

CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS

Conservation in Action

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2015 Annual Report

THE CAYUGA COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

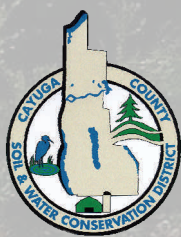
Doug Kierst, CPESC, CPSWQ	<i>Executive Director</i>
Sandy Huey	<i>Watershed Program Manager</i>
John Fraser, CPESC, CCA	<i>Nutrient Management Specialist</i>
Jason Cuddeback, CCA	<i>Grazing Specialist</i>
Valerie Horning	<i>Conservation District Technician</i>
Wanda Jakaub	<i>Principal Account Clerk</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>
Timothy Schneider	<i>Watershed Inspector</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, Dairyman'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.

2015 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>

"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 the Executive Director

The year 2015 saw some of the coldest monthly temperatures on record, near record precipitation for June and recurring Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) across NYS, and particularly in Cayuga County. These occurrences have raised the awareness level for the need to protect our natural resources.

The Cayuga County SWCD was once again at the forefront of working with local residents and municipalities to address environmental concerns. We worked with the agricultural community to evaluate, design and implement Best Management Practices to address field erosion and nutrient management concerns. We worked closely with the Owasco Lake Inspection Program to identify high priority ditch and streambank stabilization areas and local Highway Departments to remedy culvert and drainage issues.

We would not be able to provide the programs and services necessary to complete the work we do, without the support that we receive from the Cayuga County Legislature. Local residents from the ag community and members of the Owasco Watershed Lake Association voiced their support of the Cayuga SWCD to the Legislature, who in turn made the decision **not** to reduce our appropriation for the upcoming year, as had occurred in the 3 years prior.

The Value of the SWCD in Cayuga County

Since it was established by the County Board of Supervisors in August of 1944, the Cayuga SWCD has been actively involved with the protection of natural resources throughout the County. The benefits that come with having a local, technical program dedicated to resource concerns includes the immediate availability to provide important technical assistance, local knowledge of the landowners and the environmental resources, an extensive network of partner agencies at the State and Federal levels and the ability to look at the broad picture of the landscape.

Agricultural Assistance:

The role that agriculture plays in the economy of Cayuga County is substantial. As a result, farms and farm businesses need to remain viable and sustainable to provide healthy, local food, maintain a diversity of open space and continue to provide needed jobs. According to the most recent Census of Agriculture (2012), Cayuga County ranked #2 in NYS in the total value of agricultural products sold with \$293,474,000. When our favorable agricultural environment is combined with statistics that indicate the County has the most freshwater shoreline in NYS, a healthy balance must be obtained. The SWCD has the opportunity to have a significant impact throughout our community as a result of its capability to work directly with private landowners as well as local municipalities.

The programs provided by the SWCD to assist agricultural operations in remaining sustainable and viable include the Agricultural Environmental Management Program (AEM), assistance with nutrient management planning, the promotion of soil health practices, oversight of water quality protecting best management practice (BMP) implementation, and conservation mowing and seeding. In 2015, the SWCD received \$1.6 million in grant funding for important projects on Cayuga County farms. The funding is focused directly on agricultural BMP implementation. This is in addition to the ongoing conservation work that farms complete utilizing their own resources. In addition, the SWCD works closely with our Federal partners, including the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), to promote additional conservation programs, many of which are available to assist with BMP implementation projects.

Non-Agricultural Residential and Municipal Assistance:

The Cayuga SWCD also works closely with the non-agricultural landowners and municipalities throughout the County. We further our efforts on protecting water quality through programs that focus on stormwater management, wastewater management, aquatic vegetation control, streambank and shoreline stabilization, proper site drainage, critical area stabilization/seeding, roadside stabilization measures and the proper recycling of yard waste.

Cayuga County is home to a very diverse collection of water bodies. Lake Ontario defines the northern boundary of the County which also includes all or parts of three Finger Lakes - Cayuga, Owasco, and Skaneateles. In addition there are several smaller water bodies including Cross Lake, Duck Lake, Lake Como, and Otter Lake. The District's Aquatic Vegetation Control Program's objectives are to increase the accessibility and usability of the County's water bodies, while seeking to leave the lakes in the most ecologically intact manner possible. Over the past 5 years, we have removed an average of 1,933 cubic yards per year of vegetation from the waterbodies that we harvest.

