

SENECA COUNTY SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
2041 US ROUTE 20, SUITE 2
SENECA FALLS, NY 13148

NEWSLETTER

March 2019

Buffer Easement Funding Available

Source Water Buffer Program
Led by the New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee, in coordination with the Department of Agriculture and Markets, the goal of the Source Water Buffer Program is to protect active sources of public drinking water and support, expand or enhance water quality protection through the **purchase of conservation easements on agricultural lands**. Such projects shall preserve or establish buffers for surface or ground waters which serve as or are tributaries to public drinking water supplies.

Program funds are available for the **purchase of conservation easements on agricultural lands** that support, expand or enhance water quality protection of active public drinking water sources including but not limited to aquifers, watersheds, reservoirs, lakes, rivers, and streams. Program funds will also be available for the implementation of Riparian Buffer Systems within the conservation easement area that will provide further protection to water quality.

Funding in the amount of \$5,000,000 will be available Statewide on a first come, first serve basis.

If interested in pursuing a conservation easement on your agricultural land, call the Seneca SWCD for eligibility information.

2019 Seedling Sale

2019 Seedling Sale Order Form can be found on our website at www.senecacountyswcd.org

If you need an order form mailed to you, please contact Kristin White at 315-835-6030.

PICK UP & OVERSTOCK SALE
April 26th, 2019 9AM—6PM
Seneca County Fairgrounds
Waterloo, NY



www.senecacountyswcd.org

Important Dates & Events

Soil Health Workshop, Ontario
SWCD.....3/7/2019
Tree & Shrub Order Deadline.....3/8/2019
Buffer in a Bag, Free Tree grant....4/3/2019
Seneca SWCD Tree & Shrub
Sale.....4/26/2019
CLWN Spring Community
Conference.....5/18/19

OFFICE NEWS

New District Manager

When the previous District Manager retired **Erin Peruzzini** was promoted to District Manager as of October 1, 2018.

Erin was hired in 1999 as a District Technician. Throughout her 19 years at the District she has worked with landowners, municipalities, and ag producers to put projects on the ground, assist with soil erosion and drainage issues, apply for and maintain grant money for projects, and completed soil group worksheets to assist farmers with their ag value assessments.

Erin is already planning future projects for the District and will continue to work with Seneca County municipalities, landowners, and ag producers to help conserve Seneca County's natural resources and improve water quality throughout the county.

New District Technician

Matt Everdyke was hired in January as a District Technician.

After 7 years of military service, Matt graduated from Hobart and William Smith Colleges with a degree in Geoscience and a focus in hydrogeology. He began working with the USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Geneva as a biological science aid until December of 2017. Early in 2018, Matt was hired by Onondaga Counties' Water Environment Protection as a wastewater technician. He routinely sampled Onondaga Lake, its tributaries, wastewater treatment plants and industrial effluent for compliance with water quality standards.

Matt's education and varied experience will make for a great fit at Soil and Water.

New District Board of Director—Chuck Sumner

Chuck and his wife have recently renovated their family's lake cottage to become their year round residence. The cottage at Interlaken Beach in the Town of Covert has been in his family since 1960 and has been a large part of his family's life.

Chuck graduated from Alfred State College with a degree in Agricultural Marketing. After graduation he soon realized his passion for construction. In 1981 he started working for Cornell University as a project manager for Campus Life. After eighteen years he transferred to Maintenance Management where he oversaw the maintenance and construction for a third of the endowed campus. While having fifty seven buildings he also had all Cornell roads, bridges and State utilities. He worked closely with Tompkins County and Cayuga Heights building inspectors and with Cornell Utilities and DEC on bridge and stream projects. Chuck retired in 2009 and now is able to enjoy his Cayuga Lake home full time.

Being an avid hunter and fisherman he realizes how delicate a balance it is to maintain our land and streams and still provide for agricultural growth with minimal impact.

Seneca County Soil & Water is happy to welcome Chuck as the SWCD Board Member at Large!



