

## Tug Hill Commission Celebrates 50 Years

Friends of the Tug Hill Commission from near and far joined together on Thursday, October 19, to celebrate 50 years of “helping local governments and citizens shape the future of the Tug Hill region.” Almost 150 people, including board members, staff, alumni, Tug Hill sages, and local, regional, and state partners, enjoyed a fun-filled evening at Tailwater Lodge in Altmar. The evening began with the premier of the new “Park It: Tug Hill” video produced by WPBS-TV, exploring the variety of four-season recreational activities on Tug Hill. Following the video, attendees socialized while enjoying music by the NYS Old Tyme Fiddlers’ Association.

Led by Chairman Jan Bogdanowicz and Executive Director Katie Malinowski, several individuals made remarks before dinner, including former executive directors John Bartow, Bob Quinn, and Ben Coe. The commission was also honored with proclamations from Senator Walczyk and Senator Mannion, and well-wishes from the remainder of the Tug Hill legislative delegation. Roger Maciejko was recognized for his 27 years as a Tug Hill Commissioner.

After dinner, the Class of 2023 Tug Hill Sages were announced. Sages from prior years – Bob Sauer, Fran Yerdon, and Ben Coe – were joined by: Art Baderman, Rodman; Rip Colesante, Constantia; Wayne Kwasniewski, Lewis; Wayne McIlroy, Carthage; Loretta Lepkowski, Chases Lake; and Bob Quinn, Sackets Harbor.

A full set of photos from the evening are available in a [Flickr](#) photo album. Videos from the evening are available on the commission’s [YouTube](#) channel.



Current Tug Hill Commission members: Jan Bogdanowicz, Leona Cheresnoski, Mike Yerdon, Gerry Ritter, Tom Boxberger. Not pictured, Bill Scriber.



Commission Executive Directors Katie Malinowski, Ben Coe, Bob Quinn, John Bartow.

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Tug Hill Sages: Wayne McIlroy, Bob Quinn, Ben Coe, Loretta Lepkowski, Wayne Kwasniewski, Art Baderman, Rip Colesante, Fran Yerdon. Not pictured, Bob Sauer.





*Recognizing 27 years of board service: Katie Malinowski, Carolyn Maciejko, Roger Maciejko, Jan Bogdanowicz.*



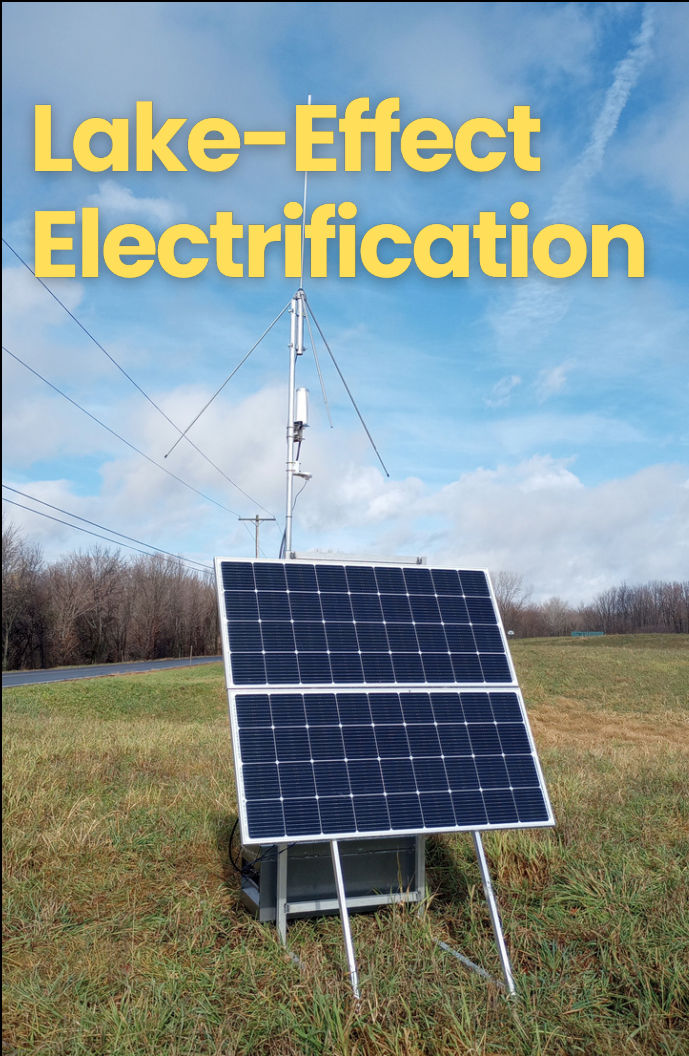
*Current Tug Hill Commission staff: Gabriel Yerdon, Matthew Smith, Paul Baxter, Chris Barboza, Mickey Dietrich, Angie Kimball, John Healt, Taylor McKinney, Matt Johnson, Katie Malinowski, Felicia Passino, Gwen Decker, Emily Fell, Jennifer Harvill.*



