

July 29, 2022

Projects Specialist Job Opening at the Tug Hill Commission

The commission is advertising for an entry level Projects Specialist to provide assistance to local governments and regional organizations in the rural Tug Hill region in the areas of natural resources, community development, and general technical assistance. Typical work activities will include, among other things:

- Project management, research and analysis;
- Preparation of outreach and educational materials;
- Assistance with conferences, workshops and meetings;
- Research and writing grant applications in support of projects;
- Creation of maps and other GIS analyses; and
- Writing of issue and technical papers.

Minimum qualifications are:

- Graduation from a regionally accredited college with Master's degree in public administration, community development, natural resources or other related field; or
- Graduation from a regionally accredited college with Bachelor's degree in public administration, community development, natural resources or other related field, or related field and two years of full-time paid experience in similar types of work. Degree requirement may be substituted with substantial relevant experience.

Letters of interest and resumes should be submitted to Jennifer Harvill, Projects Director, Tug Hill Commission, 317 Washington Street, Watertown, NY 13601, jennifer@tughill.org. Full job description is available at tughill.org/job-openings/. Applications accepted no later than September 1, 2022. Resumes will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

In This Issue

- Seeking Project Specialist
- NY Forward Grant Program
- Multi-Domain Task Force
- Black River Trash Bash
- Tug Hill Aquifer Study
- Downtown Revitalization & NY Forward Webinar
- Oneida County EV Charging Station
- Leasing Your Land for Solar Energy
- Agrivoltaics and Solar Utility Considerations Webinar
- Commission Receives SEFA Award
- Meet the Commissioners

NY Forward Grant Program Announced for Smaller and Rural Communities

The Department of State has announced a new program that might be of interest to Tug Hill towns and villages. It is called **NY Forward**, modeled after the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant that several area cities (Oswego, Watertown, Rome, Utica, etc.) have received. NY Forward is targeted for downtowns in **NY's smaller and rural communities** and is funded at \$100 million this year, the same as DRI. Attached is a brochure that describes about both programs.

Full NY Forward program guidance and application forms will be available July 25. However, communities are encouraged to submit a **Letter of Intent to Apply** right away, and to participate in capacity-building webinars that will be offered from July through September (first webinar July 28).

NY Forward awards will be smaller, but more numerous, than the DRI. Rather than one \$10 million award per region with the DRI, **NY Forward allows up to three awards per region - either two \$4.5 million awards, or one \$4.5 million award and two \$2.25 million awards.**

More information is and will be available at www.ny.gov/programs/ny-forward. If this is something your community is interested in and you would like to brainstorm, please contact your circuit rider or the Watertown office.

Fort Drum Under Consideration for Multi-Domain Task Force Site

Over 200 letters in support of Fort Drum's potential hosting of a Multi-Domain Task Force (MDTF) site were sent to Army Environmental Command last week. A [Programmatic Environmental Assessment](#) (PEA) with a draft Finding of No Significant Impact was published by the Army on June 22 for the MDTF siting, with comments due July 22. The purpose of MDTFs is to support all U.S. military services and U.S. allies in the rapid and continuous integration of all domains of warfare: land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace. The Army is proposing to station MDTFs at Army garrisons and joint bases so the MDTFs can quickly deploy to any theater of operations where they are needed.

The PEA evaluated the following installations: Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Fort Campbell, Kentucky; Fort Carson, Colorado; Fort Drum, New York; Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Knox, Kentucky; Fort Riley, Kansas; Fort Stewart, Georgia; Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), Washington; Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska; U.S. Army Garrison (USAG)-Hawai'i (Schofield Barracks and Helemano Military Reservation); and Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

The Army is currently looking at two different options for this proposal, either a full or base Multi-Domain Task Force. If a full MDTF was chosen, 3,000 additional soldiers would be stationed at Fort Drum and dozens of new civilian positions would be created. A base MDTF would require 400 new soldiers and civilians.

Fort Drum leaders said that the local Army installation is a good fit for the MDTF because of its ability to station tens of thousands of soldiers, its existing infrastructure, sufficient land and airspace, the Wheeler-Sack Army Airfield and ability to deploy.

