

May 7, 2021

Oswego County Broadband Survey Launched; Oneida County Survey Live Next Week

Residents and businesses in Oswego County can now respond to a survey regarding their internet access at www.cnyinternet.com. Starting Monday, residents and businesses in Oneida County can respond to a similar survey at <https://www.mveddbroadband.com/>. Both surveys will help inform broad-



band improvement plans being developed for the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNY RPDB) and its member counties (Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, and Oswego) and Mohawk Valley Economic Development District (MVEDD) and two of its member counties (Herkimer and

Oneida) identify areas that lack access to reliable broadband internet. Assisting with both studies is ECC Technologies, a private consulting firm based in Rochester, NY that has a successful history working with counties and municipalities across Upstate New York to identify and solve broadband internet access issues.

The broadband internet study includes a two-pronged approach, identifying physical infrastructure and conducting a public survey. Field work to inventory and map broadband facilities in each county, including existing fiber and coaxial cabling and tower sites, is nearing completion. ECC Technologies has developed a website and survey material that will allow CNY RPDB and MVEDD to collect data about broadband access in the region, called the Broadband Availability and Adoption Toolset (BAAT). Both organizations are using the BAAT survey to reach residents and businesses to learn about their current internet access issues, service reliability, and the affordability of their internet access options.

Please note the confidential information collected from this survey will be used to identify areas in the region most in need of improved internet access service. The information will also provide the basis for developing a plan that will help improve broadband internet access in the region. The plans will be completed in the fall of 2021.

If you do not have internet access, public access to a computer or paper copies of the survey may be available at your local library and municipal office. Please contact them first, to check on current hours and restrictions. **You may also contact the Tug Hill Commission at (315) 785-2380 for assistance filling out the survey or to have a survey delivered to your home.**

Tug Hill Commission Meeting May 17, Port Leyden

The commission's next meeting will be held Monday, May 17 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. at the Port Leyden Community Room at the Port Leyden Fire Hall, 3387 Douglas Street, Port Leyden. In-person meeting attendance will be limited per COVID-19 safety precautions. Please contact Gwen Decker at gwen@tughill.org for in-person RSVP. Zoom access information is us02web.zoom.us/j/81398521958, or dial 929-205-6099, meeting ID 81398521958.

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UPCOMING COMMISSION WEBINARS

Broadband: Statewide Perspective

Wednesday, May 12 at 1:00 PM Eastern Time

Scott Rasmussen, Innovation & Broadband Empire State Development, presenting a high-level view of broadband across the state.

To register: us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_mNCKXfMOQ3O4jZxc3oGplQ

How Broadband Can Be Delivered: The Southern Tier Network

Wednesday, May 19, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Andy Lukasiewicz and Joe Starks, ECC Technologies, sharing case studies on the Southern Tier Network and the nine-county collaborative.

To register: us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_FXe55T-PT5ev4vVrChcWjA

The Rise and Fall of the Florence Settlement

Thursday, May 20 at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time

A panel of researchers, Jessica Harney of the Camden Central School District, Matthew Kirk, Principal Investigator/VP Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc. and Charles E. Vandrei, Agency Historic Preservation Officer, Archaeologist, Division of Lands and Forests, NYSDEC, will provide an introductory presentation on the Florence Settlement, a settlement for free formerly enslaved people in the town of Florence. Research from archeological digs, archival searches, and more will be presented along with video clips of the site as it is today.

To register: us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5oIb1_c2RbuG7ZvqI2cwKQ

EO 202.105 Extends Remote Public Meetings Through May 27, 2021

According to the [Committee on Open Government](#), Executive Order 202.105 extends suspension of the in-person meeting requirement of open meetings law through May 27. The entire executive order is available at www.governor.ny.gov/news/no-202105-continuing-temporary-suspension-and-modification-laws-relating-disaster-emergency.

Community Recognition Award Nominations Due June 1

The commission looks forward to receiving nominations for its new recognition program to honor a Tug Hill community, council of government, or community group at the commission's 2021 annual dinner, scheduled for October 14, 2021 at the Tailwater Lodge in Altmar. A full program description and detailed list of criteria are available on the commission website at tughill.org/about/tug-hill-community-recognition-award/. Overall, the award is looking for local governments or groups that have gone above and beyond to implement a project that has made a real impact in their area.

Nominations will be accepted in two categories: **community group** efforts (not affiliated with a local government), and **governmental** efforts. Projects must have been completed within the last five years. Competitive projects will incorporate many of the following elements:

1. Built local capacity
2. Promoted actions or projects in partnership with others
3. Were well supported by the community
4. Can serve as a model to be replicated in other areas

A selection committee made up of the chairs of the region's five councils of government, the commission board chair, and commission executive director will review applications and decide on award winners.

