

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

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Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District Newsletter



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Kashong Vernal Pool Project

The Kashong Conservation Area Vernal Pool Trail project is a wetland creation project that also provides water quality improvement and wildlife habitat enhancement through the creation of 6 vernal pools at the Kashong Conservation Area in Geneva, New York. These vernal pools range in size from as small as 300 sq. ft. up to a little over 5,000 sq. ft. in size. The pools have a water storage depth range of 6 inches to 36 inches and have an average overall depth of 18 inches. The surface water storage volume created by the 6 pools is estimated at nearly 250,000 gallons. The pools were placed around the edge of a hydric wetland meadow to create surface water storage pockets that will provide critical habitat for small amphibians. Each pool is individual, with some capturing small concentrated surface water flow paths as they enter the meadow, some dug out directly into the shallow hydric water table, and one pool that captures and stores surface water runoff from an old buried wooden tile system. Extensive habitat structure was built into each vernal pool, including woody debris, logs, and large boulders. The project site was seeded with a native wetland meadow mix with additional grass mix for trail and slope stabilization. A native tree and shrub planting will take place with the Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association next spring to further enhance the project. A new path connects all 6 vernal pools to the rest of the park and will allow the public to access and enjoy this project at Kashong Conservation Area. Thank you to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance for funding this project.



Erosion Control Project in the Town of Geneva

As part of the Finger Lakes Phosphorus Reduction Project, the District was recently involved in planning, designing, and installing an upland diversion and a water and sediment control basin (WASCoB) on a farm in the Town of Geneva. This 3 basin system will help curb gully erosion present in the farm production field and save over 72 tons of sediment from directly entering a tributary to the Wilson Creek-Seneca Lake Watershed each year. The WASCoB used a broad based design profile while the diversion basins were placed directly in a headland using a steep face, broad backslope profile. Both projects keep 100% of the farmland in active agricultural production.

Installing the broad base WASCOB using a 30' front slope and 30' cut slope



The WASCoB basin blended into the field after completion



The completed WASCOB after the field was planted to wheat this fall. The subtle design creates 100% farmable short-term water storage while greatly reducing downslope erosion



Installing the diversion basin tight to the upland woods



The completed diversion catches surface water as it leaves the woods and stores and conveys this water across the field in a non-erosive manner

