

Boonville Receives NY Forward Grant

The Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council recently announced its winners of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and NY Forward Competition and the village of Boonville is the recipient of a \$4.5 million NY Forward award – congratulations!



Governor Hochul Announces Mohawk Valley Winners of Seventh Round of Downtown Revitalization Initiative and Second Round of NY Forward Program.



From the Mohawk Valley REDC website: “Boonville showcased their can-do dedication with their first NY Forward application this year. It is clear they are committed to transforming their downtown into an attractive destination for tourists and residents alike – as they say, “walkable, bikeable, adorable”. Grants from NY Main Street, EPF, NYSERDA, DEC, and NYS Smart Growth have helped renovate mixed-use properties, renew parks, improve water quality, update their comprehensive plan with smart growth principles, and earn the Village a Clean Energy Community (CEC) designation. ESD strategic planning and feasibility funding was utilized in 2022 to study the former Delta Hardwood facility, which has been identified as a potential site to support multiple tenants and additional facility expansion. With investors ready with projects, a key component of their NY Forward application is to infill their Main Street with a new 16,000 SF historically accurate mixed-use construction filling the void left behind by the devastating 2020 fire that razed a five-building complex.”

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The Tug Hill Commission will meet on Monday, March 18 at 10:00 a.m. at the Village of Pulaski Snow Memorial Building, 4971 N. Jefferson St., Pulaski, NY 13142. The public is welcome to attend.

Clean Energy Communities 3.0 Webinar February 29

Find out how your community can benefit from \$25 million in new funding now available under NYSEDA's newly released Clean Energy Communities program. The program recognizes local clean energy leadership, provides match-free grants, helps reduce municipal energy use, lowers costs, and offers additional support for projects located in disadvantaged communities. Communities with populations under 39,999 can earn up to \$250,000 in funding through the Clean Energy Communities Program. Additionally, regional Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available for free technical assistance to help your community move through the program and secure grant funding! Learn more about the program on the [NYSEDA web-site](#).

Join the webinar on Thursday, February 29 at noon. Attendees must register at tinyurl.com/THcleanenergy.

For more information, contact Jill Henck at jhenck@adirondack.org.

February 29 Red Flags for Fraud Workshop

The Tug Hill Commission in conjunction with the Office of the New York State Comptroller, Division of Local Government and School Accountability will host a municipal fraud prevention and detection workshop on Thursday, February 29, at 7 p.m. This workshop will identify steps local officials can take to help detect and prevent fraud and abuse. Participants will learn about the fraud triangle, which consists of common red flags, organization vulnerabilities to fraud and how to minimize risks. Designed to provide practical advice and information with plenty of time available for questions, the workshop is free and open to anyone.

The workshop currently is being offered both in person in Boonville (13149 State Route 12, Boonville NY 13309) and online via Zoom. However, if in-person registration remains low, it may pivot to online only. Registration is required and can be completed online at tinyurl.com/FraudFlags or call the commission office at (315) 785-2380.

WQIP Grants Announced

Several Tug Hill and nearby communities were recently announced funding through the state's Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP). WQIP grants support projects that protect drinking water, combat contributors to harmful algal blooms, update aging water infrastructure, and improve aquatic habitat in communities statewide. Tug Hill Commission staff worked closely with the towns of Martinsburg and Denmark on applications to fund the construction of salt storage facilities. These facilities will provide a safer work environment for town employees, more efficient roads services for residents, and safer, cleaner water in nearby drinking wells and Roaring Brook and Deer River, which drain to the Black River.