Nominations are due by June 1, and should be emailed to Katie Malinowski, katie@tughill.org. Please contact the office at (315) 785-2380 with any questions.

BLACK RIVER WATERSHED WEDNESDAY WEBINARS

Black River Watershed Wednesday Webinars Begins Wednesday May 12 at 3:00 p.m.

We hope you'll join us for the Black River Watershed (virtual) Conference series! This first *Watershed Wednesday Webinar* begins next Wednesday, and sessions will continue throughout May and June. All webinars are presented via Zoom and preregistration is required. These events are free to attend. This information is also available at tughill.org/black-river-watershed-wednesdays-2021/.

Black River Trail Extension and Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Connectivity and The OUTSTEPS.org Research Network: A Community Platform for Stakeholders and Universities in the Lower Great Lakes

Wednesday May 12, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

The Watertown-Jefferson County Area Transportation Council (WJCTC) is exploring various alternatives for extending the Black River Trail to Fort Drum as well as identifying gaps in the regional network for active transportation modes. This is an interactive presentation as the WJCTC is actively seeking public input as part of the planning process. Come see how this project and OUTSTEPS.org, a regional research network of eight founding universities, a diverse group of urban and rural stakeholder and indigenous rights-holder groups, can work together to support transformative and collaborative science to address regional sustainability and community resilience challenges in the Lower Great Lakes basins, including Lake Erie and Ontario.

To register: us02web.zoom.us/join/wn_qc4c3WSyTkaq2GyPdHnkZg

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid in a Changing Climate: Changing Forests and Identification and Management of HWA

Wednesday May 19, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

Dr. Lindsey Rustad will give us an overview of her 30 plus years of research in the White Mountains of New Hampshire about how climate is altering the composition of our northeastern forests from a global perspective to local impacts. Ms. Caroline Marschner will discuss eastern hemlock, its role in New York ecosystems, hemlock woolly adelgid identification and management, and implications of climate change on this aggressive forest pest.

To register: us02web.zoom.us/join/wn_B46jdWc9TzW8PaAVEjPZGw

Ice and Snow Best Practices: Communication and Consensus

Wednesday May 26, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

Ice and snow removal must balance cost, public safety and environmental considerations. Having a clear consensus on the expected level of service allows everyone a basis to communicate. Tim Hunt, Highway Superintendent at the Lewis County Highway Department, has extensive experience in local government and has served in various leadership roles throughout New York State. He has presented at the Cornell local roads programs highway school on procurement issues and currently teaches a budgeting class for Cornell local roads entitled "Dollars and Sense of Municipal Budgeting." Tim brings a diverse and balanced approach to highway management issues.

To register: us02web.zoom.us/join/wn_G3lcl-rXQy6TzALf8GcN2A





A NYS Tug Hill Commission Webinar



The New Cannabis Law: Considerations for Towns and Villages

June 1, 2021, at 12:00 p.m. EST

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The Marihuana Regulation and Taxation Act of 2021 created a new section of NYS law, Cannabis. Several of its provisions affect town and village governments, including licensing and taxation, and there are many questions regarding what can be regulated locally and the timing and process for local regulations. Questions about what this means for employers and their employees will also be addressed. There will be an opportunity for questions and answers.



Wade Beltramo
General Counsel

New York State Conference of Mayors and Municipal Officials
Wade represents NYCOM, oversees NYCOM's legal staff and amicus curiae program, and advocates at the state and federal levels and aids with municipal inquiries. Wade is a graduate of Grinnel College and the Brooklyn Law School.



Sarah Brancatella

Counsel and Legislative Director

Association of Towns of the State of New York (AOT)
Brancatella coordinates AOT's legislative advocacy, manages AOT's amicus brief program, regularly presents on new legislation, and works on member inquiries. Sarah is a graduate of SUNY Geneseo and the University at Buffalo School of Law.

Click here to register, or go to tinyurl.com/tughillcannabis or tughill.org/upcoming-workshops.

Wetlands: Regulatory Status, Local Protection Strategies Webinar May 19

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and partners are offering a webinar on Wednesday, May 19 at 3 p.m. to discuss the state and federal regulatory protections for wetlands, including recent changes, and the potential for local regulations, how to address wetlands in environmental reviews of land development projects, and approaches for crafting and adopting local laws and zoning for wetland protection.

Presenters are Roy Jacobson, DEC Division of Fish and Wildlife, Habitat Protection Section; Gretchen Stevens, Hudsonia Ltd; and Emily Svenson, Gordon and Svenson LLP.

For more information and to register click [here](#).