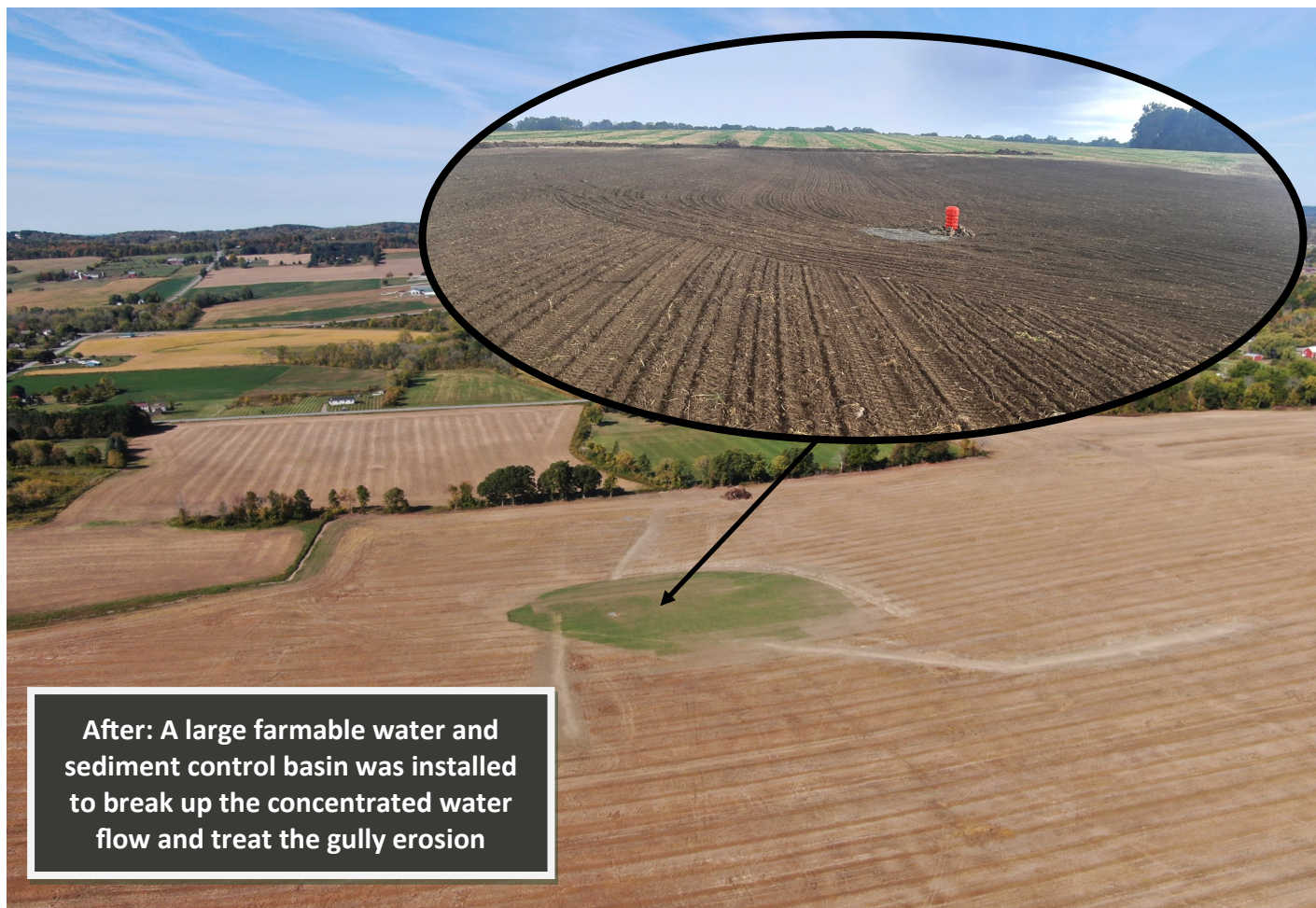


Erosion Control Project in the Town of East Bloomfield

Before: Concentrated water flow forming gully erosion across active cropland

Ontario County SWCD recently installed a large broad base water and sediment control basin system to help control a concentrated surface water flow that was causing erosion and flooding problems on agricultural lands in the Town of East Bloomfield. This project captures and stores damaging stormwater volumes using a wide shallow terraced basin design that can then release the water in a controlled manner through an

underground outlet system. This project will help prevent up to 64 tons of soil loss per year, all in the Mud Creek watershed. This project was partially funded through NYS Ag & Markets AEM Tier 4 implementation funds and Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance Funding.



After: A large farmable water and sediment control basin was installed to break up the concentrated water flow and treat the gully erosion



Local Farm Spotlighted

Tamberlane Farm recently assisted the District by hosted not only one event, but two events at their farm! Thank you to the farm for all of their hard work, dedication, and willingness to open their doors for educational opportunities.

On August 27, 2025 Tamberlane Farm hosted the Women for the Land Learning Circle event, focusing on adaptive pasture management and livestock reproductive care. We coordinated this event in partnership with American Farmland Trust. We heard from Karen Hoffman, the State Animal Husbandry and Grazing Specialist with NRCS, who provided practical advice on adaptive grazing management and pasture systems. We also heard from Nancy Glazier, the Small Farms and Livestock Specialist at Cornell Cooperative Extension NWNY, who shared strategies for improving nutrition and reproductive health in pasture-based livestock systems.

On September 15, 2025 board members and employees of the American Farmland Trust from all over the country visited our area to tour local farms and learn about our region. We were honored to help coordinate one of the tours at this Ontario County beef operation. The location was chosen to spotlight a local farm that is working on conservation projects and to highlight their work with the District and the American Farmland Trust.



Cover Crops

Have you ever looked upon a field in the fall when the corn has been harvested and see little green rows sprouting up? Then in a few short weeks the field is carpeted in green? The farm planted what is called a **cover crop**.

Cover crops provide a variety of ecological benefits and are typically planted after a row crop. Not all fields can be planted with a cover crop. It depends on multiple factors, such as harvest time, crop rotation, the farm's capability that growing season, and weather. It is not always possible for a cover crop to be planted, but when it does, it has several benefits.

Benefits:

- Enhance soil health
- Moisture retention
- Biodiversity
- Soil erosion control
- Reducing soil compaction
- Soil fertility
- Weed suppression
- Pest management

Types of Cover Crops:

- Legumes (e.g. clover, alfalfa, and vetch): known for fixing nitrogen and enriching the soil.
- Grasses (e.g. rye, oats, wheat, and triticale): these species are effective at preventing erosion and improving soil structure.
- Brassicas (e.g. radishes, mustards, turnips, and rapeseed): these crops can help break up compaction in the soil and suppress weeds.

