

# THE CONSERVATION CONNECTION

News from MCSWCD

VOLUME 37  
ISSUE 3  
SEPTEMBER 2013



Providing Today,  
Protecting Tomorrow

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## Invasive Species Alert: Water Chestnut Found in Monroe County

The highly invasive species water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) has recently been discovered along the shoreline of Lake Ontario, in Monroe County. This species, which is native to Europe, Asia, and Africa, has been spreading through New York, with this recent discovery being one of the first confirmations of this plant in the greater Western New York area. The origin of the new infestation here in Monroe County is unknown, but likely a product of boats, trailers, waders and other fishing and boating equipment inadvertently spreading aquatic invasives from waterbody to waterbody.



Clusters of saw-toothed edge on triangular floating leaves.

This species can grow in depths of up to 15 feet and are visible on water's surface, much like other native species such as lilies. Water chestnut contains a circular cluster of saw-toothed edged, triangular floating leaves. This plant which outcompetes native vegetation, produces a nut like fruit that has four spined barbs.

Small beds of water chestnut have been controlled by the New York State Canal Corporation in Lake Champlain and by Boy Scout groups and private citizens in Oneida Lake (and surrounding waterways) and Sodus Bay. While most of these efforts have successfully controlled the targeted plants, re-infestation from nearby plant beds and other vectors has required continuing efforts to stem the tide.



Water Chestnut's spiny barbed fruit.

Boats, trailers, waders and other fishing and boating equipment should be properly cleaned, dried or disinfected after use, to reduce the risk of "hitching" aquatic invasives from waterbody to waterbody. To avoid spreading invasive species check your boat trailer, axels, lights, license plate and lower unit for aquatic plants after you remove your boat from the water. In addition, examine fishing equipment, paddles, anchors, and boat decks for any other aquatic plants and dispose of properly.

## The Conservation Connection is Going Digital!

In continuing our commitment to the environment, the Conservation Connection will soon be available in electronic form only. As the deadline for going digital is 2014, we request that all recipients on our hard copy mailing list contact the District at [karenervay@monroecounty.gov](mailto:karenervay@monroecounty.gov), including your first and last names, home address, and preferred email address, to ensure that you continue to receive the newsletter without interruption.

### 2013 District Deadlines & Dates

**10/13/2013**

NRCS EQIP Program Application Deadline

**10/24/2013**

4 Hour Erosion and Sediment Control Training Registration Deadline

**10/31/2013**

4 Hour Erosion and Sediment Control Training in Henrietta

## Conservation Field Days A Success

The District hosted its **25th** Annual Conservation Field Days event in Ellison Park last week. **Thirteen** area schools attended the event held, September 17-19<sup>th</sup>. Approximately **1456** students came to learn about assorted environmental topics while enjoying one of our most beautiful County Parks. The District would like to extend a special thank you to the Monroe County Parks Department for their assistance and sponsorship of this event.



*Ryan Loysen of Monroe County Parks instructs students about environmental programs.*

Continued support from both the Monroe County Parks Department and Wegmans has enabled us to offer this wonderful learning opportunity to area students. The District strives to bring together great instructors, interested students and conservation minded teachers in a fun, outdoor environment. We provide them with the opportunity to learn and become more aware of topics including: Watershed Awareness, Wildlife Management, Medical Waste Management, Forestry, Recycling, Aquatic Life and much more.



*Mark Gooding, from NYS-DEC, teaches students about the basics of tree identification.*

This year we give thanks to all of our guest instructors, some of which included: Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge, Monroe County Department of Environmental Services, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Friends of Ganondagan, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the University of Rochester Medical Center, the Audubon Society, the Water Education Collaborative with the Rochester Museum and Science Center and the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Interested in instructing or having your local sixth grade class participate next year? Contact Karen Ervay for information regarding the 2014 event at: [karenervay@monroecounty.gov](mailto:karenervay@monroecounty.gov)

## Stormwater Training: Save the Dates

The Western New York Stormwater Management Training Series will again be offering a variety of different stormwater training sessions in 2014. John Dunkle, P.E. will be leading several different classes ranging from stormwater basics to specific elements of stormwater management design and engineering. This program is unique to Western NY, as there are no other comprehensive training programs like this in our region. Working closely with NYS-DEC Albany staff, these training sessions are the most current and accurate stormwater guidance available. Classes include detailed handouts and resources for each attendee to assist in stormwater planning, design, and implementation. Detailed class descriptions, cost, and registration information on all of the classes for this series, and other stormwater trainings offered by the MCSWCD, will be posted soon on the District *Stormwater Trainings* page on our website at: [www.monroecountyswcd.org](http://www.monroecountyswcd.org)

