



**November 1, 2013**

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# 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.

## Tug Hill Legislators Meet with Local Leaders

On Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup> over 50 Tug Hill Supervisors, Mayors and local leaders had the opportunity to hear from and exchange priorities with most of the Tug Hill State Legislative Delegation. In attendance were State Senator Joe Griffo and Assembly Members Ken Blankenbush, Will Barclay and Marc Butler. The Legislators first outlined what they felt were major accomplishments of the 2013 Legislative Session and upcoming priorities for the 2014 Legislative Session. This was the second annual "meet and greet" forum hosted by the Cooperative Tug Hill Council and was held this year in Constableville.

Among the Legislators' priorities for 2013-14 were: an on time State Budget; efforts to improve New York's economy and tax relief for New Yorkers. Among the Councils of Governments priorities for 2014 were: the 2% property tax cap; Low Volume Roads Legislation; emergency services; land acquisitions in the Core Forest and around Fort Drum; and, Section 480A of the Real Property Tax Law for forest management.

In addition, in a "round robin session" individual mayors and supervisors were able to raise other legislative and budget concerns that included: Common Core curriculum; mandate relief; and fiscal stress in particular Tug Hill municipalities.

Our thanks to the Legislators for meeting with local leaders; our local leaders for showing a strong support for the Region; and to our hosts the Constableville Fire Department, Town of West Turin and Village of Constableville; and to our Councils of Government for their help in outlining regional priorities.

## Assistance to Firefighters Grants Open Starting November 4; Deadline December 6



The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is making another round of Assistance to Firefighters grants available in Fiscal Year 2013. Eligible applicants are Fire Departments and nonaffiliated EMS organizations, as well as State Fire Training Academies. There are three categories of applications: Operations & Safety, Vehicle Acquisition; and Joint/Regional. Projected award start date is February 10, 2014 and project award end date is August 31, 2014. For more information see FEMA's website at: <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/35062>.



# A Highway Department's Legal Liabilities: Understanding the Basics

## Cornell Local Roads Program Fall Workshop

November 19, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm  
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County  
121 Second Street, Oriskany

For more information and to register, go to [www.clrp.cornell.edu](http://www.clrp.cornell.edu).

### Who Should Attend?

Local government officials in New York State responsible for highway department operations and management. Also, those employees responsible for safety and risk programs.

### Instructor:

**James L. Gelormini** is a Municipal Legal Consultant and a former New York State Assistant Attorney General.

### Course Topics

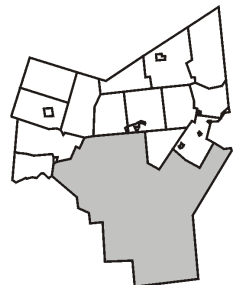
- Legal concepts
- Highway liability
- Municipal liability
- Liability based on highway design
- Insurance and indemnity
- Obligations of people who sue
- Liability arising from vehicle use
- Record Keeping
- Court procedures
- Accident response and information gathering



## Northern Oneida County Council of Governments Annual Dinner Meeting Held

NOCCOG held their 30th Annual Meeting and Dinner at the Delta Lake Inn in Rome on Thursday, October 24th with a record setting 105 people in attendance. Attendees included representatives from 18 NOCCOG towns and villages.

NOCCOG approved their annual budget for 2014 and elected their Executive Committee Officers with John Doiron as chairman, Arnie Talgo as vice chairman, Betsy Mack as fiscal officer, Bob Sauer and Mark Trnchik as directors. The NOCCOG proposed budget for 2014 was approved, with dues remaining the same for 2014 at \$1,000. NOCCOG also amended its bylaws to clarify the section on who is eligible to serve on the NOCCOG Executive Board. Municipal Management Consultant Gerry Ritter introduced the new NOCCOG brochure which illustrates NOCCOG services and programs.



The evening's program was a photo retrospective of projects underway or completed by NOCCOG town and villages in the past few years. NOCCOG's Executive Board and staff were genuinely pleased with the turnout and the opportunity to share the accomplishments of its municipal partners.

# National Bioenergy Day Celebrated

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The New York Biomass Energy Alliance hosted an invitation-only tour on Tuesday, October 17 of four local sites that are currently involved in the use or production of biomass technology. The tour included tours of the South Lewis Central School District woodchip biomass boiler system; the Re-Energy Lyonsdale 22 megawatt facility that uses biomass as its primary fuel to produce electricity; the New England Wood Pellet plant in Frankfort, the largest pellet manufacturer in the northeast US with the capacity to produce 85,000 tons of pellets per year; and a harvesting demonstration of shrub willow on the Agen Farm, East Ava Road, Ava. The demonstration project, managed by biomass energy supplier Celtic Energy Farm in collaboration with SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and Re-Energy Holdings, showed not just how to harvest the willow but the economic benefits of the ease to grow crop.