*Tug Hill Commission staff alumni: Bob Quinn, Ben Coe, Steve Hunter, Linda Garrett, Bob Stegemann, Nancy Martel, David Zembiec, Betty Adler, Jean Waterbury, Karen Catcher, Phil Street, Gerry Ritter, Lee Willbanks, John Bartow, Kayla Bogdanowicz.*



# Lake-Effect Electrification



Delving even deeper into the atmospheric phenomenon east of Lake Ontario, Dr. Scott Steiger - assisted by twenty-two undergraduate students from SUNY Oswego - recently completed fieldwork across the Tug Hill region for a new Lake-Effect Electrification (LEE) project. This project was unique in the collection of first-of-its-kind data with cutting edge lightning mapping arrays, dual-polarization X-band radar, and brand new balloon soundings. This data will provide meteorologists with a better idea of electrification and total lightning in lake-effect snowstorms, as well as how wind turbines initiate lightning.

Join the NYS Tug Hill Commission and Dr. Steiger to learn more about the LEE Project and their initial findings, as well as some SUNY Oswego students to talk about their experiences storm-chasing in the Tug Hill region!



## **Scott Steiger, Ph.D.**

*Professor of Meteorology, SUNY Oswego  
Director of Lake-Effect Storm Prediction & Research Center*

With professional research interests in thunderstorms and snow, Steiger served as an investigator for the 2013-2014 Ontario Winter Lake-effect Systems (OWLeS) project, which sought to better understand the conditions and interactions of different kinds of lake-effect systems. As a professor and researcher, Steiger's specialty areas include atmospheric electricity and lightning, radar meteorology, convective storms, and weather forecasting.



## **Event Details**

Tues, Nov 14th, 2023  
7:00-8:30 p.m.  
Sandy Creek Town Hall  
1992 Harwood Drive  
Sandy Creek, NY 13145


AND via Zoom!


## **Register Now!**

To register for this *free* event, click the following link:

[tinyurl.com/leehybridwebinar](https://tinyurl.com/leehybridwebinar)

Or call the NYS Tug Hill Commission office at (315) 785-2380

 (315) 785-2606

 [taylor@tughill.org](mailto:taylor@tughill.org)

# Forest Conservation Easement Grant to THTLT

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) recently announced over \$1.35 million in grants to land trusts across the state to secure forest conservation easements. Of that, \$181,150 was awarded to the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust to permanently protect 375 acres in the Tug Hill core forest. An easement on the Campbell property in Osceola will protect a beech-maple mesic forest, marsh headwater stream, spruce-fir swamp, and other significant wetlands. The property will complement the thousands of acres of bordering lands protected by The Nature Conservancy, New York State, and Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, further contributing to the effort to keep the core forest of Tug Hill intact.

The grants, managed by DEC in partnership with the Land Trust Alliance, were made available through the [Forest Conservation Easements for Land Trusts \(FCELT\) Grant Program](#).

## Local Government Workshop on Water Resources Programs

With partners, NY Sea Grant is hosting the ***Crosswalking Water Resources for Climate Smart Communities*** local government training workshops. To reach communities in New York's southern/eastern Lake Ontario basin, the same workshop is being held at two venues, one in Watertown and the other in Auburn. See below for more information.

This workshop is geared towards planning, zoning and municipal boards, supervisors, mayors, code enforcement officers, conservation advisory boards, and floodplain managers, but anyone interested in learning more about some federal and state programs and how they can be utilized to maintain and enhance water resources and floodplains is encouraged to attend.

For most municipalities, this local government workshop fulfills state law required training for local planning officials. A certificate of participation may be requested for the number of hours of attendance. For more information, please contact Mary Austerman at [mp357@cornell.edu](mailto:mp357@cornell.edu).

To register, click on the location that works best for you!

### **November 2, 2023 (Register by October 26, 2023), Auburn**

**9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

Holiday Inn, 75 North St, Auburn, NY 13021

Registration fee: \$35

Click here for a [Registration link](#)

### **Thursday, November 16, 2023 (Register by November 5, 2023), Watertown**

**9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

Hilton Garden Inn, 1290 Arsenal St, Watertown, NY 13601

Registration fee: \$45

Click here for a [Registration link](#)

## Funding Webinar November 14

"Accessing Local Funding Through the IRA (Infrastructure Recovery Act) and the Environmental Bond Act" will be the topic of a webinar in Tuesday, November 14 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Hosted by the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources and its chair, Senator Rachel May, the presentation will be given by the NY League of Conservation Voters President Julie Tighe. Registrants will learn about a variety of state and federal programs that cities, towns, and villages may be eligible for.

