



July 29, 2011

# 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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## NCPR Focus on Tug Hill

Last week North Country Public Radio reporter David Sommerstein put out two regional pieces focusing on the Tug Hill Region. The first piece featured Boonville resident and pilot Bob Keller who volunteers his time with LightHawk. LightHawk is a volunteer-based environmental aviation organization that provides donated flights to make the aerial perspective freely available to conservation groups and individuals interested in reporting and learning about significant landscapes and resources. In this piece David Sommerstein features the services and benefits of LightHawk and the flight he shared over Tug Hill and the western Adirondacks.



Sears Pond, Montague, NY,  
from May 18, 2010 flyover  
with LightHawk

The second piece features his report on the Tug Hill region and the Tug Hill Commission. On the same flight David rode with Tug Hill Commissioner Arnie Talgo, fellow Albany based reporter Bill Helmer and Bob Keller and they shared the significance of the Tug Hill region and the efforts of the Tug Hill Commission and local communities and residents on managing this regional resource. In case you missed them, here are the permalinks:

<http://www.northcountrypublicradio.org/news/story/18040/20110721/giving-environmental-issues-a-bird-s-eye-view>

<http://www.northcountrypublicradio.org/news/story/18042/20110722/fighting-for-its-life-tug-hill-agency-takes-to-the-air>

Our thanks to NCPR, Bob Keller and David Sommerstein for two great pieces on the Tug Hill region!

## HydroFracking Conference Materials Available

All of the presentations from last week's "Proactive Approaches to Mitigating Impacts of Marcellus Shale Development" conference in Geneva are available online at: <http://flimarcellusconference.wordpress.com/>. Click the tab on the top labeled "Documents Organized by Speaker" and all powerpoint presentations and supporting materials can be accessed.

There was a significant amount of material presented and although the Utica Shale  
*(Continued on page 2)*

***(Hydrofracking Materials - Continued from page 1)***

that is found in Tug Hill was not the focus, it was clear at the conference that it is already being looked at for development as well. There are many lessons to be learned from the current activity in Pennsylvania. Many Southern Tier communities have been working on road use agreements, aquifer protection laws, zoning amendments, etc. in anticipation of drilling activity once the environmental impact statement is complete and permits begin to be issued. When that will actually occur is not clear, and will not be until the EIS is finalized and the formal public comment period begins. Stay tuned to future Tug Hill Times for new developments, and if you have questions in the meantime feel free to contact Katie Malinowski at the Commission office, [katie@tughill.org](mailto:katie@tughill.org) or toll-free in the region, (888) 785-2380.

**Court Consolidation Legislation**

On June 18 Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed legislation authorizing the consolidation of the Harrisburg, Montague and Pinckney Town Justice Courts (Chapter 145 of the Laws of 2011). This legislation sponsored by area Legislators State Senator Joseph Griffo and Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush authorizes the first ever sharing of Town Justices and Town Justice court facilities in the State. After nearly five years of operating under an administrative order from the Fifth Judicial District Chief Administrative Judge Tormey, the Towns of Harrisburg, Montague and Pinckney will elect a single justice to serve all three towns out of the Harrisburg court facility. This legislation culminates an effort on behalf of the three towns, NYS Office of Court Administration, NYS Tug Hill Commission and our County and State legislators to enact State law that authorizes such consolidations at the request of local Town Justice Courts while improving efficiency and achieving tax payer savings.



With this legislation and process completed there is now a template for other town courts to follow if they wish to use this provision enacted under the Uniform Justice Court Act in 2010. If any towns are interested in the process used please do not hesitate to contact the Tug Hill Commission.

**Stewarts Shops Help Communities**

Stewart's is committed to contributing approximately 5% of their profit and in 2011 will donate \$2,250,000 to charitable organizations. Their contributions will include monetary donations, products and gift certificates. Stewart's is committed to making the maximum positive impact in their priority categories: Education, Health, Arts, Recreation/Kids, Social Services, Civic Groups, Product/Gift Certificates, Holiday Match Program.

To request a monetary donation, send a letter of request to: Stewart's Shops, c/o Susan Dake, P.O. Box 435, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. To request product or gift certificates, send a letter of request to: Stewart's Shops, c/o Donations Dept., P.O. Box 435, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 or call the Donation Line: (518) 581-1201 x2190. Please include: General description of your organization or program, who and how many you serve in a specific geographic area, the reason you are raising the money, the specific dollar amount that you are requesting from Stewart's, contact name and phone number, an annual budget, the total amount to be raised, your group's 9 digit federal identification #, and a copy of your 501c3 letter of approval. For complete information: <http://www.stewartsshops.com/ContentManager/index.cfm?Step=Display&ContentID=190>.

**Draft Intended Use Plan Listings Released**

The NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) recently released a Draft 2012 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWRSF) & Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWRSF) Intended Use Plan (IUP) listing/s outlining 2012 program funding priorities. Supported each year through EFC to protect the natural water resources of NYS are a wide variety of water-related activities that include wastewater treatment facilities and public water supplies. Projects include combined sewer overflow abatement facilities; storm water pollution abatement; energy

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efficiency initiatives; system security measures; land acquisition or conservation easements; water quality aspects of landfills; highway de-icing materials storage; construction, rehabilitation, and the upgrading to water treatment plants; transmission and distribution mains; storage facilities, pump stations; and, rehabilitation or development of new drinking water sources.

