

Conservation Connections

Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District

50 Commerce Way, East Aurora, New York 14052-2185
Telephone: (716) 652-8480 Fax: (716) 652-8506
www.ecswcd.org



Semi-Annual District Newsletter

Winter, 2008

What is a Conservation District?

Conservation Districts are local government subdivisions established under NYS law to carry out programs for the conservation of soil, water, and related resources. Districts are resource management agencies coordinating and implementing resource and environmental programs at the local level in cooperation with local, state and federal agencies.

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CALLING ALL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



Are you looking to spend some time outdoors in a competition that focuses on learning about our environment? The Erie County Soil & Water Conservation is currently looking for high school students interested in participating in our local Envirothon which is held at Chestnut Ridge Park in Orchard Park, New York.

The District is currently recruiting area high school students to assemble five-member teams to compete against other Erie County high school teams for its local Envirothon. Workshop Day is scheduled for April 3, 2008 and Competition Day is scheduled for May 1, 2008

On Workshop Day, students learn about environmental topics firsthand from professionals from a variety of important local and state organizations, as well as make a prepared presentation about a current environmental topic. High school teams then compete on Competition Day to achieve the highest scores in the test categories of forestry, soils, aquatics, wildlife and the 2008

Current Environmental Issue "Recreational Impacts on Natural Resources." The winning team will progress to the New York State Envirothon, held at SUNY Cobleskill on May 21-22, 2008. The 1st place team at the NYS Envirothon proceeds to the National level Canon Envirothon.

Continued on Pg.2



ECSWCD Staff who coordinate the local Envirothon. From left: Mark Gaston, Craig Domanowski, Melanie Saunders, Jim Sroka & Don Stribick

Important Dates:

- Tree & Shrub Distribution Day at the Marketplace Building at the Hamburg Fairgrounds on April 19, 2008/Order Due 3/20/08
- Erie County Envirothon: Workshop Day: April 3, 2008 Test Day: May 1, 2008
- Erie County Soil & Water Conservation District Board Meeting @ the USDA Service Center on the second Tuesday of every month at 9:30 AM
- Spring Trout Stocking Program Orders due by 4/21/08 Trout pick-up 5/3/08



\$65,993 Water Quality Improvement Project Completed

The Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District is pleased to announce the completion of the Eighteenmile Creek Watershed Agricultural Planning Project. This project included the development of Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans on twelve priority farms working approximately 3,800 acres in the Eighteenmile Creek Watershed in Erie County, New York. This 77,040-acre watershed includes portions of the Towns of Boston, Eden, Concord, Hamburg, North Collins, and Orchard Park. The project provided cost-share assistance under the NYS Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Grant Program which assists farmers in preventing water pollution from agricultural activities by providing technical assistance and financial incentives. To receive cost-share assistance, landowners had to provide a cash match of 25% of the plan cost. A Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) is a guidance document that inventories and evaluates agricultural resources and natural resources on the farm, and provides recommendations for three core management areas including nutrient budget, erosion and sediment control and agricultural waste handling.

Continued on Pg. 2

**2008 TREE & SHRUB ORDER FORM INSIDE
ORDER EARLY FOR BEST SELECTION—ORDER BY MARCH 20, 2008**



Envirothon...continued from pg. 1



The Envirothon is a very unique, positive program that expands the students' classroom, in turn enriching our community by advancing youth education and environmental stewardship. The Envirothon is a fun way for students to apply lessons learned to a natural setting. It affords students the opportunity to expand their knowledge and to practice future career skills. Through providing guidance to students, natural resource professionals—such as foresters, biologists, soil scientists, conservationists, ecologists and field technicians—also give students a glimpse of exciting possible careers in environment-related fields.

East High School's team took 2nd place in the 2007 Oral Presentation "What is the real cost of energy?"

We are committed to teaching the importance of natural resource conservation but we also feel we have an obligation to the community, the environment and ourselves. We invite you to join in on the fun of this worthwhile program. For more information on the current issue go to www.nysenvirothon.org or call the District at 652-8480, Ext. 5.

