



Tug Hill Times

Tug Hill Times is published semimonthly by the Tug Hill Commission for its board members, staff and associates, and the local representatives on the region's councils of governments.

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONSES SOUGHT

Black River St. Lawrence Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. (BRSLRC&D) is a non-governmental, independent nonprofit corporation serving the citizens of Northern New York's Oswego, Lewis, Oneida, Herkimer, Jefferson, St. Lawrence and Franklin counties. Its mission is to provide local leadership for developing and carrying out projects for conservation, improvement, development, and wise use of natural resources.

The BRSLRC&D needs public input in order to complete its next five-year strategic plan, which must be the result of public participation and serves to guide the BRSLRC&D's project priorities in one of four mandated categories: community development, land conservation, land management, and water management. Individuals interested in providing information for the organization can complete a brief survey on their web site: www.brslrcd.org, or contact Chanda Lindsay, RC&D Coordinator, at 315-782-7289 for a paper copy. Responses will be accepted through July 2008.

TRANSPORTATION OF UNTREATED WOOD RESTRICTED

On June 4, 2008, New York took a further step to stop the influx and spread of tree-killing pests such as the Emerald Ash Borer, Asian Longhorned Beetle and Sirex Wood Wasp by restricting the importation, transportation and

sale of untreated firewood. The action closely follows measures imposed by Pennsylvania and other states to stem the proliferation of invasive species that can wipe out trees in forests and neighborhoods.

Many exotic pests can be transported long distances unintentionally via human activity – especially when hauling firewood. The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), has been moving east from Michigan and was found last year in Pennsylvania. This Asian beetle, discovered in 2002, infests and kills various North American ash species – 30 million trees so far in Michigan alone. Stepped-up protections of forests across New York has attracted widespread support from the forest industry, campground owners, environmental groups and other states.

To limit this possibility, effective immediately, New York will prohibit the importation of out-of-state firewood that has not been treated to eliminate invasive species, fungi and pathogens that can kill millions of trees. The regulations also limit the transportation of untreated firewood within the state to less than 50 miles from the point of origin. Persons who cut and transport firewood for their own use (not for sale) may move that firewood no more than 50 miles from its source, and must have a Self-Issued Certificate of Source, available from the department's website, or any DEC office.

To help the effort, the state's immediate emphasis will be on public outreach and education, to raise awareness of the dangers of moving firewood. Campers are urged to leave their firewood at home, and instead use firewood from local sources. This simple step can slow

the spread of disease and protect forest land from infestation. The regulations do not affect homeowners cutting wood on their own property for use on that same property. They also do not affect firewood being transported through New York for sale and use in another state.

The new measures, available at: www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/2359.html, are emergency regulations, effective for 90 days. Meanwhile, DEC will be submitting a formal rulemaking proposal to the Governor's Office of Regulatory Reform (GORR) for review. GORR's approval would initiate a public involvement process leading to a permanent firewood regulation.

For more information:

DEC's firewood webpage:
<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/28722.html>

Emerald Ash Borer photo:
<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253.html>

US Forest Service firewood webpage:
<http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/eab/firewood/>

USDA APHIS Cooperative Emerald ash borer program webpage:
<http://www.emeraldashborer.info>

For Frequently Asked Questions about firewood:
<http://www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/44008.html>

STORMWATER REGULATIONS TRAINING

Oneida County Soil and Water Conservation District will be conducting a training session on the revised stormwater regulations for construction activities. The training will also include some helpful tips and techniques for local officials during the review process for submitted site plans. This training is one component of OCSWCD's Community Environmental Management (CEM) program

that offers technical assistance for municipalities.

The training will be held on **Tuesday, July 8th at 7:00 p.m. at the Lee Town Hall, 5808 Stoke-Lee Center Road, Lee Center.**

The training is qualifies you for two hours of yearly credits for Planning Board and ZBA members. This training is being offered free of charge and is being sponsored by the town of Lee and the Northern Oneida County Council of Governments.

JEFFERSON COUNTY AG DEVELOPMENT HOLDS MEETING ON REVAMPED POWER LINE

A meeting held by the Jefferson County Ag Development Corporation was held on June 12th in the Town of Henderson to discuss a newly revamped power line from the proposed wind farm on Galloo Island. The proposed power line route has been completely revamped from its previous route. It is now 38.2 miles total, of which only 15.1 miles is proposed as new right of way (ROW). The remaining 23.1 miles will run along the abandoned Woodville Power line (National Grid), along Interstate 81, along abandoned railroad ROW and other existing ROW. The municipalities impacted are: Henderson, Ellisburg, Sandy Creek (and the Villages of Sandy Creek and Lacona), Richland (and the Village of Pulaski) and the line now ends in the Town of Mexico. Albion is no longer impacted in this rendition of the proposed power line.

Most of the private land crossing will happen in the Town of Ellisburg. Upstate New York Power (UNYP) now has to reach out to about a dozen landowners to get the line from the shore in Henderson through Ellisburg to the Woodville line. Ellisburg landowner participation is now their focus. UNYP said that the final say on this line is going to come from the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC).

The current proposal calls for a line capacity of 250 MW, which would more than accommodate the Galloo Island proposal. UNYP, taking direction from the PSC, may need to consider the addition of 15-20 feet of height on the poles in order to make room for more lines and to increase the capacity of the proposed project to 1000 MW. This would provide more than enough capacity for all the current wind farms being proposed in northern Jefferson County.

UNYP has offered to reimburse up to \$1000 for individual landowners to consult their lawyers about the offers being made on their properties. Also, UNYP is planning to cost share with the Jefferson County Agricultural Development Corporation to have an attorney present at a public meeting to answer very general questions about negotiating lease agreements. This public meeting will be set up in the very near future.

BLACK RIVER BLUEWAY AWARDED THIRD GRANT

Governor Paterson recently announced the award of \$24.9 million in grants from the State Environmental Protection Fund's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) for 97 projects across New York State. The town of Martinsburg, on behalf of all 37 municipalities along the Black River Blueway Trail, was awarded \$55,000 to support the implementation of recommendations from the *Blueway Trail Plan*. These grant monies will be matched with \$55,000 in local funds for a total project cost of \$110,000. Work will include removal of four navigation hazards in Martinsburg; preparation of a marketing tool kit, including website enhancements; and concept planning and design of two river access sites in the town of Forestport.

The grant application was developed through an advisory committee that represents the corridor. This grant award represents the third installment of LWRP funds to the Black River Blueway Trail. The second Blueway project is now underway for river access and park improvements in the village of Dexter, the

village of Lyons Falls and the town of Turin. This project also includes the design and printing of a brochure and development of a signage plan. The grant amount for this application is \$76,000.

For more information about the Black River Blueway Trail visit:

<http://www.blackriverny.com/black-river-blueway.html>.

OPEN BURNING RULE CHANGE PUBLIC HEARING JUNE 30

Currently, the burning of all residential wastes is banned in any city or village; or in any town with a total town population, including incorporated or unincorporated areas, of greater than 20,000. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is proposing to extend the ban on open burning statewide, including those towns with populations under 20,000 residents. The DEC states that the rule is proposed to reduce the impacts of pollutants such as dioxins, furans, particulate matter and carbon monoxide, as well as reduce forest fires and the impacts from them.

The proposed regulations are available online at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/43439.html>. Written comments are accepted through 5 p.m. on July 10, 2008.

Several public hearings are being held. The closest one in the Tug Hill Region is in Watertown on Monday, June 30, 2008, 5-8 p.m. at the Dulles State Office Building, 1st Floor Auditorium, 317 Washington Street.