Funding Available from the DEC for Municipal Zero-emission Vehicle (ZEV) Rebate and Infrastructure Grant Programs

Applications for the 2021 Zero-emission Vehicle Rebate Program and the 2021 Zero-emission Vehicle Infrastructure Grant Program are available through the New York State Grants Gateway to help municipalities install public charging stations and purchase or lease zero-emission vehicles for fleet use. DEC is accepting applications on a rolling basis from now through October 29, 2021, or until funding is exhausted.

During this round, up to \$300,000 in rebates are available for municipalities that purchase (or lease for a minimum of 36 months) zero emission vehicles from eligible dealerships in New York. Plug-in hybrid, all-electric, or hydrogen fuel cell vehicles are eligible for rebates of up to \$7,500 per vehicle, depending on the electric range of the vehicle and provided they were placed into municipal service on or after March 1, 2020.

In addition, up to \$2.5 million is available during this round for municipalities to install hydrogen filling station components or electric vehicle chargers. A variable local match of zero to 20 percent of the total project cost is required based on the community's median household income. The maximum grant amount for any location is \$250,000 and \$500,000 to any one municipality.

Additional information is available online: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/109181.html#ZEV>

Village of Constableville to Receive Drinking Water Source Protection Assistance

In 2019, the commission assisted the village of Constableville with an application to the Drinking Water Source Protection Program (DWSP2), an initiative by the New York State Departments of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Health (DOH) to assist municipalities with assessing and supporting drinking water source protection programs. The village recently learned it has been chosen to work with technical assistance partners to develop programs that protect their drinking water supply at no cost to the village. The village operates a public water system which provides water to local residents and businesses within the village and a few outside users in the town of West Turin. The village obtains its drinking water from a surface water source from natural springs outside the village limits. To learn more about the DWSP2, visit the NYSDEC's website: www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/115250.html.

Local Government Aid and Spending Rules Expected on May 10

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), passed earlier this year on March 11, includes \$350 billion in direct aid to states and local governments. On May 10, the U.S. Treasury will announce final allocations, issue guidance on permissible uses, and distribute 50 percent of the funds.

The ARPA law states that governments can use the money for public health crisis expenses and for budget deficits, as well as projects to address the negative economic impacts of the COVID crisis, which includes support to community revitalization non-profits, small businesses and for sewer, stormwater, water and broadband infrastructure. The guidelines on May 10 are expected to expand definitions and rules for spending.

Aid will be allocated to entitlement municipalities directly, based on a modified Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) formula that reflects population, poverty and housing instability. Non-entitlement cities, villages and towns will receive an estimated \$109.693 per capita, based on the Census Bureau's 2019 estimate of population for your city, village or town (town-outside-village). For non-entitlement communities, the total allocation is capped at 75% of the size of pre-pandemic all-funds budget.

The money for local governments will be disbursed in two equal installments over a two-year period. Those municipalities that are CDBG entitlement communities will receive their first allocation (half of the total amount) directly from the Treasury Department. For non-entitlement communities, the first allocation will be sent to New York State and then the State has 30 days to pass it along. Second installments will be made available 12 months later.

The American Rescue Plan Act also includes:

- \$3 billion for Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants, including \$450 million set aside for tourism, travel, and hospitality. Guidance on EDA grants is expected soon that expands applicant eligibility and reduces match requirements.
- \$10 billion for critical capital projects that enable work, education and health, including broadband. Each state will receive an allocation and will determine how their funds are used. The Treasury will also issue guidance on use of these funds on May 10.
- \$30.5 billion in Federal Transit Administration funds, including capital grants. FTA is required by the law to issue guidance on use of funds by September 2021.
- \$100 million in EPA in Environmental Justice grants to identify and address disproportionate environmental or public health harms of the COVID pandemic and air, water, or brownfield risks in low-income or minority populations.

State Canal Corporation Announces 2021 Canal Opening Dates

The state Canal Corporation has announced opening dates for the canal for 2021. Oneida Lake, at the southern boundary of the Tug Hill region, is part of the state canal system.

Conditions permitting, all portions of the New York State Canal System are scheduled to open Friday, May 21 at 7:00 a.m. This proposed schedule of operations could be impacted by the COVID pandemic and/or the need to repair critical infrastructure. The public will be notified accordingly through the Notice to Mariners system if this occurs. There are no tolls or fees for recreational use of the Canal System in 2021. Standard hours of operation, until navigation system closing date on Wednesday, October 13, are 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with extended hours until 10:00 p.m. until Wednesday, September 15 at specified locks, including Lock E-23 in Brewerton.

More information about the Canal Corporation and the canal system can be found on their web site, www.canals.ny.gov.

The complete Notice to Mariners on dates and hours of operation for the 2021 navigation season can be found at: <https://www.discovertheeriecanal.com/nys-canal-corporation-announces-schedule-for-2021-navigational-season/>.

Contact Us

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