

NOVEMBER 18, 2016

Tug Hill Commission Annual Dinner a Success

Over 90 people attended the Tug Hill Commission's 2016 annual dinner, held at the Tailwater Lodge & Barn in Altmar on November 10. Attendees were able to view the new Venerable Folks of Tug Hill exhibit and portraits, a collaborative project with artist, Loretta Lepkowski, Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, Tug Hill Commission and Traditional Arts of Upstate New York. The people selected as Venerable Tug Hill folk exemplify the traditions and spirit of the Tug Hill region. The exhibit will be traveling to various locations both in and outside of the region. Many attendees also took tours of the new Tailwater facility, which is a great example of adaptive reuse of an abandoned building, in this case a former elementary school.

The keynote speaker for the evening was Ken Lynch, Executive Deputy Commissioner of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and former Region 7 Director. Ken's presentation highlighted many of the ongoing efforts of the Department of Environmental Conservation in the Tug Hill region, including the ownership soon of 2,800 acres of National Grid land along the lower Salmon River and the Salmon River Reservoir; the new Tug Hill Traverse non-motorized trail being built in the core forest of Tug Hill; and the pending acquisition of over 3,000 acres of former Harden property in the towns of Orwell and Redfield.

The evening concluded with a year-in-review presentation by Executive Director Katie Malinowski, as well as a look forward to priorities in 2017. The full presentation can be viewed on the commission's website at <http://www.tughill.org/2016/11/17/tug-hill-commission-annual-dinner/>



Leona Cheresnoski, Tug Hill Commissioner stands beside the Venerable Folks portrait of herself.

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Tug Hill Commission Meeting Scheduled

The next Tug Hill Commission meeting will be held December 12 at 10:00 a.m. at the commission office located at 317 Washington St, Watertown.

Tug Hill Invasive Species Protection Zone Field Work Complete

The Tug Hill Invasive Species Protection Zone (ISPZ) was first delineated in 2012 by the St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM). It is an area around the Tug Hill core forest dominated by native species with relatively little impacts from many invasive species. The original field report can be found on SLELO's website at <http://www.sleloinvasives.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Tug-Hill-I-S-P-Z-Field-Report-2012.pdf>.



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The SLELO Early Detection Team conducts field surveillance on the ISPZ to monitor for invasive species encroachment every two years. In 2016 the team found two sites where invasive species (Japanese Knotweed and Pale Swallow-wort) were encroaching on the ISPZ boundary. SLELO's rapid response team then treated each site with landowner permission. The map to the left shows the ISPZ boundary and the two locations of treatment.

More information about the SLELO PRISM is available at www.sleloinvasives.org.

Map shows: Early Detection surveillance of the Tug Hill ISPZ occurred August 9-15 2016. Two invasive species were observed in close proximity to the

ISPZ boundary. The SLELO PRISM Rapid Response Team, treated both sites with landowner permission.

Site 026 was near County Route 96, (swallow-wort).

Site 121 was near Florence Road, (knotweed).

New Tug Hill Video

The commission premiered a new video about the Tug Hill region and the Tug Hill Commission at the November 10th annual meeting. The video is geared toward educating the general public as well as local officials and residents about what makes Tug Hill unique, as well as highlighting the services offered by the commission. It can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9iLB55e570>.

Special thanks to Don Alexander for narrating the video, Jackie Hobbs for permission to use one of her fiddling tunes, and Mickey Dietrich for video production!

NOCCOG Monitors Potential Changes in Sales Tax Distribution

A committee has begun the task of evaluating a potential change to the formula currently used to distribute sales tax to Oneida County municipalities, prompting anxiety among local officials; particularly the villages.

In addition to County Executive Anthony J. Picente the committee consists of Board of Legislators' Chairman Gerald J. Fiorini, Majority Leader George E. Joseph, Minority Leader Philip M. Sacco, Rome Mayor Jacqueline M. Izzo, Utica Mayor Robert M. Palmieri and three town supervisors selected by the president of the Oneida County Association of Towns.

