

# CONSERVATION UPDATE

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**Good Luck to Orleans County Envirothon Teams from Kendall and Lyndonville High Schools on May 7th at Bond Lake Nature Center!**

## TREE PICK UP!

**Don't forget to pick up your trees!** For those who have placed orders, the tree pick up is in the Log Cabin at the Orleans County 4-H Fairgrounds in Knowlesville on April 24th from 8 am to 6 pm and April 25th from 8 am to 1 pm. If you are unable to pick up your order on either of these days, please make arrangements to have someone else pick them up for you. Or if you prefer, we can deliver your trees for a minimal



charge.

If you forgot to place your order there are still trees avail-

BY: JUDY BENNETT

able for purchase. Stop in the office to place your order. Quantities are limited. There will also be some trees available for purchase during the above dates and times. For more information call 589-5959 ext. 5.

There are times when the nursery has to make substitutes in their packets. So, if you have ordered one of the specialty packets, one of the species may have been replaced with something else.

## 2014 CONSERVATION FARMER OF THE YEAR!

The 2014 Conservation Farmer of the Year Award goes to Walter Zelazny & Sons. The Zelazny farm was started in 1948 when Walter Zelazny acquired property on Harrison Rd in the Town of Shelby. He started farming with his two brothers, milking around 100 cows and growing grain and vegetables. This farm eventually grew to approximately 1,000 acres.

By the 1970's, the farm was run by Walter and his two sons, Stephen and Michael. They were by then farming primarily grain (corn, soybeans and wheat), along with cattle and hogs. Today, the farm has grown to approximately 1,400 acres of grain and no animals. Family members involved with the farm are Helen, Michael and Jacob.

The Zelazny family was in the forefront of conservation tillage as far back as the 70's, having



*Pictured L to R: Senator Robert Ort, Michael Zelazny, Helen Zelazny, Jacob Zelazny*

started using reduced tillage and no-till programs for their grain crops. Today, 95% of the corn, 20% of the soybeans and even some wheat are planted no-till. These practices leave a lot of crop residue on the ground, which helps to support the biology in the soil and promote excellent soil health. The reduced trips across the field also protect the soil resource while reducing expenses and improving the bottom line of the farm.

Planting cover crops has also been a regular part of the farm planning. Frost seeding clover in wheat has always been a regu-

lar practice, with radish, vetch and rye cover crops being added in recent years. They have experimented with various combination plantings of these cover crops to help build the health of their soil and prevent any runoff and loss of soil and nutrients.

In 2014 they completed an extensive grassed waterway project designed by the Soil & Water Conservation District. This will have the benefit of moving storm water through the farm into the Wildlife Refuge without taking soil or nutrients from the fields with it. It also has the added benefit of alleviating extensive residential property & road flooding that has been experienced in this area in the past.

These practices, and others planned, demonstrate the Zelaznys excellent stewardship of the land and desire to protect our natural resources.

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## GRASS CARP

Triploid Grass Carp are a natural way to control aquatic weeds in New York ponds. As with any control methods the triploid grass carp must be used properly in order to receive the best results.

Grass Carp prefer the tender, succulent plant species over those that are tough and fibrous. Grass Carp will not control species such as cattail, bulrush, water shield, water lily, or algae.

It is hard to tell exactly how many grass carp to put in a pond. If you put in too many they can totally demolish all of the vegetation in the pond and that will also damage



the pond health. DEC will calculate how many carp you are permitted to stock after reviewing the information on your permit application and it will be stated on the per-

mit that is mailed to you.

It is recommended to stock grass carp in late spring when the new plant growth is just beginning. Stocking them later in the summer can lead to unsatisfactory results.

Individuals desiring to stock triploid grass carp in New York must first obtain a triploid grass carp stocking permit from the Department of Environmental Conservation. You can get the permit application by visiting the NYS DEC's website at [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov) or you can get one at the Orleans County Soil and Water Conservation District office.

## FISH

In the event you are stocking your pond for the first time it is usually a good idea to establish a food base for the bigger fish to forage upon. You should start by releasing small minnows and give them a year to establish themselves. The following spring you may introduce the larger fish such as bass. You can also stock with bluegill exclusively for the first year and allow time for them to spawn and reproduce. The following year bass can be introduced and will have the offspring of the bluegill to feed upon.