AEM Projects Corner

Project updates from District Technician, Christopher Creelman

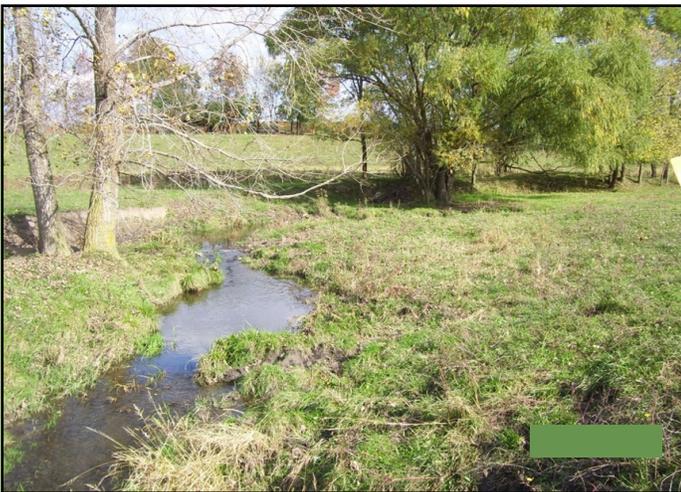
WHAT IS AEM? Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) is a voluntary, incentive-based program that helps farmers make common-sense, cost-effective, and science-based decisions to meet business objectives while protecting and conserving New York State's natural resources.

AEM is designed to work with farmers to further protect important natural resources. By participating in AEM, farmers can document their environmental stewardship and further advance their positive contributions to their communities, our food systems, the economy, and the environment.

For questions, please call our office at **315-568-4366 Extension 4**.

Here are examples of projects completed through the AEM program in Seneca County.

BEFORE



AFTER



Access Control System

Animals in the pasture had unlimited access to 1,300 feet of stream. High tensile fence was installed to eliminate animal access to the creek, and a cattle slat crossing was installed as a stabilized crossing.





AEM Projects Corner

continued

Project updates from District Technician, Christopher Creelman

HEAVY USE AREA PROTECTION



Originally, runoff from the hutch area was not controlled and drained through the farm access road where it mixed with roof runoff.



The hutch area was relocated to an improved site and a vegetated treatment area was installed downslope to treat runoff.

ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM



Originally, animals had unlimited access to stream adjacent to the farmstead. High tensile fence was installed to eliminate animal access to the stream and an animal laneway was installed from the barn to the pasture.





AEM Projects Corner

continued

Project updates from District Technician, Christopher Creelman

Rotational Grazing System

Highly erodible cropland was converted to permanent pasture. High tensile fence was installed around the perimeter of the field and the landowner uses temporary fence to break the field into smaller paddocks.



NYS DEC Trees for Tribs

*****FREE TREES and SHURBS*****

NYS DEC Announces new **Trees for Tribs "Buffer in a Bag"** Initiative.

To qualify, landowners must have property in NY State that borders at least 50 feet of a stream, river, or lake and provide photos and map coordinates of planting location. Species selection for Seneca County includes sand cherry, winterberry, red osier dogwood, silky dogwood and red oak. Qualifying public and private landowners may apply for a free bag of 25 tree and shrub seedlings for planting along streams and lakes to help stabilize banks, decrease erosion, protect water quality, and improve wildlife habitat. A total of 350 bags will be available statewide for this first round of applications and recipients will be chosen on a first come, first served basis.

Application deadline is April 3, 2019.

For assistance with the Buffer in a Bag application process, call the SWCD office. (315)568-4366

Septic Replacement Program

Funding available for Seneca & Cayuga Lake properties

Established as part of the Clean Water Infrastructure Act of 2017 (L. 2017, c. 57, Part T), the Septic System Replacement Fund provides a source of funding for the replacement of cesspools and septic systems in Seneca County. It also seeks to reduce the environmental and public-health impacts associated with the discharge of effluent cesspools and septic systems on groundwater used as drinking water, as well as threatened or impaired water bodies such as Seneca and Cayuga Lakes.

