

THE CONSERVATION CONNECTION

News from MCSWCD

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*Providing Today,
Protecting Tomorrow*

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this Fall 4

2011 District Deadlines & Dates

9/27-9/29/2011
Conservation Field Days

**10/13, 11/15,
12/6/2011**
4 Hour DEC Erosion &
Sediment Control Training

10/26/2011
Soil & Hydrology for
Green Infrastructure

“Green” Stormwater Pollution Solutions

Green Infrastructure practices help to reduce the negative effects and impacts of stormwater runoff. After a storm event, rainwater pouring off your roof and across your driveway and lawn, can collect and carry soil and pollutants off your property and into our water supply. By reducing, capturing, and treating polluted runoff closer to its source, we



*Downspout disconnect into
rain garden.*
(Photo: commons.wikimedia.org)

have a better chance of keeping our water clean. Green Infrastructure practices focus on treating smaller and more frequent rainfall events. All of these practices are geared towards improving water quality, while at the same time reducing the amount of rain water runoff by allowing it to soak into the ground. Green Infrastructure can also improve the aesthetics of your home and community.

There are a number of simple and inexpensive Green Infrastructure practices for homeowners to install. Among the most practical are rainbarrels and downspout disconnections. Rainbarrels are easy to set up, and act to capture rainwater



*Downspout &
Rainbarrel*
(Photo: rainbarrel.edu.ms)

from roofs and downspouts which can then be used at a later time to water your lawn, wash your car, clean your windows, top off your pool or other non-drinking uses. Just 1 inch of rainfall on a 1,000 sq ft. roof is equal to roughly 600 gallons of rainwater! This renewable resource can benefit you around your home and can even help reduce your water bill. You can go green to save green!

Downspout disconnection works to reduce the volume of stormwater runoff entering storm sewer systems. By disconnecting downspouts homeowners can redirect runoff to porous areas on their property, such as a rain garden where it can then soak into the ground. Rain gardens can improve water quality by filtering and absorbing pollutants through natural soils and recharging groundwater, in turn improving the health of your lawn. Homeowners can prevent erosion from occurring where downspouts have been disconnected by using a splash pad at the downspout ends.

Everything you need to build a rain barrel can be found at a local hardware store or through the Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District. Visit the Water Education Collaborative (WEC) for information on Rainbarrel workshops (www.h2ohero.org).



Growing Greener-District Receives Grant Award for Agricultural Best Management Practices

The Monroe County Soil and Water District recently teamed up with Genesee County SWCD and Wyoming County SWCD to successfully apply for State Funding through the NYS Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement & Control Grant Program. This grant proposal, titled “The Black & Oatka Creek Watersheds Agricultural Sediment Reduction Project,” was put together to target a known pollutant (sediment) that is impairing these two watersheds. Through this funding opportunity, high priority areas on farmland that have the potential to contribute sediment to the Black and Oatka Creek Watersheds, Genesee River, and ultimately Lake Ontario will be remediated. This grant has secured over \$200,000 in funding to be cost shared on 24 agricultural conservation projects across Monroe, Genesee, and Wyoming Counties.

Green Infrastructure Demonstration Projects in Monroe County

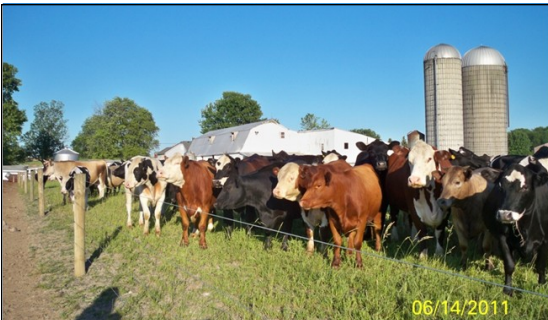
As part of the last round of the Environmental Protection Fund grant from New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Stormwater Coalition of Monroe County received more than \$192,000 for the implementation of 8 Green Infrastructure practices around Monroe County. These demonstration projects will illustrate how green infrastructure practices reduce stormwater pollution by soaking stormwater into the soil at the source of the runoff. Raingardens, porous pavement, bioretention, bio-filters, and creek restoration projects in the Towns of Brighton, Perinton, Irondequoit, Webster, the Villages of Pittsford and Fairport, and the City of Rochester have been awarded grant funding. MCSWCD will be providing technical assistance to some of these municipalities to aid in the design and implementation of these green infrastructure practices.

The Stormwater Coalition of Monroe County also received grant funding to review local municipal codes to find restrictions that impede green infrastructure practices from being implemented in local municipalities. Based on the findings from this review, the Coalition and MCSWCD will make recommendations to the Town or Village for possible changes to the municipal code to allow developers and designers to plan and implement Green Infrastructure practices throughout Monroe County.



The rain garden allows roof runoff to soak into the ground through an engineered soil media. It is an attractive, aesthetically pleasing garden bringing color and microhabitat to a landowner's yard. (Photo: DEC)

Community Visits Penfield Farm



The grazing herd at the Rothfuss Farm was on hand to supervise the pasture walk.

