

SUMMER 2021

Conservation Update

from the Broome County Soil & Water Conservation District -
assisting with the counties' natural resource needs

Charles “Chip” McElwee Retires after 25 Years with Broome SWCD



After more than 25 years with the Broome County SWCD and a total of 31 years of public service it was time for me to move into retirement. I have enjoyed all the great work that the SWCD does and there are many great moments and projects I will remember. A few things stand out, one is how agriculture in the County has changed during my time here. When I started there were over 80 dairy farms in the county, today - there are 20 dairies in the county. Many of the smaller family dairy farms shifted to raising beef cows and the SWCD adapted by focusing on rotational grazing on those farms. Another is the two major floods and the damage they did to the county. After the June 2006 flood I thought I wouldn't see a larger flood event; then came the September 2011 flood and all the work that flood event created for the SWCD.

Looking back, I've been lucky to work with great staff here at the Broome SWCD and all my colleagues across the state. In particular working with the staff of the multi-county Upper Susquehanna Coalition and their incredible knowledge and experience they shared with the group over my entire career.

There are great opportunities for the SWCD in the future and I am looking forward to seeing all the successes that the current and future staff accomplish.

Time to go fishing!! Thanks again, Chip McElwee



COVER CROPS

(by: Bailey Park)

The Broome County Soil and Water Conservation District is now offering a Cover Crop Incentive Program. This program will help producers incorporate cover cropping into their annual row crop planting systems. A cover crop is a grass, legume, or forb planted in late summer establishing seasonal vegetative cover. Typical varieties include cereal rye, winter triticale, winter wheat, and oats. Cover crops provide additional biomass, ground cover, soil infiltration, and plant diversity. This practice is an essential part to protecting our farmland from erosion through the winter months and preventing sediment from entering our streams, benefiting water quality. Broome County SWCD's Cover Crop Incentive Program is a great opportunity for producers committed to environmental stewardship of the land. This program will help protect valuable resources, enhance sustainable agriculture, as well as improve soil health.

This program is available to any producers in Broome County willing to follow the guidelines of the program for qualification purposes. For more information regarding payment rates and program details, please call the District at (607) 724-9268 ext. 5. Sign up for the 2021 program has already passed, but if you're interested, please reach out to us for next year. The first round of the program will launch summer of 2021 and the deadlines are as follows:

April 15 – Sign up for the program by providing an acreage estimate to District (already passed)

By August 27th – Contract must be signed by this date to ensure funds are reserved for you

October 15th – LATEST PLANTING DATE ALLOWED (date depends on species)

By October 22nd – Receipts for seed purchase are due so we can process your payment ASAP

Watershed Community Participates in Riparian Restoration

(by: Bailey Park -SWCD) & Lydia Brinkley-USC)



This year the Broome SWCD kicked off its Trees for Tribes program with great success! This program supports tree plantings along local tributaries and works to restore streamside plant communities on public and private land.

Volunteer planting events have spurred local involvement in water quality activities. This past spring the community came together to plant 575 trees and shrubs on over 2 1/2 acres at two different park locations: Schnurbusch Park in Conklin and Harold Moore Park in Vestal. Volunteer help goes a long way when it comes to community engagement and projects are completed in a short amount of time. As an example, the planting event at Schnurbusch Park attracted 33 volunteers and 330 bare root seedlings were planted. With that many volunteers the plants were in the ground and the entire project was complete and cleaned up within two and a half hours.

Volunteers came from SUNY Broome, Binghamton University's Environmental Science Club, Cornell Cooperative Extension's Master Gardeners, along with residents interested in contributing to their community.

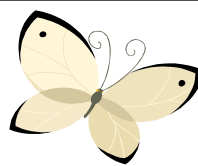
The Upper Susquehanna Coalition (USC) coordinated with One Tree Planted as they provided funding and tools and even a photographer for one of the planting events. Also, funding from the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund helped purchase t-shirts and snacks for the volunteers. The Broome SWCD would like to thank all the volunteers, USC, as well as the other agencies listed above, for making these events so successful.



(Continued at top of page)

The reforestation of riparian areas is a priority practice throughout the Upper Susquehanna Watershed. This effort is primarily driven by the Chesapeake Bay total maximum daily load allocation. Riparian forest buffers provide numerous benefits to the environment. Trees and shrubs filter stormwater runoff, increase filtration, and in a few years the plants will begin to provide habitat for wildlife. The trees will cast shade on nearby streams and creeks—cooling the water and providing in stream habitat with woody debris and leaf litter, thus balancing the aquatic ecosystem.

The Broome SWCD is excited to announce a second round of funding that is available to roll out this FALL 2021. If you have a waterbody on your property and are interested in establishing a riparian buffer, please reach out to the SWCD for more information. At that time we can set up a site visit and begin the application process. Please call the District at (607) 724-9268 x5 or via email at bpark@broomeswcd.org.



