

February 14, 2020

Black River Initiative Newsletter

The latest *Black River Initiative* newsletter is now available on our website at <https://www.tughill.org/projects/black-river-projects/>. In it, you'll find articles about projects in the Black River watershed that address water quality and community concerns. Some of the projects highlighted include green infrastructure, reducing nutrient runoff on farms, culvert assessments and invasive species. Many thanks to the contributing authors of the articles and to Emily Sheridan from NYSDEC's Great Lakes Program for authoring and compiling the newsletter.

Black River Initiative

Winter 2019



Black River as seen from Factory Street, Watertown. NYSDEC Photo.

Fighting the Good Fight to Protect Water Resources

Organizations, municipalities, and other key partners throughout the Black River watershed continue to fight the good fight towards sustaining our Black River land and water resources.

Under the Black River Watershed Management Plan and Black River 9 Element Watershed Plan, these actions include implementing agricultural, stormwater, and wastewater treatment best management practices.

The Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) awards announced in December 2019 included the following projects totaling \$1.8M in the watershed that continue to implement these important actions:

- Lowville Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements - \$1.6 million
- Town of Champion Salt Storage - \$150,000
- Lyons Falls Wastewater Treatment Plant Study - \$20,833
- Constableville Wastewater Treatment Plant Study - \$20,833
- Wilna Wastewater Treatment Plant Study - \$20,833
- Forestport Wastewater Treatment Plant Study - \$19,960

Thanks to the efforts of these communities and their partners, momentum has been maintained towards the collective actions to protect Black River drinking water, conserve fish and wildlife habitats and populations, and improve quality of life in the region. We can all look forward to seeing and enjoying the fruits of these labors.



A fishing access off Route 3, Watertown. NYSDEC photo.

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RACOG February Board Meeting

The RACOG board will meet at 6:00 pm on February 19, 2020 at the village of Carthage office located at 120 South Mechanic St., Carthage, NY 13619.

Planning for Offsite Solar Energy Projects Issue Paper Released

In response to a significant increase in proposed projects on Tug Hill and surrounding areas, the commission has prepared a new issue paper, Planning for Offsite Solar Energy Projects, located at <https://www.tughill.org/publications/technical-issue-papers/>. The paper provides background on the 2019 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, which is driving the increase in project proposals. Community perception and the differing scales of solar are discussed. Maps of potential locations for solar development in all four counties are provided with information about the criteria that was used, for use by communities to help improve understanding of where solar projects may be located. Discussion of agriculture in relation to solar projects is provided, along with an interactive calculator to look at economic impact of dairy versus solar. Community municipal planning tools, including moratoria, comprehensive plans, and zoning laws are highlighted, as well as varying levels of project reviews. The financial impact on municipalities including PILOTs and decommissioning are outlined. Numerous links to other resources are provided, as well as an example zoning law, solar lease, and decommissioning agreement.

Development of the paper was a very collaborative effort, with participation and input from county Cornell Cooperative Extension offices, planning departments, industrial development agencies, soil and water conservation districts, and the Development Authority of the North Country.

Local Government Conference March 26

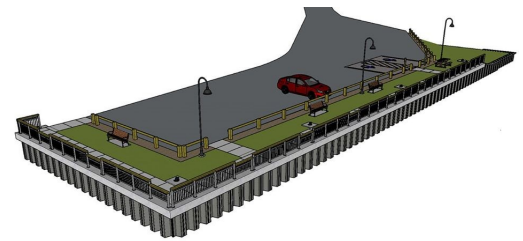
Andrew Fish, Senior Vice President for Business Development at Centerstate CEO, will be the keynote speaker during opening remarks at the Tug Hill Commission Local Government Conference at Jefferson Community College on March 26.

Register online: www.lgc2020.eventbrite.com . **Register by mail:** www.tughill.org/lgc2020 .

