

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

## WAYNE COUNTY



## SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

### 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS >>>

**Mark Humbert** – Chairman, Farm Bureau

**Lynn Chatfield** – Vice Chair, County  
Legislator

**Patricia VanLare** – Grange Member,  
Treasurer

**Peter Stoep** – At Large

**Jim Brady** – County Legislator

The Wayne County Soil and Water Conservation District's Board of Directors convenes for business on the third Wednesday of every month at 8:30 a.m. at the District office unless otherwise specified. A zoom option is available for any District Meeting upon request.

### 2024 CONSERVATION STAFF

**Ronald Thorn** – District Manager, CNMP  
Agricultural Planner

**Kelly Reynolds** – Office Manager/Accounts Clerk

**Chris Hotto** – Senior District Technician, CPESC

**Scott DeRue** – Senior District Technician, NYS  
E&SCCP

**Ian Priestley** – District Technician, CCA, AEM  
Specialist

**Drew Starkey** – District Technician & Shoreline  
Specialist

**Gabriella Taylor** – Public Relations Program  
Assistant



**The mission of the Wayne County Soil & Water Conservation District is to serve as a local agency prepared to manage and conserve the soil, water and natural resources of Wayne County.**

# BLIND SODUS BAY - EASTERN BARRIER BAR REDI PROJECT >>>

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The Blind Sodus Bay Eastern Barrier Bar REDI in Wolcott, NY project broke ground on October 25th, 2024. This project is aimed at re-establishing the barrier bar system that separates Lake Ontario from Blind Sodus Bay. From 2017 – 2020 high water levels and significant erosion erased more than half of the 3500' barrier bar.

The first phase of the project was creating a sub-layer of stone along the footprint of the project. This spanned the length of the bay from the east to the west. The contractor brought in roughly 2000 tons of stone each day and the foundation was completed on December 9th, 2024. The team is in the process of constructing a series of breakwaters as they work their way back towards the eastern end of the project. Along the way, they will install specialty features in the water and along the barrier bar for wildlife habitat.

Additionally, a new channel for recreational boating and bay-lake access will be constructed as part of this project. We expect the majority of the construction to be completed by March 2025 with final grading to take place in the Spring.





# AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT



Agricultural Environmental Management, or AEM, is a voluntary, incentive-based program for farmers led by their local Soil and Water Conservation Districts. AEM provides farmers with technical and financial resources to pursue science-based solutions to conservation concerns. The program takes a farm-by-farm approach to solutions for conservation and protects the privacy of farms participating. AEM also allows farms to document their positive contributions to environmental sustainability, water quality, and soil health.

## ➤➤➤ POLLINATOR GARDENS

This year the district planted 1.5 acres of new pollinator gardens on farms in the Wayne County Area. The district also helped farmers maintain 6 acres of pollinator gardens that have been planted previously. These plots will attract pollinators like bees, butterflies, bats, moths, hummingbirds, and beetles. It will help create a healthy and resilient community of pollinators while helping fertilize fruit crops at these farms.



## ➤➤➤ COVER CROPS

The district installed 700 acres of cover crops this year on Wayne County Farms. These cover crops will protect the soil from erosion and add nutrients to the soil.



# AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

## >>> AGRICULTURAL DRAINAGE

This year the district completed seven Agricultural Drainage projects that covered roughly seven miles. These projects protect waterways like Bear Creek, Little Creek, Melvin Brook, and Sodus Creek. The work completed included mowing, dipping, blockage removal and culvert repair/replacement. These projects help maintain drainage for hundreds of acres of agricultural land.



## >>> TIRE RECYCLING

In 2024 the District worked with a number of municipalities, moving roughly 1,600 tires or 45,000lbs of tires. A number of tractor tires were also removed through a potential new program.



## >>> NO-TILL DRILL

This year our No-Till Drill was used by 10 farms and covered 117 acres of land. Using a no-till drill promotes soil health, reduces erosion & compaction while improving the biological activity and organic matter content in your fields.

To rent our drill contact Ian at [Ian@WayneNYSWCD.org](mailto:Ian@WayneNYSWCD.org) or (315) 946 7200 ext. 5





# AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

## >>> AGRICHEMICAL MIXING FACILITY

Our Agrichemical Mixing Facilities allow farmers to keep chemicals for agricultural use in one place. This allows for ease of mixing and keeps these chemicals more secure. It also reduces the risk of these chemicals entering nearby watersheds. This will help keep the surrounding environment more secure. The district completed six of these this year, all on apple orchards.



## >>> HEAVY USE AREA



The farm and District initially worked together to implement a Heavy Use Area with the farm putting a cover on it on their own. The District was able to secure funding to help with putting in Runoff Control practices. Stormwater is collected from the roof and sent underground to the nearby creek. This ensures clean water remains clean, while contaminated water in the barnyard, remains in the barnyard.



# AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

## COMPOSTING FACILITY

This farm is located in the Erie Canal (East) watershed and was struggling to manage its horse manure during inclement weather. With warm winters and wet springs, their stacking area has quickly deteriorated, increasing the flow of nutrients off the farm and creating harsh working conditions to move the manure. Working with the District, the farm planned out a small concrete stacking pad with an adjacent treatment area, gutters to manage roof runoff, and increased drainage surrounding the stacking area. Putting in these practices will keep clean water clean while treating effluent that comes off the pad. This also provides the farm with sufficient storage until ideal conditions arise to spread.



## EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL

When visiting this farm, our technicians noticed a need for a water management practice. To help remedy this issue, the farm completed the construction of two Water and Sediment Control Basins (WASCOB) with underground outlets and about 1,000 feet of associated subsurface drainage. The goal of this project was to mitigate significant erosion that was occurring on this site. The practices installed in this project will significantly reduce soil and nutrient loss in local waterways.







## ➤➤➤ SOIL SAMPLING

This year the district completed 78 soil samples covering about 1500 acres of land. These samples help farmers make important decisions on what crops to plant and what practices to use on that soil type.

## ➤➤➤ AQUATIC VEGETATION CONTROL



The SWCD administers and manages mechanical aquatic plant harvesting services on the following embayments in Wayne County: Great Sodus Bay, Port Bay, East Bay, Blind Sodus Bay, and Maxwell Bay. Preparations for the harvesting season begin in May and operation is implemented from June through August for 12 to 14 weeks. Actual startup dates are dependent on growth rate and concentration variations of the aquatic plant species.

The basic pattern is to harvest from dock-ends outward to a point in which the weeds become less dense. The overall goal of the AVC program is to capture and remove 1,000 tons of invasive and nuisance plant material to promote water circulation and remove nutrients bound within the plants. This year they removed 616 loads (roughly 2,464 tons) out of the bays.



## >>> HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE EVENT

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This year we hosted our first Household Hazardous Waste Event since 2013! We had 103 participants that helped us dispose over 2,600 lbs of materials!

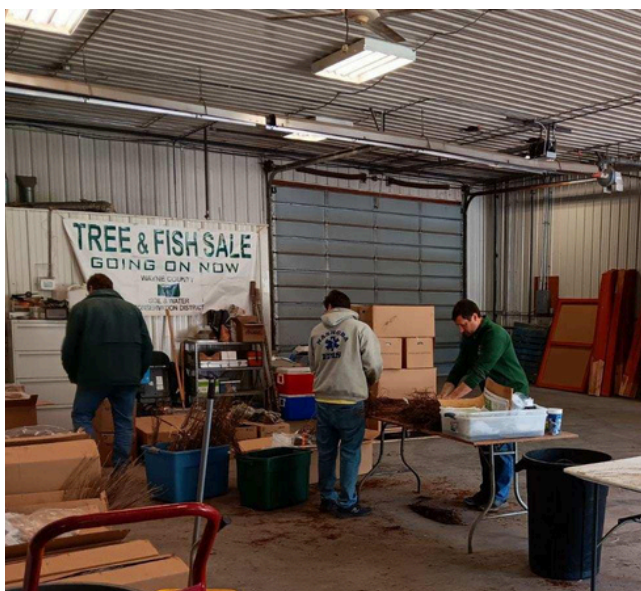
- Flammable Aerosols: 573 lbs
- Pesticides: 650 lbs
- Petroleum Products: 1337 lbs
- Bulbs: 68 lbs

## >>> E-WASTE EVENTS

This year at the district we held three Electronic Waste Collection and Recycling events. These events were extremely well attended. We collected 86,700 pounds of E-Waste from 809 households. These electronics were then sent to Sunnking to be recycled into jewelry or even outdoor furniture!



## >>> TREE SALE SUCCESS



This year's Tree and Shrub Sale was a success! We sold 9,770 items including conservation plantings and habitat structures. These goods were sold to 219 customers. Our most popular items were Norway Spruce, White Cedar, Balsam Fir. We would just like to thank everyone who purchased for investing in your community by reviving our environment.



# PORT BAY WETLAND CONNECTIVITY AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT OF BEAVER CREEK

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In 2024, The district completed a culvert replacement project along West Port Bay Road in the Town of Huron. Previously, a single dilapidated culvert connected the Beaver Creek wetland complex to the southwestern side of Port Bay.

This project installed a series of culverts at the road crossing to enhance public infrastructure & roadway safety while improving aquatic connectivity. During high flow conditions, the velocity of water movement through the old culvert impeded access of aquatic organisms. The new series of culverts allows for continual aquatic and terrestrial passageway between the wetlands of beaver creek and port bay. The town of Huron Highway department was instrumental in the success of this project by accepting the construction responsibilities of installing the culverts.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### POLLINATOR HABITAT EVENT

The district held its first pollinator habitat event this summer! This event focused on the creation and maintenance of pollinator habitats.



### >>> CAMP BEECHWOOD



This summer, three district staff members visited 4-H Camp Beechwood to teach the attendees about invasive species, and what we can do to prevent further spreading.



# 2024 ENVIROTHON

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To add to the success of our county competition, the Red Creek Rams placed second at the New York State Envirothon Competition!

In 2024, the Wayne County Envirothon was on April 17th, at the Montezuma Audubon Center in Savannah. We had 11 teams from 6 different schools participate!

Red Creek Rams took first place, followed by the Weedsport Stumpies in second place, and East Palmyra Christian School in third place. The Rams and the Stumpies represented Wayne and Cayuga Counties at the NYS Envirothon in May.

We want to thank Montezuma Audubon Center for hosting us and Wegmans for donating the snacks!