The supervisors are Robert J. Meelan of Kirkland, Scott M. Musacchio of Verona and John Urtz of Lee.

The current formula distributes a portion of sales tax collected to towns and villages based on property values. For many towns and villages, sales tax accounts for well over half of annual revenues.

The committee is scheduled to meet again on November 21st in a session closed to the public.

Workshop on Article 10 Held at JCC on November 14th

Over 100 local officials and citizens attended a workshop at JCC on November 14 about the Article 10 review process for the siting of electrical generating facilities. Co-hosted by the Tug Hill Commission and Jefferson County Planning, NYS Department of Public Service's General Counsel Paul Agresta provided the audience with a very thorough and understandable overview of the Article 10 process, which became law in 2012. Mr. Agresta stressed that the review process was enacted so that stakeholders could be brought together to balance the needs of the consumers (of electricity) with the environmental compatibility of a project designed to produce electricity, such as large wind farms. There are several opportunities for interested parties to be involved in the process, including being a participant, a party, an intervenor or even being one of two Ad Hoc siting board members, which are nominated by the communities and elected by the NYS Senate and Assembly. You will find a *Guide to Intervenor Funding* on our website at <http://www.tughill.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Guide-to-Intervenor-Funding-2-14-13.pdf>. And an excellent source of information in general, and about the Ad Hoc siting board members can be found at <http://www3.dps.ny.gov/W/PSCWeb.nsf/ArticlesByTitle/BCE89BD8C61D9D4B85257E200054A99A>.

There was lengthy discussion about local laws and how they are applied during the siting process. Under Article 10, local laws must be followed, unless they are deemed to be overly burdensome by the siting board. An example of an overly burdensome law might be a local law prohibiting towers over 100 feet tall, when, because of current technology, wind towers are now well over 200 feet tall. There is a handout on our website (within the *Article 10 Handout for Local Officials* link) titled *Resolution Adopting Local Law Regulations* that speaks to the topic of local laws and home rule in depth.

If you would like to receive emails notifying you about filings for particular projects under Article 10 review, you can visit the Department of Public Service (DPS) website. There are step by step instructions on how to subscribe to the DPS's Service List of Matter and Cases at <http://www3.dps.ny.gov/W/PSCWeb.nsf/All/531C3C8564EE05BB85257B2600740B16?OpenDocument>

The presentation and handouts (*Article 10 for Local Officials Presentation 11-14-16*, *Article 10 Handout for Local Officials*, *Guide to Intervenor Funding*, and *For More Information*) from the workshop are all available on our website at www.tughill.org.

Commission Presents on Rockefeller Institute Panel

Staff members Katie Malinowski and Angie Kimball presented on a panel at the **2nd Annual Research and Practice in Progress Briefing on Local Government in NY** on November 16 in Albany. Organized by the Rockefeller Institute of Government, speakers throughout the day presented on topics ranging from regional cases of local government innovation and change in NY, to understanding municipal fiscal stress and shared services.

Katie and Angie's presentation was entitled *Local Capacity Building Using the Circuit Rider Approach: Planning and Justice Court Solutions*. Information about the Tug Hill region, Tug Hill councils of governments, and examples of municipalities implementing on the ground projects was well-received by the attendees.

The commission's PowerPoint presentation from the day is available at <http://www.tughill.org/2016/11/17/rockefeller-institute-presentation/>.

LGC Registration Coming Soon!

Registration information will be mailed at the end of November for the Tug Hill Commission Local Government Conference Thursday, March 30, 2017 at Jefferson Community College.

More information is coming in our December 2 issue.

LGRMIF Shared Services Grant Application Information: A Webinar

Monday, November 21, 2016, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

This webinar will provide an overview for the following as it pertains to Shared Services Grant applications by defining shared services, explaining the advantages of shared services, providing examples of shared services projects, and showing how to write an award winning Shared Services Grant application. Registration: www.archives.nysed.gov/workshops/schedule/lgrmif-shared-services-grant-information-session-2016-11-21

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