



CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS

Conservation in Action

2020 Annual Report

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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>
Brian Hall, CPESC, CCA, CNMP	<i>Nutrient Management Specialist</i>
Jason Cuddeback, CCA	<i>Grazing Specialist</i>
Valerie Horning	<i>Conservation District Technician</i>
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Timothy Schneider, NYSECCP	<i>Watershed Conservation Specialist</i>
Wanda Jakaub	<i>Principal Account Clerk</i>
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Pat DeVoe	<i>Motor Equipment Operator</i>
Dan Bowen	<i>Motor Equipment Operator</i>
Tim Lozier	<i>Motor Equipment Operator</i>
Sean McCarthy	<i>Motor Equipment Operator</i>
Al Noga	<i>Motor Equipment Operator</i>
Denise Dixon	<i>Cleaner</i>

2020 Board of Directors

Ray Lockwood	<i>Chairman, Farm Bureau</i>
James Young	<i>Vice Chairman, Member at Large</i>
Andrew Dennison	<i>County Legislator</i>
Charles Ripley	<i>County Legislator</i>
Roger Conner	<i>Member, Grange</i>
Terry Baxter	<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

It goes without saying that 2020 was a year unlike any other. The lockdowns, mandated social distancing measures, flexible scheduling and learning to adjust to meetings via web-conferencing, created a few challenges to an agency that takes pride in meeting with people in person (and in the field) and tackling the situation head-on.

The nature of the work that the SWCD is involved with on a regular basis, highlights the importance of being adaptable to any situation. We often find ourselves involved in evaluating challenging natural resource concerns and it is critical that we come up with a solution to mitigate any potential threats to water quality. While the COVID pandemic may have disrupted our regular routine, our outstanding and dedicated Staff were (and continue to be) able to adapt quickly and accomplish the vital and essential work of enhancing and protecting our natural resources.

While the COVID pandemic may have temporarily altered the “landscape” of how we conduct day to day operations, the SWCD continued to work with conservation minded landowners and municipalities to permanently change the environmental “landscape” for the future.

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 75 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, landowners and government agencies “go to first” with their natural resource related problems and concerns. We take a hands on approach to evaluating a concern by providing technical assistance to identify potential solutions and coordinate the implementation of the corrective measures that may be needed utilizing our trained staff and our network of partners.

In Memoriam of Steve Nemec 2006-2021



The Cayuga SWCD Family lost an important environmental steward and watershed advocate when Board Member Steve Nemec passed away January 13, 2021. He served on the Cayuga SWCD Board since 2006 and also served on the Skaneateles Lake Watershed Ag Program Review Committee Board since its' inception in 1994. His encouragement to "carry on the good fight!" will stay with us forever.

Below: Steve working his land on Grand View Farms



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 (2017), Cayuga County ranked #2 in NYS in the total market value of agricultural products sold with \$287,853,000. 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 Cayuga 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 Cayuga 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 2020, the Cayuga SWCD assisted with the implementation of on farm agricultural BMPs totaling \$1,526,815. The landowners contributed \$590,093 towards the costs, while State funding was leveraged to cover the additional \$936,722. The Cayuga SWCD was awarded an additional \$2,610,514 in new grant funding (Round 26 AgNPS and CRF 5) for important projects on Cayuga County farms. Participating farms will be contributing \$ 1,282,476 towards the BMP's for a total of \$3,892,990 of new projects. 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 Cayuga 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 Cayuga SWCD'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 1,791 cubic yards the equivalent to 150 large dump truck loads per year of vegetation from the waterbodies that we harvest.

We continue to collaborate with our local Highway Department Superintendents to identify locations in need of assistance. The stabilization of exposed and eroding critical areas continues to be an important area of focus for the Cayuga SWCD. We have worked alongside the Highway Department personnel to address their local concerns including culvert replacements, rock lining of road ditches and installing streambank stabilization measures to protect important infrastructure. Utilizing the North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative (NAACC) protocol, the Cayuga SWCD was also able to evaluate 58 culvert crossings in Cayuga County.

Being located in the Finger Lakes Region has many 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.

***“Don’t judge each day by the harvest you reap,
but by the seeds that you plant”***

- Robert Louis Stevenson

District Services

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



No-Till Conservation Seeding

The Cayuga SWCD 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. If you are interested in seeding, you should contact Jason Cuddeback.