Cover crops can be planted as a single species or multiple species mix and are a vital tool in the practice of sustainable agriculture to enhance soil productivity and soil health. This can help reduce the need for additional nutrient inputs and reduce soil erosion keeping the invaluable top soil on the farm fields. Interested in cover crops? Contact Ontario County SWCD at (585)396-1450.



Highlighting Sustainable Agriculture: College Tours

This October the Ontario County SWCD had the pleasure of co-hosting two college-level farm technology & sustainability tours with American Dairy Association Northeast and El-Vi Farms. Local colleges that participated included Rochester Institute of Technology, SUNY Geneseo, and Finger Lakes Community College.

As part of these tours, we followed the farm's manure collection and treatment process from when manure is first produced in the barns and then directed to the on-farm methane digester, where fresh manure is processed for energy production for the local community. We then toured the manure solids separation facility where manure solids are collected, treated and recycled back into a quality bedding product for on-farm use. We finished up at the farm's covered and flared manure storage facility where the remaining post-digested liquid manure product is stored under cover until the time is right to transport to the fields for application as a valuable nutrient source for cropland. The student groups were engaged participants and we received a lot of positive feedback after the event.



Drainage Stabilization in the Town of Gorham

BEFORE

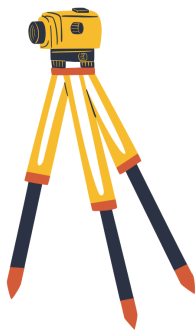


This project stabilized nearly 900 feet of drainage leading to Flint Creek. This ditch serves as the drainage way for adjacent agricultural fields as well as conveying water from upslope roadside ditches in the Town of Gorham. Erosion on site was resulting in an estimated soil loss of 35 tons per year. This project included the installation of a rock lined outlet structure to dissipate erosive energy from two outlet pipes which serve the roadside drainage. This volume was piped 150 feet to a stable, rock lined outlet within the ditch. Further down, a rock grade control structure was installed to mitigate

a severe head cut which had started at the outlet of the ditch. During the project planning phase, additional erosion undercut three large trees that required further stabilization of the drainage channel. Project partners included the Town of Gorham and Ontario County Department of Public Works and was completed this past summer.

AFTER





New Surveying Equipment

This summer the Ontario County SWCD purchased several new pieces of survey equipment.

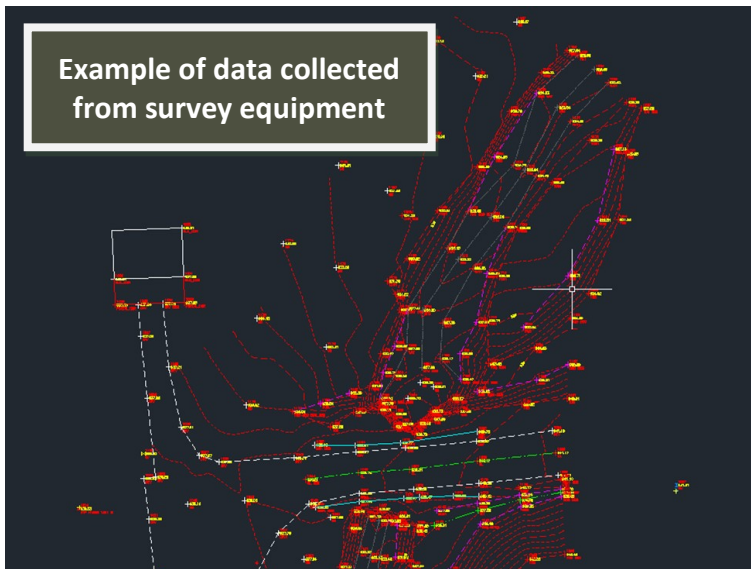
After researching options, we decided to go with a more powerful RTK GPS as well as a

new total station survey system. The Sokkia GRX3 and the iM series total station will provide the accuracy and precision needed to survey all projects the District is involved with, regardless of site conditions. The RTK GPS provides millimeter accuracy for setting control and being able to capture extremely accurate topography.

Incorporating a total station into our survey work will allow the District to survey in heavy

tree canopy and other areas where GPS sometimes struggles to map. This new Sokkia equipment is compatible with our current RTK GPS equipment, allowing for setting up base and rover combination surveys that can provide enhanced survey options on tough sites. Survey work is a huge part of our duties here at the District and being able to have two pieces of RTK GPS equipment running at the same time means the we can be twice as efficient in our mapping and survey projects.