- The town of Martinsburg was awarded \$215,103 to construct a salt storage facility adjacent to their highway garage to cover an exposed salt pile. The structure will protect the Black River and a nearby public water supply.
- The town of Denmark was awarded \$600,000 to construct a salt storage structure to cover its currently exposed salt pile. This project will protect Deer River and groundwater.
- The city of Watertown was awarded \$406,028 to construct a salt storage facility to cover an exposed salt storage pile, protecting the Black River and groundwater within a principal aquifer.
- The town of West Monroe was awarded \$647,200 for their Mulrone Drive stream culvert project. The town will replace a damaged and failing stream culvert in Big Bay Creek and install a box culvert and instream structures to mitigate stream-bank erosion, reduce stream velocity and streambed scour, and provide higher passability for aquatic life.
- The village of Cleveland was awarded \$1,000,000 for the Bridge Street stream culvert project. The village will complete a culvert repair on Cold Spring Brook by replacing the culvert and footings with a steel plate bridge to accommodate storm flow, reduce stream velocity, scour, and erosion, and remove a barrier to aquatic passage in the Oneida Lake watershed.
- The village of Camden was awarded \$1,000,000 for wastewater treatment disinfection to install an ultraviolet disinfection system at its wastewater treatment facility. This project will improve water quality in the West Branch of Fish Creek by reducing pathogens in the treatment plant's discharge.
- The village of Turin was awarded \$150,000 for a Mill Creek Streambank Stabilization project. The village will complete a streambank stabilization and dam repair project that has caused floodwater inundation of neighboring properties and streambank erosion. This project will remove portions of the dam, stabilize the streambank, and install grade control structures that will realign Mill Creek.

Oneida Lake Focus Group March 7, West Monroe

A public focus group on the Oneida Lake Watershed 9 Element Plan will be held on Thursday, March 7, from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. at the West Monroe Town Hall 46 County Route 1, West Monroe. Register and learn about additional focus groups being held in Utica, Syracuse, and Wampsville [here](#).

The Oneida Lake Watershed covers a large part of the Tug Hill region, including portions of at least 18 towns. Runoff from Tug Hill may have lesser water quality concerns than tributaries stemming from areas such as agriculture heavy Madison County or more developed areas like the outskirts of Rome and Syracuse. Because of the variety of land uses and development in the watershed, and its size, there will be four focus groups held to gather input from people who live, work and recreate in the watershed!

We will be discussing a range of issues, including: flooding, stormwater control, streambank erosion, improvements to farms that improve water quality, forestry practices, growth & economic development, municipal regulations and water quality, and septic system impacts.

Each two-hour session will start with an hour focused on the natural environment and agriculture, followed by an hour focused on the man-made environment, including homes, roads, and future development in the region. You can attend one or both portions.

Madison County and the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board are developing the [Oneida Lake Watershed 9 Element Plan](#), with support from partners at the Tug Hill Commission and the Herkimer-Oneida Counties Planning Program in holding focus group sessions on issues in the watershed.



Tug Hill Winter Wildlife Webinar Series: Part 3 of 4

Next Up – Tug Hill Birds!

Tuesday March 12th at 6PM

Join Irene Mazzocchi, retired Region 6 DEC wildlife biologist and Linda Gibbs, Community Programs Director for Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, for a lesson on Tug Hill birds. They'll talk about bird identification, population trends, habitat protection efforts, ways to help birds every day, and point us toward some ways we can help with citizen science programs.

Register at tinyurl.com/TugHillBirds

View the two previous webinars on Fisher and Marten at:

tughill.org/services/training/



Above, Blue-headed Vireo in Croghan. Left, Pileated Woodpecker in New Bremen. Submitted to the THTLT 2024 calendar by Tyler Clemons.

Come to a smart solar listening session hosted by American Farmland Trust and Thousand Islands Land Trust



Can solar help your farm's bottom line?

Come share your questions, insights and concerns

Thursday, March 28th
12 – 2 PM

JCC – Lewis County Education Center
7395 East Road
Lowville, NY 13367



Register online now >

Please let us know you are coming so we can notify you if weather requires us to reschedule.

Are you facing the possibility of a solar lease? Interested in farming and solar?

Come share your insights and concerns, and learn how solar can work with farming rather than against it. We will provide information on avoiding inappropriate solar development and ensuring it is properly designed to increase soil health, water management, and farm viability.