Several Tug Hill Commission staff and commissioners participated in the tours, marking the first National Bioenergy Day that offered an opportunity to educate the public about the value of bioenergy powered by wood and agricultural crops in terms of environmental sustainability and renewable jobs and revenues for rural economies.



Above are pictures of willow harvesting at the Agen Farm in Ava.

## ACUB Funding

A buffer for the Fort Drum post from outside encroachment could grow by 65 percent by the end of this year, thanks to an infusion of \$500,000 from the state on top of millions of federal dollars already allocated. Under a partnership known as the Army Compatible Use Program (ACUB) the focus is on sustaining the mission and training at Fort Drum. The state money announced, combined with federal funds, gives the post \$4.5 million this year to purchase development rights on land the Army deems of concern to its operations. The buffer program has been operated locally since 1999, in conjunction with the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust and Ducks Unlimited. The five development rights purchases that are close to completion this year are for land south of the post, including northern Lewis County. Specific sites were not indicated. The state funding also gives the combined local effort better odds when it applies for future money to support the buffer program.

## Information on Inter-municipal Cooperation

The Local Government Education Committee of Herkimer & Oneida Counties hosted a workshop on October 29 at SUNYIT, Marcy on ***The Nuts and Bolts of Intermunicipal Cooperation***. Robert Roeckle, Land Use Training Specialist, NYS Department of State, Division of Local Government Efficiency presented a program that addressed:

- ⇒ The Nuts & Bolts of Inter-municipal Agreements
- ⇒ Local Government Efficiency Inter-municipal Planning
- ⇒ Inter-municipal Cooperation in Building Code Enforcement

The presentation specifically referenced some examples of inter-municipal cooperation in the Tug Hill region. A copy of the power point presentation can be found at the Local Government Education Committee webpage <http://lgec.org/content/Generic/View/19>.

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## Tug Hill Commission to Meet in Parish

The Tug Hill Commission will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, November 20, 2013, from 10:00am - noon at the Parish Village Gym, 2938 East Main Street (NYS Route 69), Parish, NY 13131. Highlights of the meeting will include routine business of the Commission, latest updates of the Regional Economic Development Councils, discussion with the Salmon River Council of Governments and discussion and review of major projects and activities in the region. The public is welcome to attend and there will be a public comment period at the end of the meeting.

## Black River Trash Bash

The 2013 Black River Trash Bash was successful again this year, with 29 participants from Lyons Falls Alive, the Adirondack Community Advisory League, the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust and the Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District collecting 726 pounds of trash from the shore of the Black River. This is an annual watershed-wide event to clean up along the Black River, document what litters its shores and to increase awareness of this important natural treasure. The Black River winding from Forestport to Dexter is one of the North Country's most important natural resources.

Data collected over the last month has been collected and compiled from four locations along the Black River and sent to the American Littoral Society (ALS), who collects data from all over New York State to be included in the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup <http://www.oceanconservancy.org/our-work/international-coastal-cleanup/>.

The type and quantity of trash items collected by volunteers from this years event included 26 diapers, 42 pieces of construction materials, 2 tires, 6 appliances, 78 items of tobacco packaging, 20 pieces of fishing line, 333 beverage containers, 248 food wrappers and 341 cigarette butts. Below is a running summary of local participation over the last four years:

|                           | <b>participants</b> | <b>Weight<br/>(pounds)</b> | <b>Distance<br/>(miles)</b> | <b>Bags<br/>filled</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| 2010                      | 36                  | 735                        | 4.6                         | 49                     |
| 2011                      | 23                  | 290                        | 3.5                         | 23                     |
| 2012                      | 57                  | 504.5                      | 6.05                        | 32                     |
| 2013                      | 29                  | 726                        | 5.75                        | 32                     |
| <b>Running<br/>Totals</b> | <b>145</b>          | <b>2255.5</b>              | <b>19.9</b>                 | <b>136</b>             |

This event was sponsored in part by the ALS and organized locally by the Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Tug Hill Commission. Many thanks to Nirvana Spring Water and White's Lumber for their donations of water and gloves for the event, and to the captains of the cleanup sites.