◇ \$50 by March 6 ◇ \$100 March 7-13 ◇ \$150 after March 13 ◇

Historic Cleveland Dock to Receive Renovation

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has announced major restoration and rehabilitation of the historic Cleveland Dock Fishing Access Site is expected to begin this winter. This important renovation is the result of sustained efforts by New York State and the village of Cleveland to first stabilize the existing structure, whose deteriorating condition put the dock's continued integrity in peril, and then to make improvements to the site, including site grading, timber guide railing, railings, sidewalk, concrete wall cap, benches, picnic tables, site electric, lamp posts, parking lot improvements, accessible concrete parking pad, approximately 2,060 square yards of asphalt parking lot, and striping.



Conception design of restored Cleveland Dock

This project is a joint effort by DEC, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, and the New York State Canal Corporation.

The Cleveland village dock is on the north shore of Oneida Lake, on the east side of the village of Cleveland, on New York State Route 49. It was originally acquired by New York State in 1916. It serves as the only deepwater port on the North Shore between Sylvan Beach and Brewerton, essential for safety when storms brew up quickly, threatening maritime traffic, both recreational and commercial.

The DEC press release on the intended improvements can be found at www.dec.ny.gov/press/119326.html.

Business Transitions Workshops Announced for 2020

The Adirondack North Country Association Center for Businesses in Transitions (CBIT) has announced the following slate of workshops for 2020, designed to address topics relevant for transitioning businesses:

- **April 23, 2020:** "Business Transitions Overview: Where Do You Start?," hosted by Lewis County Economic Development/IDA
- **April 28, 2020:** "Mentoring a New Owner: The First Year," hosted by St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce
- **May 6, 2020:** "From Hello to Key Transfer: Communicating During the Transition Process," hosted by Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce
- **May 7, 2020:** "Marketing Your Available Business," hosted by the Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce and the County of Franklin Economic Development/IDA
- **September 23, 2020:** "Determining Value: Perspectives from Buyers and Sellers," hosted by Hamilton County IDA
- **September 24, 2020:** "Your Best Possible Successor is Already Working for You," hosted by Greater Watertown-North Country Chamber of Commerce

The Center is a unique collaboration of regional organizations and leaders whose shared goal is to support existing business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs in developing successful business transition strategies. In 2019, 88 North Country business owners reached out to CBIT for assistance, tapping into a network of useful tools, learning opportunities and knowledgeable professionals.

All materials developed by the partnership are available for other organizations to use to assist businesses. Economic development staff who would like access to these tools are invited to contact the Center. The partnership is also seeking co-working spaces and event partners to assist with workshops and other events.

North Country business owners looking to transition their operations to new owners or a new ownership model, as well as aspiring entrepreneurs looking to take over an existing business, are invited to contact the Center at transitions@adirondack.org or (518) 891-6200 for more information or to be connected with a community liaison. Information about the Center and its programs can be found at www.adirondack.org/businesses-in-transition.

New Draft State Forest Action Plan Available for Review and Comment Through April 3

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation has released a new draft State Forest Action Plan, available at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/60829.html>. The plan serves as a 10-year strategic plan for DEC and the New York forestry community. The draft talks about the important role forests and forest products play in mitigating total greenhouse gas emission levels through carbon sequestration and long-term storage. The draft plan identifies ways that New York's forests can realize this potential as part of the state's comprehensive climate change solution and leverages New York's forests in the fight against climate change.

The federal Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act requires each state forestry agency to develop "Statewide Assessment and Strategies for Forest Resources," collectively referred to as the State Forest Action Plan. A final State Forest Action Plan, which will be an update to New York's 2010 Plan, is due in June 2020. New York's State Forest Action Plan addresses the three national priorities identified by the U.S. Forest Service:

- Conserve and manage working forest landscapes for multiple values and uses;
- Protect forests from threats; and
- Enhance public benefits from trees and forests.

New York's plan builds on these priorities and identifies four primary goals for New York's forests:

- Keep New York's forests as forests;
- Keep New York's forests healthy;
- Ensure forests benefit humans and all living creatures; and
- Ensure support, protection, and appreciation of New York's forests

DEC will hold a public meeting on February 26, from 1 to 3 p.m., at 625 Broadway, Albany, NY, Public Assembly Room 129. All interested parties are invited to attend. Anyone unable to attend may access the meeting online or via phone.