Serving as a model for neighboring communities and listed in the 2011 IUP, the Town of Trenton received notification through EFC's Green Infrastructure Grant Program earlier this year that they were one of 40 state-wide recipients awarded \$275,500 to support the construction of a \$856,500 decentralized waste water system that will intercept raw sewage from being discharged into the West Canada Creek.

An integral part in qualifying for EFC funding, municipalities should submit the appropriate IUP project listing information as soon as possible if they are considering financing one or more projects not currently listed in the draft CWSRF IUP or DWSRF IUP. Applicants will need to provide a Project Listing Form and an approvable engineering or technical report to EFC by the **August 25, 2011 deadline**.

## **DEC Announces New York's Forests Photo Contest**



In recognition of the importance of forests to the health and well being of society, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) announced a contest to Celebrate New York's Forests. The contest is designed to increase awareness of and appreciation for all types of forests, urban and rural, large and small, public and privately owned, across the state. Taking and sharing pictures is one of the most popular activities in this country. Through this contest, New Yorkers are encouraged to reconnect with the natural world. Submitted photos should capture all aspects of forests and trees in five different categories: 1. Nature (wildlife, plants, natural landscapes, etc.); 2. Enjoying the forest (hunting, fishing, trails, camping, hiking, etc.); 3. Trees where we live (parks, streets, yards, etc.); 4. Forest products (maple syrup, lumber, baseball bats, furniture, etc.); 5. State-owned forests (State Forests, Forest Preserve lands, forested Wildlife Management Areas, Campgrounds). Contest details, rules and necessary forms can be found on DEC's website at: [www.dec.ny.gov/lands/75396.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/75396.html).

Photos must be taken in New York State. Photos will be accepted through November 1, 2011. A maximum of three photos may be submitted by a photographer, each with a submission form found on the DEC website, via e-mail or on a CD via regular mail. DEC has non-exclusive rights to use submitted photos on DEC's website, in the Conservationist magazine, in brochures and in other publications promoting forests and DEC. The photographer will retain ownership of the photo.

## **NYSERDA Grants Available For Solar Hot Water Systems**

This information was adapted from an article written by Kathy Kahn of Westfair Business Publications on April 21, 2011. The article, in its entirety, can be found at <http://westfaironline.com/2011/12650-nyserda-grants-available-to-farmers/>

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) is offering a grant opportunity for the state's first incentive program for solar-thermal systems.



The program provides incentives of up to \$4,000 per site for eligible residential customers and up to \$25,000 per site for eligible commercial and nonprofit customers who currently use electricity to produce hot water. Farms and agricultural businesses that use electricity to produce hot water are eligible to participate in this program. As part of New York's renewable energy goals, the state's solar thermal target is to displace the equivalent of 45.54 megawatts of electrical use by the end of 2015.

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Thank you!

**Parish Adopts New Zoning Law**

The Parish Town Board voted last week to adopt revisions to its zoning law. The new law, which includes changes that bring it into alignment with the town’s recently updated comprehensive plan, is the result of a year long project undertaken by the Town and Village Planning Board. The new law will be posted on the Parish website in the near future at [www.townofparish-ny.us](http://www.townofparish-ny.us).

*(Solar Grant - Continued from page 3)*

Incentives will be available only on approved solar thermal systems installed by NYSERDA-approved solar thermal installers. They will be granted first-come, first served, and applications will be accepted through December 31, 2015 or until the funds are fully committed, whichever comes first. For complete information, go to <http://www.nyserda.org/funding/2149pon.asp>.

**Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC)  
Announces Grant Award Process**

The NBRC announced that it will begin accepting applications for federal assistance beginning on August 1, 2011. The deadline for applications is August 29, 2011. The maximum grant award for any application will be \$250,000. The NBRC was created by the Congress to alleviate economic distress, and to save/create job opportunities throughout a thirty-six county region in Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont, including fourteen counties in northern New York.

Eligible projects must develop the transportation, water, sewer, energy, and telecommunications infrastructure of 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; promote resources conservation, tourism, recreation, and preservation of open spaces in a manner consistent with economic development goals; and to promote the development of renewable and alternative energy sources. All four Tug Hill counties are considered distressed. Grant materials will be available from the Commission.

**DEC Tree Grants Announced**

Three Tug Hill communities were successful in securing grant funding to support tree plantings and other projects through NYSDEC’s Urban and Community Forestry Program. Quick Start grants of \$1,000 were awarded to the Village of Prospect and the Constantia Parks & Recreation Commission to help fund the creation of local tree planting programs and Arbor Day celebrations. A small community grant of \$3,900 was secured by the Town of Forestport to provide funding for tree planting in the hamlet.



For more information on New York’s Urban and Community Forestry Program and the Cost-Share grants, visit DEC’s website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5285.html>.