

THE CONSERVATION CONNECTION

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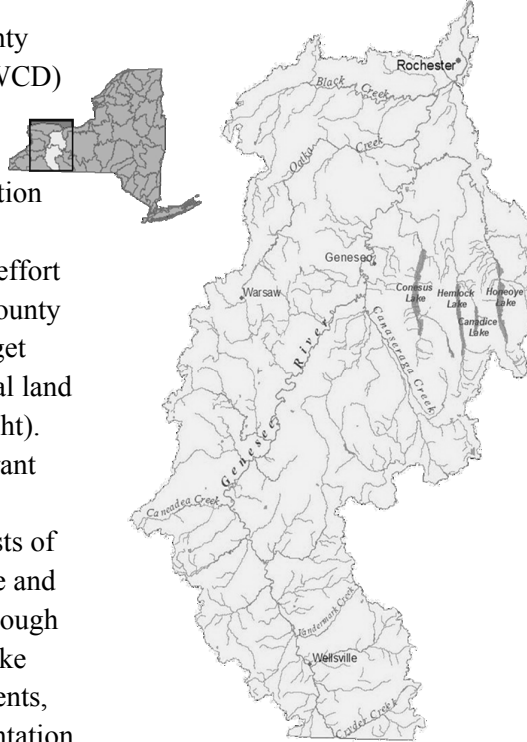


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Genesee River Implementation Grant Completed

In December 2010, the Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District (MCSWCD) closed the Agricultural Non-Point Source Genesee River Implementation Grant. The grant consisted of implementing 14 conservation practices on 12 Farms in the Genesee River Watershed. This grant was a collective team effort between Monroe County SWCD, Genesee County SWCD, and Wyoming County SWCD to target high priority resource concerns on agricultural land in the Genesee River Watershed (pictured right). The total amount of monies utilized in this grant was \$420,836.

The Genesee River Watershed consists of 2,700 square miles of land in New York State and Pennsylvania. After its 140 mile journey through New York, the Genesee River outlets into Lake Ontario. The District's recent accomplishments, with funds from the Genesee River Implementation Grant, help to reduce unwanted pollutants in the water when the river reaches Lake Ontario.



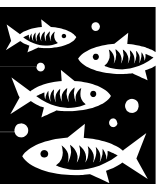
This image shows the area covered by the Genesee River Watershed. Photo courtesy of NYDEC.

Staff Updates

Caroline Myers Kilmer has taken a new position with the District as a Soil and Water Resource Specialist. Her work as Soil and Water Resource Specialist will focus on the New York State stormwater regulations including site plan reviews, construction inspections, outreach and education.

Caroline stepped down as Executive Director of the District in October to take this new part-time position in order to spend more time with her new baby, Dylan Richard. Dylan was born November 3, 2010 and weighed 10 lbs. 9 oz., and was 22 inches long.

In December 2010, Brittany Bourdon was hired as the District's Soil and Water Intern. Brittany is a senior at the Rochester Institute of Technology expecting a degree in environmental science with a minor in public policy this May. To date Brittany has been assisting with many projects including preparing soil group worksheets for agricultural assessments and modifying the District's website.



Save the Date!

Plan on stocking fish in your pond this spring? The District's Spring 2011 Fish Stocking Program will be held on Wednesday May 25th. This year the District will be selling fathead minnows, goldfish, catfish, koi, and triploid grass carp. The order form for the program is not yet available, but will be finalized and distributed in the beginning of April. If you are interested in program and would like to be added to the mailing list, or are looking for more information on stocking rates, please contact Bob Kiley at (585)473-2120x111.

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2011 District Deadlines & Dates

3-18-2011

Tree & Shrub Order forms Due

3-23-2011

Annual Banquet at Glendoveer's

3-29-2011

Stormwater Retrofit Planning & Design Workshop

4-9-2011

Pick up the Parks Project.

For information email: rloysen@monroecounty.gov

4-14/15-2011

Tree and Shrub Distribution

4-29-2011

Monroe County Envirothon at RIT

5-7-2011

"Our Fragile World" at Seneca Park Zoo

What is a Watershed and Why Should We Care?

