



THE CONSERVATION CONNECTION

News from MCSWCD



Protecting Today, Providing Tomorrow

District Tree Program Continues to Grow

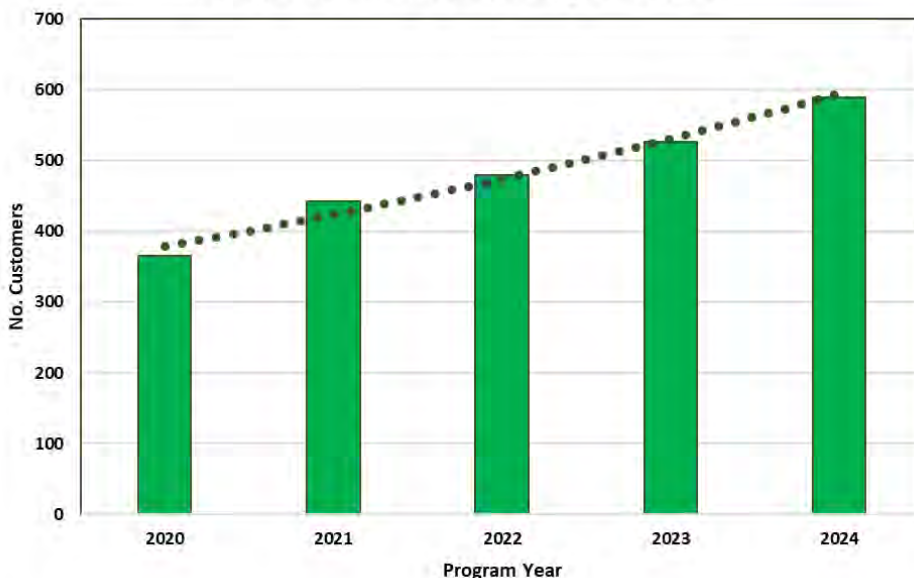
The District's Conservation Tree & Shrub Program once again saw increased ordering this year, fulfilling a total of **589** orders and distributing nearly **24,000** trees and shrubs, including **400** conservation multi-packs. New species offered this year included American Hazelnut, Choke Cherry, Common Serviceberry, Northern Bayberry, Northern Catalpa, Pin Oak, and Streamco Willow. Thank you to everyone who ordered from us this year, we hope you had a successful planting season and we will see you next year!

Thanks to the hard and efficient work of our packaging team consisting of all our District employees and volunteers from Cornell Cooperative Extension's Master Gardener Program, we once again packaged all of our trees in less than one week, making sure the trees are out of the ground for the least possible amount of time before they are planted by you! As always a special thanks to ecopark and Monroe County Department of Environmental Services (DES) staff for their help and the use of their facility for this program.

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Conservation Tree & Shrub Program Growth



Our program has continued to grow over the last several years thanks to the many residents of Monroe County dedicated to conservation and reforestation.

2024 District Dates & Deadlines

September 17-19
Conservation Field Days

October-December
(Dates TBD)
NYS DEC Endorsed 4-Hr
Erosion & Sediment
Control Training

Our office will be closed
July 4th in observance of
Independence Day
and
September 2nd in
observance of
Labor Day



District Implements Streambank Stabilization and Riparian Buffer Along Black Creek

During November 2023, the District implemented a large streambank stabilization project along Black Creek in the Village of Churchville. Funded through the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation’s Water Quality Improvement Program, this project was the culmination of years of planning and coordination between the District, the Village and several landowners.

Black Creek is a popular recreational creek and a major tributary of the Genesee River. The creek has a watershed of approximately 202 square miles, with its’ headwaters found in Wyoming County, and flows through Genesee, Orleans and Monroe Counties before joining with the Genesee in the Town of Chili. The section of Black Creek where the project is located is considered a reservoir with a very wide channel and slow moving water as it lies upstream of the Churchville dam. Over the last 20+ years, landowners have reported losing 10-15 feet of their land along with a noticeable loss/lack of beneficial riparian vegetation resulting in the need to stabilize the banks. The erosion appears to be primarily a consequence of wind-driven wave erosion and consistently saturated soils.