2022 Black River Trash Bash Looking for Volunteer Groups

In 2021, 23 participants picked up approximately 200 pounds of trash from the Black River Watershed. The Black River Trash Bash, now in its 13th year, is seeking volunteers to participate this fall in this citizen science and clean-up event.

This event is organized annually by the Lewis and Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Tug Hill Commission. Participating groups, thus far, will include the Adirondack Communities Advisory League and the Jefferson, Lewis, and Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Water Quality Coordinating Committees.

Since 2010, participants have collected over 6,000 pounds of garbage. Data is compiled through the Alliance for the Great Lakes and its Adopt-A-Beach program, greatlakes.org/get-involved/adopt-a-beach/september-adopt-a-beach/. Scientists use Adopt-a-Beach data to study the sources of plastic pollution, and help decision makers make the case for policies that protect the Great Lakes.

Every year, gloves are generously donated by White's Lumber and trash grabbers donated through the Black River Advisory Committee. One can imagine the materials that are handled, which last year included around 300 food wrappers, over 350 cigarette butts, over 100 beverage containers, and numerous items such as straws, articles of clothing, fireworks and balloons. The Development Authority of the North Country and the City of Watertown also generously handle the collected trash. Thanks also to the beach captains of the clean-up sites for their time and dedication and for organizing their groups, coordinating the data collection and making this event so successful.

The Black River, winding from Forestport to Dexter, is one of the North Country's most important natural resources. The Black River Trash Bash is an annual watershed-wide event to clean up along the river and document what litters its shores. The event seeks to increase public participation in solving the problem of litter and pollution and to increase public awareness and appreciation of the river. If you or your community group are interested in participating in next year's event, please contact Jennifer Harvill at jennifer@tughill.org or 315-785-2380.



Volunteers from 2021 Lewis County cleanup.

Tug Hill Aquifer Phase 1 Study Completed

Phase 1 of a new Tug Hill Aquifer [study](#), **Scientific Investigations Report 2022–5039: Geohydrology and Water Quality of the Northern and Central Parts of the Tug Hill Glacial Aquifer, Jefferson and Oswego Counties, North-Central New York**, was just recently released by USGS. The research to understand and manage the aquifer resources supported by the NYS Tug Hill Commission, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, Jefferson and Oswego counties, and the Salmon Rivers Council of Governments. Additional materials about the aquifer are available on the Tug Hill Commission [website](#).

