



CONSERVATION CORNER

May/June 2011 Issue

COMMUNITY ENROLLMENT

Interested in being on our outreach list? Please contact the office at 315.946.4136 and provide your name, address, phone and email.

Coming Soon!
District Website
Fall 2011



Cathy Comfort

WATER QUALITY HOTLINE AVAILABLE FOR UPDATES

Wayne County is no stranger to continued awareness of water quality for the 19 watersheds that are important to the County's environment, economy and community. As a way to continue to connect with the public and provide current information about water quality issues and the planned locations for the Aquatic Vegetative Control (AVC) Program's Weed Harvesters, the District has established a water quality hotline.

Beginning June 10, 2011, the hotline will be updated every morning to report on water quality alerts with reference to locating additional information and the planned location for the AVC crews.

HOTLINE #:

315.759.3097



What to expect:

1. You should expect a voice mail to give you the information.
2. The hotline will be updated Monday -Friday by 8:00am.
3. For more details about the policies and procedures for the AVC program operation please contact our office for a digital copy.

THE DISTRICT WELCOMES CATHERINE COMFORT, CONSERVATION SECRETARY/TREASURER

I cannot believe the first few months have just flown by! As the newest member of Wayne County Soil and Water Conservation District I guess it's time to formally introduce myself.

My name is Cathy Comfort and I started as the Conservation Secretary/Treasurer on February 14th. My background includes 15 years in city and county government. My husband and I live just outside of Lyons (exactly two miles from the office!) with our two girls and we also have two boys plus various pets. I have one granddaughter and another grandchild on the way. We are active in the community as we are both on the Board of the Jr.

Lyons Lions Youth Football Cheerleading League. Our youngest daughter is a cheerleader and our oldest helps out with coaching. On weekends you can find me in Fairport as I am a bartender at the Landing Bar and Grille. Great Food, Live Music and a fun time!

I am settling in just great here, I work with the most supportive people. Recently, I took part in the Forever Green Tree Sale, Envirothon and now the busy field season. There was a Water Symposium in March where I was able to meet the District's extended "Family," Thanks Everybody!

Pond Ecology: Control Aquatic Pond grown with Triploid Grass Carp Stocking

The grass carp, also known as white amur, is a large member of the minnow family that is native to Siberia and Asia. Grass carp are commonly used and very effective at controlling pond weeds because they feed almost exclusively on aquatic vegetation. These fish prefer finer-leaved submerged aquatic vegetation such as elodea, muskgrass and coontail. Although they do not favor filamentous algae, they will consume it if their preferred vegetation is not available. Grass carp are not effective at controlling



Triploid Grass Carp

emergent vegetation such as cattails. Triploid grass carp are generally stocked at a rate

of 5 to 10 fish per acre of surface area. Once stocked, grass carp can control aquatic vegetation for 7 to 8 years, live upwards of 15 years, and weigh in at 25 pounds or more.

Pond owners that would like to stock triploid grass carp in their ponds may contact our office about our stocking program. We can assist pond owners with obtaining the required DEC permit to stock the grass carp, help decide how many fish should be stocked, and deliver the fish to your pond.

We also offer general pond consultation to help pond owners decide how to manage their pond. For more information stop by our office at 10 Leach Road, Lyons, Monday -Friday from 7am to 4pm or call us at 315-946-4136.

Home Water Quality: Certified Well Water Testing Available

This service is available at our office the first and third Tuesday's of the month. For directions and assistance simply come to the District office and pick up the sterile sample containers and instructions. There is a \$25.00 lab fee for the test. Then please return the test before 10:00am on the first or third Tuesday of the month. The test is testing parameters for water potability, such as:

Total Coliform bacteria are not pathogenic and are mildly infectious. Its presence can be found in the natural environment and are found in the intestinal tract of warm blooded animals including humans. Total coliform occurrence is important because it can indicate that other disease causing micro-organisms may be present. If large numbers of coliforms are found in water, there is an increased likelihood that other pathogenic bacteria or organisms are present.

E. Coli is the most common bacteria of the fecal coliform subspecies. The presence of e. coli is an indicator of potential health risks to individuals exposed to the water. Its occurrence means that there was a recent sewage/ animal waste contamination of the water supply. Typical symptoms include gastric intestinal distress, nausea, and mild fever. Individuals with compromised systems are more susceptible to the bacteria.

Heterotrophic Plate Count (HPC) measures the amount of all non-coliform bacteria present in the water supply. Heterotrophic bacteria are naturally occurring, use organic material for development, and have not been found to cause illness. If large numbers of Heterotrophic bacteria are found in water, there is an increased likelihood that other pathogenic bacteria or organisms are present.

For further information or questions regarding certified water testing, contact the State Department of Health at 315-789-3030.

