



**April 8, 2016**

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

- 2016 Tug Hill Local Government Conference
- Headwaters Available
- Tug Hill Commission to Meet
- Northern Border Regional Commission Unveils New Website and Grant Round
- Comp Plans and Your Bottom Line Land Use Planning Workshop
- Stormwater Project Design Workshop May 19
- Tug Hill Oral History Video Clips on Facebook
- Department of State Municipal Restructuring Fund Accepting Applications
- Tug Hill Commission Job Announcement
- Comprehensive Plan with Sustainability Elements Webinar
- Minimum Maintenance Roads Legislation Update
- CTHC Spring Meeting Scheduled
- Webinar Series on Rural Resiliency



# 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 of the region's communities.



## 2016 Tug Hill Local Government Conference

The 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Local Government Conference was held on Thursday, March 31<sup>st</sup> with over 680 local officials, vendors and speakers in attendance. Thank you to everyone who helped make the day a success. We hope you found the day of training and networking worthwhile.

Twenty-two different sessions were held throughout the day, kicked off by an hour and half keynote presentation by Frank Pastizzo. Based on what commission staff heard from attendees during the day and on Facebook, Frank's message of inclusion, collaboration, and "whole-mindedness" was well-received. Conference evaluations are still being processed, and will be very helpful when staff begins planning the 2017 event.

Many of the conference presentations are available as pdf files on the commission website, [www.tughill.org/services/training/](http://www.tughill.org/services/training/). Additional presentations will be added as they are received.

## Headwaters Available

Our 2015 Newsletter is available on our website [www.tughill.org/publications/headwaters/](http://www.tughill.org/publications/headwaters/).

## Tug Hill Commission To Meet

The Tug Hill Commission will meet on April 18 at 10:00 a.m. at the Town of Ava Town Hall, 11468 State Route 26, Ava, NY 13303.

# **Northern Border Regional Commission Unveils New Website and Grant Round**

The federal Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) has unveiled a new website, [www.nbrc.gov](http://www.nbrc.gov), and announced the availability of a new round of grants, due June 17, 2016. The NBRC will fund economic and infrastructure developments that:

- Develop the transportation, telecommunication and basic public infrastructure within the region;
- Assist the region in obtaining job skills and employment related education, as well as entrepreneurship, technology and business development;
- Provide basic health care and other public services for those areas that are severely economically distressed and underdeveloped;
- Encourage resource conservation, tourism, recreation, and preservation of open spaces in a manner consistent with economic development goals; and/or,
- Support the development of renewable and alternative energy sources.

Eligible counties in New York are Cayuga, Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Oswego, Seneca, and St. Lawrence counties. All four Tug Hill counties are considered distressed and are eligible to request up to 80% of project cost. Eligible grant recipients include municipalities, counties, non profits, Native American tribes, and state agencies. The maximum grant award is \$250,000, and there is approximately \$1.7 million available for projects in NY. Successful grant applicants will be notified in August 2016. The full application package is available at [www.nbrc.gov/content/2016-eid-investments](http://www.nbrc.gov/content/2016-eid-investments).

## **Comp Plans and Your Bottom Line Land Use Planning Workshop**

The Tug Hill Commission and the Jefferson County Planning Department are co-sponsoring Comprehensive Plans and Your Bottom Line Workshop on Tuesday, April 19 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Jules Center Amphitheater Room 6-002 at Jefferson Community College, 1220 Coffeen St. Watertown.

The workshop will cover:

- Why comprehensive planning is vital
- Why it should have a competitive edge
- Local commitment
- A return on investment
- Marketing the plan

Please RSVP by Friday, April 15 by calling the Jefferson County Planning Department at 785-3144 or email [planning@co.jefferson.ny.us](mailto:planning@co.jefferson.ny.us)

## **Stormwater Project Design Workshop May 19**

The Jefferson County Stormwater Coalition is hosting a Stormwater Project Design Workshop on Thursday, May 19 from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at the Hilton Garden Inn, Watertown. The course is designed for consulting/municipal design engineers, land use planners/developers, stormwater professionals & landscape architects. The course fee is \$200. The full flyer and registration form is available on the coalition's website at <http://www.jcnystormwater.com/news>.

## **Tug Hill Oral History Video Clips on Facebook Page**

In the late 1980's the commission, with the assistance of Tug Hill sages Don & Bonnie Colton, undertook a series of video interviews with numerous long-time Tug Hill residents. Those videos were recently converted from VHS tapes to DVDs. Commission staff will periodically post excerpts from those videos on the commission's Facebook page. The first posted video features Alice Clemens, who is a Tug Hill Sage, North American Fiddlers Hall of Fame Inductee, and mother of Tug Hill Commissioner Leona Chereshnoski. In the video she talks about fiddling on Tug Hill.

## **Department of State Municipal Restructuring Fund Accepting Applications; Proposals Due July 12, 2016**

The Municipal Restructuring Fund (MRF) program is designed to create permanent property tax reductions resulting from shared services and consolidations between local governments. Program funding is available to eligible local governments and school districts. Projects should substantially transform the delivery of services by local governments, or completely consolidate government entities, yielding permanent, significant property tax reductions.