On June 14th the Floy-Mar Farm on Salt Road in the Town of Penfield hosted a Pasture walk to showcase recent farm improvements made to the barnyard and pasture system. The farm, owned and operated by Terry and Mary Lou Rothfuss, has been working with local agencies including the MCSWCD, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Town of Penfield to improve environmental stewardship around the farm. Earlier this Spring, District Planner Tucker Kautz and Cornell Cooperative Extension WNY Small Farms Specialist Nancy Glazier, met with Terry and brainstormed the idea of opening up the farm to the community through a pasture walk. Outreach efforts were conducted with local media sources, producers, neighbors, and town officials, and, with the help of some beautiful late spring weather, over 50 people showed up in attendance to the event. The

pasture walk consisted of a discussion first on the progress that has been made on the farm pasture system and adjoining waterways from the involved agencies, followed by a discussion on conservation programs available to interested producers. The next step was an interactive walk throughout the pasture laneways to showcase the benefits that rotational grazing can have on the environment. The event was concluded back at the farmstead with refreshments, and a little time left over for follow up questions. The District has received positive feedback on the event, and would like to thank Terry and Mary Lou for their part in being gracious hosts for this event.

Agricultural Environmental Management Update



New York State's Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program supports farms of all types and sizes in their efforts to be environmentally sound and economically viable. Farm participation in the AEM program allows the Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District to document the importance of agriculture in Monroe County, while making the District more competitive for the limited funding opportunities available for the implementation of water quality improvement projects on local farms.

The District's goal for AEM Year 7(2011-2012) is to expand our AEM efforts in the Irondequoit Creek and Four Mile Creek Watersheds. We have been able to gather valuable information on farms in these watersheds through Tier 1 Survey Worksheets completed by farmers and landowners. We now hope to move into the progressive planning phase with some of the farms that have expressed interest in the program. If you would like to hear more about the program, please contact District AEM Coordinator Tucker Kautz at (585) 473-2120-x108.

Giant Hogweed: Invader of the Northeast

Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) is a Federally listed noxious weed. This species can grow 12 feet tall or more and has large compound leaves that can grow up to 5 feet wide. The plant's stem is hollow and grows 2-4 inches in diameter with dark reddish-purple blotches. It's white flower head can grow up to 2 1/2 feet in diameter and is similar in appearance to Queen Anne's Lace.

Native to central Asia, this species was introduced to the United States in the early 20th century as an ornamental garden plant. Since then, giant hogweed has spread throughout the Pacific Northwest and New England, as well as New York State and Monroe County. Here in Monroe County there have been more than 50 confirmed infestations of giant hogweed, many of which having over 400 plants in them. Even though it is illegal to transport or move this plant, it continues to spread by wildlife. The seeds are distributed by birds and waterways, and can remain viable in the environment for over 10 years, making this species difficult to contain.

To combat the giant hogweed infestation, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS-DEC) Division of Lands & Forests created the Giant Hogweed Control Program. This program, funded through the federal American Resource & Recovery Act (ARRA), will control the giant hogweed plants on your property *free of charge*.

The program currently has six field crews across NYS. This species contains sap that can cause severe skin and eye irritation, painful blistering, permanent scarring and blindness. Contact between the skin and the sap of this plant should be avoided. Do not attempt to control this plant by cutting it down. If you need additional information or assistance in identifying your plant and control options contact the NYS-DEC at 845-256-3111 or view www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html.



Giant Hogweed beginning to flower.
(Photo: USDA)



Giant Hogweed's flowering head.
(Photo: USDSA)



Giant Hogweed's large compound leaves
(Photo: USDA)

More Stormwater Trainings Coming to Western New York

For those professionals involved in stormwater management, keeping up with the latest trends and standards can be a challenging task. New techniques, standards, and regulations are evolving as research, experience, policies, and performance data change. To help educate private and municipal engineers, landscape architects, planners, and stormwater professionals, the Western New York Stormwater Management Training Series is back with new core classes for Fall 2011—Spring 2012! With the retirement of Donald W. Lake Jr. from the stormwater field, John Dunkle PE, CPESC, CMS4s will be teaching the five core classes this fall. John is a visiting instructor at SUNY ESF, teaching a graduate level Stormwater Management class, and has been conducting stormwater trainings across NY State with Don Lake for past 6 years. Deb Caraco, PE will also be instructing this fall and has 12 years experience at the Center for Watershed Protection. She also assisted in developing the NYS-DEC Stormwater Design Manual. For class descriptions and registration options, please visit the District website.

Class	Date
Soils and Hydrology for Green Infrastructure	October 26, 2011
Applied Green Infrastructure	January 12, 2012
Stormwater Ponds and Wetlands	February 7, 2012
Stormwater Management for Linear Projects	March 20, 2012
SWPPP Preparation and Review	April 24, 2012

For more information please contact the Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District at (585)473-2120x3 or visit our website at www.monroecountyswcd.org

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**District to Hold NYS-DEC Endorsed 4 Hour Erosion and
Sediment Control Trainings this Fall**

All contractors and subcontractors involved with erosion and sediment control practices and soil disturbing activities on active construction sites disturbing one acre or more of soil, must attend a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS-DEC)-endorsed 4-hour Erosion and Sediment Control Training. Contractors that have received the initial training will need to receive an additional 4 hours of training every 3 years.



The District will be presenting one training every month this fall here in Monroe County to help train new contractors and refresh contractors whose expiration date is drawing near. For more information & registration visit our website.

Visit our website at
www.monroecountyswcd.org.

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.