The stabilization of exposed and eroding critical areas continues to be another important area of focus for the SWCD. We work closely with municipalities to review and address areas of concern. In 2015, the Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection Program evaluated roadside ditches throughout the watershed and received grant funding that will be utilized to stabilize the sites that were identified in the assessment process.

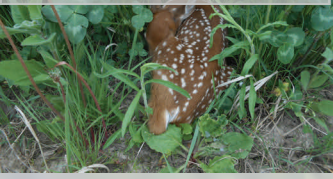
Being located in the Finger Lakes Region has myriad benefits, primarily an abundance of clean, fresh water. Farming operations and many others benefit from the availability of clean water. For instance, the tourism industry including recreational boating, hiking and fishing opportunities thrive throughout the County.

The Cayuga SWCD recognizes and appreciates the support the County Legislature provides. Without their support, we would not have the opportunity to leverage additional funds that are used to sustain and grow our water quality focused programs and services.

***"Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap,
but by the seeds that you plant"***

- Robert Louis Stevenson

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 for various projects, including: pasture, hay fields, wildlife and pollinator habitat, 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 2015**

District staff planted 29 acres of wildlife habitat and 28 acres of pasture. If you are interested in seeding, you should contact Jason Cuddeback.

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 a 15 foot width 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 2015, the Cayuga SWCD mowed 245 acres of pasture and wildlife habitat and approximately 425 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 2015, the Cayuga SWCD used its wood waste recycling services to recycle approximately 34,725 cubic yards of wood waste for 12 municipal organizations.**

Critical Area Seeding

Soil erosion and sedimentation are 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. Using our 1,000 gallon hydroseeder, 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 2015, the Cayuga SWCD completed critical area seeding on 5 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 2015 the District developed three new CNMP's and updated three existing CNMP's, totaling 2,290 acres.**

Dutch Hollow Watershed Project, Site 4



In an effort to reduce field erosion and minimize the potential for displaced sediment to enter Dutch Hollow Brook, the Cayuga SWCD worked with an agricultural producer to install a grassed waterway. The project included the re-establishment of a farm ditch to channel high flows and the installation of 1,400 feet of grassed waterway, seeded down to cool season grass mixture. The project was completed as part of a local initiative to protect Owasco Lake with funding secured by Senator James L. Seward (51st District) and Assemblyman Gary Finch (126th District).

Filtrex sediment and erosion practices installed to reduce surface flow during construction.

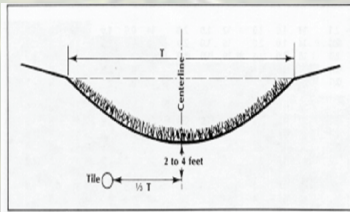
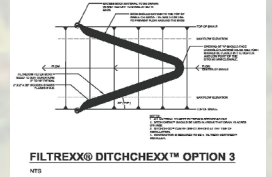


Figure 7. Minimum spacing for a tile drain beneath a grassed waterway.



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 pesticides, oil based paints, and household chemicals. **Attendance was up 5% this year, and the total weight of hazardous materials collected was just under 20,000 pounds.**

- **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 where 1,845 participants recycled over 190,000 pounds of electronics waste that were brought to be properly recycled. Attendance set a new record, up 10.6% from last year. TV's and computer monitors also set a record at over 2,300 units recycled.**

- **TIRE ROUNDUP-** Old tires can be brought in by county residents for a small fee. Lead weights are removed and then the tires are shredded to be reused as road building and drainage materials. **This year, 192 participants recycled approximately 2,500 tires and 23 pounds of lead during the event held on June 13, 2015.**

- **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 tree seedling. The trees are chipped with the District's tubgrinder and used as mulch. **Nearly 400 trees were traded and recycled in winter 2015.**

Be on the lookout for dates of the upcoming 2016 recycling events.