Example of data collected from survey equipment



40th Conservation Field Days

Conservation Field Days was held on September 24 and 25, 2025 at 4-H Camp Bristol Hills for 6th grade students across Ontario County. Each day was filled with educational stations including topics on invasive species, wildlife, birds, aquatic macroinvertebrates, agriculture, trees, composting, first-aid, recycling, ticks, and more! Ontario County SWCD coordinates the event in partnership with Ontario County Cornell Cooperative Extension. This year we hosted Naples Central School, Marcus Whitman Middle School, Moodie's Children's Hours School, Honeoye Central School, Bloomfield Middle School, and Victor Intermediate School. The teachers and students were incredibly engaged and excited to be there! We had over 560 students attend the event. Thank you to all of the schools for attending, to all of the volunteer instructors for teaching a station, and to 4-H Camp Bristol Hills for allowing us to use your facility to host Conservation Field Days. We can't wait for next year!



Ontario County Board of Supervisors Tour

On October 23, 2025 members of the Ontario County Board of Supervisors joined Ontario County SWCD staff to tour several recent projects focused on managing water resources. A huge thank you to RTS Ontario, who provided transportation for the group. Town of Richmond graciously hosted our group at lunchtime at Sandy Bottom Park. On the tour, the Board visited the Town of Bristol WQIP Roadside Stabilization Project on Egypt Road, the Town of Richmond WRC Implementation Shoreline Stabilization Project at Sandy Bottom Park, the Flexamat Stabilization Project with the Town of Canadice on Cratsley Hill Road, the WQIP Roadside Stabilization Project with Ontario County DPW on County Road 36, and the Honeoye Inlet Restoration Project. The District was excited to showcase these recently completed water resources projects and highlight the ongoing work of Ontario County SWCD.



Tire Recycling Events

The Ontario County SWCD helps with the tire recycling program funded by Ontario County's Department of Sustainability and Solid Waste Management. The registration



is all on-line and we help on the day of the event, checking people in and making sure the proper tires are recycled. On September 6, 2025 the

Town of Hopewell Highway Department hosted the third and final tire recycling event for the year. They also provided us with Town of Hopewell Highway Department employees to unload tires from vehicles/trailers and load the tires into the roll-off containers. We could not have done this event without them. We recycled 22,280 pounds of tires in 1 day! Thank you to the Towns of Canandaigua, South Bristol, and Hopewell for all of their help in 2025. For upcoming recycling opportunities, please go to ontariocountyrecycles.org. Stay tuned for 2026 tire recycling events!



NYSDEC 4-Hour Erosion & Sediment Control Course: November 20th

The Ontario County SWCD is holding a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Endorsed 4-Hour Erosion and Sediment Control Required Training on November 20, 2025. The course costs \$100 and pre-registration is required by November 18, 2025. [Click here for more information.](#) The class is filled on a first come, first serve basis. Please contact the Ontario County SWCD at (585)396-1450 or email info@ontariocountyswcd.gov for more information. Under the NYSDEC's Stormwater Permit GP-0-25-001, all developers, contractors, and subcontractors must identify at least one trained individual from their company that will be responsible for implementation of the SWPPP and have at least one trained individual on site on a daily basis when soil disturbance activities are being performed. Also, developers must have a qualified inspector conduct regular site inspections in accordance with the General Permit. This training is good for 3 years.



Rain Barrel Workshops

This summer we held 3 rain barrel workshops! The 2 most recent workshops were held at Birdhouse Brewing Company on August 19, 2025 in partnership with the Honeoye Valley Association, and at Wood Library on August 25, 2025 in their new reading garden. Both events were well attended and over 60 barrels were sold. Thank you to all of the attendees for coming out to our workshops and making a difference in preventing stormwater pollution!



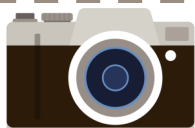
District staff helping to prepare barrels for workshops



Birdhouse Brewing Co.



Wood Library



Catch Us in the Field





Backyard Conservation Conversation



Knowing the Blue Jay

A loud bird for sure but the blue jay is so much more than that in the wild. It is known for its cool pointy crest, flashy iridescent blue, striking white and formidable black feathers, and yes, some noisy calls. Blue jays are very intelligent and highly family orientated.

