

CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS

Conservation in Action

2016 Annual Report

Highlights:

Staff Information 2
Value of SWCD 3
District Services 4
AEM & Soil Health 5
Dutch Hollow Watershed 6
Recycling Events 7
Manure Mgmt. Working Group 8
Assistance to Municipalities 9
Education 10
Owasco Lake Watershed 11
Conservation Programs 12

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

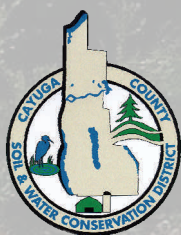
Doug Kierst, CPESC, CPSWQ	<i>Executive Director</i>
Brian Hall, CPESC, CCA, CNMP	<i>Nutrient Management Specialist</i>
Jason Cuddeback, CCA	<i>Grazing Specialist</i>
Jason Schenck	<i>Watershed Conservation Specialist</i>
Valerie Horning	<i>Conservation District Technician</i>
Wanda Jakaub	<i>Principal Account Clerk</i>
Lisa Miller	<i>Senior Typist</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>
Vacant	<i>Soil Conservation Technician</i>
Stephanie Freese	<i>Program Support Specialist</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, as well as 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>
Joe DeForest	<i>County Legislator</i>
Roger Conner	<i>Member, Grange</i>
Dale Kehoe	<i>Member at Large</i>
Steve Nemec	<i>Member at Large</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

As you turn the calendar to another year, you never know what will happen in the upcoming season. Cayuga County was no exception to the hot and dry conditions that persisted throughout the state. While the weather allowed many conservation projects to be completed, it also allowed Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) to briefly occur in many of our waterbodies.

Fortunately, the diversity of our programs allow us to positively impact a wide variety of the natural resource areas of the county through tree and shrub planting, stormwater runoff management assistance to municipalities, stream corridor stabilization, addressing agricultural resource concerns, and assisting with non-agricultural drainage and erosion issues.

In 2016, Cayuga SWCD Staff expended a lot of time and effort, while working closely with many individuals, to look into manure management in the County. In January of 2016, the *Improving Manure Management - A 14 Point Countywide Agenda for Action* was completed and distributed. The nutrient working group of the county Water Quality Management Agency continues to discuss the topic and is working on a set of guidelines that will be presented to the public.

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 2016, the SWCD received \$554,000 in state grants with \$302,000 of landowner cost share to total \$856,000 for important projects on Cayuga County farms. The funding is focused directly on agricultural BMP implementation. This is in addition to the on-going 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 1,977 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 2016 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.

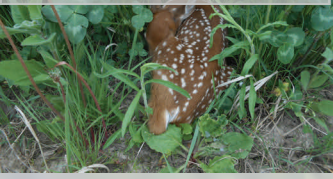
Being located in the Finger Lakes Region has myriad benefits, primarily an abundance of clean, fresh water. Farming operations and many others benefit from the availability of clean water. For instance, the tourism industry including recreational boating, hiking and fishing opportunities thrive throughout 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 2016**

District staff planted 24 acres of wildlife habitat and 35 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 2016, the Cayuga SWCD mowed 41 acres of pasture and wildlife habitat and approximately 208 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 2016, the Cayuga SWCD used its wood waste recycling services to recycle approximately 30,300 cubic yards of wood waste for 10 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 2016, the Cayuga SWCD completed critical area seeding on 3 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.



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 Storage Facility



Prescribed Grazing System

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

Funded Round 22 Ag Nonpoint Source Projects for Farms:

- 3 Silage Leachate Control Structures and 3 Waste Storage Systems, \$508,000.00 for the Cayuga Lake Watershed.
- Erosion Control System (Cover Crops), \$348,000.00 for the Owasco Lake Watershed.