Water Quality...continued from pg. 1

The plan sets a course of action for the farm operation to properly manage all farm-related resources for the protection of the environment, for maintaining production fields and for keeping the farm operation viable. It also documents good conservation work already being done. Private sector crop consultants who are New York State certified planners worked with farmers and agency staff to complete CNMPs.

Depending on farm size, the farm operation is encouraged to complete plan updates every one-to-three years. Most farm operations in the planning project are implementing or have made a commitment to implement recommendations and are participating in implementation cost-share programs delivered by the Soil and Water Conservation District and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service at the East Aurora Field Office.

Priority farms were selected for participation in the planning project after their completion of Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM). AEM is a state-wide program delivered by Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD). AEM is a process by which a farm operation documents environmental stewardship and performs agricultural conservation planning for the protection of natural resources.

Agricultural Assessment Program:

Land in agricultural production may be eligible for a reduction in property taxes if your town assessor determines that the following requirements are met:

Land, owned by you and/or rented to an operator, must consist of 7 or more acres in a single operation that was used in the preceding two years for the production for sale of crops, livestock, or livestock products. Horse-boarding operations may qualify with certain eligibility requirements.

Proceeds from sales of agricultural products in a single operation must average \$10,000 or more for the preceding two years.

The agricultural assessment is based on the productivity of the soils. The District provides the soils information for the agricultural assessment application through a "soils group worksheet."

Contact your assessor for eligibility and an application. If eligible, you must bring a copy of your tax bill and tax parcel map or survey to the District office for completion of the worksheet. Assessors request that soil group worksheets be completed by March 1, 2008.



Congratulations to Katherine Deci (left) and Melissa Nosky (right) for winning ECSWCD's 2007 America's Fair coloring contest. The prize was a bluebird house. Missing from photo: D. J. Haley

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TO PRESERVE

2008 CONSERVATION TREE & SHRUB SEEDLING PROGRAM

ORDER BY MARCH 20, 2008. Seedling orders are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. As we have no control over the weather or your choice of planting sites, times or techniques, the Erie County SWCD will not be responsible for your trees and shrubs after they leave our distribution center. A fee will be applied for returned checks. No refunds will be offered for orders not picked-up.
KEEP THIS SECTION FOR YOUR RECORDS. RETURN ONLY THE ORDER FORM ON THE NEXT PAGE.

GROWTH RATE: ↑ Fast → Moderate ↓ Slow	LIGHT PREFERENCE: ☀ Full Sun ☉ Partial Sun ● Shade
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ADAPTATIONS / BEST USES:	
🌊 Wetlands 🎄 Christmas Trees E Erosion Control	🌬 Windbreak W Wood Products 🐾 Wildlife Food and Cover

HOW TO READ SEEDLING ORDER CHARTS:

VARIETY	GROWTH RATE	MATURE HEIGHT	SOIL PREFERENCE	LIGHT PREFERENCE	ADAPTATIONS/ BEST USES
Blue Spruce	↓	30 – 60'	Rich, moist	☀ ☉	🌊 🎄 🐾

WILDLIFE ATTRACTING SEEDLING PACKS

		QTY	COST
Native NY Wildlife:	2 each - White Pine, Black Cherry, White Spruce, Serviceberry, Hazelnut	\$12	
Homeowner Pack:	2 each - Blue Spruce, Douglas Fir, Sugar Maple, Paper (White) Birch, Pin Oak	\$12	
Nut Tree Pack:	2 each - Black Walnut, Red Oak, Hazelnut, American Beech, Sawtooth Oak	\$12	
Bird and Butterfly:	2 each - Chokecherry, Butterfly Bush, Common Lilac, American Elderberry, Highbush Blueberry - Jersey (Mid-Summer Fruiting)	\$14	