AEM Protects Water Quality, the Environment, and the Bottom Line, on Wayne County Farms

Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) has been adopted by New York State as a process to assist farmers in evaluating potential environmental risks on their land and to provide assistance in implementing practical, cost effective means to address those risks. Participation in the program is voluntary, and the Wayne County Soil and Water Conservation District, USDA Natural Resources Conservation staff and private sector crop advisors are ready to partner with individual farmers in assessing concerns and identifying realistic solutions.

AEM has five levels or “Tiers” of planning and assessment.

Tier 1 – Farm Inventory or Summary

Basic farm data is recorded: owner and/or operator’s names, location of the farm, products, livestock numbers, and acres farmed. General questions about practices such as crop rotation, manure management, and pesticide use are asked. Information is kept in a confidential file. Please call the Wayne County SWCD office for this form.

Tier 2 – Farm Assessment

These worksheets ask about characteristics and operational procedures on the farm. A potential level of risk is assigned based on that information. Existing stewardship and conservation practices are recorded. SWCD staff process the information from Tier 2, creating a summary which will include basic recommendations for the farmer to consider if planning continues to Tier 3. To those producers that have done Tier 2 assessments over two years ago and think that there have been some changes in your operation please contact the office and we would be glad to update your information.

Tier 3 – Development of a Conservation Plan

The farmer may choose to address one or more concerns identified in Tier 2. Projects undertaken range from simple cropland erosion control plans (Tier 3A) barnyard water management plans and Agricultural Mixing Facilities. Tier 3B includes a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) that addresses agricultural runoff, agricultural waste and nutrient management issues. Tier 3B plans are required by federal and state law for large livestock operations designated as Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). Tier 3 plans are used to prepare cost estimates and to apply for cost-share funding from state and federal sources.

Tier 4 – Implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs)

When both grant and personal funding sources are committed, implementation of BMPs can take place. BMPs range from very simple (eg. Fencing to keep cattle out of streams) to extremely complex; such as manure transfer and storage facilities with land application spreading schedules. SWCD and NRCS staff assist in preparation of designs and construction plans and will work with contractors to ensure proper installation. CAFO farms are required to implement all planned BMPs on a specified schedule. Implementation of BMPs on smaller farms is completely voluntary and usually takes place as financial resources are available.

Tier 5 – Follow Up and Evaluation

After conservation practices or management recommendations have been implemented, evaluation takes place to assess the effectiveness of the practices. Tier 5 is similar to the Tier 2 process. A revised farm assessment is prepared to again evaluate potential risk levels for farm operations. For example, if a leachate collection system was installed for a bunker silo, the potential should be considerably reduced. **Tier 5A** is used for non-CAFO farms; **Tier 5B** is required for CAFOs



Every farm is unique and needs to have an individual plan

Investing in AEM improvements can be a significant step toward maintaining the profitability and long term viability of a farm.

How important is Wayne County Agriculture?

In 2007 there were 938 Farms in production. 168,417 acres of Land in Farms and \$168,963,000 of agricultural products sold.

Ranked in NYS

- *5th in the state for total products sold.
- *7th for grains
- *10th for vegetables, potatoes, melons and sweet potatoes.
- *1st in fruit, tree nuts and berries
- *4th in pig and hogs
- *4th in soybeans
- *1st in apples

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IS PROVIDED BY CONTINUING EDUCATION



March 2011—Wayne County Soil and Water Conservation District's work with community members in Wayne County to provide technical services and information. However, this county District is a part of a much larger consortium of Soil

and Water Districts from across the state and country. Every spring and fall the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee www.nys-soilandwater.org/ and NYS Conservation District Employee Association (NYSCDEA) www.nyscdea.com teams up to provide continued training opportunities for each District in the form of classes, seminars and workshops. This event is called Water Quality Symposium. The technical training this year surrounded information on watershed planning, effective community facilitation and leadership, stream and construction water quality conservation practices and agricultural non-point source pollution control.

It is important for an extended networking opportunity as well. When staffs gather, there is a knowledge transfer that occurs on community issues, volunteer initiatives and extended information for technical practice that can influence our home county. This year the entire staff and board of directors attended various classes and the NYSCDEA Banquet.

Board of Directors

Steve Brownell, Board Chair, Farm Bureau
Bob VanLare, Vice Chair, Grange Representative.
Bill Hammond, Macedon Town Supervisor
Jody Bender, Marion Town Supervisor
Tom Caprilla, Member at Large

Conservation Staff

Lindsey Gerstenslager MSED, District Manager
Catherine Comfort, Conservation Sec./Treasurer
Ronald Thorn, AEM Specialist District Technician,
Chris Hotto, Drainage Specialist District Technician
Scott DeRue, Water Quality Specialist, District Technician,
Terry Reynolds, District Tech. Implementation Specialist
Samantha Gonzalez, Water Quality Summer Assistant



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