



Niagara Nature News

An Environmental Publication by Niagara County Soil & Water Conservation District
SUMMER 2015 - ENEWS

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Eighteenmile Creek Cleanup Continues – Flintkote Demolition Nearing Completion



The landscape around the creek corridor part of Eighteenmile Creek is changing, bringing a brighter future to the area. In less than 1 year EPA has accomplished a tremendous amount of work, progressing towards the goal of sediment remediation in the creek. The former Flintkote Building is soon to be no more and 5 families have been relocated due to contaminated sediments flooding their yards and homes. The Flintkote Building and surrounding property have long been speculated as the source of contamination of Eighteenmile Creek and its demolition is nearing the end. Now that the building has been brought down to its lower levels, scientists are able to safely enter the basements to sample what is believed to be the areas that harmful chemicals such as Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) originally entered the creek. This testing is crucial in order to determine the appropriate methods that need to be taken in order to safely and cost effectively cleanup the sediment around the site. As the Remedial Action Plan Coordinator for the Eighteenmile Creek Area of Concern (AOC), Niagara County Soil and Water Conservation District is involved with this cleanup and is hopeful that it will aid in the delisting of Eighteenmile Creek as an AOC. If you have any questions on Eighteenmile Creek, contact Ryan Perrello at our office, 716-434-4949.

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Niagara County Soil & Water Conservation District & Eighteenmile Creek, Great Lakes Area of Concern are now on Facebook!

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2015 Niagara County Envirothon Winners

L-R: Joe Parisse, Mike Wardinski, Jake Lucas, Victor Bugenhagen, & Hunter Kroening
Instructor – Brandon Lindke

FYI...

The District has a No-Till drill available for your next conservation seeding project.

\$50 delivery charge and \$15/acre rental fee

We provide drill delivery and cleaning. Customer provides own seed.

(716) 434-4949



Winners of the 2015 Conservation Raffles
Ed Morgan and Dan Schuth from Orleans County

Be Sure to Come Visit us at the 2015 Niagara County Fair!

You can buy raffle tickets to win an Oak Bench. Proceeds will benefit the 2016 Niagara-Orleans Envirothon

Niagara Career & Technical Education Center Wins Regional Envirothon

Congratulations to Niagara Career & Technology Center (NCTC) for defeating 13 other teams at the Niagara-Orleans regional Envirothon at Bonds Lake Nature Center on May 7th.

Team Members Joe Parisse, Mike Wardinski, Jake Lucas, Victor Bugenhagen, and Hunter Kroening scored the highest cumulative total on written exams in five areas: Soils, aquatics, forestry, wildlife, and current issues. The team also received the Top Score Award in the 10-minute oral presentation category on "Urban and Community Forestry."

The winning team from NCTC represented Niagara County at the State Envirothon held at Hobart and William Smith College in Geneva. Unfortunately the group was not able to score in the top 10 of the 43 counties participating

in order to receive scholarships, but did a great overall job. Their advisor, Brandon Lindke stated how proud he was of their professional conduct and composure during the judging phase.

We want to give a big thank you to this year's sponsors of the Regional Envirothon: Western NY Energy LLC, M&T Bank, NY Forest Owners Association, Wheatfield Lions Club, The Sports and Graphics Co., Newroyal Orchards, Orleans Poverty Hill Farm, Assemblywoman Jane Corwin, Assemblyman Stephen Hawley, Representative Chris Collins, and Senator Robert Ort.

If your school is interested in participating in the Niagara-Orleans Envirothon, contact Darcy at our office 716-434-4949 ext. 4

Niagara County Applies for NYS Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement & Control Grant Program

Niagara County Soil and Water Conservation District has applied for funding from the NYS Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement & Control Program to implement Cover Crops on 4 farms (780 acres total) within the Eighteenmile Creek Watershed. This project will address nutrient and sediment laden runoff from agricultural fields within our largest watershed in Niagara County. Eighteenmile Creek is identified as an Area of Concern (AOC) and is also listed as a federal Superfund site. Both designations are based on sediment contamination.

Cover cropping is a Best Management Practice (BMP) that when implemented, improves water quality. Cover cropping reduces nutrient loss by surface water runoff and nutrients will be returned back to the soil when the cover crop is terminated before planting. These recycled nutrients mean less fertilizer will need to be added to the fields when planting future crops and will result in an economic savings to the producers. Organic matter in the fields will be increased which should enhance the crop yield and soil tilth. Overall soil health will be improved over the three years of cover cropping. If you have any questions on Soil Health or the District's Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Program, contact Mike Clifford at our office, 716-434-4949.

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

Fall 2015 Pond Stocking

Order Deadline: August 28, 2015

Pickup Date: September 17, 2015 10:00am SHARP

General Information: Stocking rates usually are 50-100 bass and 500-600 minnows per surface acre. If your pond is relatively new, be sure there is vegetation for reproductive habitat and aquatic life for a food chain. Recommended time to establish a pond before stocking is one year. You MUST obtain a stocking permit from the DEC prior to pickup. Applications are available in our office or on our website, www.niagaraswcd.com.