In total, 1,075 feet of streambank stabilization was implemented along the site using a combination of rock revetment bank stabilization and peaked stone toe protection. As there was no land access from the backyards, this project had to be constructed via a barge in the creek - definitely not your typical stream project! As part of the plan, a five foot wide floodplain bench was installed along approximately 400 feet of the creek. This created bench area and the remaining project banks were then planted with trees, shrubs, and herbaceous perennials creating a 5,375 square feet (0.12 acres) riparian buffer. District and Village of Churchville DPW staff installed a total of 170 conservation plantings. A riparian buffer is an important component of a stream project and once the plantings mature, it will help increase the shoreline’s natural resiliency to erosion, minimize sediments and nutrients from entering the creek and improve aquatic habitat, all due to the presence of the plants and their growing root structures.

<p>Upstream start of the project facing downstream - Post Planting May 2024</p>	<p>Downstream end of the project facing upstream - April 2024</p>
	

District Implements Streambank Stabilization and Riparian Buffer Along Black Creek (cont.)



Construction lasted two weeks in the fall 2023 followed by a day of buffer planting in spring 2024



Have You Seen Our Spotted Lanternfly Traps Around the County?

The District has expanded our detection and monitoring trap network for the invasive spotted lanternfly (SLF) this year. Throughout the summer and into fall, District staff will be checking over 30 traps for the spotted lanternfly. In addition to SUNY Brockport and Monroe County Parks Dept., we partnered with the City of Rochester, the Towns of Chili, Clarkson, Gates, Greece, Hamlin, Henrietta, Penfield, Pittsford, and Sweden, and the Villages of East Rochester and Webster to install traps in various public parks. The expansion was implemented after an established population of SLF was found for the first time in Monroe County last fall in the Town of Greece.

The traps installed work to detect SLF early and then rapidly respond to their presence should they be found. Trap locations are based on tree species known to be fed upon by SLF, proximity to major routes for car or train travel, and high visibility public areas for education.



If you see one of our traps, or another organization's traps, do not touch or move them. Traps are monitored bi-weekly by staff.

If you think you have seen SLF, please report it to NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets: <https://agriculture.ny.gov/spottedlanternfly>



Box Tree Moth Updates

The Native to East Asia, the box tree moth was first confirmed in New York state in July 2021. The caterpillars of box tree moths primarily feed on boxwood plants, completely defoliating them, leading to drastic plant decline and mortality if infestations are heavy enough. Signs to look for on boxwood plants include green-black frass and webbing/silk threads. There is also evidence of caterpillars feeding on bark after the leaves are gone which can lead to girdling and mortality.

Boxwood plants make an estimated \$140 million in wholesale and retail sales annually in the United States, and thus are an important part of the nursery industry. Boxwood plants are popular landscape plants due to their low maintenance and typical deer-resistance.

In late 2023, New York State Dept. of Agriculture & Markets expanded a quarantine to Monroe County that limits the sale, movement, and production of boxwood plants in Monroe and five contiguous counties. This quarantine hopes to slow the spread of the moth and allows thorough inspections of stock entering or leaving Monroe County.

Monroe County Farmland Protection Survey

Monroe County is updating its Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan. The Plan will recommend ways to preserve high quality farmland and support the continued economic viability of agriculture in Monroe County. The plan will guide not only Monroe County officials, but also landowners, municipalities, farmers, farm support agencies, and other related partner organizations.

Through engagement with stakeholders, the planning process will help bring together the county's farming community and build support for a planning and policy framework to keep Monroe County's farmland productive, prosperous, and secure.

To better understand the challenges and opportunities for agriculture in Monroe County, the county has created a survey for stakeholders including farmers, farmland owners, or those knowledgeable about the agricultural landscape.