2016 AEM Accomplishments

Tier I -	17
Tier II -	10
Tier IIIA -	5
Tier IIIB -	2
Tier IV -	4
Tier VA -	1

THE 2016 EMPIRE FARM DAYS SOIL HEALTH AROUND THE COUNTY



Clover After Wheat Harvest



Cover Crop Inter-seeder



Empire Farm Days, Soil Health



Cover Crop Tour



Reduced Tillage Tour

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

Dutch Hollow Watershed Project, Site 1

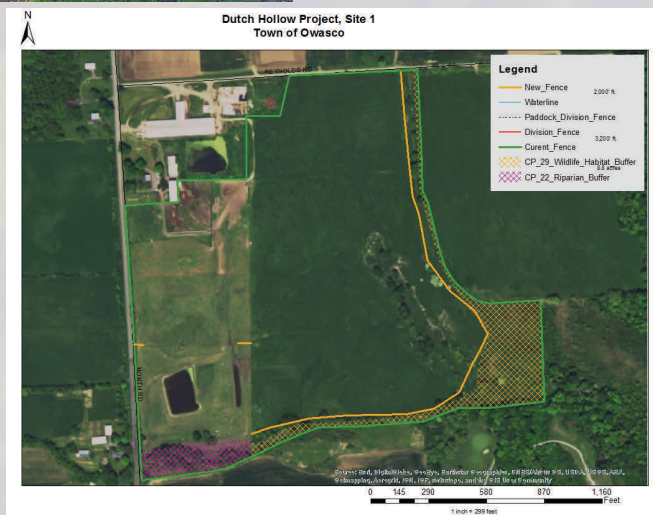


In an effort to reduce field erosion and minimize the potential for displaced sediment to enter Dutch Hollow Brook, the Cayuga SWCD worked with an agricultural producer to re-shape and grade a 350 feet season tributary to Dutch Hollow Br., implement 3,000 feet of exclusion fence to remove animals from the tributary, install 2.0 acres of Riparian Herbaceous Buffer, 14.8 acres of Herbaceous Buffer, and retrofitting a sediment control structure. The project was seeded down using a Conservation seeding mix. 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).

District staff working with local Farm Service Agency (FSA) to match funds under CREP.



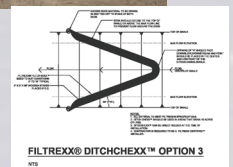
Dutch Hollow Watershed Project, Site 2 & 3



Cayuga SWCD worked with an agricultural producer to install two grassed waterways. The project included installation of a 1,000 feet of grassed waterway along with 1,900 feet of subsurface drainage, seeded down to cool season grass mixture. The installation of these BMP's is estimated to save 13.29 tons of soil per acre per year.



District staff and Cornell University establishing base line data of before and after BMP implementation to measure reductions of nutrient and sediment loading to Dutch Hollow Brook.



Filtrex and sediment and erosion practices were installed to reduce surface flow during and after construc-

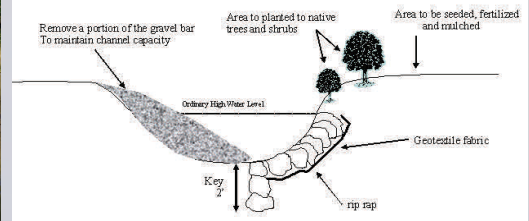
Dutch Hollow Watershed Project, Site 5



Cayuga SWCD worked with a landowner to install and stabilize a portion of Dutch Hollow Brook Streambank. The project included the installation of a 110' rock rip rap along



with shrub plantings and seeded down to a conservation grass seed mixture. The installation of these BMP's is estimated to save 11.7 tons of soil per acre per year.



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-** The County's fall event 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. **The total weight of hazardous materials collected was just over 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 1,772 participants brought in over 125,000 pounds of electronics waste that were brought to be properly recycled. Attendance set new records for the September and November events. Old TV's and computer monitors with lead-glass picture tubes still make up 56% of the weight collected.**
- 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, 234 participants recycled approximately 3,020 tires and 20 pounds of lead during the event held on June 11, 2016.**



The attendance this year for the 5 events totaled 2,263 vehicles, just shy of the all-time record set in 2015 (2,315) and only the second time we have had over 2,150 vehicles/households in one year.

- 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 2016.**

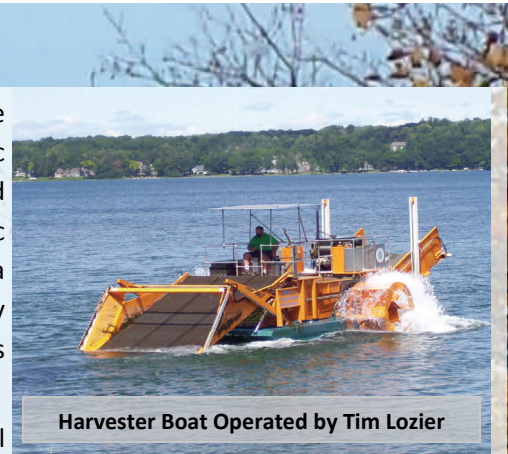
Be on the lookout for dates of the upcoming 2017 recycling events.

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.



