



SUMMER 2022
NIAGARA COUNTY SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER
 An Environmental Publication

Niagara County Soil & Water
Conservation District
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Climate Resilient Farming

The new buzz words for agriculture are “more resilient” and “more sustainable” which in today's high prices and shortages seems like a good plan. For New York State it is also in response to climate change bringing extreme weather shifts from longer droughts to larger rain events and flooding. New York State has made Climate Resilient Farming a priority by budgeting \$17 million dollars in the 2022-2023 budget.

The climate resilient farming grant is broken into 3 tracks. Track 1 is targeted to fund the covering of Manure Storage Structures and installing a flare to burn off excess methane that would be collected under the cover. The goal of this track is to collect clean water before going into the pit and the farm would save fuel expense in spreading that water with the manure along with less greenhouse gases from spreading the water and burning off the methane. The clean water collected could be held to be used on the farm during a drought and capture water during heavy storm events.

Track 2 is Water Management which is again capturing water during extreme storm events and having water to use during extreme drought events. The reduction of greenhouse gases during these projects will need to be identified, which will certainly make your farm more resilient and sustainable during these times of high fuel costs.

Track 3 is Soil Health which will be improving soil health to make farms more sustainable. This will work using cover crops and changing row crops to permanent pasture or hay crops, even tree planting in riparian buffers or agroforestry. This will make farms more resilient and save fuel costs.

If you are interested in or have questions on Climate Resilient Farming or any of our other programs please contact our office.

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Site Plan and Erosion & Sediment Control Trainings Provided & Planned

NCSWCD provided two hours of Site Plan Training to Code Enforcement Officers and local planning board members. The training, which is approved by the NYS Department of State for Code Enforcement Officers, gives CEO's and local officials an understanding of the requirements for projects falling under the NYS DEC Stormwater Management permits. There is also information on permit requirements and Erosion and Sediment Control Practices required by the permit.

The District continues to provide the 4-hour Erosion and Sediment Control training for contractors and inspectors on NYS DEC permitted sites disturbing more than one (1) acre of soil. The next training is tentatively scheduled for September 8th.

The Niagara County SWCD will be hosting more trainings this fall, please reach out to our office for more information.

NCSWCD Starts New AEM Round

The work on the new Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Round has begun! AEM helps landowners fund work from assessing farms and woodland properties for environmental stewardship documentation to developing conservation plans.

Plans help the district and landowners identify funding sources and technical assistance available to address environmental concerns to help protect natural resources. There are many different funding sources through both New York State and the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service.

The AEM program has provided \$100,000 in cost share program implementation funds. These funds are designated to help landowners already in the AEM program implement cover crop planting, agricultural waste management storage and agricultural chemical storage facilities. These projects will be completed by December 31st of 2023. In 2023-24 NCSWCD will be identifying new farms and projects for the next AEM Round to be completed in 2025.

If you are interested in or have questions on AEM or any of our other programs please contact our office.

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NCSW Board Meetings

Board Meetings are held the fourth Thursday of every month. Please contact the office for more information.

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Niagara County Soil & Water Conservation District

Eighteenmile Creek Great Lakes Area of Concern



Eighteenmile Creek Review

GREEN Projects

Since 2014, NCSWCD has worked with three schools on a project called Global Rivers Environmental Education Network, or GREEN. In the GREEN program students start with a fall field trip around the Eighteenmile Creek watershed to find different issues that impact habitat or water quality within the watershed. Throughout the school year classes discuss solutions to each issue they found and develop a watershed action project.

Projects completed include creating a pollinator habitat on a steep slope, creating an aquatic invasive species bin and building various wildlife nest boxes. Lockport High School started planting a pollinator habitat on a steep slope at the Olcott Marina. This pollinator habitat includes a showy wildflower mix, grasses, clover and milkweed. Newfane High School built an aquatic invasive species bin for boaters and fisherman to use in Olcott. The invasive species bin will be placed near the boat washing station to dispose of aquatic plants that attach to boats or nuisance fish that may be caught (such as gobies). Niagara Orleans Career and Technical Center's Conservation class built and placed various wildlife and pollinator habitat boxes for the Niagara Region State Parks.

Superfund Update

In December 2021, EPA announced the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) would invest \$3.5 billion toward the cleanup of Superfund sites. A portion of that funding will be invested into cleaning up Operable Units (OUs) 2 and 4. The remainder of 2022 will be used for finishing remedial designs, and construction could begin as early as summer 2023.

Reminder of OU2 and OU4 Sites:

OU2 is the creek channel and upland properties surrounding the creek from the Erie Canal to Harwood Street.

OU4 includes residential properties east of Mill Street

Cleanup of these upstream areas could mean great improvements to the Great Lakes Area of Concern. OU2 has been long regarded as the most polluted and a source of PCBs into the water column that get transported downstream. Cleanup of these upstream areas along and completing the remedial investigation of OU3 (from Harwood St. to Lake Ontario) are big strides to restoring the watershed and removal of future beneficial use impairments.

Interseeder Rental

Interseeder rental is available for farmers to plant cover crops between corn rows. Planting can occur between v3 and v7 stage, and won't impact the corn being grown. First use of the interseeder is free, subsequent uses will cost \$5 per acre.



