

THE CONSERVATION CONNECTION

News from MCSWCD



*Providing Today,
Protecting Tomorrow*

Soil and Water is Moving!

As of May 1st, 2013, MCSWCD will be located in a County facility at **145 Paul Road, Building 5, Rochester, NY 14624**. The District will no longer be co-located with the United States Department of Agriculture. Please check our website in April for new contact information such as phone number and email addresses.

The Conservation Connection is Going Digital

After much thought, the Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District's quarterly newsletter will be going electronic and completely paperless by 2014! As a conservation organization, it is in our mission to protect the environment, while providing technical assistance to better manage natural resources. The decision to go to a digital newsletter will save approximately 100,000 sheets of paper annually, which is about a half ton of paper or approximately 13 trees per year.

Not only is this decision aimed at helping the environment, it will also help cut printing costs. By eliminating the hard copy newsletter, the District will become more contemporary, as most people now find their news online.

As we appreciate your continued support for the District, we ask that you contact the District to ensure that you stay connected to our conservation efforts and updated on new programs and services. To that effect, we request that residents, agencies, and landowners that are on our hard copy mailing list send an email with your name and home address in the body of the email to newsletter@monroecountyswcd.org to continue to receive the Conservation Connection. Thank you!



Conservation Tree and Shrub Program Pick up



For those that have pre-ordered, this is a reminder that the pick-up for the Conservation Tree and Shrub Program will be held at the Monroe County ecopark facility located at 10 Avion Drive Rochester, NY 14624 on **April 18th & April 19th from 9 AM to 5:30 PM**. For more information on the ecopark facility, location, and directions please visit the ecopark website at:

<http://www.monroecounty.gov/ecopark>

For those that did not have a chance to pre-order, we will have our overstock sale, on April 20th from 9 am to 12 pm, selling the remaining plant stock on a first come, first serve basis. Some species may not be available at the overstock sale. For next year, be sure to pre-order to ensure that your preferred species of trees or shrubs are available for purchase.

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2013 District Deadlines & Dates

NYS-DEC Endorsed 4hr Erosion & Sediment Control Training in Penfield, NY

March 20 (Register by 3/13)

WNY-Stormwater Mgmt. Training Series: Stormwater Design for Linear Projects in Rochester, NY

March 27

Tree and Shrub Distribution at the Monroe County ecopark!

April 18 and 19

Tree and Shrub Overstock Sale at the Monroe County ecopark

April 20

Pick up the Parks Event

April 23

NYS-DEC Endorsed 4hr Erosion & Sediment Control Training in Parma, NY

April 25

Monroe County Envirothon

May 2

Soil Testing: a Fast, Easy & Effective Farm Best Management Practice

With spring on the way, it is time for farms to start preparing for the 2013 growing season. Soil testing can be a huge financial benefit to any farm that applies nutrients to their cropland base. Maintaining up-to-date soil test data allows farms to apply nutrients based on known crop needs, thereby increasing planting efficiencies while significantly reducing the potential for unused nutrients to leave the field through leaching and runoff. Pulling soil samples in the spring can also be a fun process that allows you to become reacquainted with your fields on a hands-on level each year.

When sampling soils, a minimum of one soil core sample per acre for up to 10 acres in a (management) unit is appropriate. These samples are then mixed together to make a single composite sample. That sample will represent that particular management unit. If a field is less than 10 acres, a sample should be taken that best represents the layout of that particular field. If there are specific problem sites in a field, an individual test of that site should be sent in without mixing it with other samples.



To collect a soil sample, take a vertical soil core sample from the soil surface to a depth of 6-8 inches. Sample each management unit in a random (zig-zag) pattern throughout the field and mark each sample site on an aerial photo. Ideally, fertility should be checked about once every 3 years, from the same sites, during the same time of year. The best times to sample are before planting in the spring and after harvest in the fall. Cornell offers soil testing lab analysis through Agro-one labs. Free soil test sample collection boxes are available here at the Monroe SWCD office as well as the local Cornell Cooperative Extension office. Samples for a Cornell analysis should be mailed to – **Cornell Nutrient Analysis Laboratory, G01 Bradfield Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853-1901, (607) 255-4540.**

The Monroe County SWCD can work with you to take the information provided through a soil test and develop a nutrient management plan tailored to your farm.

Does Your Farm Need to Report its Water Withdrawal?



