



**SUMMER 2023**  
**NIAGARA COUNTY SOIL & WATER**  
**CONSERVATION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER**  
 An Environmental Publication

Niagara County Soil & Water  
 Conservation District  
 4487 Lake Avenue  
 Lockport, New York 14094  
 Phone: (716) 434-4949 Ext. 4  
 www.niagaraswcd.com

**District Engineer Could Mean More Grant Money for Local Farms**

Round 18 of the New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Base Program has some changes for the upcoming year that could favor the Niagara County Soil & Water Conservation District and its farmers. There is \$260,00 (up \$130,000) available for farm planning and \$200,000 (up \$100,000) available for district projects that submit a two-year AEM Action Plan and have a NYS licensed professional engineer on staff. Luckily for Niagara County, we have a NYS licensed professional engineer on staff. As District Engineer Mark has worked on the designs for all of our past projects .

We are currently wrapping up the AEM Round 17 with three Ag-Chem Handling Facilities, two Cover Crop projects, and a Feed Storage Facility completed or are nearing completion this year.

AEM is a voluntary, incentive based program that helps farmers make common sense, cost effective, and science based decisions to meet business objectives while protecting and conserving New York State's natural resources. AEM is a cooperative interagency program that provides one on one help to farmers to identify environmental risks on their farms. Once these risks are identified, farmers receive help with solution planning, project design, and with obtaining financial assistance to address existing problems and prevent future issues.



Recently Completed Ag-Chem Handling Facility

Dave Reckahn, District Natural Resource Technician and AEM specialist, has been working on possible projects for the next Round. If you think AEM is something you would be interested in for your farm please reach out to our office and Dave will set up a time to come out to your farm and meet with you. In order to be eligible for AEM funding farms need to have a Tier III plan which we can do for you, you just need to meet with Dave and Ron!

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**Mark Seider, P.E.**

*District Engineer*  
 mark.seider@ny.nacdnet.net

**Katie Pfeifer**

*District Clerk/ Assistant Treasurer*  
 katherine.pfeifer@ny.nacdnet.net

**Scott Collins**

*Remedial Action Plan Coordinator*  
 scott.collins@ny.nacdnet.net

**David Reckahn**

*Natural Resource Technician*  
 david.reckahn@ny.nacdnet.net

**Ronald Zietz**

*Natural Resource Technician*  
 ronald.zietz@ny.nacdnet.net

**USDA NRCS**

**Charles T. Kesterson**

*Resource Conservationist*  
 charles.kesterson@ny.usda.gov

**It' Time to Clean-Up!**

NCSWCD will be holding weekly litter pick-ups around the County this summer and fall in an effort to clean up areas that may be over looked.

Other organizations have similar clean-ups at certain waterbodies throughout our community. We will be focusing on areas we come across during our daily activities around the County that are in addition to other clean-ups.

We also are planning this year's annual Clean Sweep at Fisherman's Park along Eighteenmile Creek. Students, scout troops, and volunteers are all welcome to join the effort (counts towards much needed school volunteer hours too) to clean-up the creek!

If you are interested in joining or hosting a litter pick-up or notice an area that needs cleaned-up please call our office.



**Christmas Tree Recycling**

Ever wonder what you could be doing with your Christmas tree other than putting it out to the curb? You can recycle it!

This past winter we had Christmas tree drop-off sites at our office and Bond Lake. We collected just over 50 trees, not bad for our first year. Recycled trees were chipped and used at County parks for trails, tree plantings, and more.

With the help of the Parks Department and towns around the County we hope to expand drop-off sites this winter. Our Christmas tree drop-off will be set up again this year at our office on the Niagara County Fairgrounds and various other locations. Keep an eye on our Facebook page and the winter newsletter for locations.



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**NCSW Board Meetings**

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

**For More District News Follow Us On Facebook!**

**Niagara County Soil & Water Conservation District**

**Eighteenmile Creek Great Lakes Area of Concern**



**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.



**Students Take on Climate Change at Envirothon**

Nine teams of high school students from Lockport High School, Lyndonville High School, Niagara Career & Technical Education Center, and Orleans Career & Technical Education Center competed Thursday at the Niagara-Orleans Regional Envirothon held at Bond Lake Park Nature Center in Lewiston.

Teams of five or six students in grades 9-12 were tested on wildlife, aquatics, forestry, soils/land use, and a current environmental issue. This year's current issue is Adapting to Climate Change, bringing to light ways to reduce climate change and how to continue to do so in the future. Students were on top of their game, hard fought tie-breakers decided the winners for two of the categories.



The top scoring team overall & from Niagara County was from Mr. Paul Dewey's class at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center, students included Brayden Barber, Lorna Becker, Marissa Stoddard, Cassidy Wagner and Aaron Zaker. (Pictured left)

The top scoring team from Orleans County was from Mr. Peter Jablonski and Ms. Brooke Kiefer's class at the

Orleans Career and Technical Education Center, students included Eliana Benedict, Arianna Bloom, Ella Booth, Olivia Coles, Kristopher Meyers, and Kayla Burgio.