Simply said, a *watershed* is a drainage basin or area of land where water from rain and melting snow or ice drains into a nearby waterbody such as a stream, pond, river, or lake. It includes both the streams and rivers that convey the water as well as the land surface from which the water drains. In a sense, it acts as a large funnel, collecting rainwater from an extensive surface area and concentrating it into one location.

We *must* care about watersheds because as water flows over land, it collects soil, pet wastes, fertilizers, pesticides, oils, and other pollutants which then flow to a nearby waterway. Even if your home is not near a stream or river, runoff from your yard will flow down your street into a ditch or storm drain, draining directly into a neighborhood pond or stream, and eventually reach Lake Ontario. This runoff can carry damaging and polluting chemicals with it.

Be an H2O Hero! When you make wise, environmentally friendly decisions, such as using less toxic lawn care products and proper disposal of potentially damaging chemical and electronic wastes, you can protect everyone's water quality! Better water quality means a cleaner Lake Ontario, safer drinking water and a safer environment for you and your family.

Did You Know?

- ◆ The Genesee River Basin covers 2,700 square miles, and all the runoff from that watershed will pass through the 500 foot wide channel between the piers at Charlotte!
- ◆ A single quart of motor oil dumped down a storm drain can create a two acre oil-slick!

For more information about local stormwater pollution and what you can do to reduce it, visit www.H2OHero.org and become a fan of Larry the H2O Hero on Facebook!

A message from The Stormwater Coalition of Monroe County and the Water Education Collaborative. Written by Linda Evans.

2011 Agricultural Plastic Container Recycling Program

Monroe County SWCD will be working in conjunction with Genesee County SWCD, the USAg Recycling, Inc., and the Ag Container Recycling Council to participate in the 2011 Agricultural Plastics Recycling Program.

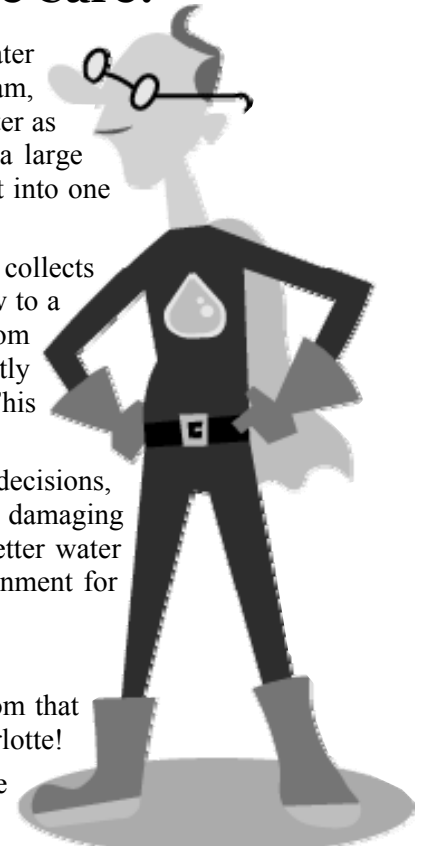
What qualifies to be recycled?

Only non-refillable plastic containers from 1 gallon to 55 gallon barrels made from high-density polyethylene (HDPE) embossed with recycling symbol #2 on the bottom are acceptable. Larger containers, such as 250 gal. totes are accepted but must have all metal removed and be cut into 2' x 2' strips. 5 gal. buckets must have metal handle removed.

Multi-gallon containers must have caps and booklet removed. All containers **MUST** be clean, empty and pressure rinsed or triple rinsed and dry. Any container that is not clean will be returned to the owner.

To participate...

You must call the district ahead of time to preregister, and to let us know the approximate amount of containers you will have for recycling. **Collection will be available in June and October.** Exact dates and locations are to be decided, and will be based on the anticipated amount collected. For more information, or to preregister, please contact the District AEM Coordinator Tucker Kautz at 473-2120x108



Spring Pond Preparation

Is your pond covered in algae? Algal blooms, or a rapid increase or accumulation of algae, are a result of high levels of excessive nutrients in the pond, such as phosphorous and nitrogen. Common sources of nutrients that contribute to algal growth are pet waste, fertilizers, grass clippings, leaves, and leaf litter. Preventing these items from entering the pond may help to decrease the algal growth this year.



Pond with no buffer and algal problems. Ideal habitat for Canada geese.