The survey will take ~5 minutes and can be accessed here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MonroeAgPlanSurvey>

For more information on the Monroe County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan, please visit their website: <https://www.monroecountyagplan.com/>



Agricultural Plastics Recycling Program



Attention farmers! Agricultural plastics recycling pick-up is available for your pesticide containers in the spring and fall (based on availability of vendor and by appointment only). This program accepts rigid high-density polyethylene (HDPE) 55-gallon containers and smaller, that previously held products utilized in agricultural crop protection, animal health, specialty pest control, micronutrient, biologicals, fertilizer, and adjuvant products.

Clean plastic containers picked up through this program must be triple rinsed and free of all remaining liquid and dried flaky residue to be accepted. All caps and labels must be removed as well. Stained containers are acceptable. Recycled containers are processed for use in certified end use products, such as: Agricultural Drain pipe, Cinder blocks, Fence Posts and Nursery Pots rather than landfilled or burnt.

If you have plastic waste that can be recycled or are interested in learning more about this program please contact our office at (585) 753-7380 or mcsxcd@monroecounty.gov

1st Round of Reforestation Efforts Begin

Last year, the District was awarded \$200,000 in federal funds through the Fiscal Year 2022 Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) Forest Restoration grant in an effort to reforest areas within Monroe County that have been decimated by the invasive Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and no longer have viable canopy cover. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an invasive beetle from Asia first detected in the New York state in 2009 in Cattaraugus County. Since then EAB has decimated the state’s ash tree populations. Monroe County has some of the highest ash tree density in New York State and the majority of the County is included in the 2.2MM acres of forest damage mapped in 2021 for the Eastern Region Forest Health Management. Ash tree density measures between 30-100% in areas of the county, reforestation and mitigation is of upmost importance to maintaining natural public lands for County residents and wildlife.

The project will span 3 years with the first tree planting this spring, where 1,280 trees were planted across nine sites by four partners. Monroe County Parks Department planted 1,040 trees at Black Creek Park, Ellison Park, Greece Canal Park, Northampton Park, Oatka Creek Park, and Powder Mills Park; Tinker Nature Park in Henrietta planted 55 trees around the park; the Village of Honeoye Falls planted 30 trees at Rotary Park; and Rush Recreation & Park Association planted 155 trees at Hundred Acre Park. Tree plantings will continue this fall through spring of 2026 across the county.



Oatka Creek Park



Tinker Nature Park

District Hosts Second Tree Planting Workshop



As part of the GLRI grant, we hosted our second tree planting workshop for Monroe County residents this spring led by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Region 8 Forester Garrett Koplun.

Held at Ellison Park in the Town of Penfield, 20 Monroe County residents learned about a multitude of topics including native tree selection, tree protection, proper digging and placement of trees, proper mulching, and more!

Another Sun-filled Envirothon



On May 7th, the District welcomed six local high schools at Monroe County’s Ellison Park for the 31st annual Envirothon educational competition event. The weather was beautiful for our five returning schools and one new school.

The Envirothon is an annual outdoor, environmental education competition for high school students. Teams of five compete against each other to demonstrate their knowledge in five core topics: wildlife, aquatics, forestry, soils and current issues which is selected at a national level each year. This year’s current issue topic was Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future. The winning team represented Monroe County at the New York State competition held on the campus of SUNY Cortland in Cortland, NY on May 23rd & 24th. The winner of the NYS Envirothon will go on to compete in the National Envirothon in Geneva, NY July 28th – August 3rd.

This year 20 teams, comprised of 100 students, from Brockport High School, Eastridge High School, Greece Arcadia High School, The Harley School, Honeoye Falls-Lima High School, and Webster Thomas High School competed against each other for the chance to go to the NYS Envirothon. The Harley School Team #1 took first place and went on to represent Monroe County in the state competition at SUNY Cortland taking 19th place out of 41 teams.



