



# Lewis County Soil & Water Conservation District Conservation News

SUMMER/FALL 2022

## DIRECTORS:

**Ashley Marolf**  
Chairman

**Andrea Moroughan**  
Legislator / Vice Chair

**Thomas Osborne**  
Legislator / Secretary

**Jennifer Myers**  
Member At Large

**Brian Reape**  
Farm Bureau Rep.

**Board Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month @ 10:00 AM (call to confirm)**

## STAFF:

**Nichelle Swisher**  
District Manager

**Michael Durant**  
District Technician

**Carla Yaw**  
District Treasurer

**Alexis Lyndaker**  
WAC Specialist



## We Have Moved!

As most of you may know, there are a lot of capitol projects taking place within the county. A new County Highway building is being constructed and the Social Services building is undergoing a major renovation. After these projects are completed the old County Highway building will also be renovated and will become our new home. Because projects are happening simultaneously we required a temporary office space.

We have left our Outer Stowe Street location and will not be returning. For now, our office is located at 5960 Main Street Glenfield, NY 13343, Room 104 of the former Glenfield Elementary School. This will be our home only in the interim until the renovations of our new offices are complete at the corner of NYS Route 812 and the East Road. For now, please continue to use 5274 Outer Stowe Street Lowville NY 13367 as our mailing address as our mail is being forwarded until the final move. Please note that we will continue to accept Water Samples for Converse Labs Wednesdays only between 8:00am-10:00am at our Glenfield location.



## Fish Sale CANCELLED!

We will not be having our Fish Sale this year.  
We are hoping to bring the program back next Fall!



# Hydroseeding

The District continues to provide hydroseeding services to our municipalities and public entities throughout the county. Erosion control, mined land reclamation and municipal projects are the types of projects where we can utilize our Finn T-75, 700 gallon hydroseeder. This equipment mixes a slurry consisting of a conservation seed mix, water, and a wood fiber mulch to create a “blanket”. This blanket keeps soil in place while the seed is germinating. This service is made possible by funding from the Finger Lakes Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FOLLOWPA).



# AGNPS Round 28



The District applies for funding on behalf of local farms, to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) that protect water quality. This competitive funding is provided through the Agricultural Non-Point Source Abatement and Control Grant Program (AGNPS) through NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Environmental Protection Fund. The District applied for two separate grants through this round of funding. One of those grants, the *Lewis County Cover Crop Project*, was a county wide application for the implementation of cover crops on three separate farms. The total state share request for this grant was \$339,445. If awarded, these farms would receive an acreage payment, established by the New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee, for the amount of cover crops planted on their farm. The second grant was for the implementation of a Livestock Heavy Use Area Runoff Management System and Cover Crop System for an individual farm. The total state share requested was \$223,144.

If both grants are awarded, the District will have brought in \$562,589.00 for four different farms within the county. We have high hopes for these grant applications and look forward to seeing the ranking list of awarded grants later this year.

Pictured Above: Cover Crops planted through an AGNPS Grant this past fall with the District’s 15’ No-Till Drill.

# 2022 Black River Watershed Conference

After two years of virtual events, the 2022 Black River Watershed Conference was finally held in person at the 3 Willows Event Center in Lyons Falls, NY. This conference was organized jointly by the Tug Hill Commission, the Lewis, Jefferson, Hamilton, Oneida and Herkimer County Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Region 6 of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. The Master of Ceremonies for the 12th Annual Conference was Thomas Voss, NYSDEC Division of Water Retiree.

Topics presented include several Black River Watershed Soil and Water Conservation District Project Updates, Planning Department Updates on the Beaver River Septic Replacement Program, Municipal Culvert Replacements using the North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative (NAACC– through Trout Unlimited), Citizen Science (CSLAP, WAVE, etc.-NYSDEC), the Urban Forest Sustainability Initiative (SLELO), and Drinking Water Source Protection-NYSDEC). Also, new this year, was the introduction of the *Friends of the Black River* with a discussion of Dr. Galucci's English translation of the Castorland Journals, a journal of the French exploration of the Black River in the 1790's.

Sponsors that help make this event possible include the Black River Advisory Council, AOK Engineering, Barton & Loguidice and EA Engineering, Science, and Technology Inc.

The Black River Watershed Conference Committee would like to thank all presenters who took time out of their day to make this event possible. The total number of attendees for the day was 70. We are very thankful to be back in person and hope next year will be just as successful.



Pictured *Above Left*: Nichelle Swisher discussing the NYS Road Salt Task Force, *Above Middle*: 3 Willows Conference Center Sign; *Above Right*: Black River Watershed Steering Committee at the completion of the conference; (Back Row: Tom Voss), (Middle Row: Patricia Schulenburg, Nichelle Swisher, Caitlin Stewart), (Front Row: Jennifer Harvill).



Pictured *Above Left*: Nichelle Swisher (Lewis SWCD), Caitlin Stewart (Hamilton SWCD) and Tim Wimmer (Oneida SWCD); Picture *Above Right*: Jo-Anne Humphries from Trout Unlimited discussing the NAACC culvert evaluation process for strategic culvert replacement to encourage trout movement throughout the watershed.

