



SUMMER 2024
NIAGARA COUNTY SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER
 An Environmental Publication

Niagara County Soil & Water Conservation District
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 Phone: (716) 434-4949 Ext. 4
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DISTRICT EQUIPMENT USED TO HELP TOWN PROJECTS

Many farmers and residents have rented District equipment for projects but District equipment is not just for residents to use, towns are also welcome to use the equipment for their projects. This year the Towns of Hartland and Lewiston are using District equipment for town projects.

The Town of Hartland and the Niagara County Federation of Conservation Clubs worked with District employees to plant a grassland and pollinator habitat behind the town park. The no-till drill was used to plant warm season grasses and wildflowers on almost five acres.



Photos are from the recent planting of a grassland and pollinator habitat in Hartland.

The Town of Lewiston Highway Department will be using the District's hydro-seeder for a ditch seeding project along town roadways.

If you are interested in using the no-till drill, inter-seeder, or hydro-seeder please call the district office or see page 2 for more information.



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FREATMAN FARMS & LAKESHORE DAIRY AWARDED

2024 DISTRICT AEM FARM AWARDS

This year's Niagara County SWCD AEM Farm Award winners are Freatman Farms and Lakeshore Dairy. Farms are nominated based on their efforts to implement planned Best Management Practices to protect and conserve the natural resources in the County.

Freatman Farms recently completed an Ag-Chem Mixing Facility project with the District to ensure that chemicals are contained and do not leak into the soil and water when sprayers are being filled. Freatman Farms also does 75 acres of cover crops yearly to improve soil health, uptake excessive nutrients, and reduce erosion.

Lakeshore Dairy's neighbors and fellow farmers have noticed the improvements that have been made and the change it has brought to the area. District AEM projects at Lakeshore Dairy include a new silage leachate channel, a new bunk with a vegetative treatment area to treat runoff from bunk silos, the use of cover crops, and it doesn't stop there. There are plans to continue new projects at Lakeshore Dairy.

Winners will be presented with AEM building plaques at the Niagara County Fair Farmer's Breakfast.

No farm is too big or too small to participate in the AEM program. Please contact the office to schedule a farm visit to see how we can assist you in an AEM plan.



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NCSW Board Meetings

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

Follow Us for More District News on Facebook

Niagara County Soil & Water Conservation District

Eighteenmile Creek Great Lakes Area of Concern

THANK YOU TO OUR TREE & FISH CUSTOMERS

Both the Tree and Fish Sales were successes this year. We couldn't do it without our many loyal and new customers supporting the programs, we hope to see you next year.

Thank you to everyone the purchased trees and fish!

NCSW CAN HELP YOU!

- Agricultural Grants
- Bird/Bat/Duck Houses
- Eighteenmile Creek RAP
- Invasive Species Control/Eradication
- Pond Site Evaluations
- Agriculture Value Assessments
- Educational Programs
- Equipment Rental
- Drainage /Tiling Assistance
- Permit Application Assistance
- Mining Assistance
- Erosion Control
- Flood Prevention
- Water Conservation & Wetlands
- Ground Water, Water Quality & Quantity
- Nonpoint Source Pollution
- Forestland Protection
- Wildlife
- Recreation
- Manure Management
- Waste Water Management
- Tree/Seed Sale
- Pond Stocking/ Carp Sale

2024 NIAGARA ORLEANS ENVIROTHON GROWS AGAIN WITH TWELVE TEAMS COMPETING

Twelve teams of high school students from Albion, Brockport, Christian Academy, Lewiston-Porter, Lockport, Lyndonville, Medina, Newfane, Niagara Academy, Niagara Falls, Niagara Wheatfield, North Tonawanda, Royalton Hartland, Starpoint, Wilson, and Niagara-Orleans Career & Technical Education Center, competed May 1st at the Niagara-Orleans Envirothon held at Bond Lake Park Nature Center in Lewiston.

Teams were tested on wildlife, aquatics, forestry, soils/land use, and a current environmental issue. This year's current issue was Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future. Students had to develop a theoretical plan for a school district to help reach renewable energy goals and present for a panel of judges to grade.

Congratulations to the over-all winners for Niagara County from Niagara-Orleans County Career and Technical Center from Mr. Kaplewicz's class, students included Alex Achtziger-Hughes, Samantha Maciejewski, Miles Manns, and Alyssa Nagel.

A special thank you to this year's event sponsors M&T Bank, NewRoyal Orchards, and the NYS Forest Owners Association – Niagara Frontier Chapter for providing breakfast, lunch, and Envirothon shirts for the students. Exams and proctoring were provided by the Aquarium of Niagara, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation,

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge, and both Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Vic DiGiacomo of the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee came to discuss future conservation careers and opportunities with students.



The Niagara-Orleans Envirothon is an environmental competition on different aspects of natural resources. It gives students hands-on experience and knowledge of the environment to understand how to protect and manage the natural resources.

INTER-SEEDER RENTAL

Inter-seeder 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 inter-seeder 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 + \$50 delivery in Niagara County.



CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE

Don't Lose Your Benefits!

Have you, will you or are you thinking about doing any of the following activities that have not been evaluated by NRCS on land you farm?

- Land clearing?
- Working new land?
- Excavation?
- Stump removal?
- Create a new drainage system?
- Constructing a building or structure?
- Improving an existing drainage system?
- Modifying an existing drainage system?
- Maintaining an existing drainage system?
- Land leveling?
- Dredging an area?
- Filling an area?
- Plant an agricultural commodity on land where an NRCS determination of Highly Erodible Land (HEL) or wetland has not been made?

If you answered yes and want to remain eligible for USDA program payments, you MUST file Form AD-1026 with FSA and answer yes to one or more of the following questions:

- 5 • 9 • 10A • 10B • 10C



USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Feb. 2010

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.

2023 SWCD Annual Report of Accomplishments

District Activities::

Tree Program - 40,159 seedlings/ 605 customers
 Ag Value Assessments - 76 totaling 3,895 acres
 Pond Stocking - 13,405 fingerlings to 27 ponds
 Grass Carp - 50 carp to 10 ponds
 Pond Site Evaluations – 16
 Wildlife Houses Sold - 92
 Regional Envirothon - 9 teams/ 2 counties
 Student Education - 2 events/ 38 students
 Newsletters - 11,274 mailed/ emailed to addresses
 Media Articles - 8
 Resource Map Requests - 16
 Permit Assistance - 5
 Technical Assistance - 28
 Wildlife Habitat Improvements - 8 acres pollinator habitat
 Litter Clean-Up - 5 events/ 1,277lbs.
 No-Till Drill Plantings - 32 acres at 3 sites
 Inter-Seeder Acres Planted - 17 acres at 1 farms
 Stormwater Management Site Visits - 26
 Stormwater Management Plans Reviewed - 1
 Water Quality Monitoring & Samples - 10
 Invasive Species/Japanese knotweed - 429 treated sites/ 70 acres
 Invasive Species/ Multiflora rose - 60 acres
 Education Booths - 6 events/ 939 participants
 Arbor Day - 480 trees
 Christmas Tree Recycling - 53 trees
 4 Hour Soil & Erosion Training - 3 classes/ 94 participants

Ag Best Management Practices:

Drainage/Ditching - 12,145 lf tiles/ditches
 Ag-Chemical Handling & Storage System – 1 design/ 2 projects installed
 Petroleum SPCC Plans - 2
 Bunk Silo Expansion - 1
 Erosion Assistance - 3 sites
 Short Term Manure Storage - 1
 Roof Water Mgmt System - 1 designed / 2 installed
 Waste Storage and Transfer System - project installed
 Soil Health Projects - Cover Crop Plantings, 288 acres/ 6 farms

AEM Plans Completed:

Tier 1 - 50, Tier 2 - 46, Tier 3a - 34, Tier 4 - 7, Tier 5a - 6, Tier 5b - 3



FIELD DAYS IS FINALLY BACK!

On June 5th 800 students from six school districts around the County gathered at Royalton Ravine to participate in Environmental Field Days. It was great to have everyone back enjoying and learning about the great outdoors!

We couldn't have done it without the many great instructors that gave up their day to come spend it with us. Thank you!

Plans are already underway to make next year even better. If you're interested in attending next year please contact our office for details.

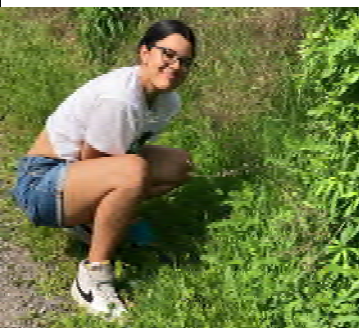
GREEN PROJECTS

The Global Rivers Environmental Education Network (GREEN) projects were completed in May 2024. Schools completed water quality monitoring in the fall of 2023 and spent the school year developing watershed action projects before the school year ended.

Lockport students expanded and improved a pollinator habitat in the Olcott Harbor. Work included removing undesirable species, planting winterberry and milkweed seedlings, and spreading pollinator seeds.



Newfane students hanging a blue bird box



Lockport student planting seedlings

Newfane students released classroom raised trout into Olcott Harbor and built/installed bluebird boxes throughout Fisherman's Park.

Niagara BOCES Conservation class completed tree and shrub plantings in addition to completing additional water quality testing.

Project supplies were sponsored by our local GMCH Lockport.

Field Crews Continue to Fight Invasive Species



NCSWCD is still working to eradicate the very invasive Japanese Knotweed from the County. Japanese knotweed shades out native plants causing them to die away and create erosion problems. Once knotweed has been successfully treated other plants are able to grow. If you have or think you have knotweed on your property and would like it treated please contact our office at 716-434-4949 ext 4.



Top photo: Japanese knotweed new growth stems;
 Bottom left: Knotweed stems; Bottom right: Japanese knotweed flowers and leaves



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