Register [here](#). Contact the [Legislative Commission on Rural Resources](#) with questions, (518) 455-2631, [ruralres@nysenate.gov](mailto:ruralres@nysenate.gov).





# Oneida Lake Watershed Stakeholder Survey

Do you live, work, recreate, or otherwise spend time in the Oneida Lake Watershed? Please fill out [this short survey](#)! The Oneida Lake watershed is getting a Nine Element Watershed Management (9E) Plan and your input concerning current and future threats to the watershed is a valuable piece of the planning effort. A 9E plan is a type of clean water plan that details a community's water quality concerns and a strategy to address these concerns.

## DEC Releases Final Unit Management Plan for Tug Hill East Unit

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) recently finalized the Unit Management Plan (UMP) for the Tug Hill East Unit. The UMP covers a total of 22,886 acres of public land in seven State Forests, one Unique Area, and 13 Detached Forest Preserve parcels in the Lewis County towns of Lewis, Martinsburg, Osceola, Turin, and West Turin, the Oneida County town of Ava, and the Oswego County town of Redfield. A bulleted list of planned management actions by year can be found on page 82 of the UMP.

The UMP addresses management activities for the next ten years. The unit is both Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) certified. State forest management goals for the unit include (1) Provide Healthy and Biologically Diverse Ecosystems, (2) Maintain Man-made State Forest Assets, (3) Provide Recreational Opportunities for People of all Ages and Abilities, (4) Provide Economic Benefits to the People of the State, and (5) Provide a Legal Framework for Forest Conservation and Sustainable Management of State Forests.

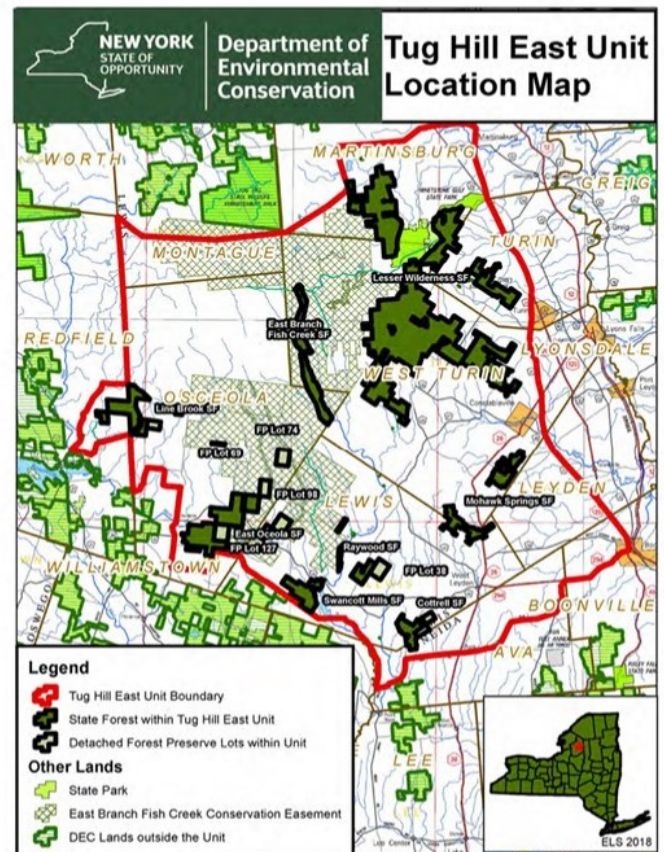
The Tug Hill East Unit contains 7,755.6 acres that will be protected because of wetland characteristics, 36.5% of the whole unit. It contains 23 at risk species. Extraction of forest products will continue while most management decisions will be based largely on uneven-aged management techniques with active intentional management that leads to structural complexity while keeping a late-successional forest. Management will enhance uneven-aged silviculture – most are even aged now and enhance quality saw timber and conifer forest cover. Management will aim to improve winter cover for white-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, and varying hare by increasing young, dense, softwood understory.

Soil and water conservation will be considered with all management activities. Public Forest Access Road (PFAR) improvements include: brush, rake and grade PFARs annually or at a minimum, once every 3 years; bridge replacement is needed at the end of the Seelman PFAR on Lewis RA# 5 and Seymour PFAR; Nob PFAR, Swancott Mills PFAR and Dolsee Trail PFAR, a total of 3.7 miles, need cross drainage culverts and significant gravel. Beaver Pond Road, 0.7 miles of haul road, also needs significant improvements and may be upgraded to a PFAR.