Pizza lunch will be served.

For more information:

American Farmland Trust
Linda Garrett
New York Regional Director

Phone: [+1 \(518\) 732 6254](tel:+15187326254)
Email: Lgarrett@farmland.org
Website: farmland.org

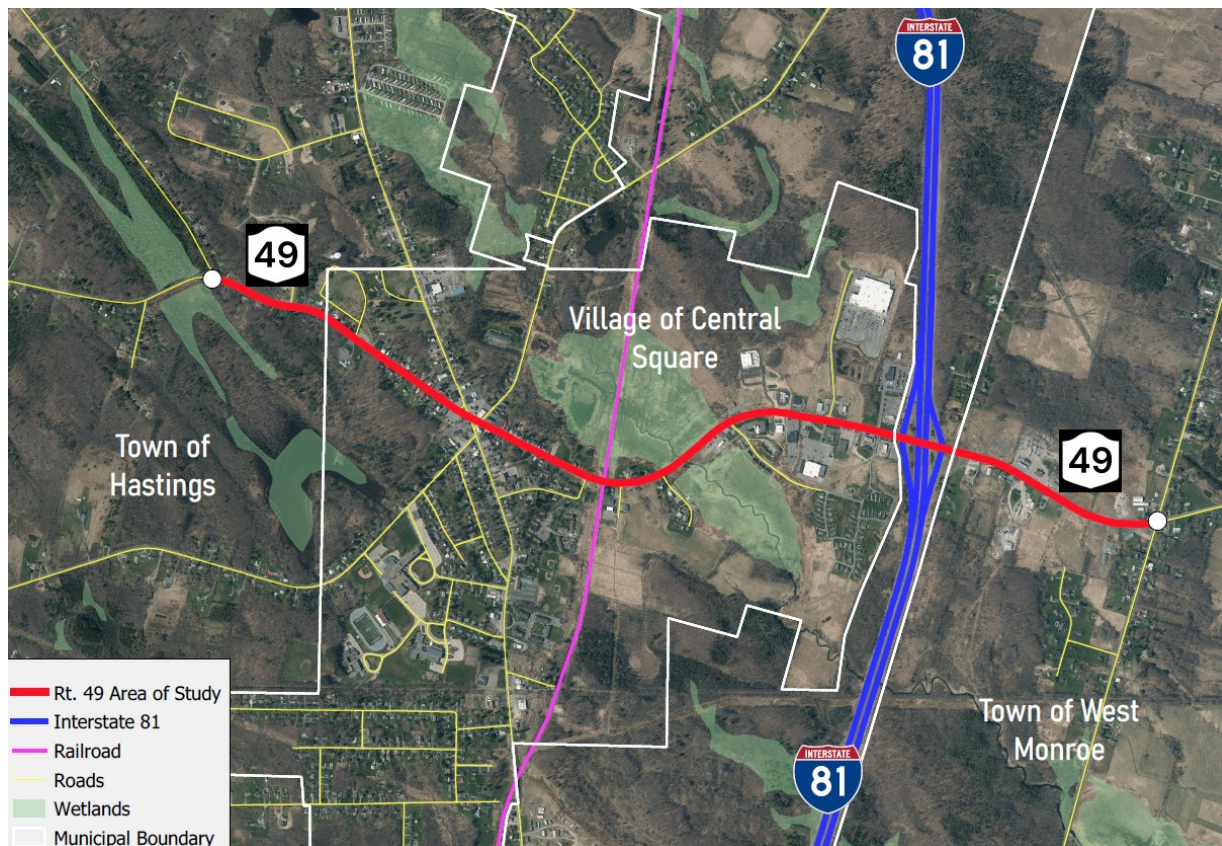
Who should attend:

- Agriculture and Farmland Protection Boards
- Planning Board Members

Route 49 Corridor Study Approved

The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council has adopted their 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program, which includes a project sponsored by West Monroe for a Route 49 Corridor study. The project “will address transportation needs of the area residents and commuters, adequacy, safety, and ease of use of existing transportation infrastructure, access management, and a traffic safety analysis.” According to the UPWP, the study is worth \$55,000. The study is slated to begin in the first quarter of the state fiscal year 2024-2025, and a final document is proposed to be presented in the second quarter of state fiscal year 2025-2026. There are many steps to the project and public engagement is envisioned as part of the process.