Conservation Mowing

The Cayuga SWCD 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 Cayuga SWCD has been increasing the number of acres mowed and trimmed. **In 2020, the Cayuga SWCD mowed 10 acres of wildlife habitat and approximately 202 miles of conservation ditches, field edges and roadsides.**



Bat Wing Deck can cut 15 feet in one pass

Critical Area Seeding

Soil erosion and sedimentation are leading causes of water quality degradation. The Cayuga SWCD 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 Cayuga SWCD can quickly respond to requests for assistance. The Cayuga SWCD provides hydroseeding for county, town and village governmental departments. **In 2020, the Cayuga SWCD completed critical area seeding on 23 acres of eroding roadbanks and disturbed areas.**



Cayuga SWCD 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.

Filmore Road Streambank and Flood Mitigation Project

The Cayuga SWCD was awarded funding in 2019 to address erosion and flooding concerns along Filmore Road in the Town of Summerhill after a severe storm led to a section of culvert becoming dislodged and another two sections to completely fail. District Staff worked with HUNT Engineers, Architects and Surveyors to design a new stormwater conveyance system with inlet and outlet protection to convey stream flows in an efficient manner, while also providing road shoulder integrity to Filmore Road. District Staff worked with the Town of Summerhill to install 320 feet of squash pipe, back fill, inlet and outlet protection, and hydroseed the work site. Additional work at the site will be completed in 2021 and 2022 to stabilize another section of the stream to prevent further erosion and nutrient loss.



Assistance to Municipalities & Organizations

Firelane 24 Bank Stabilization

Over 120 feet of streambank was protected with medium stone fill along an unnamed tributary of Owasco Lake in the Town of Niles. Recent storms caused the toe of the streambank to become unstable, resulting in the bank to be continually eroded away, threatening the foundation of an old barn.



Richardson Hill Road Culvert Replacement Project

In 2017, a storm rolled through parts of the Town of Sempronius and produced around 5.5 inches of rain in less than a two hour time frame. Severe flooding caused the stream to back up and overtop the road due to an undersized culvert, which resulted in the downstream shoulder of the road to be washed away, including the last section of culvert pipe. District Staff worked with the Town of Sempronius to secure a Multi-Model Program mini grant from New York State to offset part of the cost to increase the size of the culvert, while also improving aquatic passage. A bottomless arch culvert was chosen to promote brook trout habitat and allow the local populations of fish to access over 2.5 miles of new stream reaches. District Staff worked with the Town of Sempronius highway to install the culvert, as well as Holbrook Precast who produced and set the concrete footers for the Project.





Wycoff Road Ditch Stabilization Project

District Staff worked with the Cayuga County Highway Department to stabilize 1,350 feet of road ditch along Wycoff Road in the Town of Scipio. Due to steep slopes and multiple inputs of runoff from the surrounding landscape, the ditches became increasingly deeper and unstable. Medium stone fill, chinked in with gabion stone fill, was used to protect the ditches from severe erosion. Rock lined channels allow water velocities to be slowed due to multiple angles of the rock. As water velocities decrease, so to is the potential for erosion which can cause safety concerns for the road shoulder.



Ensenore Shoreline Stabilization Project

Over 130 feet of shoreline was protected using medium stone fill and gabion stone fill after an old log cribbing structure began to fail after multiple years of wave and ice damage. Shoreline protection is a critical component to littoral zones, as shoreline erosion has been identified as a main source of nutrient inputs that feed harmful algal blooms.