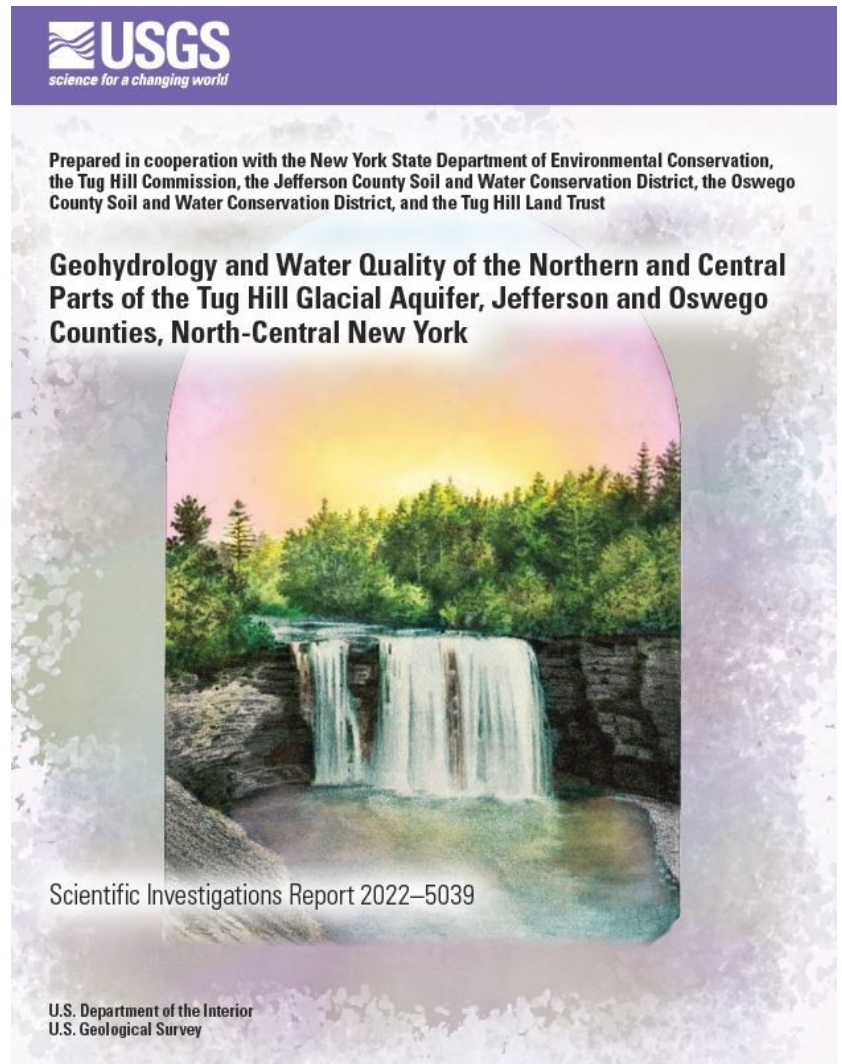
The Tug Hill Aquifer has been identified as an important source of drinking water for communities along the western edge of the Tug Hill Plateau since the 1980s, when it was first investigated by the USGS. In recent years, there was renewed interest by communities to understand this regional drinking-water supply and how to protect it. Ongoing research to understand and manage the aquifer resources was supported by the NYS Tug Hill Commission, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, Jefferson and Oswego counties, and the Salmon Rivers Council of Governments. In 2007, the USGS, with multiple stakeholders, entered into a program to collect more detailed data in order to better understand the aquifer resource. The program was designed in two phases, the first being a data collection phase and the second being the creation of numerical groundwater flow modeling of the aquifer system to provide communities and stakeholders with a tool for decision making. Lack of funding is currently precluding work on Phase II.

Excerpts from the new report:

“This report provides a regional appraisal of the geohydrology and water quality of the northern and central parts of the Tug Hill glacial aquifer in Jefferson and Oswego Counties. The report describes the geometry and glacial origin of the northern and central parts of the Tug Hill glacial aquifer, sources of recharge and discharge to those areas, groundwater withdrawals, groundwater-flow directions, and groundwater and surface-water quality.”

“In 2006, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designated the northern part of the Tug Hill glacial aquifer and its watershed that extends eastward onto the Tug Hill Plateau as a Federal sole source aquifer for drinking water. An aquifer is designated as a sole source aquifer when the aquifer supplies at least 50 percent of the drinking water consumed in the area overlying the aquifer and there are no reasonably available alternative drinking water sources should the aquifer become contaminated (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2019). The Tug Hill glacial aquifer is the source of drinking water for many municipalities, as well as for drinking-water wells for private residences, mobile-home parks, campgrounds, and other facilities. Water from the aquifer is also used in manufacturing, industry, and agriculture. Additionally, the aquifer is tapped by large pumping wells that supply water to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Fish Hatchery in the hamlet of Altmar.”

“Water-quality samples were collected at 21 sites from streams during base-flow conditions, and groundwater-quality and environmental samples were collected from 20 wells in the northern and central parts of the Tug Hill glacial aquifer. Water-quality analyses of the samples indicated that surface water and groundwater are generally of good quality.”



Downtown Revitalization Initiative + NY Forward Webinar August 4

On Thursday, August 4 at 1 p.m. join the NYS Department of State, NYS Economic Development Council, and NY Conference Of Mayors & NYS Association of Counties for a free webinar to learn more about Round Six of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and the first round of the New York Forward program.

New York State's downtowns are centers for commerce, culture, diversity, entrepreneurship, and entertainment, and revitalization of our downtowns is a key to sustainable and equitable economic development. Governor Hochul has prioritized downtown revitalization as a cornerstone of the State's economic development strategy through two complementary downtown redevelopment programs—the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) and New York Forward. This year, DRI will invest \$100 million in 10 new communities and New York Forward will invest an additional \$100 million in 20-30 smaller downtown neighborhoods.