We're Hiring: NOCCOG Circuit Rider

The New York State Tug Hill Commission is hiring a circuit rider/municipal management consultant to serve the Northern Oneida County Council of Governments (NOCCOG). NOCCOG is a cooperative of 17-member local governments in the Tug Hill region providing day-to-day technical assistance through this position to its member communities. Answering to an executive committee and working as a state employee of the commission, the person filling this post is expected to establish and maintain regular contact with member communities and to serve as the program manager.

Minimum qualifications are: a bachelor's degree and 3-5 years work experience, although an equivalent combination of education and experience with local government of 5-10 years will be considered; NYS driver's license and suitable vehicle; proven computer literacy (email, word processing, spreadsheets, data base, website maintenance) and reliable access to high speed internet and cellular service; excellent oral, written, organizational and interpersonal skills; self-starter with strong work ethic and ability to work independently; ability and willingness to attend night meetings three plus times per week and travel in inclement weather on very rural roads; familiarity and experience with local government a plus; familiarity with Tug Hill region a plus.

For more information about the position, see our website, <https://www.tughill.org/2020/01/17/noccog-municipal-management-consultant-circuit-rider/>.

QGIS NY 2020 Conference

Cornell University, CUNY Baruch College, and the Tug Hill Commission partnered to bring a free QGIS conference to New York State on April 3rd, 2020 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. @ Cornell University, Mann Library, Ithaca, NY. QGIS is a free software used for geographic information systems projects, such as mapmaking and spatial analyses. The vision of this conference is (1) to enable local governments, private organizations, and individuals to shape the future of their regions in New York (and beyond) using open-source QGIS and (2) to strengthen the regional open-source GIS community by bringing people together and optionally pairing up mentors and mentees. Registration for this event was free thanks to funding provided by OSGeo-US. Registration opened on January 30 at 9:00 a.m. and by 4:00 p.m. the 50-participant cap was reached. The registrants represent universities, state and local government, and the private sector. Due to the high level of interest, the conference planning committee is looking into options for increasing conference capacity, including live-streaming presentations and recording some hands-on sessions. If you are interested in hearing more about opportunities to learn QGIS or connect with a mentor or mentee, email Alaina Mallette, alaina@tughill.org, or Mickey Dietrich, mickey@tughill.org.

10th Annual Black River Watershed Conference

June 3 - 4, 2020

Savory Downtown

Watertown, NY 13601

SAVE THE DATE

<https://www.tughill.org/projects/black-river-projects/black-river-watershed-conference/>

Contact Us

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To request our newsletter electronically please email gwen@tughill.org or call 1-888-785-2380.

For upcoming trainings, grant deadlines, and meetings, view our [calendar](#).

LED Street Light Conversion Project Meeting

On January 29, representatives from the New York Power Authority and Wendel provided updates to the municipalities involved in the LED street light conversion project. July 2020 is the construction goal for communities that move forward after the design phase. The group includes the towns of Adams, Champion, Denmark, Lyme, Martinsburg, Wilna and villages of Adams, Carthage, Castorland, Copenhagen, Croghan, Deferiet, Lowville, Lyons Falls, Sackets Harbor, and West Carthage.



New York State Canal Corporation Announces 2020 Operation Schedule

The New York State Canal Corporation has announced that the canal will be opening for operations in 2020 beginning on Friday, May 15 at 7:00 a.m., weather permitting, and will close for the season on Wednesday, October 14 at 5:00 p.m. The standard hours of operation for the 2020 season are 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

There will be no tolls or fees for recreational use of the Canal System in 2020.

Oneida Lake, at the southern extent of the Tug Hill Region, is part of the Erie Canalway system.

For more information about the Canal Corporation, see www.canals.ny.gov.

Canal Notice and Alerts can be found at www.canals.ny.gov/wwwapps/tas/notices.