The State Departments of Environmental Conservation ("DEC") and Health ("DOH") determined Seneca County's lakes as priority geographic areas where the Program will provide grants for eligible septic system projects. An area's designation as a priority is based on its vulnerability to contamination (e.g. the presence of a sole-source aquifer or a known water-quality impairment), population density, soils, hydrogeology, climate and reasonable ability for septic system projects to mitigate water quality impacts. Under the Program, **Seneca County can access monies from the Fund to reimburse property owners for up to 50% of the eligible costs (up to a maximum of \$10,000) of their eligible septic system projects.**

The Program provides grants for eligible "septic system projects" involving:

- the replacement of a cesspool with a septic system, or
- the installation, replacement or upgrade of a septic system or septic system components, or installation of enhanced treatment technologies, including an advanced nitrogen removal system.
- Lakefront systems within 200' from the lake or adjacent tributary
- Primary and second homes are eligible
- New systems must be designed by a licensed professional engineer

Eligible Costs –	Ineligible Costs –
i. incurred cost must be reasonable and necessary for work done to a septic system if it is determined by the County Health Department or other authorized agent as identified above in 7(b) that such septic system is failing or reasonably likely to fail prior to any repairs, or such system has received a Notice of Violation or Notice of Failure prior to any repairs. ii. Design and installation costs, and costs of the system, system components, or enhanced treatment technologies. iii. Design costs are eligible, limited only to work needed to complete an approved design, including needed site investigation.	i. Routine maintenance such as a pump out of a septic tank. ii. Any expenses that are not appropriately documented; iii. Government permit fees, including but not limited to fees assessed for building permits, zoning permits, and floodplain disturbance permits; iv. Interest and late fees; v. Fines and penalties; vi. The payment of sales tax; vii. Non-essential site beautification or interior plumbing changes; viii. Administrative work conducted by the engineer; and ix. Construction observation by the engineer if the engineer, or an entity owned, controlled by or employing the engineer, is also conducting the repair or replacement.

The Environmental Facilities Corporation administers the funding for this program, which would be requested by Seneca County following an approved and completed project.

<https://www.efc.ny.gov/SepticReplacement>

Please call the **Seneca County Health Department** for more information. **(315)539-1945**

*Special thanks to **Senator Pamela Helming** for helping secure the funding to preserve our valuable Seneca County lakes.*

HABS Harriers – first call!

Join Cayuga Lake's Harmful Algal Bloom monitoring team for 2019

Hilary Lambert
Steward, Cayuga Lake Watershed Network



We're looking for new volunteers to join our established team to monitor the Cayuga Lake shoreline for Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) this coming summer. Also known as cyanobacteria or blue-green algae, HABs are on the rise in Cayuga Lake and across the region. They can be toxic; they are ugly, and people and pets need to stay away from them. Will you help us ramp up our monitoring and reporting vigilance in 2019?

In 2018, the Community Science Institute of Ithaca carried out lab analysis of the HABs samples collected by Harriers and members of the public. They documented forty confirmed cyanobacteria blooms, seventy percent of which had *microcystin* toxin levels above the acceptable limit for ambient water set by the NY State Department of Health. These blooms with higher toxin levels were observed to occur more frequently in September, were dominated by specific taxa (types) of cyanobacteria, and many of them occurred in the northern half of the lake.

Last year, CSI recruited and, with the NY Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC), trained over 70 volunteers around Cayuga Lake as HABs Harriers. These Harriers monitored thirty percent of the Cayuga Lake shoreline weekly from July to October. This year we are looking for thirty new volunteers and we aim to cover fifty percent of the shoreline. Our short-term goal is to keep the public alert to blooms that may threaten human and animal health. Long term, we seek to better understand factors that promote HABs so that we can manage the risk they pose to our recreational enjoyment of the lake and drinking water.

What's involved in being a HABs Harrier volunteer?

- You commit to walking a designated stretch of shoreline once a week and submitting a report as to whether you observed a Harmful Algal Bloom.
- If you observe a suspicious bloom, you take pictures, record the location, report it, take a sample and get it to the CSI lab for analysis.
- You attend a two-hour HABs identification and sampling workshop in June, presented by the Community Science Institute and the DEC.
- The shoreline zone you designate can be your own property or that of a friend; or you can select available public shoreline for your regular patrol.
- The monitoring season is from July – October with flexibility when you need to be away.