The final UMP incorporates increased opportunities for outdoor recreation, including seven new designated drive-up campsites, two walk-in primitive campsites, and a network of trails for the Motorized Access Program for Persons with Disabilities (MAPPWD). Additional parking areas will be developed to give the public better access to the Unit and additional proposed facilities within the Unit. Another management objective is to install an elevated viewing platform to observe birds and wildlife across the large wetland between North Road and the Whetstone Reservoir.

The carpenter ski trails will be upgraded and the trail system extended. Agreements with local snowmobile clubs on the existing trails will remain the same. Several linkage trails that would better connect the Lewis County ATV trail system are under consideration. The management plan will seek to identify potential helicopter landing sites for first responders and law enforcement.

The final UMP for Tug Hill East can be found on [DEC's website \(PDF\)](#). Paper copies are available for review at the DEC Region 6 Headquarters in the State Office Building in Watertown, the Lowville DEC sub-office, and the Lowville Library.



# Traffic Safety Coordinator Facebook Page Available

The Traffic Safety Coordinator Facebook page is officially active. The page will contain traffic safety information, tips, events, and other information focusing on increasing traffic safety and awareness. Please like and follow [here](#)!

The Traffic Safety Coordinator's informational page has been updated on the NYS Tug Hill Commission website at <https://tughill.org/services/traffic-counter/>. This page contains further information on the Traffic Safety Coordinator's [description and services](#), and provides information on the MetroCount [traffic counter](#).

## Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Walk and Talk November 1

The Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust and the St. Lawrence-Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM) are holding a guided walk at Whetstone Gulf State Park on Wednesday, November 1 from 10 a.m. to Noon. Learn to recognize and report Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) if found – an invasive insect that kills hemlock trees. This is the first of five informational survey outings being held in and near the Tug Hill region this winter. The following day, November 2, is reserved as an alternate date in the case of weather that isn't safe for travel.

The Eastern Hemlock is a key tree species found throughout Tug Hill that provides many benefits for people and nature. Detecting the presence of HWA early on provides enough time to protect infested trees and helps to stop the spread to new areas. Trainers will help participants learn how to identify the Eastern Hemlock, survey for HWA and report observations using their smartphone through a free mobile application called iMapInvasives (a community science tool). Please [register here](#).

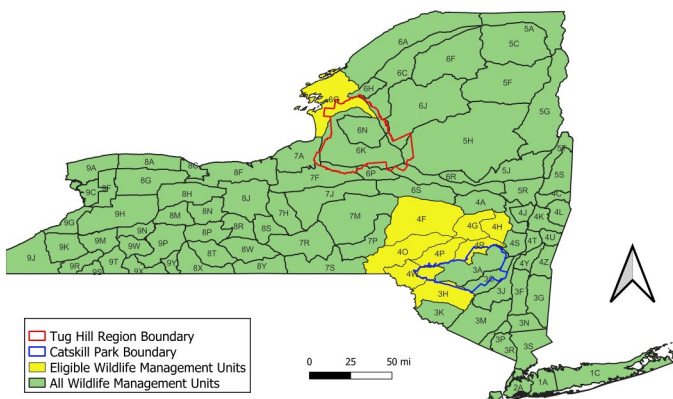
## Northern Tug Hill Region Included in Multi-Year Bald and Golden Eagle Study

White-tailed deer hunters in the northern portion of the Tug Hill region have the opportunity to participate in a multi-year study of non-lead ammunition impacts on the state's eagle conservation efforts. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is partnering with the New York Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at Cornell University, U.S. Geological Survey, and Conservation Science Global on a research study that seeks to engage deer hunters who are willing to make the switch from traditional lead ammunition to non-lead alternatives. The study will examine the positive impacts of reducing lead exposure in eagle populations.

Eagles are often exposed to lead fragments left behind when deer hunters field dress their deer and eagles scavenge the remains. Although both bald eagle and golden eagle

populations are stable in New York, research has shown that lead poisoning has negative impacts on population growth and stability in both species. DEC's partners are offering up to \$60 rebates for hunters to purchase certified non-lead ammunition along with the completion of a pre- and post-hunt survey. Hunters are eligible to participate if they have been issued a Deer Management Permit (DMP) in the following Wildlife Management Units (WMUs): 3H, 4F, 4G, 4H, 4O, 4P, 4R, 4W, and

2023-2024 Wildlife Management Units Where Participating Deer Management Permit Holders are Eligible for Non-Lead Ammo Rebates



6G (see map). These WMU's were chosen due to high eagle abundance and deer harvest rates.

This hunting season marks the beginning of this study, but DEC hopes to continue the study in the 2024 and 2025 hunting seasons. For more information and eligibility information, visit [the Hunters for Eagle Conservation website](#).

### Contact Us

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To request our newsletter electronically please email [gwen@tughill.org](mailto:gwen@tughill.org) or call

1-888-785-2380.

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