

# CDEA News



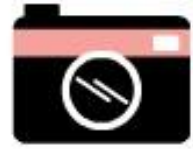
**NEW YORK STATE  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION, INC.**



September 2019



# This Issue's Cover Photo



This issue's cover photo was taken by Troy Bishopp aka The Grass Whisperer, Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District. Conservation professionals measure forage dry matter in a beef pasture. For the full story, see page 6.



## A Letter from the President

Chastity Miller, President, New York State Conservation District Employees' Association, Inc.

Happy September everyone! Can you believe it is almost Fall...I know many of you are in the height of your construction season and trying to get those projects buttoned up before the white stuff thinks about flying. This month we have an excellent opportunity with the Conservation Skills Workshop held September 23-27 in Cortland! A huge thank you to all that work very hard to put together that in field training session. Also thank you to Cortland County for hosting us. It is a great opportunity to have training and then to get to go see the projects. Also it is a great opportunity to network with each other.

I recently attended the Northeast Association of Conservation Districts annual meeting at Foxwoods in Connecticut! It was a great meeting there were about 7 of us from NY out of the 80 that attended. I listened to allot and gathered allot of information on what other states are doing and how they are doing it. The big take home message? Partnerships and communication. We all can make a difference and this our opportunity and we just need to get involved. You may ask yourself how do I do that? Contact your Division Representative (they are on the last page of the newsletter), if you don't know who yours is, then call me, I will help! So mark your calendars for March 10-14, 2020 for the next Water Quality Symposium. It will be at the Double Tree Hilton in Syracuse again. The classes are being planed and set up now and we are working on the fun!

As the summer winds down take a moment to enjoy the sun and warmth. Don't forget to enjoy the summers bounty in the fresh fruits and veggies!



## Water Chestnut Hand Pulling Project Summer 2019 Summary Report

Robbie Rioux, Crew Leader, Onondaga County Soil & Water Conservation District

The fourth annual Water Chestnut Hand Pulling Project has ended with near record breaking numbers. The crew (l-r), Robbie Rioux, Maddie Rioux, Liz Kelsey-Gossard, and Megan Vandewarker hand pulled a grand total of 28,000 pounds of water chestnut from the Seneca River and Cross Lake. This is the second highest amount ever pulled, and a terrific feat. The

European water chestnut, sometimes called the water caltrop or horned water chestnut, is an invasive aquatic plant that was unintentionally released into Northeastern US waterways in the late 1800s. Water chestnut is slowly spreading throughout New York State, invading and clogging waterways, altering habitats, and causing public

nuisance. Robbie added, “We had a wonderful summer meeting and working with generous homeowners and businesses who care deeply about our waterways and want to see change.”





## Irrigation Training

Tim Clark, Environmental Engineer, New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee


32 District and NRCS staff met at SUNY Cobleskill to learn the fundamentals of crop irrigation. SUNY Cobleskill professor George Crosby introduced the class to the concepts of evapotranspiration, soil water holding capacity, sprinkler spacing, and drip irrigation design. Each participant received a copy of the Principles of Irrigation textbook from the Irrigation association, which was used in class and will be useful for students as a reference. Funding for the training was provided by the Ecosystem Based Management program.

On the second day Professor Crosby showed how to conduct an irrigation audit by having the students placed measure cups in a grid across a golf green at the campus. He demonstrated automatic sprinkler control and wiring using some of the irrigation infrastructure nearby. Then the class went over to the Horticulture building and assembled a microirrigation system consisting of a manifold and 3 drip tape lines.

Professor Crosby continued to reinforce the idea that the Northeast is decades behind more arid states in irrigation technology and experience, but that the skills needed are not too hard to learn. New York State and NRCS have cost share programs available to help producers build out or modernize their irrigation systems. We expect more and more Soil and Water Districts will be involved with irrigation in their counties in the future. For more information contact [tim.clark@agriculture.ny.gov](mailto:tim.clark@agriculture.ny.gov).



Your **EPIC** story could be here!

Email your news to [hcsxcd@frontiernet.net](mailto:hcsxcd@frontiernet.net) 

Thank you for making CDEA News  
a continued success!

