

Ulster County Soil and Water Conservation District

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SWCD

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Fred Wilklow—Member

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Kathy Nolan—Legislature

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Travis Ferry
District Technician
Certified Crop Advisor

Adam Doan,
A.W.S.M.P. Project Manager

Bobby Taylor,
A.W.S.M.P. CSBI Coordinator

Allison Lent
A.W.S.M.P. Stream Assessment
Coordinator

Mark Tollefson
A.W.S.M.P. Watershed Technician

USDA NRCS Staff

Oscar Velez-Juarbe
District Conservationist

Scott Morris
IT Specialist

Adam Kudlo
Program Support Specialist



ANNUAL TREE & SHRUB SALE

ORDER FORM ENCLOSED

SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 19 -APRIL 20, 2023
Tree species availability is limited

Congratulations

Mount Academy, Esopus, New York Hudson Valley, New York State and National Champions

Congratulations to The Mount Academy, who won the **Capitol District Envirothon**. The winning schools from region went on to the New York State Envirothon to represent their counties.

The Mount Academy took 1st place at the **NYS Envirothon** for 2022. Student Teams from more than 200 High Schools across the State *Competed* in 32nd Annual Environmental Science Competition. The Mount academy also continued their 9th-year winning streak at the State Envirothon allowing them to represent New York at the National Conservation Foundation Envirothon.



National Conservation Foundation

Envirothon. The Mount Academy took 4th place at last years event, held on July 25-27, 2022 at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. High schools from 41 teams across the US, Canada and China participated in the NCF-Envirothon virtually in a truly international competition. Congratulations to the Mount Academy on another great year! Additional information and sponsorship opportunities can be found at www.nysenvirothon.com.



Congratulations!!!

To Allison Lent and Bobby Taylor welcoming their baby girl Ellie on December 13, 2022. Allison worked until the very end, wrapping up her day at 4:30 p.m. on December 12th, making sure her stream project and loose ends were buttoned up. Bobby worked in the cold all day (actually for weeks) dealing with frozen ground wrapping up his CSBI (riparian buffer) projects as well. Talk about dedicated employees!!!!

Welcome!!!

Travis Ferry, who started with the District in June 2022. Travis has over 5 years experience in the Conservation District world and is also a Certified Crop Advisor. He has already helped the District expand our programs and he has areas of expertise that are greatly needed in our county.

STREAM WORK AT ULSTER COUNTY SWCD

The Ulster County Soil and Water Conservation District has completed two stream restoration projects in the Upper Esopus Creek watershed for 2022. The Stony Clove Creek flows directly into the Esopus Creek and the Panther Kill is a tributary to Woodland Valley Creek that flows into the Esopus Creek. Both restoration projects reduced suspended sediment loading to the Upper Esopus Creek by addressing stream and hillslope instability.

Both projects were funded through an agreement with New York City Department of Environmental Protection via the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program (AWSMP). Kingston Equipment Rental of West Hurley, NY was awarded the bid for the Stony Clove project and Hubbell, Inc. of Margaretville NY was awarded the bid for the Panther Kill project. The AWSMP is a partnership between Ulster County Soil & Water Conservation District, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County and NYC DEP.



Hillslope failure and bank erosion (left photo) and stabilized hillslope and stream channel realignment (right photo) at Stony Clove Creek restoration site.



The Panther Kill restoration site showing turbidity loading from bank and hillslope erosion (left photo) and completed restoration project with grade control, bank stabilization and clear mountain stream water (right photo).

Allison Lent - Ashokan Basin Stream Assessment Coordinator and Adam Doan—Ashokan Basin Project Manager

Special Thanks to Bill Wilkow—Ulster County SWCD Board Member

Bill Wilkow has been a board member and treasurer with the Ulster County Soil and Water Conservation district for over 38 years and decided to “retire” from his position this past fall. Bill has farmed all of his life and he is still active at Wilkow Orchards, which is now owned and operated by his son Fred, who recently has been appointed to fill Bill’s vacancy, which are big shoes to fill. For all of Bill’s years of service, his valuable input and time he has given to the District, he has received the Pride of Ulster County award from the County Legislature. The District staff are still in touch with Bill and would like him to still attend meetings when he is available. We give Fred a warm welcome, he



is a practical farmer with many years of business experience. Fred has attended our meetings as the member of the public and we value his input and ideas, and since his legislative appointment to the Board of Directors, the District Board and staff look forward to working with him. Over time, Districts and Boards change and evolve, which is a good thing. Our prior board members are dearly missed.

AEM Program

AEM (Agricultural Environmental Management) is a voluntary, confidential, incentive-based program that helps farmers make common-sense, cost-effective and science-based decisions to help meet business objectives while protecting and conserving our natural resources. Farmers work with Ulster County Soil and Water Conservation District AEM resource professionals to develop comprehensive farm plans using a 5 tiered process. More information is available on the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee website: <http://www.nys-soilandwater.org/aem/index.html>)

For the last few years, there has been more emphasis and demand from farmers in the County for soil sampling and analysis for lime and fertilizer recommendations. The conservation plans, a.k.a. “Tier 3”, have resulted in improved crop yields and lower input costs, as well as reduced nutrient and soil ruoff from crop fields and improved soil health. **A Tier 3 is**



required to apply for State cost share funding programs, and the District does the majority of the leg-work for grant funding applications and administration, thus minimizing the burden of paperwork for farmers. The Ulster County SWCD would like to thank all of the participating farmers for helping

make our jobs much more satisfying and worthwhile, the years of relationship building and putting common sense conservation practices in the ground, which are priceless.

*Jake Wedemeyer
Executive Director
CCA, CPESC*

Ulster County SWCD Cover Crop Program

Rising input costs over the past year caused the District to take action to help farmers. The District formed the Soil Health Program to reimburse county farmers planting fall cover crops. The goal was to develop a simple and easy program that would reimburse farmers for a beneficial practice that might not get implemented in a year of soaring costs.