Pickup Information: Pickup will be at the SWCD office located at the northeast end of the Coop. Extension Administrative Building on the County Fairgrounds, Route 78, Lockport. Your order will be pre-counted and in an aerated bag for your convenience. You will just need to bring a box or cooler in which to stabilize the bag for transport. Transferring the fish to your pond immediately is of utmost importance due to oxygen needs. The hatchery personnel will be available for only 1/2 hour for delivery so PLEASE BE PROMPT!

Fall 2015 Grass Carp Stocking

Order Deadline: August 28, 2015

Pickup Date: Tentatively scheduled for the third/fourth week of September

General Information: The average size of the carp will be between 10-12". Stock grass carps in ponds which have been properly protected so they are unable to escape through inlets and outlets into other NYS waters. You MUST obtain a stocking permit from the NYS DEC before submitting your order. If you require a permit application, our office retains a supply of them or you can print a copy on our website, www.niagaraswcd.com.

Pickup Information: Pickup will be at the SWCD office located at the northeast end of the Coop. Extension Administrative Building on the County Fairgrounds, Route 78, Lockport. At the time of pickup, you will need to bring a container **WITH A LID** (an 18-gal plastic tote holds 4 carp) filled 1/2 full with pond water. These fish are highly perishable and must be transported as quickly as possible. For more information on Triploid Grass Carp and how they can benefit pond weed control, call (716) 434-4949 ext. 114

Payment Information: Submit payment by check or money order with the bottom portions of these forms, payable to Niagara County SWCD. Keep the top portions as your delivery reminders

Fall 2015 Pond Stocking				Fall 2015 Grass Carp Stocking	
Type of Fish	Cost	# of Fish	\$ Amount		
Perch 2" - 4"	25/\$46			Name: _____	
Bass 2" - 4"	25/\$54			Address: _____	
Catfish 4" - 6"	12/\$32			Daytime Phone: _____	
Sunfish 2" - 4"	25/\$42			Number of Carp: _____	
Fathead Minnows 1"	100/\$20			<input type="checkbox"/> \$21/fish + Delivery \$4.00	
Golden Shiners 2" - 3"	50/\$26			Total Due _____	
Subtotal					
+ Delivery			\$4.00		
Total Due					
<i>(NYS sales tax included as required)</i>					
Name: _____					
Address: _____					
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____					
Daytime Phone: _____					
Mail to Niagara County SWCD 4487 Lake Ave. Lockport, New York 14094					
Mail payment WITH ALL 3 ORIGINAL COPIES of your DEC Permit to: Niagara County SWCD 4487 Lake Avenue Lockport, NY 14094					

FISH FACTS

The following are brief descriptions of the fish we offer for our Pond Stocking and Triploid Grass Carp programs. Order forms are included in this newsletter on page # 3.

Largemouth Bass – Found throughout NYS, they are considered one of the state's most important sport fish. These members of the Sunfish Family (Centrarchidae) prefer weedy, rocky areas to provide both protection and food supply. Usually weighing 3-5 lbs, they can get over 10 lbs and 2 feet in length. They are carnivorous; which means they'll eat small fish, crayfish, frogs, snakes, and some small mammals and birds if given the opportunity.

Channel Catfish - Catfishes are characterized by scaleless skin and barbels, better known as whiskers, about their mouth. Channel catfish have a deeply forked tail and dark spots. The spotting, however, diminishes with age. Consequently, older channel cats are frequently mistaken as blue catfish. But the anal fin on blue cats has a flat outer edge and channel cats have a rounded edge. They can grow to be 4 ft long and weigh up to 58lbs.

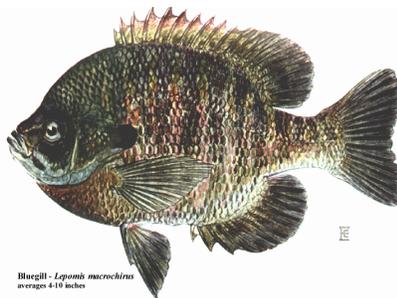
Fathead Minnows – Fathead minnows are small in size, averaging 2 to 3 inches in length. They are sturdy, heavy bodied fish with small mouths and a lateral line that stops under the dorsal fin. They are generally dull in color, with dark bodies and a slight brass tint on the sides. They prefer ponds and slow moving water in streams. They can tolerate muddy water, and are occasionally found in roadside ditches. In addition, fathead minnows can tolerate water with salt in it.

Golden Shiners - The golden shiner can be found throughout most of the US. These fish can be found in large schools around submerged structures where they primarily feed on zooplankton. The golden shiner spawns several times throughout spring and summer. Spawning can be aided with the use of structures such as sunken evergreens or stacked pallets. The abundant reproduction of this fish makes it an excellent choice for stocking where predatory species are present. These fish are slightly larger than fathead minnows and are preferred by large predators.