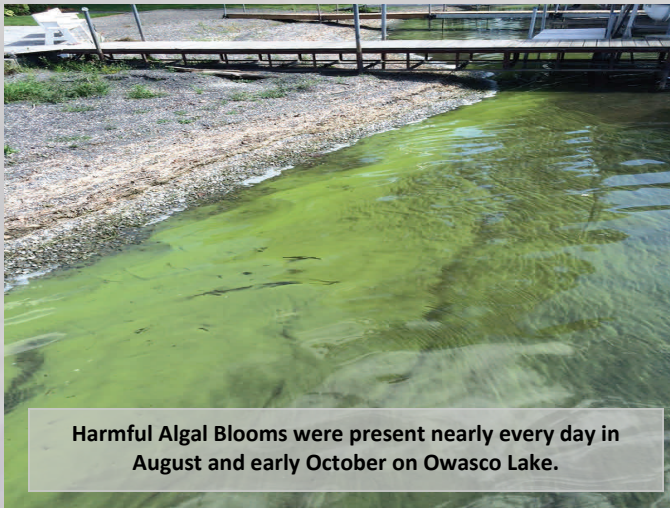
Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection Program

Year in Review

May and June were extraordinarily wet months in central New York, with nearly 14 inches of rainfall. As a result, the Owasco Lake watershed experienced heavy rain events causing drainage concerns and severe erosion. The Inspection Program staff was very busy during this period, providing technical assistance and documenting areas of concern. The heavy runoff events enriched the lake with nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen, and combined with the warmer temperatures of the summer months, resulted in multiple Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) late July through early October.

Throughout the year, staff collected water samples from around the watershed to test the waters for bacteria, nutrients, harmful algae, and other pollution. Over 350 water samples were taken, including sampling programs from OWLA, the HAB Program, HydroLab deployment, and single rainfall event samples from areas of concern.

The Inspection Program was awarded three separate grants: An Arbor Day Grant (\$1,000), Sea Grant for Tributary Crossing Signs (\$~14,000), and a Revitalization Grant for Road Ditch Stabilization (\$~200,000). These three grants will not only help protect water quality, but add an educational component to the watershed.



Harmful Algal Blooms were present nearly every day in August and early October on Owasco Lake.



Heavy rains in the spring resulted in severe erosion on open ground resulting in excess nutrient flow into the lake.

The Inspection Program Welcomes New Staff

We would like to thank the City of Auburn and the Town of Owasco for a boost in Program funding in 2015. The additional funds enabled the Inspection Program to expand its efforts and create a new Watershed Inspector position. **Tim Schneider** was hired in May 2015 as the new Inspector. Tim compliments the program with a wealth of knowledge and experiences related to watershed management, including working with Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District for the summer 2014. Tim is a recent graduate from SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF) with a degree in Environmental Science and a focus in Watershed Science. He is excited to apply his background knowledge to Owasco Lake and the watershed, assisting with water quality concerns and building working relationships with all residents.

Owasco Lake Watershed Management Plan

On Monday, November 30, 2015, an Owasco Lake Watershed Management Plan public meeting was scheduled at Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES at 7 pm. There were approximately 45 people in attendance for this meeting. The project team analyzed the factors affecting water quality and habitat conditions, and identified measures for restoration and protection. This meeting was held to inform the public of findings from the project team and allow them the opportunity to offer their insights on the development of the Owasco Lake Watershed Management and Waterfront Revitalization Plan which has been underway for over a year.

Aquatic Vegetation Control (AVC) Program

The AVC program provides relief to the County's waterbodies that have become impaired by dense vegetative growth. Due to nutrient inputs and sunlight, aquatic vegetation is an unavoidable reality in lake 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 objective is 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 in shallow water. This boat cuts and picks up the weeds. The second boat is a transport boat, 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 2015, the Aquatic Vegetation Control Program removed from Cayuga County waterbodies: • 801 cubic yards (Yd³) Aquatic Vegetation • 104,130 dry pounds Aquatic Vegetation • 2,184 pounds of Nitrogen • 185 pounds of Phosphorus • 1,159 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
2015	45	306	397	53
2014	940	742	306	122
2013	1,162	428	413	76
2012	535	887	1,224	137
2011	646	708	492	46

Cayuga County Manure Management Meeting

On Monday, November 16, 2015 a manure management meeting was held at the Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES meeting room at 7 pm. The meeting was hosted by Cayuga County legislators Keith Batman and Mike Didio and facilitated by Nick Colas of the County Planning and Economic Development Office. Approximately 75 people attended this meeting. The meeting's purpose was to discuss how local farmers, non-farmers, municipal agencies and legislators plan to improve the water quality of the County's waterbodies. A working group and its advisory committee compiled a "14-point Countywide Agenda for Action regarding Improving Manure Management". The agenda for action and which agencies would be responsible for administering each action and its follow through were discussed. Before the actions are implemented, the agenda will need to be approved by the County Legislature. It is important to have involvement from all entities in order to achieve the goal of improving the water quality in Cayuga County.