# Conservation Field Days

In May, the District participated in the Lewis County 4H Conservation Field Days hosted by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Lewis County and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation at the NYSDEC's Dadville location. Over 220 students from four different school districts, including students from the homeschoolers association, attended this four hour event. The District provided an education station on erosion control. Michael Durant and Alexis Lyndaker, along with the District's summer intern, Harper Barrett, presented soil erosion, causes of erosion, and how it can be prevented. Two different displays were used: the first display showing the importance of roots and vegetation within our soil. The second was our EmRiver EM2 Stream Table demonstrating how soil erosion can occur, the importance of streambank protection, and demonstrating river/stream conservation.



Pictured Above: Michael Durant, District Technician, demonstrating streambank erosion with the EM2 River Model

# Water Conservation Education Day

The District provided a Water Conservation Education Day for over 50 third grade students from South Lewis Central School. Students rotated between three water related learning stations and then participated in a game of water-themed jeopardy. The first station included a demonstration using the EmRiver EM2 Stream Table to educate students on the impacts of waterways on surrounding landscapes and how to prevent erosion. The second station utilized the Enviroscape model to explain why we should use best management practices for activities, such as herbicide application near waterways, and demonstrated how a watershed functions as a whole. The final station included a model that exhibited ground water flow and infiltration at different rates through varying soil types into aquifers. It also shows how wells are recharged and how they can become contaminated.



Pictured Left: 3rd graders from South Lewis Central School participating in Water Jeopardy

## Rentals:

### 7 Foot No-Till Seeder (Tractor Attached)

#### Landowner Operated

\$100 Delivery & Setup Fee  
\$15 Per Acre

\$100 Cleaning Fee (If Applicable)

#### District Operated

\$100 Delivery & Setup Fee  
\$25 Per Acre

### 15 Foot No-Till Drill (Tractor Attached)

#### Landowner Operated

\$50 Delivery & Setup Fee  
\$15 Per Acre

\$100 Cleaning Fee (If Applicable)

#### District Operated

\$50 Delivery & Setup Fee  
\$25 Per Acre

# Effects of Road Salt on Macroinvertebrates & Waterways

For months at a time, in the North Country, is not uncommon to see a big orange truck plowing the road and spreading material to ensure that county residents safely and efficiently arrive at their destinations. This clearing of ice off the roads keeps the county functioning. Alternatives to the chosen materials traditionally used, however, may have a more positive effect on the natural environment .

Salt is currently used to clear roads because it lowers the freezing point of water through a process called, freezing point depression. When the ice turns to slush, the trucks are then easily able to clear it off the roads. The slush eventually melts into water that carries the salt into the forest and neighboring waterways, creating a real problem for the wildlife inhabiting those areas. A recent study completed in the Raquette River in Potsdam, NY showed the direct effects that high levels of salinity in the water had on Macroinvertebrates. [Benthic aquatic macroinvertebrates are small aquatic larvae that live in the substrate at the bottom of streams. Examples include mayfly, stonefly and beetle larvae]. Macroinvertebrates detect early water quality issues in waterways and are very vulnerable to changes in their environment.

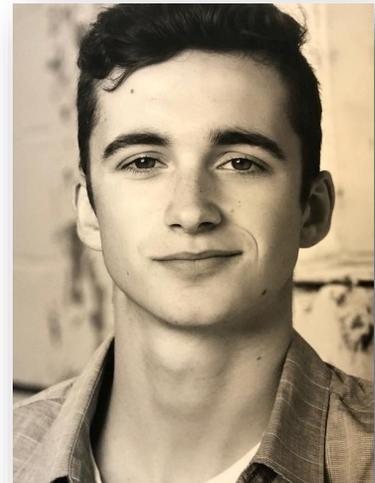
High levels of water salinity are wreaking havoc on every species of Macroinvertebrate; meaning that the other inhabitants of these waterways, such as fish, are soon to meet the same fate. Macroinvertebrates are much more important than just an indicator organism. When these Macroinvertebrates reach maturity they become dragonflies and other insects whose favorite pastime is controlling the populations of mosquitos and black flies.

Finding a cost-effective and sustainable alternative to use in place of salt will benefit all North Country residents. One possibility already used in places like North Dakota, Wisconsin, and Maine, is using an organic liquid mixture of pickle brine and molasses. The brine has shown to melt the snow while the molasses acts as a stabilizer that binds the brine to the snow and ice, helping it to melt it away. Brine has also shown to be a proactive method for clearing off the roads even before the snowfall, helping to minimize the hard work that faces road crews in the winter months. While the brine used on the roads still consists of 23% salt, it is a helpful and positive step in the right direction to protecting the tiny species that work so hard to maintain the healthy environment this area has to offer. *Article By Harper Barrett*