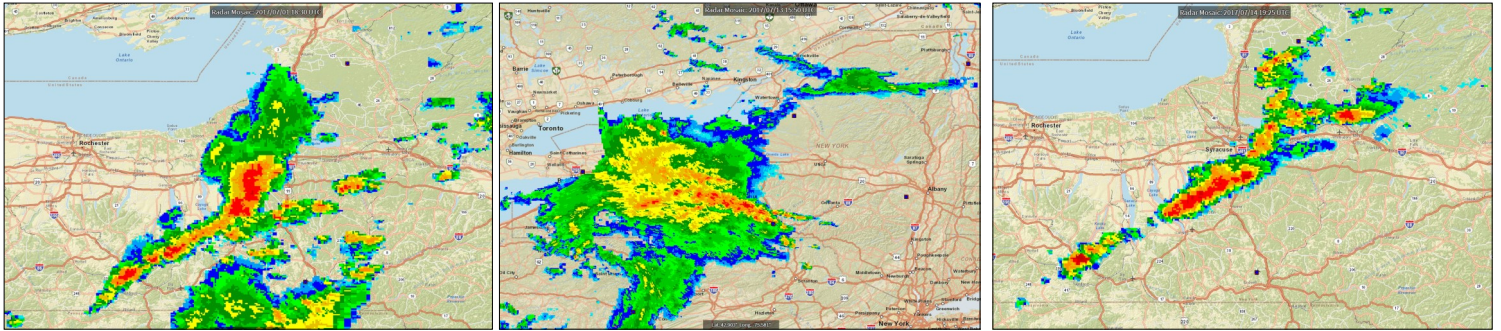


Dill Road Streambank Stabilization and Culvert Replacement

Great Gully Creek in the Town of Ledyard was threatening the stability and safety of Dill Road due to continual meandering. The elevated road surface and the high suspended solid composition of the stream during heavy flow events, caused the stream to become unstable, resulting in streambank erosion and meandering of the stream corridor. To solve this issue, the Cayuga SWCD realigned the stream, stabilized the banks with medium stone fill, and increased the culvert size to handle larger storm events and promote sediment transport.

West Ave, Oak Hill Flood Mitigation Project

Recent storms have caused severe flooding in the Village of Moravia along West Ave, Oak Hill Road and North Main Street due to infrastructure failure and increased storm intensity and frequency. In 2017 alone, there were three severe storms in a two week period that produced 6 inches of rain, with some isolated locations of up to 11 inches. The Cayuga SWCD worked with HUNT Engineers, Architects and Surveyors to design an improved storm water system to convey runoff in an efficient manner, capture sediment and gravel, and stabilize highly erodible areas. To solve the complexity of the flooding, the project was broken up into a 5 phase approach: Daylight the stream, construct a sediment capturing basin, stabilize the streambanks and road ditches, create stormwater storage and convey runoff in an efficient manner.



Phase 1

Due to difficult elevations and undersized infrastructure, 620 feet of subsurface drainage had been choked with sediment and gravel that severely constricted the flow of an unnamed tributary to the Owasco Inlet. To alleviate the flooding issues and prevent the flow from backing up and over topping the road, the Cayuga SWCD removed around 250 feet of 30 inch HDPE culvert and stabilized the newly established channel with Rolled Erosion Control Products. The daylighted stream will allow for more efficient sediment and water transport which should take pressure off the system and prevent flooding during minor storm events.



Phase 2

To capture any sediment/gravel that is transported downstream before it enters the subsurface drainage system, the Cayuga SWCD worked with Holbrook Precast to install two concrete sediment basins. The idea behind the basins is to allow for sediment and gravel to drop out of suspension and only allow stormwater to flow through the culvert. Two steel grates, constructed locally by Cascade Fabrication, were installed with eye hooks for easy removal, allowing the Village of Moravia to perform continual maintenance.



Phase 3-5

In 2021, the Cayuga SWCD plans to stabilize around 350 feet of highly erodible streambank by installing Medium Stone Fill and bioengineering practices. Additionally, a large stormwater basin will be constructed upstream to capture runoff and slowly release it over a longer period of time, reducing the flooding downstream by around 30%. Finally, the Cayuga SWCD will partner with the Cayuga County Highway Department to install subsurface drainage, drop inlets and reestablish the drainage ditch along Oak Hill Road, to slow water velocities and to prevent road shoulder damage.



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 2020, the Aquatic Vegetation Control Program removed from Cayuga County waterbodies: • 1,620 cubic yards (Yd³) Aquatic Vegetation (equivalent to 150 large dump truck loads) • 210,600 dry pounds Aquatic Vegetation • 4,422 pounds of Nitrogen • 376 pounds of Phosphorus • 2,349 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
2020	451	673	382	114
2019	489	756	252	138
2018	474	496	780	38
2017	872	627	91	214
2016	734	581	795	N/A

Road Ditch and Critical Area Hydroseeding Program

District Staff assisted towns in Cayuga County to hydroseed road side ditches that are cleaned of accumulated sediment to reestablish vegetation and prevent future erosion. The District was able to hydroseed 5 miles of road ditch in 2020. This was considerably lower than normal due to the abnormally dry growing season and limited amount of ditch stabilization work that was completed due to work schedules affected by COVID precautions.





Agricultural Environmental Management Program

The County's **Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM)** Program is a voluntary, watershed based, locally-led effort to protect and enhance the environment while maintaining the viability of agriculture in Cayuga County.

