



WYOMING COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

May 2017



Wyoming County Winning Team - Warsaw High School

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The Trailside Envirothon is a regional competition for high school students in the local area, including Wyoming and Allegany County. This annual event has been held at Letchworth State Park's Trailside Lodge since 1991.

Teams of students are tested on their knowledge of five different subjects throughout the day. The subjects include forestry, wildlife, soils, aquatics, and a current issue. This year's current issue topic was Agriculture Soil and Water Conservation Stewardship.

This hands-on educational event includes a wide variety of questions on examinations; anywhere from identifying an animal from its fur to measuring the board footage in a tree to using reference materials to determine a soil type. Students spend a significant amount of time studying for the event, both in their normal classes, and also attending study sessions after school hours.

On the day of the Trailside Envirothon, students arrive at the Trailside Lodge around 9:00 am where they break off into teams of 5. After the students are given an orientation so that they understand the rules and are told where the various stations are located, they move to their testing locations where they are given 30 minutes to complete their tests. When the time



From the left are: Stella Glosser, Cheyanne Wick, Joe Fisher, Cherie Glosser and Lauren Crandall.

has ended for each station, students wait for a horn to sound so they know to move to their next testing station. The teams repeat this until each team has completed all 5 of their tests. The students are provided with lunch as their final scores are tallied up, and the winners are finally revealed.

The winning team from each county is able to advance on to the New York State Envirothon, which will be held at Hobart William Smith College in Geneva, NY on May 24th and 25th. At this event, teams compete against the top teams from counties across the state. The winning team from the New York State Envirothon then has the opportunity to go to the National Envirothon Event.

Continued inside cover -



Wildlife Station at the Trailside Envirothon

Continued from cover -

The winners of the 2017 Trailside Envirothon were Warsaw Central School for Wyoming County and Cuba-Rushford School District for Allegany County.

A significant amount of time is put into planning, organizing, and dealing with the logistics of the event. Wyoming and Allegany County Soil & Water Conservation District work to put the program together. Staff from each District, along with volunteers from other agencies which include Wyoming and Allegany County USDA FSA and NRCS, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation – Letchworth State

Park, and other members of the community bring the event together by writing, facilitating, and grading of tests, setting up the stations, gathering materials and supplies, and assisting with other logistics.

The Wyoming County Soil & Water Conservation District would like to sincerely thank all of the volunteer and sponsors that made the 2017 Trailside Envirothon a success.

Essential support is provided by school science teachers, school districts, and local residents and businesses that donate supporting funds.

GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES FUNDING FOR WESTERN NEW YORK FARMS TO ADDRESS IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

More than \$179,000 Will Help Three Farms Reduce Their Environmental Impact and Better Prepare for and Recover from Extreme Weather Events

On April 13th, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced that three farms in Erie and Wyoming Counties will benefit from more than \$179,000 awarded through round two of the Climate Resilient Farming Grant Program. Launched by the Governor in 2015, the program help farms reduce their operational impact on the environment and better prepare for and recover after extreme weather events.

"This funding will help protect and preserve New York's natural resources by supporting farms and addressing the unpredictable conditions and challenges of climate change," **Governor Cuomo said.** "As New York continues to lead the nation in environmental protection, these grants not only build on our efforts to create a cleaner, greener, more resilient state – they address the needs of hard-working farmers in Erie and Wyoming Counties."

As part of this second round of funding, County Soil and Water Conservation Districts in six regions across the state were awarded a total of more than \$1.5 million in grants on behalf of farmers in one of the following project categories: agricultural waste storage cover and flare, on-farm water management, and soil health systems.

Projects awarded in Western New York include:

Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District \$147,430 – The District will work with two specialty crop farms to install micro-irrigation systems on approximately 104 acres of cropland to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve on-farm efficiency of water use, application and delivery. The systems will also allow the delivery of water-soluble fertilizers in the irrigation water, reducing the potential for nitrate to leach into ground water.

Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District

\$32,010 – The District will work with the Daniel Pingrey Farm in the Town of Sheldon to implement a pond expansion to improve resilience during drought conditions and ensure the farm has a continuous supply of water in the future. It will also prevent the need to truck supplemental water to the farm and hold higher rates of runoff water that would otherwise impact downstream communities.