Harvester Boat Operated by Tim Lozier



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

In 2016, the Aquatic Vegetation Control Program removed from Cayuga County waterbodies: • 2,110 cubic yards (Yd³) Aquatic Vegetation • 274,300 dry pounds Aquatic Vegetation • 5,759 pounds of Nitrogen • 489 pounds of Phosphorus • 3,058 pounds of Potassium

Volume (Yd ³)	Owasco Lake	Cayuga Lake	Fair-Haven Bay	Lake Como
2016	734	581	795	N/A
2015	45	306	397	53
2014	940	742	306	122
2013	1,162	428	413	76
2012	535	887	1,224	137

Cayuga County Manure Management Working Group

The Cayuga County Manure Management Working Group is a committee that was organized by County Legislators Keith Batman and Michael Didio to investigate how practices involving the storage, application, processing, and transport of manure can be improved so that their negative impacts on water quality are minimized. The Working Group appointed an Advisory Committee to make recommendations addressing concerns regarding manure management. The Working Group and Advisory Committee developed a Fourteen-Point Countywide Agenda for Action that was adopted by the County Legislators in January of 2016. Certain action items from the Fourteen-Point plan began in 2016. For more information on the Fourteen-Point Countywide Agenda for Action, please see: http://www.cayugacounty.us/Portals/0/planning/WQMA/Documents/Agenda%20for%20Action_Jan_26_2016.pdf?ver=2016-01-27-150215-000.

The whole objective of this program is to improve manure management throughout Cayuga County. The responsible parties are requested to report to the Manure Management Working Group on a quarterly basis to review progress being made on the action items. This will allow discussion regarding any obstacles that have been encountered and how, if necessary, any projects should be modified, additional resources employed, or schedules extended. In turn, the Manure Management Working Group will, to the best of its ability, support the efforts of the responsible parties to execute the action items. Eventually, the Manure Management Working Group will dissolve and support of this Agenda for Action will be provided by the Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency.

Assistance to Municipalities & Organizations

In 2016 the District met with 21 different local and state government departments to address erosion and drainage concerns at 40 separate sites. District personnel completed surveys and designs for 9 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. Three of these projects were installed by District equipment operators with assistance from the local municipalities.



Mathers Road Stabilization—Town of Venice

The Cayuga SWCD 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

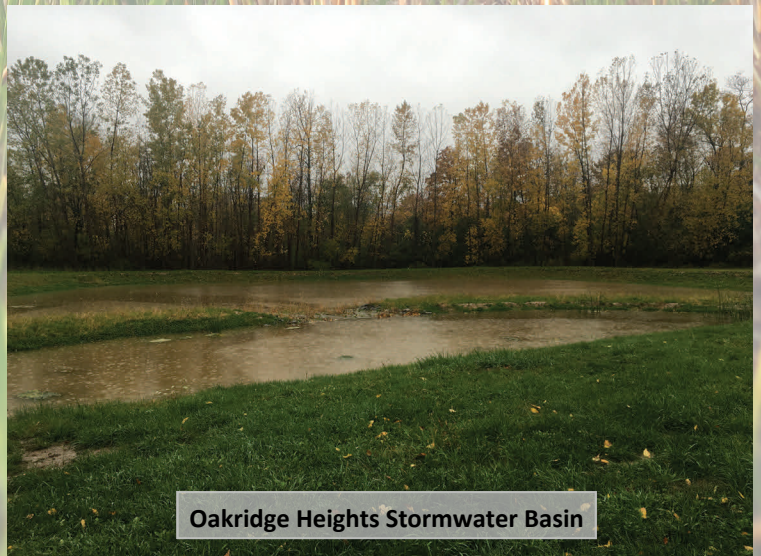
culvert and road, so that they can handle future storm events. The District worked with the Town and an engineer to finalize the plan for remediation.

In the summer of 2016, the Cayuga SWCD Staff, along with the Town of Venice Highway Department, installed a reinforced road bed utilizing manufactured products, a new 72" culvert pipe, and retaining wall built from stone and other manufactured products. The new structure allows proper passage of stormwater. The project was a great success and Mathers Rd. is now open to the public.



Oakridge Heights Stormwater Basin—Town of Owasco

Cayuga SWCD Staff also completed construction of a stormwater retention basin in the Town of Owasco during the summer of 2016. The basin handles stormwater runoff from an adjacent housing development. The basin includes rock outlet protection, a forebay for settling any suspended sediment, as well as a concrete outlet structure for controlled release of stormwater. The new basin serves as excellent habitat for many aquatic and wetland animals as well as benefitting water quality in the Owasco Lake Watershed.