The AEM Program in Cayuga County is administered through the Cayuga SWCD and it is designed to assist farmers in protecting the natural resources that they depend on. Through AEM participation our farmers can document their environmental stewardship and further advance their positive contributions to our community, food systems, the economy, and the environment. Local AEM resource professionals assist farms through assessment, planning and implementation needs, while targeting local, State, and Federal technical and financial resources that may be available for eligible farms. Farms and/or landowners interested in participating in the AEM Program are encouraged to reach out the Cayuga SWCD or visit www.cayugaswcd.org for additional information.

Benefits of AEM Participation:

- Document existing environmental stewardship
- Potential funding for planning and implementation of on farm Best Management Practices
- Documentation of current environmental stewardship activities on farms
- Science-based, farmer-driven, decision-making and goal-setting
- Increased awareness of how farm practices affect the surrounding environment both on and off the farm



Examples of BMPs that have been implemented on Cayuga County farms through the AEM Program:

- Manure Management Systems, including waste storages and transfer systems
- Silage Leachate Management
- Erosion Control Systems, including Cover Crop, Water & Sediment Control Basins and grassed or lined waterways
- Prescribed Grazing Systems, including Laneways, Water Source Development and Fencing

2020 PROGRAMMATIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent setbacks 2020 brought, the District had a successful year full of programmatic updates. As part of a phased approach, the Cayuga SWCD plans to reinvigorate the vision of the AEM Program to better meet the needs of the District staff, the watershed, and its farmers. As part of the process, the Cayuga SWCD has developed and implemented a centralized database that will better enable staff to prioritize workloads and improve customer service. Additionally, the Cayuga SWCD has developed standardized planning templates to accommodate increased demands for nutrient management planning across the County. Moving forward, the Cayuga SWCD will adaptively manage the AEM Program to continuously meet the needs of an ever changing industry and environmental concerns across the County's watersheds.

2020 AEM Outreach & Education



The foundation of the Cayuga SWCD's AEM Program revolves around providing education and outreach to not only producers but our partner agencies, watershed groups, and the community. Through this education we can effectively and efficiently work together to ensure Cayuga County's watersheds are a healthy and productive landscape for all residents.

The Cayuga SWCD utilizes fact sheets, brochures, social media and in person meetings (farm visits, presentations, and workshops) to facilitate program outreach. For more information about the Cayuga SWCD's outreach and education initiatives, follow us on Facebook or subscribe to our YouTube channel. The Cayuga SWCD regularly posts educational videos about ongoing watershed efforts and stewardship activities happening across the County!



AEM TIER 4 — ROUND 16 — BMP IMPLEMENTATION

The AEM Tier 4 Implementation Program is a new funding source to the District as of Round 16 (2020-2021). This funding source is used to implement 'shovel-ready' projects that are identified in a producer's plan. The following projects were implemented in 2020:

Project 1: The Cayuga SWCD partnered with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) — Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to implement a soil and erosion control structure in the Owasco Lake Watershed. The project involved the installation of a line waterway (1,300 ft.) to address significant soil erosion and nutrient loss to a roadside ditch during certain parts of the producer's crop rotation. The system will decrease water velocity, help prevent soil loss, and settle out sediment and nutrients before reaching Owasco Lake.



AEM 2020 — SOIL HEALTH ACHIEVEMENTS

Cayuga SWCD assisted with the implementation of 6,843 acres of cover crops.



Cayuga SWCD assisted with the implementation of 2,516 acres of residue/reduced tillage management.



Record number of acres being injected



Biological study on Cayuga County Farms



Increased interest in testing alternative farming practices



Increased adoption of No-till & Reduced Tillage Practices

NYS Agricultural Non-Point Source Abatement and Control Program **NYS Climate Resilient Farming Program** **NYS CAFO Waste Storage & Transfer System Program**

These Agricultural Grant Programs are coordinated by the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee through NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets. They are competitive grant programs that award cost-share funding to farmers to address water quality challenges facing farms across NYS. Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) play an integral role in the administration of grant funds and provide planning, design, and implementation assistance .