The Climate Resilient Farming Grant Program is funded through the State's Environmental Protection Fund and was first announced by Governor Cuomo Opportunity Agenda. During Earth Week in April 2015, the Governor announced \$1.4 million in awards through the first round of the program to support 11 projects on farms across five regions. All 11 projects are currently underway to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate water and soil quality concerns.

State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball said, "This past summer, New York farms saw unprecedented drought conditions, with many suffering crop loss and increased costs. This program will help farmers better manage for droughts and floods that are becoming more common, while reducing their environmental footprint and protecting our surrounding natural resources."

Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Patty Ritchie said, "Farmers across the state were severely impacted by last year's devastating drought and are still recovering from its effects. I would like to thank Governor Cuomo and Commissioner Ball for recognizing the need for this critical funding, which will allow farmers to better prepare themselves with the necessary tools for any extreme weather they may encounter."

Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair Bill Magee said, "As they continue to prepare for and adapt to the changes in their environment, New York farmers facing the challenge of climate change will better be able to manage the detrimental effects of extreme weather conditions such as flooding and drought with a leg-up from the Climate Resilient Farming Grant Program."

Chairman of the New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee Dale Stein said, "The Climate Resilient Farming program is an innovative program that helps New York's farmers adapt their farms to the changing climate. Through the program, farms are able to implement projects that help them manage through periods of extreme weather, from severe storms to severe drought, and that reduce greenhouse gas production and promote increased soil health. New York State is leading the nation in helping farms preserve, protect and promote the environment for the generations that follow us."

David Fisher, New York Farm Bureau President, said, "Farmers have long dealt with whatever Mother Nature throws at them, but weather conditions in recent years have been tough and extreme. The Climate Resilient Farming Grant Program helps new York farms continue to lead the way on environmental stewardship while at the same time improving their ability to weather both the wet and dry conditions that can threaten their livelihoods."

Mark Gaston, Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District Field Manager, said, "The CRF grant program is yet another tool in the toolbox of Soil and Water Conservation Districts to assist farms and minimize environmental risk in an uncertain climate. Under the Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) framework, districts can be ready for new resource challenges, such as increased risk of flooding, prolonged drought, and more intensive pest and weed pressure."

Greg McKurth, Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District Manager, said, "Due to last year's severe drought conditions in Western New York as well as ongoing global climate changes, the Climate Resilient Farming Grant Program is an excellent program and resource for Soil and Water Conservation Districts in New York State. It allows the Districts to provide necessary assistance to our agricultural community in contending with these challenging times."

The District welcomes Conservation Technician, Stephen Dziak

Steve graduated from SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry in 2016 with a degree in Environmental Resources Engineering. He is currently in the process of obtaining a certification in erosion and sediment control and eventually hopes to obtain his Professional Engineering License.

Although originally not from Wyoming County, Steve has spent a great deal of time at his family cottage on Silver Lake and has interest in improving and maintaining the water quality throughout the county.



Erosion Sites in the Silver Lake Watershed

In recent months, the topic of a major dredging project at the outlet, north end and inlet of Silver Lake has gained increased interest and media attention within the Silver Lake Watershed. This type of project is expected to be very expensive and time consuming for the agencies, municipalities and organizations that are involved in securing the necessary funding and environmental permits to conduct the project. The Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District fully supports these efforts.

This Spring, the District has been conducting an inventory of locations within the Silver Lake Watershed that have potential to be sources of sediment that has built up in the lake through the process of erosion. Erosion begins when bare soil is exposed to a rain drop. The velocity of the rain drop is enough to displace fine particles of soil that can then be transported through moving water. As more moving water accumulates, it begins to channelize and picks up a higher sediment load. Even in the far reaches of a watershed, it may appear that only a little soil is being lost but it is important to remember that it can add up over years without being stabilized.

By the time the rainfall reaches its end water body, such as Silver Lake it has picked up velocity and volume as well as other sediments from unstable banks. When the water reaches a large waterbody, the velocity of the incoming flow drastically decreases and the sediment drops out of the water column. The District is looking to find locations to stabilize soil and decrease the velocity of storm water runoff within the Silver Lake watershed. Between the Soil & Water Conservation District and the 2014 F.X. Browne Watershed Management Plan, there have been over 32 identified possible erosion sites throughout the watershed. The district is moving forward on identifying the most severe locations and securing funding to improve the conditions at these sites.

The most common signs of erosion are muddy discolored water, sediment deposits, undercut streambanks/channels or channels that appear deeper and wider, and root systems that are exposed.