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



Silage Leachate Concrete Apron



Water & Sediment Control Basin



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

2015 AEM Accomplishments

Tier I -	8
Tier II -	8
Tier IIIA -	3
Tier IIIB -	3
Tier IV -	3
Tier VA -	3

Funded Round 21 Ag Nonpoint Source Projects for Farms:

- Silage Leachate Control Structure, \$173,905.00 for the Cayuga Lake Watershed.
- Erosion Control System, \$78,990.00 for the Owasco Lake Watershed.
- Nutrient & Sediment Reduction, \$458,590.00 for the Cayuga Lake Watershed.
- Manure Management Project, \$319,054.00 for the Cayuga Lake Watershed.

Funded by NYS DEC:

- Soil Health Mini Grant, \$25,000 for the Owasco Lake Watershed.

SOIL HEALTH SEMINAR AT CUDDEBACK FARMS & THE 2015 EMPIRE FARM DAYS

Ray Archuleta talks Soil Health



Cover Crop Inter-seeder



Measuring Erosion with Rain Drops



For every 1% increase in organic matter your soil will hold approximately 4% more water.

Reduced Tillage Farmer Panel



Empire Farm Days, Soil Health Building



Assistance to Municipalities & Organizations

In 2015 the District met with 19 different local and state government departments to address erosion and drainage concerns at 30 separate sites. District personnel completed surveys and designs for 11 of these sites. The District also helped to obtain joint permits from the NYSDEC and the Army Corps that were required for several of the projects. Two of these projects were installed by District equipment operators with assistance from the local municipalities.

One project completed in 2015 stabilized an eroding road bank along Booth Road in the Town of Scipio. The unstabilized road shoulder dropped off steeply for 18 feet down into an Owasco Lake tributary. Soil, gravel, and asphalt were eroding into the stream, while creating a hazard to motorists. One truck had already slid off of this embankment in the winter of 2014.

District personnel extended the existing 42" culvert by 20 feet on the downstream side in order to lessen the slope. The toe of the slope was stabilized with three tiers of precast concrete blocks. Stone was then placed above the culvert, sloping up to the newly widened shoulder. The Town of Scipio assisted with the project by trucking stone and installing a new guide rail.



Booth Road Before



Booth Road After



Storm damage along the east side of Mathers Road.

The District staff participated in repairing the Mathers Road washout in the Town of Venice. In June of 2015, severe rains washed out a portion of Mathers Road and runoff from the storm plugged the 36 inch culvert with tree limbs and other debris, causing water to overtop the road. The water flowing across Mathers Road then eroded the roadbed and pavement on the downstream side of the road. The damage was so severe that the road had to be closed while highway departments from Venice, Moravia, and Scipio began remediation.

District staff met with the highway department to discuss ways to improve the culvert and road, so that they can handle future storm events. The Town plans on replacing the existing 36 inch corrugated metal culvert with a 48 inch smooth interior pipe. The District is working with the Town and an engineer to finalize the plan for remediation.

Barnyard Improvement - Town of Ledyard

A concrete barnyard and waste storage facilities were recently completed at a beef farm in the Cayuga Lake watershed, in the Town of Ledyard. The majority of these beef cows are on pasture during the grazing season, but they were wintering on a muddy lot which drained towards the lake. The new barnyard will contain all cows that are not on pasture. Concrete curbs and walls will direct runoff from the barnyard into a series of two storages. The first ramped concrete storage will capture most of the solids before spilling over into a circular concrete tank. The manure from these storages can then be applied to cropland at an appropriate time according to the farm's comprehensive nutrient management plan. This project received cost sharing from the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution Abatement and Control Program.



Before



After

Ross Farm Erosion Control - Town of Fleming



A recently completed water and sediment control basin.