# SAVE THE DATE

NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION OF  
CONSERVATION  
DISTRICTS

2020 NORTHEAST  
REGIONAL MEETING



SEPTEMBER 13-16, 2020  
PORTSMOUTH,  
NEW HAMPSHIRE





## Conservation Professionals Increase Knowledge to Support Client Needs

Troy Bishopp, The Grass Whisperer, Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District

Cortland, NY—As the autumnal equinox is ushered in, so too is the annual conservation skills training regime for conservation professional partners. Whether environmental stewardship is agriculture, rural, municipal or urban related, the folks on the front line of service

sources Conservation Service, and the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee. Seasoned practitioners and leaders in their respective fields teach the theories, designs, techniques and tools for getting thoughtful, effective conservation on the ground.

vation planning and practices associated with landings, skid trails, forest roads, stream crossings, sensitive areas for setbacks/buffers and post-harvest restoration.

Featured speakers from several local Soil & Water Conservation Districts described their individual Rural Roads Active Management Programs and how each district interacts with their municipalities and landowners when managing rural roads for water quality. Classes also addressed assisting municipalities with developing and implementing an effective pollution prevention and good housekeeping program.

The weeklong mentorship also prepared staff with the New York State Erosion & Sediment Control Implementation Course and administered the certification test which implements the state's water quality objectives for construction sites.

“A trained professional is a valuable asset to our local community, said Conservation Skills Workshop Coordinator, Stacy Russell. The week gives us an opportunity to acquire new skills, determine what is working in the field and network across all conservation disciplines to support our customers better and improve our environmental footprint.”

To learn more, visit [www.nyscdea.com](http://www.nyscdea.com).



*Conservation Professionals look over the soil health of a hay field during the Conservation Skills Training workshop.*

seek ongoing training to help clients reach their water quality goals throughout the state.

The weeklong indoor and out-in-the-field workshops were sponsored by the NYS Conservation District Employee's Association, USDA Natural Re-

Newly hired local professionals worked through the NRCS / AEM planning process starting with an introduction to the core planning components and headed to the field to do on-farm assessments and learn the fundamentals of planning key farm land uses such as farmsteads, cropland, and pasture.

Statewide employees honed their skills in surveying, wetland delineation and the basics of GPS data collection for inventory and evaluation as well as conserva-

tion practice implementation and project oversight. They gained knowledge in the fundamentals of prescribed grazing planning and management, treating cropland erosion issues and using a suite of practices to improve soil infiltration capabilities and also forest conser-

## Down and Dirty with the Wetlands

Laura Generous, Natural Resource Conservation Technician, Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District

In July, Washington County SWCD hosted a free Wetland Delineation Training for fellow SWCD folk, contractors, and watershed groups utilizing Part C funding. A wide variety of the state was also covered, with participants from the North County, Central, and Western New York. New connections and many laughs were shared over the course of the training. The three-day training presented by Dr. Mike Losito, professor from SUNY Cobleskill, covered an extensive amount of knowledge and each individual gained a new skill set. Morning sessions were held at the Farm Credit East in Greenwich and afternoon field sessions were held at Carter's Pond, a DEC wildlife management unit. A history of how wetland delineation has evolved over the years was explained each morning, and how that would tie in with the field portion of the afternoon. On the first

afternoon, it was all about flowers, wetland plants, and how to utilize *Newcomb's Wildflower Guide* to determine which plants we held. While many of the plants in the area studied were known, such as chickory, black eyed Susan, and birds foot trefoil, we struggled at first through the guide to get to the correct page. As the afternoon progressed, it became easier and quicker to flip through the puzzle and get to the correct page. The second day we got down and dirty, literally! We spent the morning with some more history, then talked about soils. In the afternoon, we made our way to some gorgeous wetland soils, and with loud sucking noises, pulled out several samples to examine and classify. We learned to use the *Munsell Soil Color Book*, then use the information gathered to try to identify the soil based on a list of descriptions. Many of us were able to experience

redoximorphic features, iron that is liquified when in wet conditions but changes to a solid reddish state when exposed to air, change right before our eyes! After learning how to identify plants and knowing which ones are more wetland based, and discovering how to tell if a soil is hydric, everything was put together to find the line between wetland and upland. This knowledge is very valuable in many of the projects and landowners that we all help on a regular basis. If anyone is on the edge about going to a wetland delineation training, or need to brush up on their plant ID or soils skills, this is a great opportunity to so. Even if wetlands aren't part of your routine tasks, just the history, learning another way to identify plants, or brush up on using the *Munsell Soil Color Book* is very valuable!