Establishing vegetation on a site is often the best way to hold soil in place and make it less susceptible to erosion forces. In some cases, vegetation is not enough and more aggressive techniques like rock lined channels or plunge pools may be necessary.

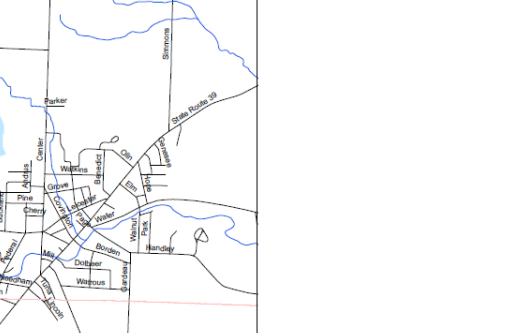
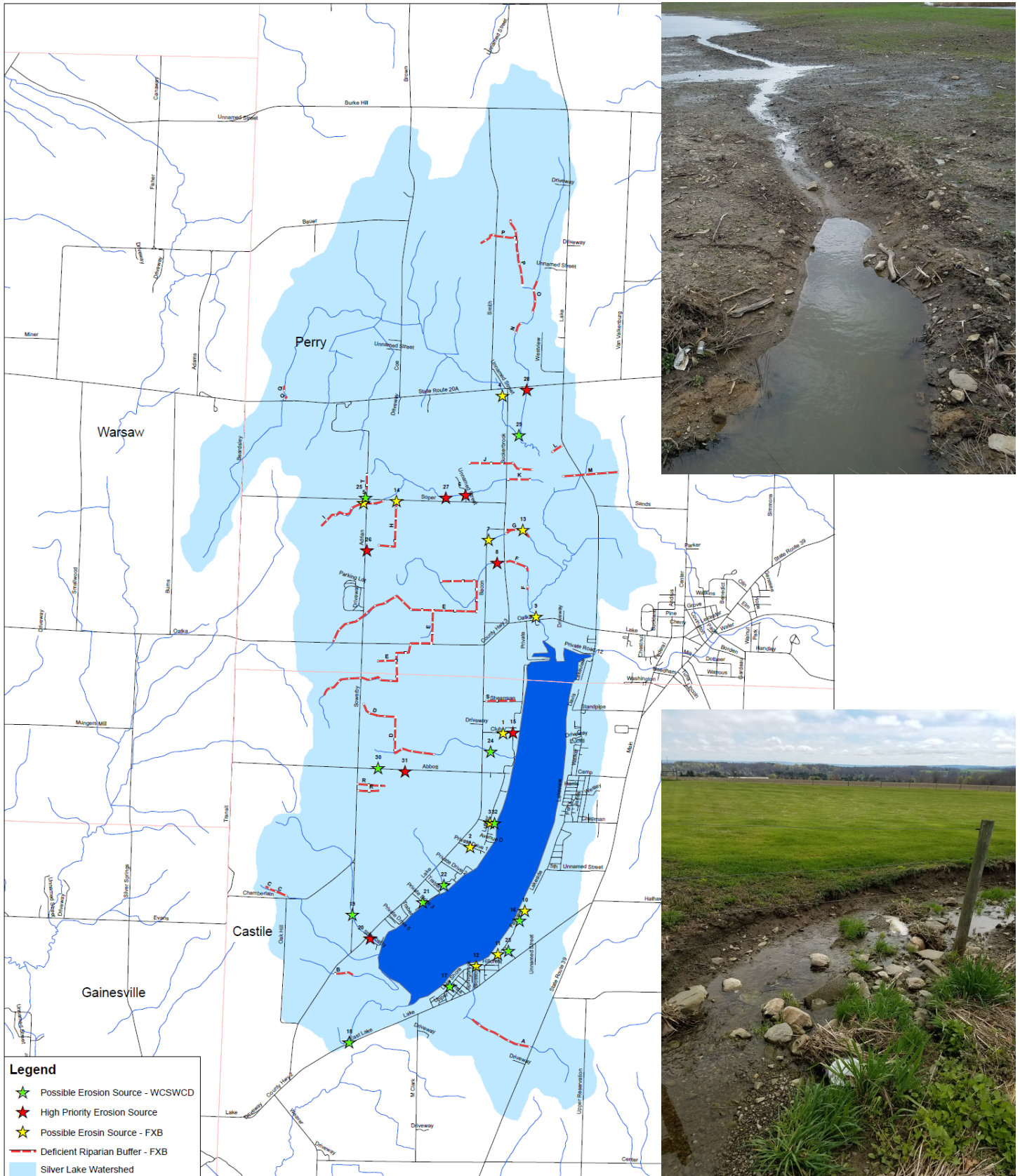
The District is actively working with the Silver Lake Watershed Commission, Silver Lake Association and County and Town Highway Departments to identify the highest priority sites within the entire Silver Lake Watershed. We fully expect additional sites to be added to this inventory as we move forward.