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.



Baltimore Woods Nature Center at a Crime Scene Investigation station.



Owasco Lake Watershed Inspector, Tim Schneider, teaching the kids about Stream Dynamics.

In 2016, there were 12 stations for the students to attend. The stations covered subjects such as: Invasive Species, Stream Dynamics, Crime Scene Investigation, 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.

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 2016 Regional Envirothon was held at Beaver Lake Nature Center in Baldwinsville, NY on April 20, 2016.



**2016 Regional Envirothon winners
"Hydrizilla"
from Weedsport**

District Training Sessions

Throughout 2016, the District held eleven erosion and sediment control workshops for construction site contractors and operators. One hundred and eighteen 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 2017.



Executive Director, Doug Kierst at Stormwater Training Workshop

2016 Manure Handling Workshop

On February 24, 2016, the District held a Manure Handling Workshop in conjunction with NYS DEC, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Pro-Dairy. The workshop was attended by over 75 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.

Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection Program



The Program's mission is: *to make regular and thorough inspections of Owasco Lake, its watercourses, and its watershed to ascertain compliance with the Rules and Regulations of the Owasco Lake Watershed and to provide educational outreach to the watershed community to foster lake stewardship.*



Limited rainfall resulted in many streams to dry up, along with the Owasco being 18 inches below normal summer water levels. Emerson Park (above), known for the many events the parks host and proximity to the lake, experienced very dry weather into August.

Road Crossing Grant

Tributary Adoption and Identification Pilot Program, or "TAIPP", was funded by New York Sea Grant in 2015 to develop and install 25 stream-road crossing identification signs in the towns of Owasco, Niles, and Fleming. TAIPP was created to assist watershed residents and visitors with the knowledge of understanding where streams originate, and where they eventually enter Owasco Lake. In addition, the signs will allow for quick and easy reporting of a potential violation, such as land disturbance, discolored water, or illegal disposal of animal carcasses into a protected tributary.

Each sign contains the main watershed (Owasco Lake), the sub watershed (i.e. Dutch Hollow), and a location ID (i.e T3A) that is specific to stream-road crossing which allows Inspection Program staff, Emergency Response staff, NYSDEC, or municipalities to quickly locate the potential violation. The Quick Response (QR) code, is designed to be scanned by a smartphone, allowing the user to be redirected to the inspection programs website where additional information for a specific site will be downloaded. The QR code website information includes watershed size, sampling results, biologic information and supplemental information. A QR scanner can be downloaded off your smartphone's app/play store for free.

We hope to expand the sign coverage to the entire watershed, and build off the success of TAIPP, and make changes where necessary once the public becomes active users to this unique program. We encourage watershed residents and visitors to learn more about the watershed through TAIPP, and become active watershed stewards to help ensure the water quality of Owasco Lake is held at a high standard.

Abnormally Dry Year

For most of 2016, the watershed was in a moderate drought with only 7.2 inches of rain falling during May, June and July leading to brown grass and lowered lake levels. This year was very different than 2015 where the region experienced one of the wettest springs of recent memory, and causing severe erosion and runoff events into Owasco Lake.

The drier conditions were a well needed break for the watershed after experiencing two wet years with high nutrient loading from runoff and increasingly strong storms that are becoming more frequent. The weather allowed for a successful construction season, where many Best Management Practices (BMPs) were implemented and high risk erosion areas were stabilized before the winter freeze and spring thaw.

The Inspection Program saw many conservation practices in 2016 from the Agriculture Community planting thousands of acres of cover crops to hold the soil in place, to lakeshore owners practicing good lawn care, and municipalities stabilizing road ditches. Certainly, more can be done from everyone in the watershed to ensure the water quality in the number one property, but small changes can have a major impact on the environment.

Tributary Adoption and Identification Project

Owasco Lake

Dutch Hollow

Brook

Subwatershed



Report issues to
Watershed Inspection Program
(315) 427-5188

Location ID

T3A




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 2016 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 2016 the District sold over 3,000 fish including 121 grass carp during the fish stocking sales.

Tree, Shrub & Groundcover Sale– The Cayuga County SWCD held their 45th Annual Spring Tree and Groundcover Sale in May 2016. 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 2016 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– 205 Soil Group Worksheets were completed for landowners in Cayuga County in 2016. 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