

The Dirt

News from MCSWCD

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2009 TREE PROGRAM BEGINS



View our Tree & Shrub Program Catalogue and Order Form on the web!

www.monroecountyswcd.org

Please call the district if you would like a hard copy sent to you in the mail.

The Conservation District annual tree and shrub seedling sale is here! We sell a variety of bare root evergreen and deciduous seedlings to be used for effective conservation purposes. These seedlings provide the homeowner with economical conservation materials to establish windbreaks, reforest land, prevent soil erosion and create suitable wildlife habitats. Trees and shrubs can also add value to your home while

improving environmental health to your property.

A few new items added this year include: Pin Oak, Sycamore, Native Flowering Pack, and a Nut Tree Variety Pack. Also, a Conservation District Reusable Carry Bag is available for only \$1.50!

Since phosphorous is a pollutant of concern in our local waterways due to fertilizer runoff, the district offers a Phosphorous Free Fertilizer (10-0-20) for landowners to use to reduce water pollution at the local level.

Orders must be received by March 23rd for distribution on April 23rd and 24th from 9 am to 6 pm. Overstock sale will be held on April 25th at 12:00pm and will go until stock runs out.

2009 Stormwater Trainings Available

The MCSWCD will be offering several NYS DEC endorsed 4 hour contractor/developer trainings in 2009 to satisfy the New SPDES General Permit for Construction Activity (GP-0-08-001). Training is for Qualified Inspectors and Trained Individuals. Please check the district website for upcoming trainings!

DISTRICT WELCOMES NEW PLANNING TECHNICIAN



The District would like to welcome its newest staff member, Clark Moore. Clark has a B.S. degree in Plant Science from Cornell University. Clark is familiar with many faces of NYS Agriculture as he was a Research Technician with the Geneva Agricultural Experiment Station for 2 years. He then moved on to become a private consultant with Ag Consulting Services for 9 years working with vegetable, fruit, and cash crops, and also with Concentrated

Animal Feeding Operation Farms. Clark spent the last 8 years of his career with U.A.P. as a sales consultant for seed, chemicals, and fertilizers for agriculture.

Clark will be administering the Agricultural Environmental Program and other Agricultural programs to meet the need of our local producers.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Tree & Shrub Program	1
2009 Stormwater Trainings	1
District Welcomes its Newest Staff Member	1
AEM Update	2
Featured Shrub Species	2
Conservation Field Days	3
Black Creek Streambank Stabilization Project	3
Ag Assessments	4
District Personnel	4

GO PAPERLESS !

The 'Electronic' Dirt?

Sign up to receive an email link to each new issue, rather than a hardcopy in the mail. By becoming a "paper-free" subscriber, you will conserve natural resources and lower the District's operating expenses. Send us an email with "Newsletter" as the subject.

Newsletter@monroecountyswcd.org

Please include your name and address in the body of the message.

District Deadlines:

- Feb. 23** - Soil Group Worksheet Request form Due
- March 23** - Tree & Shrub Order Forms due
- April 23 & 24** - Pick-up for ordered trees



AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District is focusing efforts of the Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program in the Braddocks Bay and Long Pond Watersheds. These watersheds include portions of Brockport, Clarkson, Hamlin, Parma, Ogden, Spencerport and Greece. The AEM program supports agriculture of all type and sizes, i.e. crop, fruit vegetable farms, greenhouses, tree farms or farm stands, whether you have 14 horses or 2 alpaca, etc. in their efforts to be environmentally sound and economically viable. By bringing together technical assistance and cost share funding, AEM is able to support agricultural families in their efforts to farm cleaner and greener into future generations.

Participating in the AEM Program supports both Individual agriculture operations and the larger agricultural Community by documenting the importance of farming in Monroe County, which opens up funding to support environmental management projects on local agricultural related operations.

AEM provides the agriculture community with a quick and easy way to look at their impact on natural resources. The assessment helps by documenting

environmentally sound practices, identifying and prioritizing areas for improvement, and locating available resources to address concerns. The first step in the process is completing an AEM Questionnaire and the AEM Watershed Site Evaluation Worksheet, with the help of district staff. The Watershed Site Evaluation Worksheet looks at your operations specific location and site characteristics to determine which of the AEM Worksheets should be completed in order to focus on the water quality issues that are a priority for your operation.

Since 2005, the Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District has received \$230,000 in state funds to cost-share conservation projects on farms in Monroe County. Participation in AEM will allow farms to be considered for participation in this cost-share program. Although outreach efforts will be focused in the above mentioned watersheds, all agricultural related operations in Monroe County are encouraged to begin participate in AEM.

