



# 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.

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November 4, 2010

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### LOCAL GROUPS PITCHED IN TO PITCH OUT THE TRASH!

The Tug Hill Commission, the Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, would like to thank all who were involved with the Black River Trash Bash clean up event held October 2<sup>nd</sup> and October 9<sup>th</sup> at locations along the Black River in Boonville, Port Leyden, Lyons Falls, Lowville, Carthage and Watertown.

Thirty-six volunteers from groups including the Adirondack Communities Advisory League, Port Leyden Plus, Lyons Falls Alive, Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District, the Village of West Carthage and the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust participated. In all, they collected over 700 pounds of trash from the shores of the Black River!

This event was sponsored in part by the American Littoral Society (ALS), which conducts an annual world-wide beach cleanup day. The ALS provided trash bags for the event. The volunteers not only collected trash, but they also tallied the types of garbage they collected on data cards, also provided by the ALS. That data was sent to the ALS, which will use the data to help devise strategies to combat pollution. The goal of the event was to increase public participation in solving the problem of litter and pollution and to increase public awareness and appreciation of the River.

The volunteers worked hard and very much appreciated the donations of leather work gloves from White's Lumber in Watertown and bottled water from Nirvana Spring Water.

The New York State DOT Region 7 (Lewis County) loaned their garbage grabbers to the groups and free hauling and trash disposal was provided by the Villages of West Carthage, Lyons Falls, and Port Leyden, the City of Watertown, ACAL and MJS Rubbish Removal Service (Croghan, NY).

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNITIES ON NATURAL GAS EXPLORATION ISSUES RELEASED

A paper titled *Marcellus Shale Communities: Report, Recommendations and Resources for a Collaborative Approach to Planning and Local Land Use Tools* (October 2010) was recently compiled by the Central New York Regional Planning Board (CNY RPDB) Community Development Program to provide background, discussion and resources for local communities and counties to discuss potential impacts of the gas industry land use in their areas. Although the focus of the paper is on Southern Tier communities facing significant development because of Marcellus Shale, it could be useful for Tug Hill communities if the Utica Shale found in the region becomes financially attractive for gas development.

This paper can be found online at <http://www.cnyrpd.org/reports.asp>.

This paper is a must read for communities that could possibly be impacted by gas mining, since local municipalities currently have no clear legal authority to regulate the gas industry. This eight page document contains links to valuable information sources and discusses New York State's legal responsibilities regarding gas mining and resulting implications to local communities. It includes links to databases on existing gas wells and maps describing where the wells are located, contains a

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question and answer section and makes recommendations to counties and local municipalities on how to prepare for gas mining.

Questions and answers discussed included:

- What permitting will be required for re-injection of “produced water” into older wells?
- Can zoning regulation be used to locate industrial uses including gas drilling?
- Can surface/ground water withdrawals be locally regulated?
- How can costs be determined for conditions analysis of existing roads, culverts and bridges on identified “Haul Routes?”
- Can municipalities require that heavy industry companies cover the cost of road conditions analysis prior to commencement of permitted operations within the municipality?

### **GREEN PROJECTS FEATURED ON EFC WEBSITE**

The Black River Initiative, which comprises three related but distinct Black River focused projects, has been featured on the Green Project Exchange website. Sponsored by the Environmental Finance Center at Syracuse University, [greenprojectexchange.org](http://greenprojectexchange.org) is a free online resource that highlights local green initiatives and projects across New York state. It is a free and easy way for communities to exchange information and ideas about their green project success stories.

Green Project Exchange maps and categorizes projects, introduces users to innovative ideas and processes, connects users to resources and funding available for green projects, encourages communities to identify shared interests, provides networking opportunities and helps communities find creative and pragmatic solutions that benefit people and the environment.

Specifically, the Black River Initiative can be found at:

<http://www.greenprojectexchange.org/gpe/projects.html?action=detail&skuvar=29><http://www.greenprojectexchange.org/gpe/projects.html?action=detail&skuvar=29>.

### **STATE LAND TAX PAYMENTS ON TUG HILL ISSUE PAPER RELEASED**

The Tug Hill Commission has recently published an issue paper titled *State Land Tax Payments on Tug Hill*. The Commission began studying this issue in 2007, in light of the November 2007 NYS Supreme Court case in Chautauqua County known as the Dillenburg Case. The outcome of this case may have threatened tax payments generated by some NYS owned lands, which fund county, town, school and special district taxes. The case was eventually dropped, however, the impacts to Tug Hill communities could have been significant.

This paper covers the history of taxation of NYS owned lands and why some NYS owned lands generate tax payments to all taxing jurisdictions, while others either do not pay any taxes or only pay certain taxes. It also contains a map showing the amount of taxes paid by NYS Owned Lands in each town. The paper is available on our website under publications/reference, or contact the Commission for a hard copy.