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



**Pond Site Evaluations**

Are you interested in having a pond on your property but your worried it won't hold water? Call us! We have a pond site evaluation we can perform on your property to help determine the best site for your pond. Soils, topography, wetlands, township requirements are all things we review with a homeowner then summarize our findings in a letter that can be taken to the town. The cost for a pond site evaluation is \$100 and can be paid at the time of our visit or before you receive your pond letter. Additional information about pond site evaluations or other district programs can be found at [niagaraswcd.com/Programs.html](http://niagaraswcd.com/Programs.html)

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.

**2022 SWCD Annual Report of Accomplishments**

Tree Program - 39,591 seedlings / 650 customers  
 Ag Value Assessments - 94 totaling 5072 acres  
 Pond Stocking - 18530 fingerlings to 28 ponds  
 Grass Carp - 79 carp to 17 ponds  
 Pond Site Evaluations - 24  
 Wildlife Houses Sold - 41  
 Regional Envirothon - 6 teams / 2 counties  
 Newsletters - 11,182 mailed/mailed to addresses  
 Media Articles - 10  
 Resource Map Requests - 22  
 Permit Assistance - 1  
 Technical Assistance - 7  
 Wildlife Habitat Improvements - .4 acres pollinator habitat  
 No-Till Drill Plantings - 19.5 acres at 3 sites  
 Interseeder acres planted - 109 acres at 2 farms  
 Stormwater Management site visits - 24  
 Invasive Species/Japanese knotweed - 417 treated sites/ 68.2 acres  
 Invasive Species/ Multiflora rose - 140 acres  
 Education Booths - 4 events / 661 participants  
 Arbor Day - 525 trees  
 Fire Code Training - 1 class/ 45 participants  
 4 Hour Soil & Erosion Training - 2 classes/ 29 participants  
 Pasture Walks - 2 walks / 65 participants  
Ag Best Management Practices:  
 Drainage/Ditching - 21,475 lf tiles/ditches  
 Silage Leachate Systems - 1 vegetative treatment area project repaired  
 Ag-Chemical Handling & Storage System - 4 designs / 3 projects installed  
 Compost Pad Roof & Covers - 1 design  
 Petroleum SPCC Plans - 2  
 Erosion Assistance - 5 sites  
 Petroleum Secondary Containment System - 2 designed / 2 installed  
 Roof Water Mgmt System - 2 designed / 1 installed  
 Waste Storage and Transfer System - 1 project installed  
 Soil Health Projects - cover crop plantings, 770 acres  
AEMs completed: Tier 1 - 25, Tier 2 - 24, Tier 3a - 22, Tier 4 - 1, Tier 5a - 1, Tier 5b - 0

**Thank You to our Tree Customers**

This year's sale was a great success thanks to many new and returning tree customers. It was great to see so many new faces mixed in with returning ones. Approximately 700 customers purchased over 40,000 new trees/shrubs to be planted throughout Niagara County and New York State. Some of the trees were purchased to be part of a study to create disease-resistant trees.

A special thank you to Tops Friendly Markets in Wrights Corners and Marjim Manor for our packing supplies and to CCE Niagara for the use of their Merchant Building.

Thank you again to everyone that purchased trees, we hope to see you all again next year!

*"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago,  
 The second best time is now."  
 —Chinese Proverb*

**GREEN Projects**

Lockport and Newfane schools completed their watershed action projects in the Olcott Harbor. Newfane classes built a nuisance invasive species disposal bin at the boat wash station. This project is intended to give boaters/fisherman a place to dispose of aquatic invasive species like gobies, plants that attach to boats, or unwanted bait fish.

Lockport High School's environmental science class expanded a pollinator habitat on steep slopes leading to extra parking. Initial pollinator planting started in 2022 near the fish cleaning station. This year's class improved that habitat by removing nuisance species. The pollinator habitat became Certified Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation.



Each class develops their own projects throughout the school year based on observed water quality issues.

**Field Crews Continue to Fight Invasive Species**

The fight against invasive plants is continuing into 2023 for NCSWCD. 2023 is the ninth year NCSWCD Conservation Assistants have been fighting against the very invasive Japanese knotweed. Crews will be out across Niagara County this summer and fall.

New for the District is Multiflora Rose. We began fighting this invasive species in the fall of 2022 at the request of the NYS Parks Department and will continue to fight it at County parks through 2023. Although beautiful, Multiflora Rose forms dense thickets and overtakes native plants and trees.

Native pollinator habitats and grass fields have been and will continue to be planted to ensure a healthy space for the creatures that rely on these plants for food and living. If you think you may have Japanese knotweed and would like it treated please contact our office.

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**Drew & Chad Klotzbach**  
7342 Alleghany Rd  
Basom New York 14013  
Drew: 716-560-1979  
Chad: 716-560-0470  
Office: 585-762-4411  
drew@alleghanyfs.com  
chad@alleghanyfs.com

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Owner: Todd Garrison  
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