MRF projects should be transformative and have substantial impact on governmental operations and functions, and they must yield permanent property tax reductions. MRF projects will progress to implementation through one of two development tracks: (1) Venture Track; and (2) Fast Track. In each track, projects will be subject to a multi-phase review and approval process. The DOS will provide applicants with technical assistance during regional meetings, document review sessions, project clinics and upon request.

More information is available at [www.dos.ny.gov/funding/rfa-15-mrf-27/MRFRFA%20Final.pdf](http://www.dos.ny.gov/funding/rfa-15-mrf-27/MRFRFA%20Final.pdf)

## **Tug Hill Commission Job Announcement**

The Tug Hill Commission currently has an opening for an Associate Director/Director of Community and Regional Projects. The position is part of the commission's management team, and will oversee staff in the areas of natural resources, community development, GIS and community outreach. Interested persons should submit a cover letter and resume to executive director Katie Malinowski by April 11, 2016. The anticipated start date for the position is July 1, 2016.

The full job description is available on the commission's website, [www.tughill.org](http://www.tughill.org).

## **Comprehensive Plans with Sustainability Elements Webinar**

NYS DEC will offer a Comprehensive Plans with Sustainability Elements webinar on Thursday, April 14 from 10:30 a.m - 12:00 p.m.

For more information on this webinar go to [www.dec.ny.gov/energy/76910.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/76910.html)

## **Minimum Maintenance Roads Legislation Update**

Tug Hill towns, as well as many other rural towns in NY, have for many years designated low-volume roads as a means of managing rural, unimproved local roads. This has been done using their Home Rule authority, due process through public notice and hearing, the adoption of a local law by the town board, and classification according to the Local Road Research and Coordination Council *Manual: Guidelines for Rural Town and County Roads*. Last week, the state supreme court ruled against the town of West Turin's minimum maintenance road law. The full article can be read at [www.watertowndailytimes.com/news04/judge-rules-west-turin-minimum-maintenance-road-law-invalid-20160401](http://www.watertowndailytimes.com/news04/judge-rules-west-turin-minimum-maintenance-road-law-invalid-20160401). Commission staff is examining what the implications are for Tug Hill communities and will have more information soon.

In recent years several bills have been introduced in the State Legislature for rural low-volume roads. This year these bills are S02265/A01837. The senate version of the bill passed the senate on 3/17/2016, and was delivered to the assembly and referred to the transportation committee. The full bill can be read by entering the bill number at [assembly.state.ny.us/leg/](http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/).

Contact us at:

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## CTHC Spring Meeting Scheduled

On Thursday April 21<sup>st</sup> the Cooperative Tug Hill Council (CTHC) will hold their Annual Spring meeting at the Tug Hill Hideaway, 1838 Fish Creek Rd., West Leyden. Cocktail hour begins 6:00 p.m. with dinner at 7:00 p.m. and the business meeting to follow.

On the agenda for the meeting are review of the September 2015 meeting minutes and the current financial report. Election of officers for 2016 will follow these items. The Tug Hill Commission will provide updates on projects that they are assisting the council with, as well as discuss the subject of minimum maintenance roads and camp zoning. The progress on the town information survey on which the council has been working on will also be given, and the proposed work goals for 2016 will be reviewed for approval.

Speakers for the evening will be Bob Quinn and Linda Garrett, from the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust who will be speaking about the Land Trust's work in our region, as well as highlighting some projects that the Land Trust has undertaken with some of our towns. The meeting will close, as usual, with supervisor topics and any other comments from the floor.

Invitations to the meeting have been mailed. The cost for the dinner is \$18 per person with representative's dinners being paid for by the CTHC. Reservations can be made by contacting Angie Kimball at [angela@tughill.org](mailto:angela@tughill.org) or at 599-8825 or 480-6857. Please RSVP by Thursday, April 14.

## Webinar Series on Rural Resiliency

Environmental Finance Center is offering a three part Rural Resiliency webinar.

Severe weather events, ranging from extended periods of drought to intense rainfall, can wreak havoc on infrastructure and budgets in communities throughout the Northeast. This webinar series explores the fundamentals of watershed management, impacts of stormwater runoff on infrastructure, management practices for stormwater and drinking water resiliency, the latest EPA Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rulings, and financial tools and resources, including state and federal funding opportunities.

### Webinar 1

Rural Water Resiliency through Watershed and Roadway-Stream Intersection Management

Thursday, April 21st, 1pm-2pm EDT

### Webinar 2

Planning for the New(est) Definition of Federal Waters of the United States (WOTUS)

Thursday, May 12th, 1pm-2pm EDT

### Webinar 3

Financing Resilient Communities

Thursday, May 26th, 1pm-2pm EDT

For more information about the webinar and to register go to  
<http://efc.syr.edu/homepage-5/>