CSI works together with DEC and other agencies to alert the public quickly to where the blooms are threatening lake use. Blooms are reported on CSI's website at the [HABs Reporting Page](http://www.communityscience.org/cayuga-lake-2018-harmful-algal-blooms-results/report-a-hab/).
<http://www.communityscience.org/cayuga-lake-2018-harmful-algal-blooms-results/report-a-hab/>

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network (CLWN) partners with CSI to get information out to the public. Go to the CLWN website www.cayugalake.org for more HABs information – click on Algal Blooms at the top of the home page. We need your help this summer to protect our beautiful lake and our enjoyment of its waters.

Please contact Hilary Lambert steward@cayugalake.org for more information about becoming a HABs Harrier.

What to do when you see, what you believe to be a harmful algal bloom?

With harmful algal blooms becoming more prominent in our lakes, it is imperative that we maintain the safety of those sampling and the integrity of the samples themselves; it is recommended that, in the event you see what you think is a HAB, contact either the **Cayuga Lake Watershed Network (CLWN)** or the **Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association (SLPWA)** so they can dispatch a trained member of their respective groups to collect the sample. They will need some information including the date, time, GPS coordinates (address, distance, and direction will suffice however, GPS coordinates are preferred), and a few pictures if possible. This information will help the trained volunteers to get to the bloom as soon as possible. Once the sample is collected, it will make its way to Ithaca at the Community Science Institute where it will be analyzed for blue/green chlorophyll and microcystin. This will confirm or deny that it is an algal bloom and the toxicity of the bloom.

CLWN HAB's Hotline habshotline@gmail.com

See article on previous page to become a volunteer or HAB Harrier for Cayuga Lake.

SLPWA HAB's Hotline **1800-220-1609**

During the months of August and September, volunteers monitor the shorelines of Seneca Lake for CyanoHABs. To become a volunteer at SLPWA you need to go to their website <https://senecalake.org/> and click on the volunteer tab, fill out the appropriate information and await contact from a SLPWA representative.

OTHER WAYS TO REPORT IT!

● If you suspect that you have seen a HAB, please report the bloom to the DEC. Fill out and submit a Suspicious Algal Bloom Report Form (PDF, 764 KB). Email the completed form and, if possible, attach digital photos (close-up and landscape to show extent and location) of the suspected bloom to HABsInfo@dec.ny.gov.

● Please report any health symptoms to NYS Health Department at harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov and your local health department.

FOR ADDITIONAL **HAB** INFORMATION

https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/habsprogramguide.pdf

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/77118.html>



SWCD Board of Directors	
Mike Reynolds	Legislator, Chairman
Ron McGreevy	Legislator
Elisabeth Freier	Farm Bureau, Treasurer
John Hunt	Grange, Vice Chairman
Chuck Sumner	Member At-Large

Staff	Direct Phone
Erin Peruzzini District Manager	315-835-6039
Kristin White District Bookkeeper and Secretary to the Board	315-835-6030
Christopher Creelman District Technician	315-835-6041
Matt Everdyke District Technician	315-835-6040
Ron Vanacore USDA/NRCS District Conservationist	315-835-6038

2019 Board Meetings
4th Monday of the Month
(unless otherwise noted)
9:30 A.M.
Seneca County SWCD Office

- * January 28, 2019
- * February 25, 2019
- * March 25, 2019
- * April—No Meeting
- * May 20, 2019
- * June 24, 2019
- * July 22, 2019
- * August 26, 2019
- * September 23, 2019
- * October 28, 2019
- * November 25, 2019
- * December 16, 2019



Public Welcome!

*Dates and times may change during the year due to unforeseen circumstances. Check our website for up-to-date meeting times.

This newsletter is published by the Seneca County Soil & Water Conservation District and is available at no cost to interested landowners, land users, and to the general public. If you would like to receive our newsletter, call us with your email address or view it online at www.senecacountyswcd.org. Programs and services offered through the Seneca County Soil & Water Conservation District are made possible through the financial support of the County of Seneca, State of New York, specialized grant opportunities, and fundraising programs. All SWCD programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, political beliefs, religion, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. Our Board of Director meetings are open to the public; please call for more information.