To determine how many fish to add to

your pond it is recommended that for every acre of surface water you can release approximately 100 largemouth bass (fingerling 1" - 3" long). To support the bass, you will need a forage base of at least five bluegill to every one bass. If you are planning to stock your pond with fathead minnows instead, a ten minnow to one bass ratio is recommended. Each of these fish species is suitable for warm water fish ponds in New York State. As a side note, fathead minnows are highly favored for their ability to control mosquito larvae that potentially carry the West Nile Virus.

Also remember, it is illegal to liberate fish into any water body in New York State without first obtaining a permit. The DEC offers several types of permits related to ponds and fish stocking. If you have a pond you may qualify for a farm fishpond license that is good for five years and permits you to stock the pond. It allows the licensee, and his or her immediate family to fish the pond without any restrictions regarding size, quantity, or fishing license requirements. The permit is free and the application processing requirements are minimal. If you are interested in obtaining a permit application, contact the District office.

## DAY ON THE HILL

On March 3, 2015, Ed Morgan, John De-Filippis, John Kast and Dennis Kirby traveled to Albany for the annual Soil & Water Conservation District's visit with our elected representatives. Board members feel it is important to talk to our representatives in person to emphasize the importance of the conservation work that Districts do in our Counties and encourage the channeling of State funds from the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) to the programs that support that work.

We met with our newly elected Senator Rob

Ortt of the 62nd Senate District, Assemblyman Steve Hawley of the 139th Assembly District and Assemblywoman Jane Corwin of the 144th Assembly District. We were well received and they took the time to listen to our needs and plans for future work.

It is important our representatives know how their local supporters feel about topics they will be deciding on.



## WINTER 2014 WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

This winter three stream cleaning projects were completed using the "Slashbuster". The "Slashbuster" is an attachment that the Orleans County Soil and Water Conservation District bought to fit on the Orleans County Highway Department's excavator. This device shreds woody debris with its rotating teeth and is capable of picking objects up and out of a stream, allowing water to flow freely through its designated channel.

The first two projects worked on this winter were a ditch located on Old Oak Orchard Road in the Town of Barre and a ditch off Route 63 in the Town of Yates. Both of these ditches were brought to our attention by the Orleans County Highway Department, who worked on improving the ditches many years ago. These ditches had lots of

woody debris and smaller trees growing in them resulting in restricted flow of the water through them. After checking to make sure that no permits were required to clean these ditches, Orleans County SWCD obtained easements from the landowners to conduct a water management project on their property. Orleans County SWCD then gave the proper paper work to the Orleans County Highway department to bring the "Slashbuster" out and start the job.

The third project worked on was Yanty Creek, just past the Orleans Monroe County line, in the Town of Hamlin. We have worked for many years to get this project moving. This project was located in a DEC wetland, so in order to start this project a DEC permit, along with landowner easements had to be obtained. After obtaining

the permit and easements the "Slashbuster" went to work removing 12 blockages from the stream. One of the main blockages was just off of Monroe Orleans County Line Road, which restricted water flow so much that residents on Kenmore Rd in the Town of Kendall (Orleans County) would get flooded and water would backup for over a mile.

With the removal of these blockages, water is allowed to flow freely through these streams which will reduce the flooding possibilities of roads and of adjoining properties. Currently we are working on getting easements together for next winter's proposed "Slashbuster" projects.



\*Yanty Creek Before



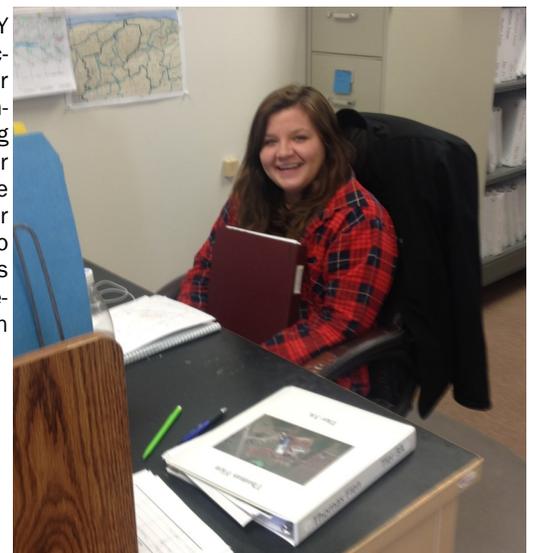
\*Yanty Creek After

## DISTRICT HIRES NEW TECHNICIAN

The District would like to welcome Megan McAnn to our staff. Megan graduated from RIT in May 2014 with a BS degree in Environmental Science with concentrations in both Biology and Public Policy.