Any farm that operates a water withdrawal system with the capacity to withdraw 100,000+ gallons per day (on any given day in a month) must report amounts withdrawn to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS-DEC) annually. Farms may determine the amount withdrawn any way that accurately gauges the amount of water used. A water use calculation spreadsheet for dairy farm water use is expected to be made available through NYS-DEC & Cornell shortly.

Water withdrawals must be reported by completing the water withdrawal reporting form you may complete online and email, or print, fill out, and mail the form back to NYS-DEC. A link to a free download can be found on the NYS-DEC website at http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/wwrnonag.pdf. Water use reports are due by March 31st of each year.

Monroe County Agricultural Plastic Recycling Program 2013

Monroe County SWCD will once again be working with USAg Recycling Inc. to offer local agricultural producers a convenient option for disposing of empty agricultural plastic containers for the 2013 crop season.



Pick up dates will be scheduled for June and/or October. Containers accepted are HDPE #2 plastic containers only, ranging from less than 1 gallon to 55 gallon barrels. To be acceptable for recycling, plastic containers must be empty, clean, uncapped, and dry.

To help store containers until pick up time, bags that hold 50 to 60 – 2.5 gallon containers are available for free upon registration.

For questions about soil testing or water withdrawal, or to register for plastic pick-up dates, please contact Tucker Kautz at 585-473-2120 Ext. #108.

Water, Water, Everywhere

Compared to the winter of 2012, 2013 has seen record snowfalls in many areas of the country. Monroe County has felt the impact of these winter storms events as well. With spring around the corner, a reprieve from the winter weather is on the way. But as temperatures warm, and snow and ice begin to melt, homeowners and residents should be aware of the potential impacts spring thaw can bring.

During the spring thaw, frozen ground prevents snowmelt and rainfall from seeping into the ground. Each cubic foot of melted snow correlates to gallons of water in the form of runoff. This increased runoff can result in the overflow of streams, ponds, rivers, and lakes. Add spring storms to the mix, and you have a recipe for potentially serious spring flooding.

Increased flow in streams from spring thaw and flooding can also result in increased stream bank erosion. Streams on or near your property should be monitored for signs of excess erosion and bank loss. If you are experiencing erosion issues or stream bank loss, the Monroe County SWCD can offer technical assistance and advice on possible solutions. Contact Bob Kiley at 473-2120 x111 or robert.kiley@ny.nacdn.net.



District Technician Accepts Position as Program Manager

In March of 2013, Monroe County Soil & Water Resource Technician, James A. Balyszak, left the District to fill the position of Hydrilla Program Manager in Tompkins County, NY. “My time with the District has been a fantastic experience.” James said. “I have learned a great deal from my colleagues and have enjoyed working closely with outside agencies, municipalities, private landowners, and farmers throughout Monroe County. Working with these groups and individuals to implement comprehensive resource management practices has been a very rewarding experience, and I wish everyone all the best moving forward!”

Envirothon 2013



The 2013 Monroe County Envirothon will be held on May 2nd, 2013 at Ellison Park in the Town of Penfield. The Envirothon is an annual environmental education event for high school students that develops environmental awareness. If you are interested in volunteering and would like more information please contact Karen Ervay by April 1st at karen.ervay@ny.nacdn.net or (585) 473-2120 x3.

District Gets New Intern

Our Soil and Water intern for the 2013 season is Sandy Golberg, a Master’s student in RIT’s Environmental Science program. She is from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and has been in Rochester since 2008. Her thesis focuses on repurposing vacant and empty lots in the City of Rochester. Sandy will be assisting the District with agricultural assessments, our tree and shrub program, our website and newsletter, and educational outreach.

4th Annual Pick up the Parks

The 4th annual Pick Up the Parks Event will be Saturday, April 13th, 2013, from 9am until noon. Interested people can register through Ryan Loysen at: rloysen@monroecounty.gov.



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<http://www.facebook.com/MonroeCountySWCD>

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Conservation District**

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Soil & Water Intern

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Spring 2013 Fish Stocking Program
Save the Date

Do you plan on restocking your pond this spring? Have unwanted excess aquatic vegetation starting to clog your pond?

The District's Spring 2013 Fish Stocking Program will be held on June 19th. 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, please contact Bob Kiley at (585)473-2120 x 111.



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 email address and contact information 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.