## Herkimer County Hydroseeding Program: From Webb to Warren

Bob Tilbe, Conservation Aide, Herkimer County Soil & Water Conservation District

The Herkimer County SWCD has offered hydroseeding services to municipalities for its third season. The SWCD has worked with municipal Highway Departments, as well as the County Highway Department to hydroseed 21 sites throughout 7 towns so far in 2019. These sites total over 208,000 square feet, which include nearly 5 linear miles of road ditch. The benefits of hydroseeding include stabilizing exposed soil, reducing erosion, and improving water quality. The SWCD offers this service at no cost to municipalities within Herkimer County for seeding municipal-owned property and rights-of-way on a first-come, first-served basis. This is a great practice to implement after performing work on ditches. This program runs from early summer through late September. Below are photos of District staff hydroseeding in the county's northern-most town, Webb (1 & 2), and hydroseeded sites in the southern-most town, Warren (3 & 4).



*Hydroseeding Joy Tract Rd. at Bisby Rd. intersection.*



*Hydroseeding Moose River Trail at Russell St. intersection.*



*Recently cleaned ditch hydroseeded on Atswell Rd.*



*Recently cleaned ditch hydroseeded on Hicks Rd.*



# Where in New York is **Ronny Raindrop?**

CDEA News is proud to present **Where in New York is Ronny Raindrop?** By evaporation or precipitation, by sublimation or freezing, Ronny thrills crowds all across New York State. Submit your photos of Ronny with a brief description of what he's doing and where he is.



Carla Yaw of Lewis County SWCD spotted Ronny in an unusual location!



Ronny at the 2019 State Envirothon.



Ronny at the 2019 State Envirothon.



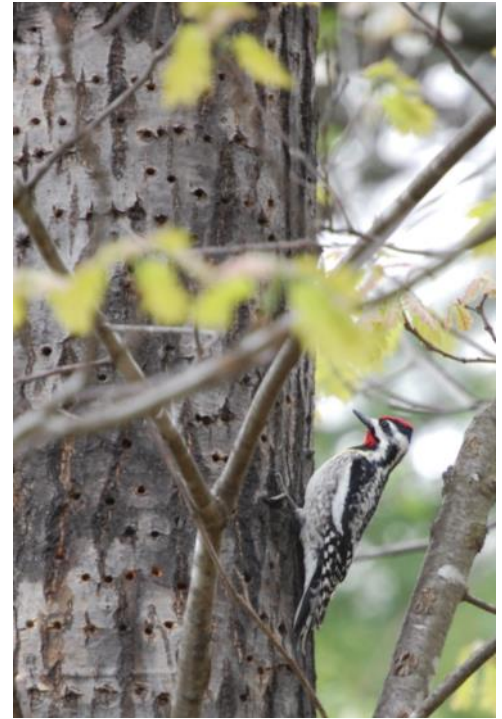
Ronny at the 2019 State Envirothon.



# Photo Album



More like the calm after the storm! A beautiful double rainbow over Lake Steere in Oxford, New York after a stormy evening. Miranda Palmer, Tioga County SWCD.



Chastity Miller, Franklin County SWCD



Early morning hike in Oakley Corners State Forest. Miranda Palmer, Tioga County SWCD.



Chastity Miller, Franklin County SWCD





## 1st Annual NYS CDEA

### Fish On Challenge

Don't forget to send your entries in for the NYS CDEA Fish on Challenge!! With 6 categories there are lots of opportunities! You don't need to have the biggest fish either, the Jokers Wild category gives you a chance to explain why your fish is unique, was it the species caught, the size for the species or the way you caught it? Get creative and get out and go fishing! We want to hear about your fishing adventures and the great resource we are all trying to protect. Send your entries to [Fishcdea@gmail.com](mailto:Fishcdea@gmail.com).



# New York State Conservation District Employees' Association, Inc.

*“Your local Soil and Water Conservation District provides ongoing programs and services to conserve, enhance and protect soil and water resources in your community.”*

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