2020 Ag Active Grants "ON THE BOOKS"

- 23 Grants Encompassing 55 Farms
- \$15,013,698 Contracted with NYS and Landowners
- Increased \$ 2,214,529 from 2019

2020 AgNPS BMPs "ON THE GROUND"

- 17 Farms Completed BMPs
- 25+ BMP Systems
- \$936,722 State Share
- \$590,093 Landowner Share
- \$1,526,815 Total Project Costs
- Increased \$619,886 from 2019



Installed Best Management Practice (BMP) Systems

Structural BMPs

- Erosion Control Basins
- Livestock Exclusion
- Access Road Stabilization
- Waste Storage Facilities
- Waste Transfer
- Runoff Control and Treatment
- Heavy Use Area Stabilization
- Lined Waterway



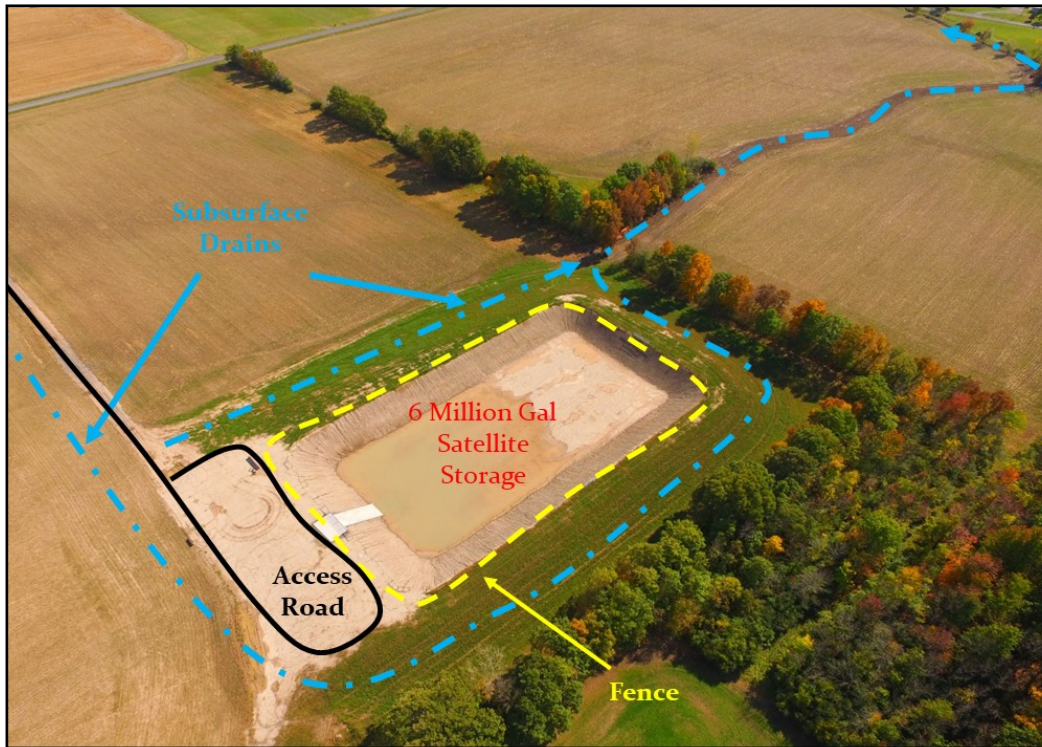
Management BMPs

- Nutrient Management
- Soil Management
- Crop Rotations
- Cover Crops
- Soil Testing and Analysis
- Soil Amendments
- Rotational Grazing



Grid Tile Drainage System



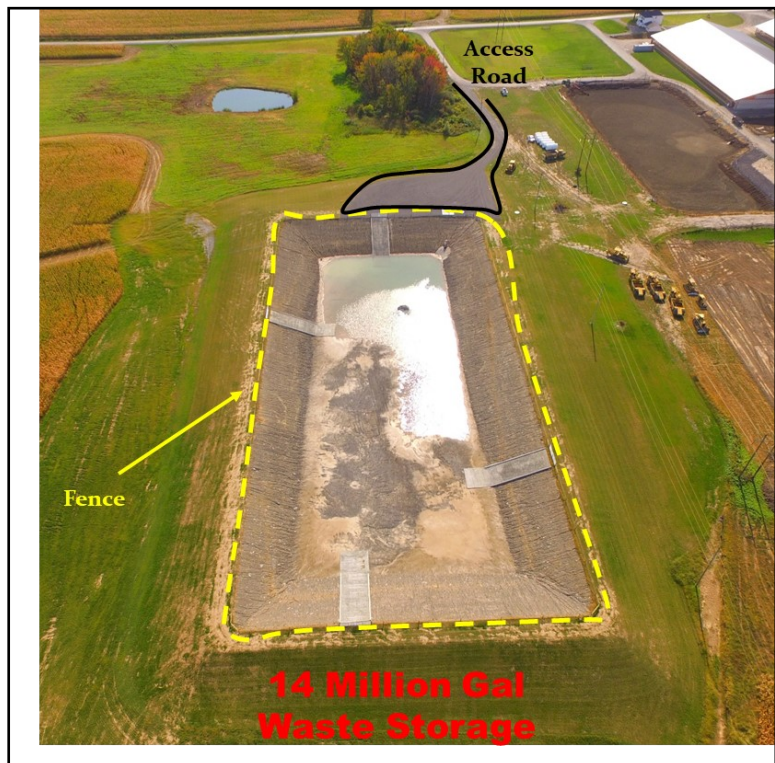
NYS Ag NPS 2020 Installed Best Management Systems Cont.**Satellite Waste Storage**