EVERGREEN TRANSPLANTS

Do not mix species

	10 for \$18	30 for \$51	50 for \$80
American Arborvitae	↓ 20 – 30'	Deep, moist, sandy	☀ 🌊 🐾
White Pine	↑ 50 – 80'	Fertile, moist, well-drained	☀ 🌊 🐾 🎄 W
Blue Spruce	↓ 30 – 60'	Rich, moist	☀ ☉ 🌊 🎄
Norway Spruce	↑ 40 – 60'	Acid, sandy, moist, well-drained	☀ ☉ 🌊 🎄
White Spruce	→ 40 – 60'	Moist loam, alluvial, tolerant	☀ ☉ 🌊 🐾 🎄
Balsam Fir	↓ 45 – 75'	Moist, well-drained, slightly acid	☀ ☉ 🎄
Canaan Fir	↓ 40 – 55'	Moist, well-drained, slightly acid	☀ ☉ 🎄
Concolor Fir	↓ 30 – 50'	Deep, rich, gravelly/sandy loam	☀ 🎄 W
Douglas Fir	→ 40 – 80'	Moist, well-drained, slightly acid	☀ 🎄
Fraser Fir	↓ 30 – 40'	Cool, moist, well-drained Loam	☀ ☉ 🎄 🐾
Hemlock	→ 40 – 70'	Moist well-drained, acid	☀ ☉ ● W 🐾

EVERGREEN/CONIFER SEEDLINGS

Do not mix species in a bundle

	10 for \$8	30 for \$21	100 for \$60	500 for \$250	QTY	COST
Austrian Pine	→ 50 – 60'	Tolerates many soils	☀ ☉ 🌊 🎄			
Scotch Pine	→ 30 – 60'	Acidic, well-drained	☀ 🎄			
White Pine	↑ 50 – 80'	Fertile, moist, well-drained	☀ 🌊 🐾 🎄 W			
Blue Spruce	↓ 30 – 60'	Rich, moist	☀ ☉ 🌊 🎄			
Norway Spruce	→ 40 – 60'	Acid, sandy, moist, well-drained	☀ ☉ 🌊 🎄 W			
White Spruce	→ 40 – 60'	Moist loam, alluvial	☀ ☉ 🌊 🐾 🎄			
Concolor Fir	↓ 30 – 50'	Deep, rich, gravelly/sandy loam	☀ 🎄 W			
Douglas Fir	→ 40 – 80'	Moist, well-drained, slightly acid	☀ 🎄			
Fraser Fir	↓ 30 – 40'	Cool, moist, well-drained loam	☀ ☉ 🎄 🐾			
Hemlock	→ 40 – 70'	Moist, well-drained, acid	☀ ☉ ● W			
Japanese Larch	↑ 70 – 90'	Moist, well-drained	☀ 🌊 W			

CONSERVATION SHRUBS SEEDLINGS

Do not mix species in a bundle

	10 for \$9	30 for \$24	50 for \$35	QTY	COST
Sargent Crabapple	→ 6 – 8'	Well-drained	☀ 🐾		
Red Osier Dogwood	↑ 7 – 9'	Moist soils	☀ ☉ 🌊 E		
American Elderberry	↑ 5 – 12'	Moist soils, adaptable	☀ ☉ 🌊 🐾		
American Filbert (Hazelnut)	→ 8 – 18'	Well-drained, loam, pH tolerant	☀ ☉ 🐾		
Rugosa Rose	↑ 4 – 6'	Fertile, slightly acid loam, salt tolerant	☀ E		
Shadblow Serviceberry	→ 6 – 20'	Moist, well-drained	☀ ☉ 🌊 🐾		
Streamco Willow	↑ 12 – 15'	Moist, slightly acid	☀ ☉ ● 🌊 E		

BROADLEAF DECIDUOUS SEEDLINGS

Do not mix species in a bundle

	10 for \$9	30 for \$24	50 for \$35	QTY	COST
Paper (White) Birch	↑ 50 – 70'	Moist, acid, well-drained loam	☀ W 🐾		
River Birch	↑ 40 – 70'	Moist, acid	☀ ☉ 🌊 🐾		
Black Cherry	→ 50 – 60'	Deep, moist, fertile	☀ W 🐾		
Red Maple	→ 40 – 60'	Moist, slightly acid, tolerant	☀ ☉ 🌊 W		
Sugar Maple	↓ 60 – 75'	Well-drained, fertile	☀ ☉ W		
Northern Red Oak	↑ 60 – 75'	Well-drained/sandy, slightly acid	☀ W 🐾		
Sawtooth Oak	→ 35 – 45'	Well-drained, acid, adaptable	☀ 🐾		
White Oak	↓ 50 – 80'	Deep, well-drained, moist, acid	☀ W 🐾		
Hybrid Poplar	↑ 80' +	Moist, silty or loamy	☀ 🌊 🐾		
Sycamore	↑ 75 – 100'	Deep, moist, rich soils	☀ ☉ 🌊		
Tuliptree	↑ 70 – 90'	Deep, moist, well-drained loam	☀ W 🐾		
Black Walnut	↑ 50 – 75'	Deep, moist, rich soils	☀ W 🐾		