Triploid Grass Carp – The grass carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idella*) is one of the largest members of the minnow family, commonly reaching weights in excess of 25 lbs. They can live up to 10 years. Native to Asia, this carp lacks the barbells and spiny dorsal and anal fin rays characteristic of its North American relatives, bearing a closer resemblance to a large creek chub. It is called "triploid" since it has been bred to retain an extra chromosome, rendering it sterile. Grass carp feed strictly by grazing on aquatic vegetation and are effectively used as aquatic plant control agents in over 50 countries.

Perch - The true perch of New York State include some of the best tasting and most popular freshwater fishes. As a family, they are widely distributed, adaptable to a wide range of habitats, and fun to catch on rod and reel. In addition, the less known members of the perch family, the darters, are probably the most colorful freshwater fish in North America. True perch are spiny-rayed fish which have one or more sharp spines on their fins. While they are quite variable in appearance, they all are slender in body shape, have two dorsal (back) fins, and one anal fin. True perch can be separated into two groups: larger perches and smaller perches.

Sunfish - Sunfish are small- to medium-sized fish with a single anal fin (bottom Rear) and a two-part dorsal fin (back). They are spiny-rayed, with one or more sharp spines found on their dorsal, pelvic (bottom front) and anal fins. These spines help protect the fish from being eaten by larger fish and can prick the fingers of any angler who is not careful when removing the hook.



Harrell - *Lepomis macrochirus*
average 4-10 inches

2014 ANNUAL REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Trees Sold - 28,025 to 457 customers
- Ag Value Assessments - 136 totaling 8,343 acres
- Ponds Stocked - 2,235 fish to 14 ponds
- Grass Carp - 105 carp to 22 ponds
- Pond Site Evaluations - 18
- Wildlife Houses Sold - 14
- Resource Map Requests - 32
- Environmental Field Days - 435 students
- Regional Envirothon - 14 teams
- Other educational Events - 7 / 1204 participants
- Media Articles - 9
- Newsletters - 4,631 mailed/emailed twice a year
- Permit Assistance - 3
- Watershed Management Plans - 2
- WQ/Land Use Technical Assistance - 35
- Drainage/Ditching Surveyed - 120,000 LF
- Wildlife Habitat Improvement - 2 sites
- Invasive Species Projects - 3
- AEMs Completed: Tier I-6, Tier II-6, Tier III-6, Tier IV-5, Tier V-10
- Silage Leachate Systems - 1
- Ag Waste Mixing Facilities - 1
- Barnyard Runoff Control - 6
- Other Barnyard Systems - 2

TREE PROGRAM THANKS!

The District would like to thank the entire



community for their never-ending support of this program. Together we are planting 28,025 seedlings for reforestation and wildlife habitat!

Thanks so much to those co-workers who helped us prepare and distribute over 450 tree orders: Jamie and Lori in the FSA office, and retired NRCS Conservationist, Greg. Much appreciation goes to the Niagara County Sheriff's Work Program. A special thanks to TOPS Lockport and TOPS Wrights Corners for packing supplies. Please remember to support these local businesses!



Emerald Ash Borer Spreads

What is the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)?

- Metallic green colored beetle
- Attacks and kills all native ash to U.S
- Creates "D" shaped holes when they emerge from the ash tree

What You Can Do

- Don't move any firewood more than 50 miles or outside of the quarantine zone.
- If you notice stressed or dying Ash trees in your area, it is likely due to EAB. Report suspected EAB infestations to NYSDEC
- Inject trees that are of importance to you and that are in good condition, treatment can cost upwards of \$100 per tree.

The Emerald Ash Borer is not "new" to Niagara County but their effects on our trees are becoming more noticeable. Recently more and more detections have been reported to NYSDEC foresters from all areas of the county. Unfortunately for Niagara County, ash trees comprise between 31-60% of all our trees. Ash trees within forests or woods as well as ones found along streets or in yards are susceptible and must be injected every 2 to 3 years in order to prevent tree mortality. If you don't plan on treating your ash trees you may have to start planning for their removal due to the potential hazard to people and property. Pictured below is an ash tree that is heavily infested with EAB, notice the crown dieback and the new shoots coming off the base of the tree.



Outdoor Learning in the Park

Environmental Field Day was held at Victor Fitchlee Royalton Ravine Conservation Park in Gasport in early June and we couldn't have asked for a more beautiful day! The sunny, 70-degree temperature made for a wonderful outdoor classroom. Attending were close to 400 students from 5 area schools learning about a variety of topics from 18 volunteer agencies and hobbyists including: beekeeping, insects, fossils, trees, geology, stormwater, wildlife, rabies, green power, invasive species, and recycling. They heard from DEC Conservation officers, took a guided walk through the woods, and tested their skill at archery.

Held in June each year since 1969, this FREE educational event for 5th and 6th graders is offered to all Niagara County schools; public, private, parochial and home. It is a great opportunity for students to touch on several items in quick, 15-minute presentations. Learning about the environment IN the environment... it doesn't get better than that!

Check with your teachers to see if your school is interested in attending. Contact Darcy at our office for more info and to sign up for June 2016.



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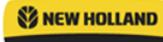
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