- 6 Million Gallon
- 2,100 Ft Access Road
- 3,540 Ft Drainage
- 1,100 Ft Fence



NYS Ag NPS 2020 Installed Best Management Systems Cont.**Waste Storage and Transfer System**

- 14 Million Gallon
- 1,450 Ft Access Road
- 300 Ft Drainage
- 1,600 Ft Fence
- 4 Concrete Ramps
- 2 Underground Transfers
- Grassed Waterway



Looking Forward to 2021



Scott Gulf Road Streambank and Flood Mitigation Project

The Cayuga SWCD will be assisting the Cayuga County Highway Department to stabilize the road shoulder and stream that runs along Scott Gulf Road in the Town of Sempronius. Recent storms and a breached beaver dam caused severe damage to the corridor, making the road unsafe for travel. The project calls for the road shoulder to be stabilized with jersey barriers, while rock sills are installed within the stream to slow water velocities.

Hemlock Creek Streambank and Flood Mitigation Project, Locke

The Cayuga SWCD will be assisting The Town of Locke to address major flooding concerns along Hemlock Creek by installing streambank protection, stream training structures, and floodplain recreation. Recent storms have caused the stream to break over its banks, and flood Route 38 and the homes within the village, causing damage to property and land. The project is slated to begin after July 15th when permits allow for work to begin.



Community Recycling Events

The Cayuga SWCD partners with the Cayuga County Planning Department and Cornell Cooperative Extension, who act as coordinators for the Tire Roundup. The Cayuga SWCD assists by making facilities, equipment and staff available.

- **TIRE ROUNDUP**– Old tires can be brought in by county residents for a small fee. Lead weights are removed and most of the tires go to NUCOR to supply carbon for steel production. Others are shredded to be reused as road, building and drainage materials. **This year participants recycled approximately 2,950 tires and 23 pounds of lead during the event held on June 27, 2020**

- **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 that was held at the Natural Resource Center on October 17, 2020.

- **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 and used as mulch. **Over 250 trees were traded and recycled in the winter of 2020.**



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.



John Graham, NYS DEC Forester, teaching on the "Trees of Emerson Park"

In 2020, Conservation Field Days was cancelled due to COVID 19. We look forward to holding the event next year and will re-evaluate the program .



Niles Brown, Retired from Cornell Cooperative Extension, presenting on "You Can Make a Difference" (Birds)

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 2020 Regional Envirothon was held virtually due to COVID 19.

District Training Sessions

Throughout 2020, the Cayuga SWCD held fewer erosion and sediment control workshops for construction site contractors and operators due to COVID 19. Forty eight 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.



Doug Kierst, CPESC, Executive Director, teaching a Stormwater Training Workshop

Conservation Programs offered at the District

Cayuga SWCD 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 Cayuga SWCD seeks grant funding to assist with project implementation.

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 Cayuga SWCD held Fish Stocking Sales in May and September of 2020 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 2020, the Cayuga SWCD sold over 475 fish including 70 grass carp during the fish stocking sales.**

Tree, Shrub & Groundcover Sale- The Cayuga SWCD held their 49th Annual Spring Tree and Groundcover Sale in May 2020. As in the past, the Cayuga SWCD 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 2020, the Cayuga SWCD sold over 11,400 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 Cayuga SWCD office.

Septic System Inspections & Dye Testing- The Cayuga SWCD provides services to county landowners for septic system inspections (dye tests) that are mandated by the Cayuga County Health Department. The Cayuga SWCD 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- **313 Soil Group Worksheets were completed for landowners in Cayuga County in 2020.** 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. 4

Email: cayugaswcd@cayugaswcd.org

Website: www.cayugaswcd.org

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