<b>Stormwater Class</b>	<b>Date</b>
FUNDAMENTALS OF STORMWATER MANAGEMENT DESIGN	2/13/2014
RUNOFF REDUCTION WITH GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	3/5/2014
SOILS AND THE DESIGN OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE INFILTRATION PRACTICES	4/1/2014
FUNDAMENTALS OF FLOODPLAIN AND FLOODWAY ANALYSIS	5/7/2014
STORMWATER PRINCIPALS FOR MS4 ENGINEERS	6/4/2014

## **Agricultural BMP Spotlight: Hedgerows**

With the increase in intensive farming systems and larger equipment over the last few decades, it has become common to see hedgerows being removed on tracts of farmland with the goal of turning tracts of multiple small fields into one large field. Large fields are farmed more easily with today's larger equipment, and provide more growing space to produce larger yields of crops. A farm considering removing a hedgerow should first weigh the disadvantages of working around the hedgerow with equipment versus the many conservation benefits that may be achieved by keeping hedgerows in place as part of the landscape.

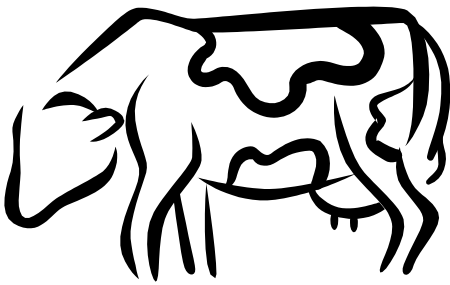
Hedgerows, as a best management practice (BMP) in an agricultural landscape serve to:

- ◆ Reduce erosion from surface water runoff by breaking up slope length
- ◆ Reduce wind erosion in open cropland
- ◆ Provide habitat, including food, cover, and corridors for terrestrial wildlife and nesting habitat for pollinators
- ◆ Provide food, cover, and shade for aquatic organisms that live in adjacent streams or watercourses
- ◆ Provide substrate for beneficial invertebrates as a component of integrated pest management
- ◆ Intercept airborne particulate matter
- ◆ Reduce chemical drift and odor movement
- ◆ Provide screens and barriers to noise and dust
- ◆ Increase carbon storage in biomass and soils



For more information on hedgerows or any other agricultural best management practices please contact Tucker Kautz at 585.753.7380 or email at [tuckerkautz@monroecounty.gov](mailto:tuckerkautz@monroecounty.gov)

## **NYS-DEC CAFO Permit Updates**



NYS DEC has recently finalized modifications to the State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Permit for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) GP-0-09-001. The regulatory amendments clarify requirements of the CAFO program and exempt non-discharging AFOs with 200 to 299 mature dairy cows from obtaining SPDES permit coverage. Farms in this size range where dirty runoff water, manure, milking center waste or bunk leachate can discharge to

a stream or watercourse are required to obtain or retain permit coverage. The “no discharge” requirement can be met if farms prepare, implement and follow a comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP) in accordance with USDA-NRCS standards and specifications, do not have ditches or pipes that flow directly to streams, do not discharge directly, and do not have overflows of manure storage structures. A discharge without a permit may result in fines along with a requirement to get a permit.

Under the rule, non-discharging AFOs with 200-299 mature dairy cows are excluded from the definition of “Medium CAFO.” Consequently, these AFOs would not be required to obtain ECL CAFO SPDES permit coverage unless: 1) the facility requests and is granted permit coverage as a Small CAFO or 2) the facility is designated to be a Small CAFO by NYS DEC.

Modifications were also made under Part 360 of the permit to include updated material on permit coverage of food processing and fish hatchery waste products as well as clarification on regulatory coverage of farm composting and anaerobic digesting facilities.

The permit modifications are intended to provide regulatory relief to a portion of the dairy community to assist them in meeting the expected demand from the yogurt industry, while ensuring that the risks posed to the environment will be manageable.



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Anwar Karim  
*District Conservationist*

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**NRCS-NY Announces Application Cutoff Dates  
for NRCS Conservation Programs**

New York Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announces **October 18, 2013** as the application cutoff date for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP). All applications are competitive and are ranked based on national, state and locally identified resource priorities and the overall benefit to the environment. The **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** offers financial assistance for practices which address soil erosion, water quality and habitat degradation. Focus areas within the EQIP program include soil health, livestock waste, habitat, forestry and grazing. The **Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)** helps participants restore and protect fish and wildlife habitat in shrubland areas.

If you are interested in applying for an NRCS conservation program please contact our local District Conservationist, Anwar Karim at 473-2120 or by email at [anwar.karim@ny.usda.gov](mailto:anwar.karim@ny.usda.gov)



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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 or view it online at [www.monroecountyswcd.org](http://www.monroecountyswcd.org). Programs and services offered through the Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District are made possible through the financial support of the County of Monroe, State of New York, specialized grant opportunities, and fundraising programs. All 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.