Is going into the woods or to a park something you enjoy doing? If so, you have likely seen and definitely heard the common blue jay. A member of the Corvidae family, like crows, the calls of the blue jay are unmistakable. One of their calls even sounds like they are saying their name: 'blue-jay...blue-jay'! However, blue jays are master mimics and can perfectly sound the call of a red-tailed hawk. Some say, they do that to clear the feeder area of other birds so there is more food for them.



So always be sure to fill your platform and house feeders with sunflower seeds and shelled peanuts to get the chance to see a blue jay (or twelve) up close right in your yard. Blue jays are very social and will delight your feeding station daily, even in the fall and winter. Planting oak trees around your property will also help attract many blue jays as they eat up the acorns.

Pretty as they are with the blue coloration, it is important to know that their feathers are not actually blue. There is no blue pigment in any bird's feathers. What you are seeing is the blue light reflected by the sun to your eyes. In a shadow, a blue jay will appear gray not blue.

Pumpkin Smash and Compost Bash!

- Watch local Robotics Clubs demo & smash pumpkins!
- Smash your own pumpkin! BYOP- Bring your own pumpkin. Limited quantities of pumpkins available. All pumpkins collected and smashed will be composted after the event.
- Participate & learn with other pumpkin activities!

November 8, 2025 | 8:00 am to 11:00 am

**Ontario County Fairgrounds
2820 County Road 10
Canandaigua, NY 14424**



Registration is NOT required for this event, which is free to Ontario County residents!

Please dress appropriately for outdoor weather. All participants in the smash activity must wear closed toe shoes.

**For more information visit
OntarioCountyRecycles.org**

Hosted by:

**Ontario
County**
Department of
Sustainability and
Solid Waste Management

CCE
ONTARIO



December 11, 2025

WATER WORKSHOP

Credits Approved through NYS Department of State:

5.5 Credit Hours for Real Estate Professionals

3 Credit Hours for Code Enforcement and Administration

2 Credit hours in Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code

Location: Ontario County Soil & Water Conservation District

480 North Main Street

Canandaigua, NY 14424

Cost: \$15 and pre-registration is required. Please email info@ontariocountyswcd.gov or call (585)396-1450 by December 9.

*Light refreshments & lunch will be provided. Please make checks payable to **Ontario County SWCD**.*

Schedule: December 11, 2025 from 8:30am to 3:00pm

Presentation Topics:

- Groundwater/Surface Water Basics
- Wells for Drinking Water - Installation & Maintenance
- Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems
- Wetlands/Floodplains & Protected Areas
- Drainage & Stormwater Management

Target Audience: Real estate professionals, municipal officials, and planning & zoning board members

Registration

Name(s): _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____



ONTARIO COUNTY

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

www.ontariocountyswcd.gov

480 North Main Street, Canandaigua, New York 14424

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- Conservation District Technician: **Tad Gerace**
- Conservation District Technician: **Jenny May**
- Conservation District Educator: **Alaina Robarge**
- Senior Conservation District Technician: **Jeremy Paris**
- Canandaigua Lake Watershed Inspector: **Tyler Ohle**
- Canandaigua Lake Watershed Administrative Assistant: **Jamie Noga**

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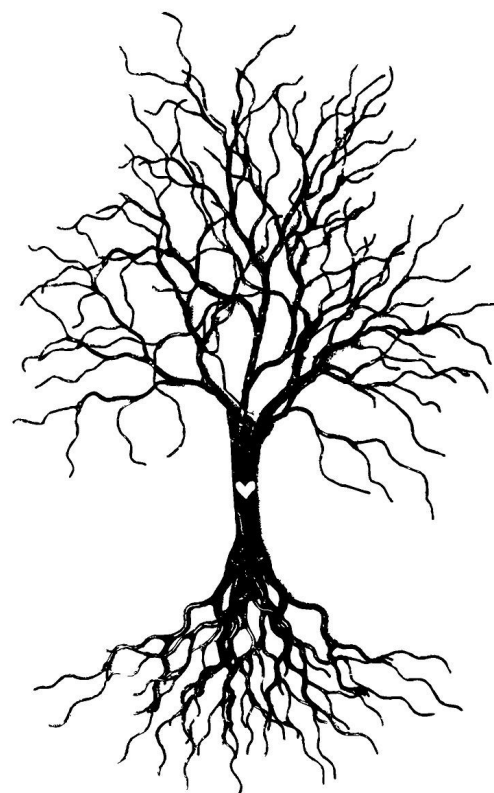
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