AMERICAN CHESTNUT SEEDLINGS

	10 for \$20	QTY	COST
American Chestnut	→ 70 – 90'	Moist, sandy loam	☀ ☉ W

Am. Chestnut is offered as part of a conservation effort to perpetuate the species until a control for Chestnut blight can be developed. See www.ecswcd.org for more information.

EVERGREEN TRANSPLANT PACK	\$20	QTY	COST
2 each - Canaan Fir, Douglas Fir, White Pine, Blue Spruce, White Spruce			

The Tree and Shrub Seedling Program is an annual sale of evergreen and deciduous seedlings and transplants for the conservation of natural resources and the enhancement of forestry resources, wildlife habitat and economic development in Erie County.

2008 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Online Seedling Information

Visit our website at www.ecswcd.org for seedling descriptions, planting tips, a printable order form and more!

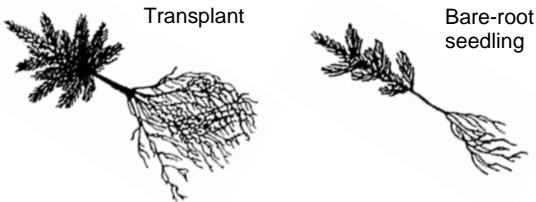
Bluebird Nest Boxes

Mount nest boxes to help the New York State Bird increase its population—Bluebirds help control unwanted insects in your garden too!

More Transplants

Balsam Fir, Concolor Fir and Canaan Fir are now available as bare-root transplant stock - more mature plants with thicker stems, more branching and larger root systems than bare-root seedlings.

NEW! A **Transplant Variety Pack** is now available!
SEE OTHER PAGE FOR SELECTION



ORDER BY: MARCH 20, 2008

PICK-UP DATE: APRIL 19, 2008

Confirmation of order and pick-up date will be sent to you.

Pick-up* will be at The Fairgrounds in Hamburg, NY on April 19, 2008.

*Friday April 18, 2008 evening pick-up at the fairgrounds is available by appointment only, please call the District for arrangements.

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Seedlings are sold in bundles of the same species only. Please do not mix species.

ERIE COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT 2008 TREE & SHRUB ORDER FORM

SEED MIXES/PLANTING SUPPLIES (Tax Included)	QTY	COST	TOTAL
Sunny Wildflower Seed Mix 2500 sq. ft. coverage		\$11.00 ea.	
Bird/Butterfly Wildflower Seed Mix 1350 sq. ft. coverage		\$13.00 ea.	
Shady Wildflower Seed Mix 1200 sq. ft. coverage		\$11.00 ea.	
Fertilizer Tablets		10 / \$1.10	
Orange Marker Flags		10 / \$1.10	
5' Tree Shelter (promotes fast growth and protects seedling)		\$5.00 ea.	
3' Tree Shelter (provides protection benefits)		\$3.50 ea.	
Bluebird Nest Box		\$12.00 ea.	
SEEDLING DESCRIPTION	QTY	COST	TOTAL

TAX EXEMPT

RECEIPT NO. (OFFICE USE) GRAND TOTAL ENCLOSED \$
(Do Not add Sales Tax)

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Telephone (H) _____ (W) _____

PLEASE REMIT THIS SECTION WITH PAYMENT
Make your check or money order payable to:
Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District
50 Commerce Way, East Aurora, New York 14052-2185
ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 20, 2008

FEMA STREAM DEBRIS CLEAN-UP

Almost one year to the day, the last of the prioritized stream debris removal projects resulting from the October 2006 snow storm was finally completed. The impressive results of the many hours focused on assessing and mapping debris sites, filing permits, contacting public officials, working with landowners and coordinating contractor activities totaled approximately 180 debris sites cleared of potential flooding and erosion impacts to local roads, bridges and properties. Areas that received assistance included Alden, Amherst, the City of Buffalo, Cheektowaga, Clarence, Depew, Elma, Grand Island, Hamburg, the City of Lackawanna, Lancaster and Newstead. The District would like to thank all the involved landowners, contractors, state and federal agencies and town and county officials, especially the Erie County Emergency Services and Department of Public Works, for all their contributions and patience in accomplishing this extensive undertaking.