Please contact Clark J. Moore, Soil & Water Planning Technician for Monroe County at 585-473-2120 ext.108 to schedule a free, confidential AEM Assessment.

FEATURED/NEW TREE AND SHRUB SPECIES

American Beech: A very formal and stately tree. Leaves emerge in late spring, changing from shimmering green to lustrous dark green to golden bronze in the fall. Smooth bark. Plant in well-drained, aerated soil. Can be used as a hedge. Grows to 50'-70' with a 40' spread. *Available in the Nut Variety Pack only. Seedlings are 18-24". Nut Variety Pack is \$18 (see below)*

Pin Oak: This deciduous tree grows to 90 feet tall in poorly drained wet sites to clay upland soils. It is easily transplanted because of shallow roots. 1/2" acorns provide food for wildlife. *12-20" seedlings are available for \$12 for 10 and \$48 for 50*

Sycamore: This deciduous tree grows to 100 feet tall in poorly drained soils, bottomlands, and along stream-banks. It has a large, broad crown and the bark is attractively mottled. It is NOT shade tolerant. *12-24" seedlings are available for \$11 for 10 and \$44 for 50*

Silky Dogwood: This native shrub has dense foliage that turns red in the fall. Yellow-white flowers appear in late May, then gray berries in the fall. Grows best in well drained, moist soil and is good for soil erosion on stream-banks. Berries provide food for birds. *12-24" seedlings are available for \$11 for 10 and \$44 for 50*

Nut Variety Pack: A new variety pack offered this year, has a mix of hardwood trees which bare nuts. Each packet will include two seedlings each of: American Beech, Black Walnut, Hazelnut, Red Oak, and White Oak. *18-24" seedlings, White Oak is 14-20" seedlings are available. \$18 per pack*

2008 CONSERVATION FIELD DAYS EVENT A SUCCESS

The 20th annual Conservation Field Days was held September 23-25 at Ellison Park in the Town of Penfield. The goal of the Conservation Field Days event is to teach students about important environmental issues while having fun in one of our most beautiful parks. This year, approximately 1400 students attended the event from 12 different schools throughout Monroe County. Students learn about different environmental topics such as energy alternatives, water safety, bird migration, wetlands and much, much more.

Twenty-four groups assisted with instruction for 54 different topic stations. Agencies included state and local government such as NYS DEC, US ACOE, League of Woman Voters, Suny Brockport, RIT, local and national clubs such as

Audubon Society, educational agencies such as Cornell Cooperative Extension, and many others. This event was made possible by sponsorship from Monroe County Parks Department and Wegmans.



Fuel Cell Car presented by General Motors

BLACK CREEK STREAMBANK STABILIZATION

The Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District completed 450 linear feet of streambank stabilization on Black Creek at two sites in the Town of Chili. The project commenced in August and was completed 5 weeks later on September 24, 2008. MCSWCD technicians worked with the Town of Chili Highway Department and Department of Public works to construct the stabilization measures. The stabilization technique used was rock rip rap with a mix of native plant species planted between the rocks to allow for a vegetative cover over the rocks to improve cooling effects for aquatic life, filter pollutants from runoff events, minimize sediment loss, and beautify the surroundings. The project was funded by the Great Lakes Commission through a grant that the MCSWCD received in 2006.



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This newsletter is published quarterly by the Monroe 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 mailing address or view it online at www.monroecountyswcd.org. Programs and services offered through the Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District are made possible through the financial support of the USDA NRCS, County of Monroe, State of New York, specialized grant opportunities, and fundraising programs. All NRCS & 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 information.

Agricultural Assessments

What is an Agricultural Assessment?

The NYS Legislature has enacted a law to protect and promote the availability of land farming purposes since 1971. This law provides a local mechanism for establishing and maintaining agricultural districts, as well as provides tax benefits by limiting farmland assessment values. While prescribed rates have been pre-determined, the tax benefit does encourage the continuation of farm related practices and the preservation of agricultural open space.

- Generally, the property must be 10+ acres (<7 acres must earn \$50,000+)
- Land must be used for the production of crops
- Annual gross sales of agricultural products must average \$10,000+
- Equine: must be 10+ acres, board 10+ horses, and generate \$10,000+ in boarding fees.

What is the process?

Landowner's should contact their Town Assessor or the Soil and Water Conservation District to discuss eligibility requirements. If the property appears to qualify, a Soil Group Worksheet Request form may be submitted to the district by **February 23rd**. By calculating soil type, acreage and determining production rate for each parcel, a tax assessment reduction can be calculated between soil value and full assessed value.

***More information and Ag Assessment Request Form available on the website @
www.monroecoutyswcd.org*