Check out the SMTC website and the 2024-2025 UPWP: smtcmpo.org/about-us/planning-process/upwp/



* Approximate study area.

RACOG Economic Visioning Summit March 29

The River Area Council of Governments' Economic Visioning Summit will be held on Friday, March 29 at the Carthage Elks Lodge, 511 Fulton St., Carthage. It will run from 9:00 a.m. to noon, followed by lunch, and is free to attend. There will be presentations on the Denmark Highway Garage and Solar Project, Fort Drum Regional Impact, Lowville DRI, Traffic Data, Jeopardy Game, and potential some other additional projects.

Register at tinyurl.com/racogsummit2024, and contact Mickey Dietrich at mickey@tughill.org, (315) 681-5023 with any questions.



Grant Opportunity: Preservation Opportunity Fund

The NY Preservation League is launching a new, annually occurring grant program this year to help support capital improvement projects at significant historic properties in New York State.

WHO: Only 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations in New York State are eligible to apply.

WHAT: This grant will support discrete capital projects on historical buildings, sites, structures, and objects. Eligible work may include, but is not limited to, restoration and repair of windows, masonry, roofing/structural systems, historic interiors/exterior, historic finishes, or electrical and HVAC systems.

WHEN: All interested applicants must submit a short Letter of Intent (LOI) by **March 12, 2024**, before 5:00 p.m. From there, a limited number of applicants will be contacted by the Preservation League to submit a full application, due **April 30, 2024**, before 5:00 p.m.

WHERE: The application process for this grant, including the LOI submission, is supported entirely through the online grant application system, SmarterSelect. Organizations applying for funding through the Preservation League the first time will need to create an organization account.

For more information concerning this grant opportunity and detailed guidelines for the application process, please visit the webpage for the Preservation Opportunity Fund [here](#). A recording of the most recent information session about this session, hosted on February 13, 2024, is available on YouTube [here](#). For direct questions about the grant program, please contact grants@preservenys.org.

Funding for Forestport Invasive Species Boat Wash Station

New York State recently announced the recipients of \$3 million in state grants for 43 invasive species projects. The town of Forestport, Oneida County, will receive \$48,600 for aquatic invasive species watercraft spread prevention, stewards, and a boat decontamination program.

The grants are part of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's [Invasive Species grant program](#), which provides funding for aquatic and terrestrial invasive species spread prevention, early detection and rapid response, lake management planning, research, and education and outreach.

Traffic Safety Coordinator Presents at Local Schools

The commission's Traffic Safety Coordinator, Christopher Barboza, recently held traffic safety awareness presentations at Lowville, Sandy Creek, and Thousand Islands High Schools. The presentations at Lowville and Sandy Creek were combined with a presentation provided by Karen Torres, a distracted driving awareness advocate, speaker, and educator. The presentation at the Thousand Islands High School was provided by the traffic safety coordinator as part of their driver's education class. The focus of these presentations was to identify the causes of crashes that occur among the population of youth drivers, and discuss risky behaviors that need to be avoided when behind the wheel. The presentations were well received by students and school faculty, and the next scheduled traffic safety presentation is being held at Hannibal High School in Oswego County on February 29 as part of their driver education program. This event includes coordinated efforts with Oswego County's Stop DWI program who will provide impairment goggles to facilitate the presentation. Additional presentation opportunities are being looked at for April (National Distracted Driving Awareness Month) and May (Global Youth Traffic Safety Month).

Contact Us

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To request our newsletter electronically please email gwen@tughill.org.

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