A team determines the height of a tree for the Forestry exam

Students used learned knowledge, critical thinking, and their surroundings to have the best chance at victory, along with helping prepare them for future environmental careers and gain an appreciation for each environmental topic.

Thank you to all our instructors, exam authors, volunteers, and sponsors that make this event possible!



2024 Conservation Field Days Open for Registration

We are now accepting registrations for the 2024 Conservation Field Days. This year’s event is being held September 17th, 18th, and 19th at Ellison Park.

Conservation Field Days brings together local fifth and sixth grade students and environmental and conservation professionals for three days of learning and hands-on activities. Each year we welcome around 1,000 students attend over the three days.

Schools interested in attending and instructors interested in hosting a station should reach out to our office to see what slots are still available. mcswcd@monroecounty.gov

Interested in being a volunteer for the event? Contact our office!

Clean, Drain, Dry: Look for the Watercraft Stewards

With boating season in full swing, recreational boaters and anglers alike are traveling between different water bodies to enjoy the summer. Hitchhiking is the most common way aquatic invasive species spread when they become attached to boats, boating equipment, fishing equipment, and personal gear. There is an easy three step solution to stop the spread of invasive species:

- 1. Clean:** Plants and mud should be cleaned off of all boats, boating gear, fishing gear, boots/waders, etc. For boats, it is especially important to clean off the rudders and undercarriage of the boat where it has the highest potential of coming into contact with aquatic invasive species. Any debris collected should be put in the trash, NOT thrown back into the water. **A really effective way to clean and disinfect your boat and any equipment/gear is using water or steam that is at least 140° F for at least 30 seconds.**
- 2. Drain:** All water holding compartments should be drained including ballast tanks, live wells, etc. If fishing, all gear and bait buckets should be drained on land.
- 3. Dry:** Perhaps the most important step, make sure your boat and equipment/gear are completely dry before entering another body of water. Make sure all parts of the boat are dry, this may mean using towels to clean inner parts and compartments of the boat that the sun cannot reach well. **Drying your boat and gear out completely is the most effective way of ensuring aquatic invasive species aren't spread.**

If you are boating or fishing around Monroe County there is a good chance you will see a watercraft steward stationed to inspect boats entering and leaving our local waterbodies. The District partners with Monroe County Department of Environmental Services and Finger Lakes Partnership for the Regional Management of Invasive Species (FLPRISM) to provide stewards at the Port of Rochester launch, the Erie Canal launch off Ayrault Road, the Sandy Creek/Lake Ontario launch, and the Erie Canal launch at Sans Souci Park. In addition to those stewards, the state often has stewards stationed at Irondequoit Bay State Park, the Erie Canal launch in the Village of Fairport, and the Black Creek launch at Ballantyne Park.

Common Aquatic Invasive Species Found in Monroe County



Eurasian Watermilfoil



Curly-leaf Pondweed



Zebra Mussel

**Monroe County Soil & Water
Conservation District**

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Get Outdoors This Summer

Monroe County is extremely fortunate to have our own parks department and 21 dedicated parks. These parks offer an escape to nature through undeveloped forest, while offering lots of recreational opportunities including hiking, kayaking, birdwatching, sports fields, disc golf courses, golf courses, and much more! Spread throughout the county, there is something for everyone at these parks.

If you are visiting any of these parks, remember to be mindful of your actions and how they relate to the conservation of our county's environment and natural areas. When visiting a county park there are several simple ways to ensure you leave no trace:

- All county parks are carry-in, carry-out, meaning any trash you bring in you must take out with you
- Pets should be leashed at all times and their waste should be picked up; many of our parks have streams running through them or wetlands present and pet waste is a major contributor of unwanted nutrients entering waterbodies; plus off leash pets may not stay on the designated trails interfering with wildlife

If we all respect the rules of the parks, they will be conserved for many future generations to come!

For more information on county parks and to find the nearest park to you: <https://www.monroecounty.gov/parks>



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. 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 age, 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.