We hit the ground running in July and reached out to as many farmers as we could. In total we ended up with 18 applicants signed up to plant 566 acres. Applicants were limited to a maximum reimbursement of \$5,000.00, in order to allow as many signups as possible with limited funding available. Challenging weather in late summer and fall made it difficult for farmers to get acreage planted, but we ended the year with 531 acres of cover crop certified on 16 farms.

The District will continue the program this fall as well. Anyone interested in participating should contact the District this summer. Applications will be accepted July 1st through September 15th.



Ulster County SWCD No-Till Drill Rental Program

Earlier this year, Ulster County SWCD was awarded a Climate Resilient Farming grant to purchase a no-till grass drill. We are currently working on placing an order for the drill and expect it to be available for farmers to rent starting this spring. The drill will be available to Ulster County farmers to help with cover crop planting as well as pasture and hay field renovations. After a lot of research, the District has decided to go with a Great Plains (or Land Pride) 7ft No-Till Drill. This size may be somewhat small for some producers, but we feel this is the best balance between size and horsepower requirements (55 horsepower) to best serve as many farmers in the county as possible.

We encourage anyone interested in renting the drill to check our website or call the District in May for more information.

*Travis Ferry
District Technician
Certified Crop Advisor (CCA)*



5

Steps to Assistance

How to Get Assistance from NRCS for Farms, Ranches and Forests

1

PLANNING

Visit your local NRCS field office to discuss your goals and work with staff on a conservation plan.

2

APPLICATION

With the help of NRCS, complete an application for financial assistance programs.

3

ELIGIBILITY

Find out if you're eligible for NRCS' variety of financial assistance programs.

4

RANKING

NRCS ranks applications according to local resource concerns.

5

IMPLEMENTING

Put conservation to work by signing a contract and implementing conservation practices.

Get Started with NRCS

Do you farm or ranch and want to make improvements to the land that you own or lease?

Natural Resources Conservation Service offers technical and financial assistance to help farmers, ranchers and forest landowners.

1

Planning

To get started with NRCS, we recommend you stop by your local NRCS field office.

We'll discuss your vision for your land.

NRCS provides landowners with free technical assistance, or advice, for their land. Common technical assistance includes: resource assessment, practice design and resource monitoring. Your conservation planner will help you determine if financial assistance is right for you.

2

Application

We'll walk you through the application process. To get started on applying for financial assistance, we'll work with you:

- To fill out an AD 1026, which ensures a conservation plan is in place before lands with highly erodible soils are farmed. It also ensures that identified wetland areas are protected.
- To meet other eligibility certifications.

Once complete, we'll work with you on the application, or CPA 1200.

Applications for most programs are accepted on a continuous basis, but they're considered for funding in different ranking periods. Be sure to ask your local NRCS district conservationist about the deadline for the ranking period to ensure you turn in your application in time.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

3

Eligibility

As part of the application process, we'll check to see if you are eligible.

To do this, you'll need to bring:

- An official tax ID (Social Security number or an employer ID)
- A property deed or lease agreement to show you have control of the property; and
- A farm tract number.

If you don't have a farm tract number, you can get one from USDA's Farm Service Agency. Typically, the local FSA office is located in the same building as the local NRCS office. You only need a farm tract number if you're interested in financial assistance.

4

Ranking

NRCS will take a look at the applications and rank them according to local resource

concerns, the amount of conservation benefits the work will provide and the needs of applicants.

5

Implementing

If you're selected, you can choose whether to sign the contract for the work to be done.

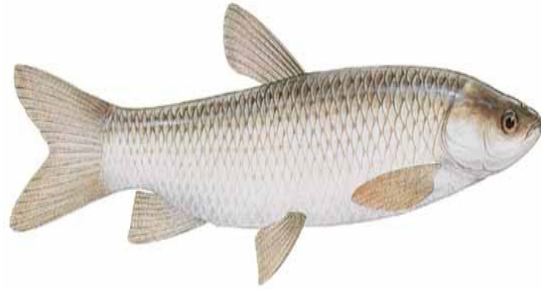
Once you sign the contract, you'll be provided standards and specifications for completing the practice or practices, and then you will have a specified amount of time to implement. Once the work is implemented and inspected, you'll be paid the rate of compensation for the work if it meets NRCS standards and specifications.

To find out more, go to: www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted

FISH PROGRAM

The Ulster County S.W.C.D. sells fish (Trout, Bass, Triploid Grass Carp & Minnows) to interested pond owners in Ulster County. We purchase these fish from a private fish hatchery in central New York. This Program helps local pond owners stock their ponds.

The District's pond stocking program is on a pre-order basis. The 2023 Order Form will be available in March. If you have any questions related to the date of the sale, pond stocking, species selection, or stocking rates, please check our website at <https://ucswcd.org> or call the office at (845) 883-7162, ext 3.



SOIL GROUP WORKSHEETS

In order to qualify for the 2023 tax season, soils group worksheets will need to be submitted to your Town's Assessor by March 1, 2023. Please contact your assessor first to see if your land qualifies. If it does, the District will prepare the Soils Group Worksheet.. Cost is \$40 per parcel. If you need to come to the office, please call first at (845) 883-7162, ext. 3 to schedule an office visit.



Catskill Stream Buffer Initiative Interested in protecting your streamside area by planting a native riparian buffer? Do you live in Ulster County? Contact our soil & water conservation district office to learn about the many programs that are available through federal, state and local partners. Some of these programs provide financial and technical assistance to landowners, municipalities, farmers, and conservation organizations for planting native riparian buffers to improve water quality and wildlife habitat.