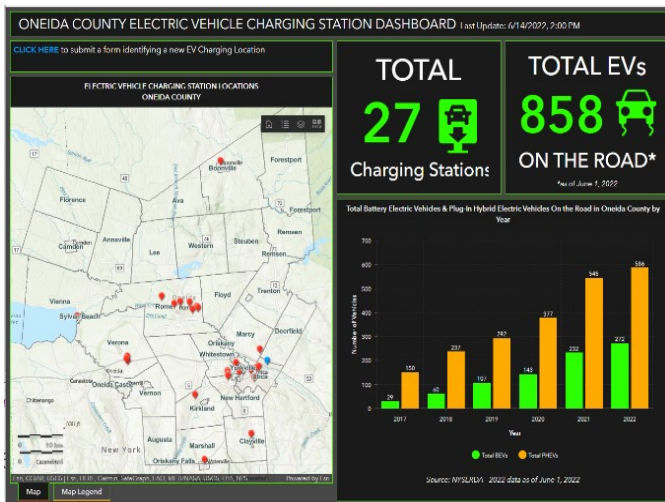
The overarching goals of the two programs, both of which are led by the Department of State, are to revitalize downtowns and reinvigorate local and regional economies by creating a critical mass of vibrant downtown destinations in each region. NY Forward diverges in several aspects to reach and serve the unique needs and characteristics of the State's smaller and rural communities.

Speaker: Kisha Santiago, Deputy Secretary of State for Planning, Development & Community Infrastructure, NYS Department of State

Applications for both programs are available now. Communities are encouraged to submit a **Letter of Intent to Apply no later than August 10, 2022. The application is due by September 23, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.**

Register at us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Qp0j0SfRQVKB6ThhWlirJg.

Oneida County EV Charging Station Dashboard Released



Oneida County announced the release of an Electric Vehicle Charging Station Dashboard that will pinpoint locations for residents and visitors.

The dashboard is an ESRI ArcGIS platform that has a variety of features to help residents and visitors locate and utilize electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. The dashboard map has pinpoint addresses of all Oneida County charging stations and provides information that includes location, charger type, number of chargers at the location, charger brand, payment method, connection type, kilowatts, hours of operations, charger access and whether there is accessible parking.

Also included on the dashboard is the total number of charging stations, the number of electric vehicles registered in the county and a year-over-year comparison of registered EVs. The total number of registered vehicles will be updated monthly.

The dashboard also has a submission form for local governments, businesses, and organizations in order to notify the county when new EV charging stations have been installed. Those submissions will be delivered directly to the Oneida County Planning Department and will then be added to the dashboard in real time.

The dashboard was a key implementation metric of the EV charging station community plan released in May 2022. It is available at www.ocgov.net and can be directly viewed using this [link](#).

Leasing Your Land for Solar Energy Development Webinar Recording Available

Penn State recently held a Leasing Your Land for Solar Energy Development webinar. The presenter was Scott Kurkoski, Managing Attorney for Levene Gouldin & Thompson, LLP in Binghamton, NY. It may be of interest to both landowners and municipalities and can be viewed [here](#).

Additional renewable and alternative energy webinars offered by Penn State are available [here](#).

Agrivoltaics and Solar Utility Considerations Webinar August 9

Hosted by Cornell Cooperative Extension, Penn State Extension, and PA & NY Farm Bureaus, webinar speakers Margaret Skinner from the University of Vermont and Jesse Robertson-Dubois from Bluewave will share their agrivoltaics (dual-use solar and agriculture) experiences including business and legal considerations landowners should think about and address from design to final operation. They will focus on a range of agrivoltaics practices beyond the increasingly common practice of grazing with sheep. There will be time for questions and answers at the end of the event.

This event is being offered at no charge to participants. Registration is required to receive the link to access the webinar. Registrants will also receive access to the webinar recording.

Register here: extension.psu.edu/agrivoltaics-and-solar-utility-considerations

Contact Us

NYS Tug Hill Commission
317 Washington Street
Watertown, NY 13601

Phone: 315-785-2380
Toll Free within the region:
1-888-785-2380
Email: tughill@tughill.org

Visit us at:

Web: www.tughill.org

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/TugHillCommission

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](#).