She interned for a year at both the Monroe County Storm Water Coalition and RITS's Oral History of Family Farms research project. While interning, she volunteered at Color Brighton Green and built rain barrels for the residents of Brighton, NY. As part of the Family Farm project, she interviewed farmers whose farms have been passed down from generation to generation, each for over 100 years, and helped compile a research paper that was eventually published in the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle.

She was born and raised in Medina, NY where she was involved in swimming, soccer, and dance, and where her passion for the environment started. She's always enjoyed being outside, traveling and learning more about the environment which led her to her career today. She is excited to be working with Orleans County Soil and Water Conservation District and looks forward to learning the practical aspects of the job as well as interacting with the people of Orleans County and becoming more active in conservation efforts for the community.



## KATIE RECEIVES AWARD

Katie Sommerfeldt, District Technician, received the Division I Merit Award from the New York State Conservation District Employees Association. The Merit Award recognizes a District employee who has shown outstanding effort in promoting their District and its activities.

Katie has developed an excellent working relationship with not only the District, FSA and NRCS staff, but with individual landowners and the Town and County Highway Departments. This creates a very productive office atmosphere at the Orleans County Service Center.

Katie has been able to obtain permits from DEC and the Army Corp of Engineers on several drainage projects within the county. One of these projects was in the works for over 25 years with nothing being resolved. This project was finally able to be completed because of her exemplary work and dedication.

In the past the Town and County Highway



Departments have all done their own drainage ditches and culvert replacements with little or no assistance from the Soil and Water Conservation District. Now, they regularly contact Katie to have her assist with ditch designs and culvert sizing.

Katie also assists the District Manager with the design and implementation of all Ag Nonpoint Source Grant projects. She is instrumental in creating the designs and

obtaining NRCS Engineer approval for the projects.

The farmers in the county come to Katie when they have drainage issues. With the flat topography in the county there are many problems with drainage that have to be dealt with on a daily basis and she deals with them in a professional manner. Landowners, as well, regularly call in with complaints of flooding or drainage problems. At times, this has led to Katie becoming a mediator between landowners and she has done an excellent job with trying to resolve the issues and suggesting solutions.

Katie is willing to work hard and do any task that is asked of her. She takes seriously the duties of a Conservation District to the Community and exemplifies how developing partnerships can support the County community and government.

Congratulations Katie!

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As of January 2016 we are going totally Green with our Newsletter! We will no longer be mailing out hard copies. The only way to continue to receive the newsletter is by email so please call (585)589-5959 ext. 5 to give us your email address or email [judy.bennett@ny.nacdnet.net](mailto:judy.bennett@ny.nacdnet.net) so that we can update our email list.

Thank you and have a great 2015!



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## 2015 FISH ORDER FORM

Name:	Phone:
Address:	Cell Phone:
	E-mail:

Species	Size	Price	Quantity	Cost
Bass (Large Mouth)*	3" - 4"	\$64 (per 25)		
Bluegill*	1" - 2"	\$55 (per 25)		
Fathead Minnows*	1"	\$15 (per 100)		
Grass Carp**	8" - 12"	\$20 (per fish)		

\* "Farm Fish Pond License" required for new ponds and pond that have not been stocked in the last five years

\*\* D.E.C. Grass Carp Permit Required

*(Tax already included in price of fish)*

Total \$

	Grass Carp	Other Fish
Order deadline	May 22, 2015	July 7, 2015
Pickup dates	June 9, 2015	July 21, 2015

Make Checks Payable to:  
Orleans County SWCD  
446 West Avenue  
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Please include all permits when placing order!