Trees, Shrubs and Groundcovers in our Annual Tree Sale.

Zero Phosphorous Fertilizer– Most lawns in New York State do not need additional phosphorus for healthy growth. Plants will only absorb enough phosphorous as needed, leading the excess to be washed into streams, lakes, and reservoirs. Fertilizer in water can create excess algae, plant growth and green scum that poses a threat to water quality and aquatic species. Therefore, under New York State law, fertilizer containing phosphorous may only be applied under approved conditions. The District offers zero-phosphorous fertilizer at a low cost price to protect our freshwater resources.

Bird & Bat Houses– Wooden nesting boxes help promote backyard conservation and increase the population of local birds and bats. Locally made wooden nesting boxes that provide safe habitat for bluebirds, screech owls, kestrels, wood ducks, and bats are offered for sale at the District office.



Cedar and Pine Blue Bird Boxes provide safe habitat.

Septic System Inspections & Dye Testing– The District provides services to county landowners for septic system inspections (dye tests) that are mandated by the Cayuga County Health Department. The District also provides percolation tests, septic system designs and inspections of newly installed septic systems in compliance with Cayuga County and NY State Health Codes.

Agricultural Land Assessment– 182 Soil Group Worksheets were completed for landowners in Cayuga County in 2014. The Agricultural Land Assessment Program is a state-wide program that provides the opportunity for farmland owners to receive real property assessments based on the value of their land for agricultural production rather than on its development value. Eligibility requirements are outlined by the State Office of Real Property and Department of Ag and Markets, and determined by local assessors.

Cayuga County Soil & Water Conservation District

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