## 2022 Pratt-Northam Water Quality Intern

My name is Harper Barrett and I currently attend SUNY Potsdam. I am an environmental studies major with a minor in Wilderness education; I chose this path because I love the outdoors and want to educate as many people as I can about what we need to do to keep our area healthy and beautiful for our future generations to enjoy as much as the citizens of Lewis County do now. I am a Division 3 athlete at Potsdam, I run cross country in the fall and track and field in the winter and spring. When I am not training for sports I enjoy hiking, snowboarding, and rock climbing. I look forward to this opportunity with the Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District to learn about how I may better protect our environment and serve the community I call home. *Pictured Right: Harper Barrett*



# Riverfest 2022



Since 2010 the District, Lewis County Water Quality Coordinating Committee (WQCC) and Ronny Raindrop have participated in Riverfest, a canoe and kayak paddle, sponsored by the Lewis County Chamber of Commerce. This year's 10.3 mile route started in Naumburg (Castorland boat launch) and ended at the Carthage and West Carthage boat launches.

The District created a River Trivia contest and the Lewis County and Carthage Area Chamber of Commerce put together prizes for the winner. Approximately 132 paddlers answered questions from a trivia card provided at registration. Multiple choice answers were placed on pool floats all the way down the river. This year's trivia questions were sponsored by: AmeriCU, Carthage Saving Bank, Casquette Ford, Kraft Heinz, Lisk's Florals, Naturally Lewis, Snow Ridge and Sterling Roots. Thank you to all of the sponsors and participants this year!

# Lewis County Fair



## Pollinator Poster Contest Winners

*Junior Category: K-1st*  
1st- Maggie Miller  
2nd- Raelynn Hartshorn  
3rd- Adrien Essenlohr

*Junior Category: 2nd-3rd*  
1st-Arabella Eastman-Jackson  
2nd- Avery Monks  
3rd- Bryson Eaves

*Junior Category: 4th-6th*  
1st- Braelynn Eaves  
2nd- Addison Baker  
3rd- Amelia Kloster

*Senior Category: 7th-9th*  
1st- Blake Meyer  
2nd- Hayden Hulbert  
3rd- Samantha Grimsey

Thank you to all who visited our booth under the grandstand at the Lewis County Fair. This years display included the winning posters from our Pollinator Poster Contest and a Rain Barrel demonstration. Over 300 visitors entered to win their very own rain barrel. Julius Guinard was the lucky winner.

There were over 80 entries submitted from various student age groups for the poster contest which was titled "Where Would We BEE Without Pollinators?" To view all of the poster contest entries on our website under the publications tab: [www.lewiscountysoilandwater.com](http://www.lewiscountysoilandwater.com)

# RIVERFEST



8:30 AM: Participants answer questions while paddling down the Black River

10AM -4PM: Sweep the river to make sure all participants are off and collect River Trivia pool floats

8:30 AM: Pictures with Ronny Raindrop

8:00 AM: Return to start and await Ronny Raindrop's arrival

5:45 AM: Load 1/2 trivia floats and multiple choice answers on the boat

7:00 AM: Load other 1/2 trivia floats and multiple choice answers on the boat at half-way point



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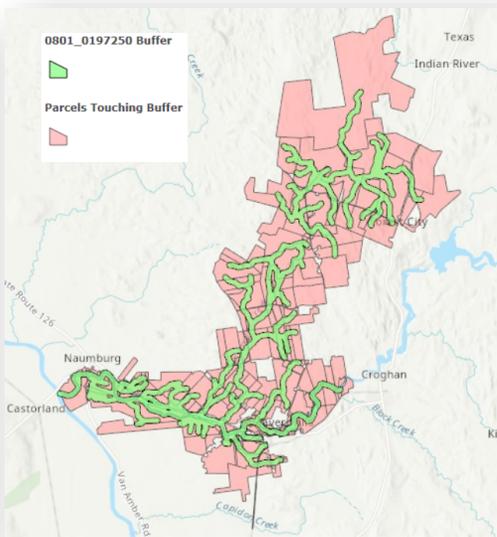
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# Lewis County Septic System Replacement Program



Map of the tax parcels eligible for the Septic System Replacement Program in the Beaver River Watershed, Lewis County, New York.

In 2021, the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation announced that some residents within the Beaver River Watershed are eligible for the Septic System Replacement Fund.

The Septic System Replacement Fund Program provides funding to counties to help homeowners replace cesspools and septic systems. Participating counties, including Lewis County, provide grants to reimburse property owners for up to 50% of the costs (up to a maximum of \$10,000) of their eligible septic system projects. Funding considerations for projects include the properties location in relation to a waterbody and the condition of the septic system.

Eligible projects under this program include:

- Replacement of a cesspool with a septic system; or
- Installation, replacement or upgrade of a septic system or septic system components; or
- Installation of enhanced treatment technologies, including an advanced nitrogen removal system.

Interested property owners are encouraged to contact Lewis County Planning by reaching out to Megan Krokowski at : [megankrokowski@lewiscounty.ny.gov](mailto:megankrokowski@lewiscounty.ny.gov)

More information on the Septic System Replacement Fund is available at: [Lewis County, New York- NYS Septic Replacement Program](#)