



July 26, 2013

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July 28



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.

Parish Town, Village Boards Learn About Village Dissolution and Alternatives

The town and village of Parish, at their July joint meeting, received a presentation by Tug Hill Commission Executive Director John Bartow on village dissolution and alternatives. In the wake of the dissolution of the village of Altmar, which ceased existence as an incorporated entity at the end of May 2013, towns and villages have a nearby example of a village dissolution process. The Tug Hill Commission assisted the village of Altmar through the voter-initiated dissolution process, and the process illustrated weaknesses in the current process which other towns and villages may want to be aware of.

Among the weaknesses in the voter-initiated dissolution process is that the voters are forced into making a binding decision regarding dissolution before the study takes place providing the facts and figures about the impacts of dissolution. Another weakness is that the dissolution process provides for a timeline which length challenges the ability of a village to do a thorough and accurate study and analysis of dissolution impacts and implementation.

Executive Director Bartow reviewed some of the other alternatives to voter-initiated dissolution. The municipality can initiate a dissolution or consolidation study itself, either formally or informally. The formal process is eligible for financial support for study costs from the state. Municipalities may also opt to enter into mergers of functions or enter into intermunicipal agreements for services. The town and village of Parish, in this case, already share a planning board and a zoning board of appeals. The town provides assessment services, code enforcement services and justice court town wide, so these are areas of operation that the village can opt out of the cost of providing.

More information about municipal dissolution, mergers, and intermunicipal cooperation can be found at the New York State Department of State web site, www.dos.ny.gov/lq/lqe/dissolution.html.