SEFA Presents Award to Tug Hill Commission

The Tug Hill Commission recently received an "Investment Award" for their 2021 [NYS SEFA](#) campaign! Pictured left to right are: Dawn Cole, CEO of United Way of Northern NY (UWNNY); Natasha Gamble, Director of Development at UWNNY; Felicia Passino, Carla Fowler, Matthew Johnson, and Jennifer Harvill from the Tug Hill Commission.

Meet the Commissioners - Leona Chereshnoski

Where are you from?

I'm from Osceola, born and raised. My legal address is in Lorraine where I lived and was married for 50 years.

Tell me about growing up in Osceola?

I was raised on a farm family, everyone helped, and it was a great life. The work was hard on my father who had six kids and a wife on the farm. When I was kid, I went to school in a one room schoolhouse until 6th or 7th grade. Life was spent gathering chicken eggs as a kid. I went to work in Syracuse where I met my husband. Syracuse was not for me, and we moved back to Osceola. Now my kids and I run a bed and breakfast.

What are some of your favorite things to do in your free time?

As I get older, I still enjoy hunting, we all hunt in our family and enjoy that time together. I like to travel and find a road I've never been on before. I volunteer with nonprofits, and that keeps me busy. I volunteer for the New York State Old Tyme Fiddlers Association. My mother was a fiddler. I am also secretary for my local snowmobile club.

Tell me a little about your background, career, and journey to become a Commissioner?

My experience is not like too many others. After I raised my three kids, I worked on and off. In 1979 I worked in the elementary school library. When my youngest daughter started college in 1991, I received my master's degree in Library Science from Syracuse University. Before that I was involved in town government. We built a playground and baseball field in Lorraine, wrote grants, and the Tug Hill Commission helped every step of the way. That was my first involvement with local government. In 1984 I was asked to join the Tug Hill Commission. After retiring from school libraries, and my husband's death, I have worked as Director of the Osceola Public Library, just 12 hours a week but I keep it going!

What do you like most about the Tug Hill region?

I like the woods, the peace and quiet, and the people. It's a good place to live. Tug Hill is changing, and it can be good for the economy. I love the historical aspects, I enjoy Osceola and the local history. My grandfather and husband were loggers. Constable Hall is also a wonderful place.

Where are some of your favorite places to visit in Tug Hill?

The woods are beautiful, there are things to see, and small communities are attractive to me. I love the ability at the commission to help small communities.

What projects/initiatives are you working on for the Tug Hill Commission and the community?

I stay posted on things of interest or concern by representing small towns on the hill. Rules and regulations can make it hard on town boards, which are almost completely volunteer led. I hate to see things pushed without the ability or resources to implement. I try to watch out for things like that. The planning part of the commission's role is doing good work, but sometimes (these regulations) may be either too restrictive or not restrictive enough. The commission is the best place to go for a town official for advice.

What do you enjoy most about being a Commissioner for the Tug Hill Commission?

I like the people I meet, the feeling of accomplishment when projects are completed and successful. The board and the staff is wonderful to work with.

What is your long-term vision for the Tug Hill Commission and the Tug Hill community?

I hope that the commission continues to be a voice for this special and different region. Local officials don't always have the ability to contact Albany. The commission is a representative voice. All our executive directors have been a voice for the communities.

What would you tell someone thinking about joining a leadership role as a Commissioner?

If you are interested in local government, being on the commission is a very good way to look out for Tug Hill. I meet the most interesting people. I can't express enough what a rewarding experience it is to serve on the commission.

What are a few major accomplishments you've seen while at the Tug Hill Commission?

We have helped communities with drinking water projects, but a water system isn't needed in each community. The water that comes off the hill is pure, and we need to take care of it. Planning is important, including help with landfills, windmills, and solar projects.

Is there anything else that you'd like to share?

This may sound like a Debbie Downer, but the commercialization of the Hill can be great for local businesses but also brings in noise and traffic. There is a need to promote consideration and respect from outside recreators to the residents and the community.