Silver Lake Watershed

Potential Erosion Sites 2017



Announcing the Genesee River Sediment and Phosphorus Reduction Program

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), in partnership with NY State Department of Agriculture and Markets, the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and NY State Department of Environmental Conservation, is offering an opportunity for producers in the Genesee River watershed to apply for financial assistance to address resource concerns associated with sediment and phosphorus runoff from agricultural lands. “We are proud to work with NRCS, our Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to address a critical need in our State”, said Richard A. Ball, The NYS Agriculture Commissioner. “Through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, we will have an opportunity to improve soil and water quality, and protect aquatic habitats and human health by keeping harmful pollutants out of the Genesee River. This project represents a primary goal of New York’s Oceans and Great Lakes Initiative, to collectively combat threats to our Great Lakes ecosystem and preserve our vital watersheds for generations to come.”

Funding is available to agricultural producers for implementing practices that reduce nutrient runoff, sedimentation, and enhance wildlife habitat. Local Partners and NRCS offices will work together to provide assistance to producers in the project area in planning and implementing conservation practices.

This RCPP partnership announces **June 16, 2017** as the application cutoff date for the first round of funding. All applications are competitive and are ranked based on locally identified resource priorities and the overall benefit to the environment.

Interested landowners should contact their local NRCS office for additional information and to obtain an application.

As part of application process, all landowners will need to complete USDA eligibility requirements. To find information on EQIP Eligibility please visit: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ny/programs/financial/eqip/?cid=nrcs144p2_027069.

If you are interested in applying for an NRCS conservation program please visit the NRCS web site for information at: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ny/programs/?cid=nrcs144p2_027058.

You may apply by visiting your local NRCS field office, which can be located using the web site: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=NY>.

The District welcomes Summer Intern, Jake Kelly










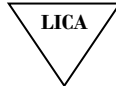
Jake is currently attending SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry for Natural Resources Management.

Jake grew up in Perry, NY and hopes to gain experience and knowledge about soil and water conservation.



Watershed Agricultural Coordinator

The Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District is hiring a **Watershed Agricultural Coordinator** to coordinate agricultural programs and projects within the Genesee River Watershed; develop and manage grants; track data and create reports; experience with agriculture, farm conservation practices and plans, and Geographic Information Systems. Good ability to communicate with state and federal legislators as well as farmers; excellent organizational ability. Monroe County Civil Service position. Call (585) 753-7380 or email kellyemerick@monroecounty.gov for more information.

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**Agricultural Energy Audits Available to
New York Farms through NYSERDA**

**New York farms can cut energy use and energy costs with
the Agriculture Energy Audit Program**

Last spring, NYSERDA launched the [Agriculture Energy Audit Program](#). The Program offers farms and on-farm producers **no-cost energy audits**. No up-front costs are required from the farmer as NYSERDA pays the consultant directly. Three levels of audits are offered. The level II audit adheres to ANSI/ASABE S612 standards and can be submitted with EQIP applications or to other third parties for funding consideration.

The next EQIP deadline is June 18, 2017. Farmers are encouraged to sign up for the audit immediately and begin the application process with their local NRCS office. Level II audits are required for EQIP applications. The audit does not have to be completed by June's deadline but farmers must be enrolled in the AEAP program to qualify.

Audits are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The program runs through the end of the 2017 or until funds are expended. For general information or to request flyers for your office call 800-732-1399 or email aEEP@nyserda.ny.gov. To discuss the program further or contact the Program Manager, Lisa Coven, at extension 839 or lisac@ensave.com.

This publication is the quarterly newsletter of the Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District and is available at no cost to all District cooperators, all interested landowner and land users, and to the general public. To receive this newsletter, simply email us at wcsxcd@frontiernet.net or send your complete mailing address to our office.

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