Another known contributor is the Canada goose (*Branta Canadensis*). Geese produce around 1.5-2.0 pounds of feces each day totaling roughly 1200 lbs. of feces per goose, per year. These feces have very high levels of both nitrogen and phosphorus. Decreasing the amount of geese at the pond will in turn decrease the amount of phosphorous and nitrogen running off into the pond. This species is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 making it illegal to hunt, kill, sell, purchase, or possess any parts of the animal (feathers, nests, eggs, etc.) without a permit from the New York State-Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS-DEC) and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The best way to ensure that geese do not make a home out of your pond is to allow a 3-6 foot wide vegetated buffer to grow around the pond!

If you know that algae will be a problem in your pond this year consider using barley straw. Barley straw can help slow the growth rate of algae in a pond. Unfortunately, barely straw will not help clarify the water during the active growing season and should be used as a preventative measure. As the barley straw decomposes it emits an enzyme that will reduce algal growth and help clarify the water. The barley straw will float just below the water level once it becomes saturated. You should replace the barley straw when it looks decomposed or is giving off a foul odor. Barley straw is available for purchase at the District for \$12.00 a bale. If you have any questions on the use of barely straw, application rates, pond health or would like to schedule a field visit to have a technician take a look at your pond, please call Bob Kiley at (585)473-2120x111.



Pond with a 5 foot vegetated buffer. The buffer deters Canada geese visiting the pond.

BMP Spotlight: Grassed Waterway

After a rain event, surface water runoff will follow the topography across cropland until it reaches an outlet area. If a field has inadequate groundcover to hold the topsoil in place, there is a high potential for severe erosion to take place in areas that concentrate flow. Tilling over the eroded areas each year will not solve the problem, but will instead allow more valuable topsoil to leave the cropland and potentially enter the local watershed. A good solution to this problem is to construct a permanent grassed waterway to allow water to be conveyed through cropland in a non-erosive manner. A

grassed waterway is comprised of a slightly defined channel, with permanent vegetation, that generally follows the natural topography of the field. The vegetation in the waterway holds the soil in place and helps to filter out any sediments and nutrients that are washing off the cropland. The waterway is designed to be easily crossed with farm machinery.



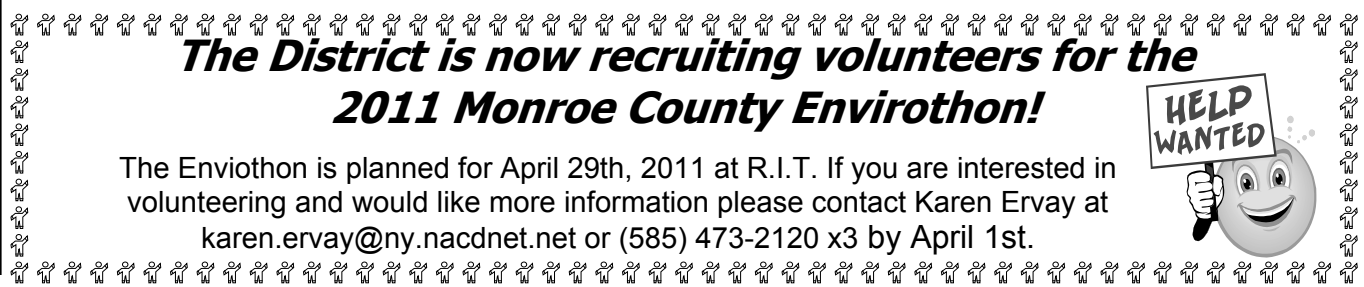
Water washing across this field has led to severe erosion.



A grassed waterway allows water to be conveyed across this field in a non-erosive manner

The District is now recruiting volunteers for the 2011 Monroe County Envirothon!

The Enviothon is planned for April 29th, 2011 at R.I.T. If you are interested in volunteering and would like more information please contact Karen Ervay at karen.ervay@ny.nacdnet.net or (585) 473-2120 x3 by April 1st.



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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.

Come Join Us!

MESWCD Annual Banquet



March 23rd, 2011

at Glendoveers in Rochester,
New York



The buffet dinner costs \$25/person and will incorporate many local products. This years speaker will be Jeremy Newman from WBEE. Social hour will begin at 6 o'clock and dinner will be served at 6:45 pm.

RSVP to Farm Bureau by calling 1-877-383-7663