In 2015, the District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service worked with the Ross Farm in the Town of Fleming to plan and implement an erosion control system. State and Federal grants were obtained to help fund the project, which includes 4 water and sediment control basins, 2 underground outlets, 2 diversion ditches, and a grassed waterway on cropland in the Owasco Lake watershed. These structures will capture and transport runoff from the field in a non-erosive manner, thereby reducing the amount of sediment and nutrients that can enter Owasco Lake. This project will also help to alleviate flooding and drainage problems that were occurring in a subdivision located down slope of the cropland.

Peters Dairy Farm—Silage Leachate Collection System—Town of Sennett

A silage leachate collection system was installed on the Peters Dairy Farm in the Seneca River Watershed. The system was installed to capture silage leachate from the existing bunk silo, collect the low flows (highly concentrated leachate) in a tank, and treat the high flows (during rain event) in a vegetated treatment area,

thereby protecting water quality in the Seneca River Watershed. The system consists of a concrete swale to collect the leachate, a collector box to direct the leachate to the appropriate area, a storage tank for the low flows, and a level lip spreader to distribute the high flow leachate to a vegetated treatment area.

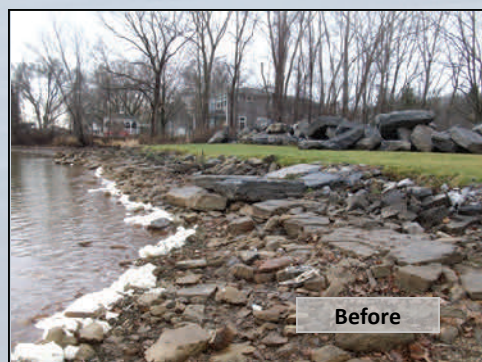


Before



After

Emerson Park Sailboat Launch - Town of Fleming



Before

In 2015, the District completed work on the West side of the Emerson Park sailboat launch on Owasco Lake. Approximately 150' of eroding shoreline was stabilized utilizing large stackable stone, placed on geotextile fabric. Previously, the District had stabilized the area to the East of the sailboat launch. This project will improve water quality, aesthetics and user accessibility to Owasco Lake.



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.



Dairy Princess, Katie Bower, speaking on How Dairy Farms Conserve the Land.

In 2015, there were 12 stations for the students to attend. The stations covered subjects such as: Invasive Species, Insects, How Dairy Farms Conserve the Land, Watershed Education, Fish Identification, Birds, Model Healthy Choices, Bats, The Value of Trees 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.



Scipio Town Supervisor, Janet Reohr, teaching the kids about the Value of Trees

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
The 2015 Regional Envirothon was held at Highland Forest in Fabius, NY on April 29, 2015.



**2015 Regional Envirothon winners
"Without a Trout"
from Skaneateles**

District Training Sessions

Throughout 2015, the District held nine erosion and sediment control workshops for construction site contractors and operators. Seventy-nine 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 2016 and more classes will likely be held in the late fall.



**Executive Director , Doug Kierst at
Stormwater Training Workshop**

2015 Manure Handling Workshop

On March 26, 2015, the District held a Manure Handling Workshop in conjunction with NYS DEC, Cornell Cooperative Extension and Pro-Dairy. The workshop was attended by over 50 area farmers and agency staff discussing concerns in manure handling and application, and what to do in case of a runoff event or equipment failure.

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 otherwise easily travel across paved surfaces, collecting pollution along the way, and into the natural resources area waterways.

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

Annual Fish Stocking Sale– The District held an Annual Fish Stocking Sale in May and September of 2015 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 2015 the District sold over 3,500 fish including 100 grass carp during the fish stocking sales.

Tree, Shrub & Groundcover Sale– The Cayuga County SWCD held their 44th Annual Spring Tree and Groundcover Sale in May 2015. 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 2015 the District sold over 11,000 Trees, Shrubs and Groundcovers in our Annual Tree Sale.

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.

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– 160 Soil Group Worksheets were completed for landowners in Cayuga County in 2015. 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.



Cedar and Pine Blue Bird Boxes provide safe habitat

Cayuga County Soil & Water Conservation District

7413 County House Rd, Auburn, NY 13021

Phone: (315) 252-4171 Ext. 3

Email: cayugaswcd@cayugaswcd.org

Website: www.cayugaswcd.org

Follow us on facebook: www.facebook.com/cayugaswcd