Backyard Conservation Practices websites to browse:

www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat/
www.arboday.org
www.pollinator.org

Or search for "backyard conservation" on the web

AVAILABLE FROM THE DISTRICT: (607) 724-9268 x5

48" TREE TUBES: These help protect seedlings from wildlife & promote growth. These lighter colored vented shelters provide enough light to enter the protector wall to stimulate diameter growth. It is recommended inspecting your plantings and remove tube once tree base reaches tube diameter. 10 tubes for \$32.00 (tax inc)

NO-TILL SEEDER: The District continues rental of our Truax No-Till seeder for agricultural as well as wildlife plantings. Rental rates for the seeder are \$20 per acre, \$0.75/loaded mile and a \$50 set-up fee within the county. Contact Justin at the SWCD for more information. Requirement for using the no-till seeder is a tractor of minimum 50 horsepower with dual remotes.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE - The District continues to offer technical assistance for pond evaluations, sediment & erosion control, and drainage - contact Justin at the SWCD for more information. (\$50 per visit)

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUR WEBSITE:
www.broomeswcd.org and our facebook page

Upcoming Events

****Binghamton Regional Farmers Market—Saturdays** (year round) 9am-1pm and **Tuesdays** (June-Sept) 3pm-6pm behind Cornell Cooperative Extension, 840 Upper Front St., Binghamton, NY

****Ag & Art Night Market—**July 15, August 19, Sept. 16 4:00 –7:00pm at Broome County Regional Farmers Mkt—This is a pop-up market that will bring local food, farmers & artisans to create a specially curated market that celebrates our local businesses. More info contact Molly @ Broome Co. Cornell Cooperative Extension at (607)772-8953

****Much Ado in the Garden—**July 18 11 am—3 pm—Broome Co. Regional Farmers Market/Cutler Botanic Gardens - Celebrate the Renaissance Era in Cutler Botanic Gardens. Featuring Madrigal Choir of Binghamton and other local artists, vendors, food and more. Pre-registration requested call (607) 584-9966.

****Empire Farm Days—**August 3-5, Palladino Farms, 3416 Sweet Road, Pompey, NY for more info visit www.empirefarmdays.com

****Family Pond Safari—**August 18, either 9:30am-11am; or 1pm-2:30pm –Nataniel Cole Park—There's much more to a pond than fish, frogs, or turtles. You & your family participate in a "Family Pond Safari". To register at https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/WeeksWithoutWallsPondSafaries_203 or contact Tom Tasber at CCE at (607)584-5003.



FAIRS: (you can search the internet for fair information):
Broome Co. Fair—July 27-Aug 1; WhitneyPoint FairGrounds
Tioga Co. Fair—Aug. 10-14, Owego, NY
Chenango Co. Fair—August 10-15, Norwich, NY
Delaware Co. Fair—August 16-21, Walton, NY
New York State Fair—August 20—Sept. 6, Syracuse, NY

MULCH AROUND PLANTS & SHRUBS



Mulching cools, protects, and enriches the soil. Placing a layer of organic material around plants provides important nutrients for the plants and an ideal environment for earthworms and other organisms that help enrich the soil.

Special THANKS to Wendy Calderio and Terry Woodnorth who donated towards Envirothon Program

District Staff District Directors

Vacant : Exec. Director
 Holly Lurenz: Secretary/Asst. Treas.
 Justin Puglisi: Grazing Specialist
 Bailey Park : Natural Resource Asst.
 Elena Steele: NRCS District Con.
 Phil Zurheide: NRCS Soil Con.

Mike Donahue (Chair): Rural At-Large
 Kelly Wildoner: Co. Legislature
 Erin Heard: Urban At-Large
 Alex Urda: Agricultural Rep
 Peter Shafer: (ViceChair) Urban At-Large
 Greg Baldwin: Co. Legislature
 Lester Price (Treas): Farm Bureau Rep.

SWCD News & Notes



Agricultural Environmental Management Program

(by: Justin Puglisi)

The Broome County Soil and Water Conservation District continues to run the Agricultural Environmental Management Program (AEM). The AEM program allows District staff the opportunity to visit farms within Broome County. During these site visits staff and landowners can observe and discuss resource concerns on the farm. Possible topics may include, but are not limited to: fencing, pastures, stocking numbers, lack of forage, erosion, drainage, plantings, and general rotational grazing management. Whether you are a new producer, or a producer we have worked with in the past, feel free to contact the District with any agricultural or environmental concerns you may have.

Another part of the District's AEM program will allow the allocation of funding for Best Management Practices (BMP's) on participating landowners farms. BMP's may include but are not limited to: hi-tensile fence, spring developments, ponds, pipelines, and water facilities. Landowners looking for possible funding must be a participant in the AEM program and have animals on their farm. Any producer interested in funding for BMP's on their farm should contact the District and request an AEM Implementation application.



CRITICAL AREA SEEDING

(By: Justin Puglisi)



The Broome County SWCD is in the implementation phase of their Round 16 - DEC Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Project – Continued Critical Area Seeding Grant. Since the award of this grant the District was able to do critical area seedings for local municipalities and school districts on a cost share basis with the State. This grant cycle leveraged \$70,000.00 in State funds to be used for material purchase, labor, and equipment costs. Funding will be used through the 2024 hydroseeding season, or until the funding is exhausted.

The District's hydroseeder is used to apply seed, fertilizer, and fiber mulch to local sites in need of stabilization. Such sites include: landfills, construction sites, stream banks, road banks, and ditches. The application of hydroseeding materials facilitates grass and legume growth, thus stabilizing these areas preventing erosion, and ultimately reducing sediment and nutrient loading of our watersheds.

Any school district or local municipality in need of a critical area seeding or having questions about the program should contact Justin Puglisi at the Broome County SWCD at (607) 724-9268 x5.



Broome Co. SWCD
1163 Upper Front St.
Binghamton, NY 13905

(607) 724-9268 ext. 5; obroomecountys@stny.rr.com
www.broomeswcd.org

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