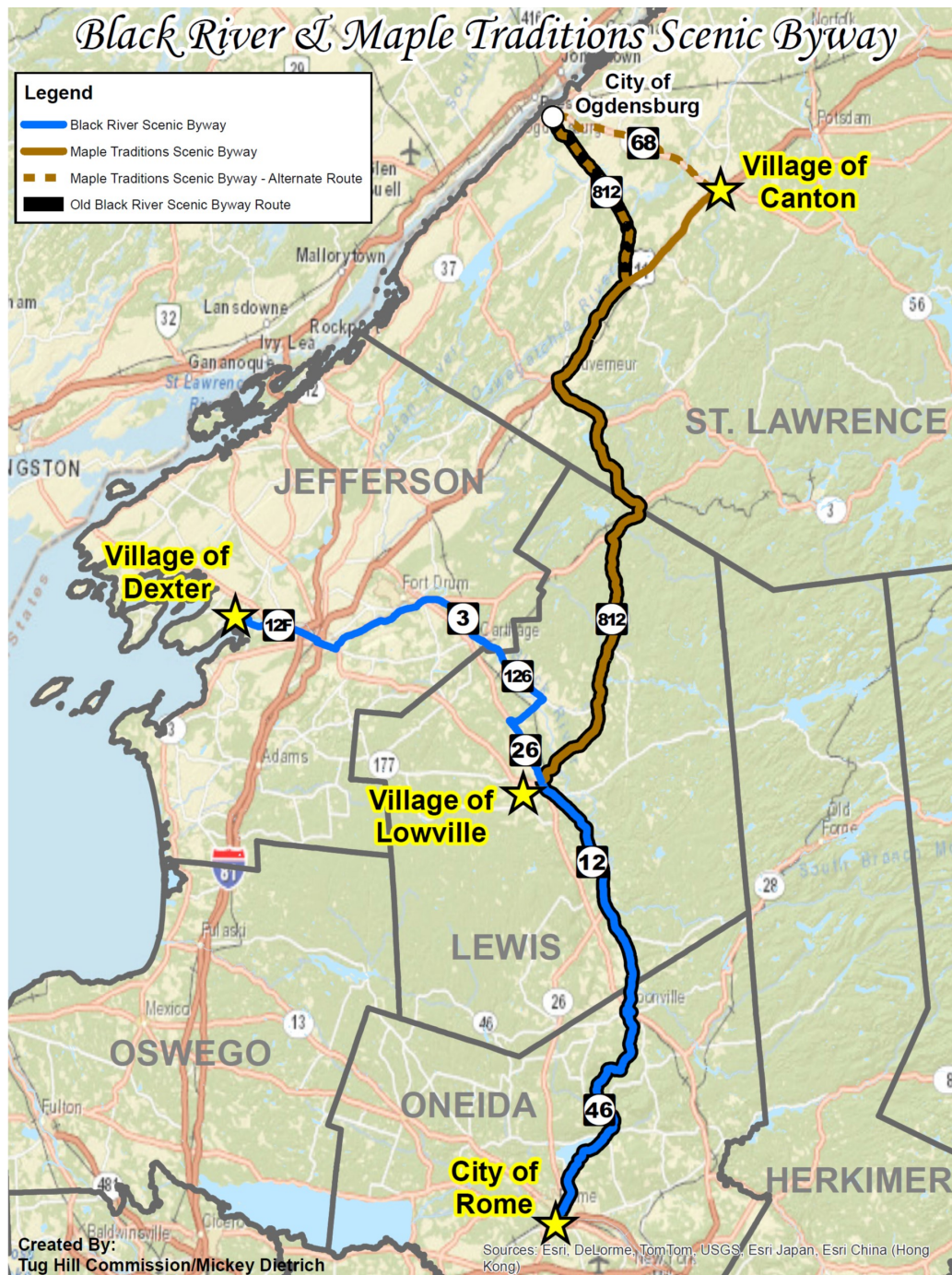
YOU ARE INVITED TO AN
OPEN HOUSE
TOWN OF MARTINSBURG
MUNICIPAL FACILITIES



JULY 30, 2013
4:00 PM TO 8:00 PM
5405 CEMETERY STREET
MARTINSBURG, N.Y. 13404
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE
COURTESY OF BERNIER, CARR & ASSOCIATES, ENGINEERS

Black River Trail and Maple Traditions Scenic Byways Signed into Law

On Friday, July 12th Governor Cuomo signed the Black River Trail and Maple Traditions Scenic Byway Legislation, which can be found in Chapter 140, Laws of 2013! Sponsored by State Senators Griffo and Ritchie and Assembly members Brindisi, Russell, Butler and Blankenbush. The completed legislation caps off a multiyear effort to reroute the Black River Trail to follow the Black River, and to create a new Maple Traditions route from Lowville to Ogdensburg and Canton. These two routes are now part of the state's Scenic Byways system that includes more than 2,000 miles of roads in New York that have particular scenic, recreational, cultural, natural or archaeological significance. The program is intended to help preserve unusual environments and promote tourism. Communities along the scenic byway are eligible for federal funds for enhancements through the state Department of Transportation.



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Tug Hill Aquifer Study Funded By USGS And DEC

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) today announced that it has awarded \$116,500 from the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to perform a characterization of the northern and central portions of the Tug Hill aquifer, located in Jefferson and Oswego counties.

Tug Hill's sole source aquifer is an important source of drinking water and supports a premier sports fishery in the North Country. The USGS survey, which is expected to be completed in the fall of 2014, is critical to studying the aquifer's capacity and quality, as well as its limitations. The overall project cost is \$212,286, with USGS providing \$95,768 for the study.

This study builds on years of work and collaboration among regional organizations including the Tug Hill Commission, the Jefferson and Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust and the USGS to collect data to develop groundwater-flow models of the aquifer. This data, along with new hydrogeologic information and field data, will be used to complete a comprehensive assessment of the aquifer's geology, size, water quality, and surface water and groundwater interactions.

Water demand in the Tug Hill region has been growing and could be further stressed by additional aquifer withdrawals, including potential demands from new business ventures in the region, as well as impacts from other factors such as climate change and sprawling communities. Information generated from this study will help DEC, local government, water managers, businesses and homeowners make water-wise conservation-based decisions and ensure safe drinking water supplies, adequate water resources for economic development and healthy aquatic environments. Such decision-making is consistent with New York's obligations under the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact.

As part of this project, the USGS needs to identify homeowners who are willing to allow sampling of their well water. If interested, please contact Edward Bugliosi at 607-266-0217 x3005 (or email ebuglios@usgs.gov). Wells selected for sampling will be determined based on well-design characteristics and local geology. Select wells will be sampled for common water-quality constituents. USGS will provide a report on study findings to DEC by September 2014.

Communities Meet To Review MS4 Program

Tug Hill Commission staff facilitated a meeting on July 17 with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's Region 6 Water Engineer Steve Botsford and the 17 communities potentially impacted by new MS4 (municipal separate storm sewer system) regulations in the area surrounding Watertown and Fort Drum. Municipalities were given information on waiver requests and notice of intent forms that will need to be completed by communities not able to waive out of the program. Additional training sessions will be held in the fall to continue assistance.

SLELO Completes Invasive Field Reports

The St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM) has released reports for 2013 field work done to date. Sites monitored include Delta Lake in Oneida County and Little John WMA and the Salmon River Estuary in Oswego County. The reports can be found on their website at: <http://www.sleloinvasives.org/field-reports/1669-2/>.