No-Till Drill Rental

No-Till Drill rental is available for your next conservation seeding project. We provide the drill, delivery and cleaning. Customer proves the seed. Cost is \$15/acre plus \$50 delivery in Niagara County.



5 Steps to Assistance
How to Get Assistance from NRCS for Farms, Ranches and Forests

- 1 PLANNING**
Visit your local NRCS field office to discuss your goals and work with staff on a conservation plan.
- 2 APPLICATION**
With the help of NRCS, complete an application for financial assistance programs.
- 3 ELIGIBILITY**
As part of applying, we'll file paperwork to ensure you're eligible for assistance.
- 4 RANKING**
NRCS ranks applications according to local resource concerns.
- 5 IMPLEMENTING**
Put conservation to work by signing a contract and implementing conservation practices.

The Niagara County Soil & Water Conservation District is a local government subdivision under New York State law. The District was established as a public benefit by the County of Niagara in 1954. Your support of our programs aid in the District's conservation efforts to protect natural resources and water quality for our residents. In these wavering economic times, we thank you for your continued assistance in fulfilling our goals.

2021 SWCD Annual Report of Accomplishments

Tree Program - 30,824 seedlings / 605 customers
 Ag Value Assessments - 106 totaling 7,312 acres
 Pond Stocking - 45,610 fingerlings to 33 ponds
 Grass Carp - 283 carp to 23 ponds
 Pond Site Evaluations - 11
 Wildlife Houses Sold - 55
 Regional Envirothon - 6 teams / 2 counties
 Newsletters - mailed/mailed to 11,194 addresses
 Media Articles - 8
 Resource Map Requests - 32
 Permit Assistance - 2
 Technical Assistance - 11
 WQ/Land Use Planning - 3 municipalities
 Wildlife Habitat Improvements -
 No-Till Drill Plantings - 48 acres at 6 sites
 Interseeder acres planted - 111 at 2 farms
 Road-Stream Culvert assistance - 0
 Stormwater Management site visits - 79
 Invasive Species/Japanese knotweed - 400 treated sites/ 60 acres
 Flood Mitigation—1 site/ 20 acres
 Education Booths—2 events / 383 participants
 Arbor Day—525 trees
 Site Plan Training—1 class/ 39 participants
 4 Hour Soil & Erosion Training—4 classes/ 115 participants

Ag Best Management Practices:

Drainage/Ditching - 29 sites, 8,900lf tiles/ditches
 Silage Leachate Systems - 2 designs / 2 projects installed
 Ag-Chemical Handling & Storage System - 3 designs / 1 project installed
 Animal Trails & Walkways—1994 feet
 Roofs & Covers—1
 Fencing— 2173ft
 Erosion Assistance— 2 sites
 Petroleum Secondary Containment System - 1 design
 Roof Water Mgmt System - 2 designs
 Waste Storage and Transfer System - 1 design / 1 project installed
 Soil Health Projects - 5 cover crop plantings, 450 acres

AEMs completed: Tier 1 - 11, Tier 2 - 10, Tier 3a - 10, Tier 4 - 5, Tier 5a - 4, Tier 5b - 0

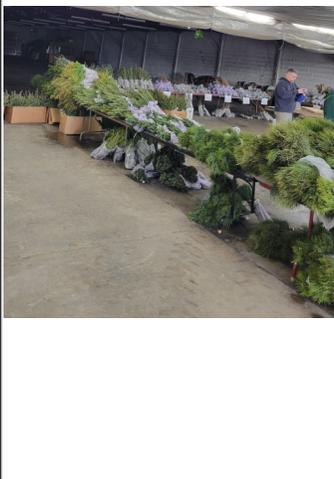


2022 Tree Sale

This year's sale was a great success, with approximately 700 customers we sold almost 40,000 new trees/shrubs to be planted in Niagara County and New York State.

A special thank you to Tops Friendly Markets in Wrights Corners, MarJim Manor, Supermarket Liquors & Spirits, and Wrights Corners Wines & Spirits for our packing supplies! Also to CCE Niagara County for the use of their Merchant Building.

Thank you to all our returning customers and new customers. Hope to see you all next year!



*"He that plants trees loves others besides himself."
 —Thomas Fuller*



Envirothon is Back in Person!

Six teams competed at our regional Envirothon. Teams of five students competed against each other on aquatic, soils, wildlife, forestry, and waste to resource exams.

Paul Dewey's Niagara Career and Technical Center's team of Allison Lang, Cassidy Wagner, Marissa Stoddard, Lorna Beker, and Olivia Shackelford took first place and the chance to represent Niagara County at the NYS Envirothon. The girls did great and placed in the Top 20 overall!



If you are interested in competing next year or have questions on having a team please contact our office at 716-434-4949 ext 4.

Summer Field Crew Fighting Invasive Japanese Knotweed

The NCSWCD Conservation Assistants will continue the fight against the invasive Japanese knotweed. Crews will be out across Niagara County this summer and fall.

If you think you may have Japanese knotweed and would like it treated please reach out to our office at 716-434-4949 ext 4.

Non-Discrimination Statement

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