Results of a stream debris removal project in Ellicott Creek

Even though the District was heavily involved in stream debris clearing activities, several grant related stream-bank stabilization projects were completed throughout the year in Concord, Wales and Marilla. Currently, preliminary design work is ongoing for the 2008 construction season and it should be another very active year working along our local creeks and streams.

<i>District Products and Services</i>	
USGS Topographic Maps	\$ 8.00
DOQQ Prints (8 1/2 X 11)	\$ 1.00
Bluebird Nest Houses	\$ 11.00
Bat Houses	\$ 12.00
Wood Duck Nest Houses	\$ 23.00
Marking Flags, Fertilizer Tablets	\$.10
Tree Shelters—5 foot	\$ 4.62
Tree Shelters—3 foot	\$ 3.33
Finder Pocket Field Guides	\$ 4.00
Add 8.75% sales tax to above items	
On site Pond Evaluation & Layout	\$600.00
Soil Group Worksheets	\$ 35.00
Technical Assistance Available	

Check us out on the Web!
www.ecswcd.org

Go to our web page and see what is new at the District. Our website has an array of information that can be accessed by Erie County residents. On our home page, click on the learning links for pond management, conservation practices and for internet based information including a link to an Internet Mapping System that has parcel information for the whole County. The District website also includes past issues of Conservation Connections, informational publications, and status of current projects. We welcome you to see what is new at the District!

Vacancy Announcement
for
E. C. Soil & Water Conservation District
Board of Directors At-Large Position
 2 year Appointment

Responsibilities include:
 Governing District activities
 Attending monthly District Board meetings
 Representing the District at local and state functions

Interested candidates should send a resume to
Francis Gernatt, Chairman of the Board at:
 50 Commerce Way,
 East Aurora, NY 14052 by 2/29/08

Candidates must be
 Erie County Residents and U.S. Citizens
 This is a volunteer position

For more information, please contact:
 Mark Gaston at 652-8480

NEW YORK BEGINNING FARMER LOAN PROGRAM (BFLP)

New York State, through the Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC), is making it easier for beginning farmers to acquire agricultural land and equipment by offering low-cost financing through the New York Beginning Farmer Loan Program (BFLP). Under the BFLP, beginning farmers can borrow up to \$250,000.00 at reduced rates to help start a farming business or facilitate inter-generational transfer of a farm business. EFC would like to work with you to make this program available to the vast agricultural community.

To obtain BFLP financing, the beginning farmer works with a lender to arrange the terms of a loan. The beginning farmer and the lender then apply to the BFLP. The BFLP acts as a conduit by issuing and selling a tax-exempt bond (aggie-bond) to the lender with the funds being loaned to the farmer using the lender's terms. EFC then assigns the loan back to the lender. By using tax-exempt funds, the lender can give a better interest rate to the farmer, usually around 1 to 2 percentage points less than the taxable interest loan.

The BFLP is administered by the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) in partnership with the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. EFC coordinates with various farm and banking organizations to promote the program.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact 800-200-2200 (within NYS), 518-486-9246 or check EFC's website at www.nysefc.org by clicking on Programs, NY Beginning Farmer Loan Program. In addition, you may contact the Erie County Soil & Water Conservation District at (716) 652-8480 in East Aurora where brochures are available.

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- Melanie J. Saunders, Secretary/Treasurer
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- James Sroka, Water Quality Technician
- Craig Domanowski, Water Quality Technician

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service:

- John Whitney, District Conservationist
- Michael Shinnick, Area I Ag. Engineer
- Charlie Kesterson, Soil Conservationist

Office Hours:

7:30 AM - 5:00 PM Monday through Thursday
 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM Friday

The Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Tree & Shrub
 Order Form
 Enclosed

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