

# TUG HILL TIMES



July 26, 2024

NYS TUG HILL COMMISSION | DULLES STATE OFFICE BUILDING | 317 WASHINGTON STREET | WATERTOWN NY 13601 (315) 785-2380 | [www.tughill.org](http://www.tughill.org)

## Commission Annual Dinner September 19

Invitations are in the mail for the Tug Hill Commission's annual dinner on Thursday, September 19 at the Hayloft at Moonshine Farm. If you did not receive an invitation and would like to join, please call the office at (315) 785-2380.

### You Are Invited

#### NYS Tug Hill Commission Annual Dinner

Thursday, September 19, 2024

The Hayloft at Moonshine Farm  
6615 Bueno Road, Port Leyden, NY 13433

Cost: \$30 per person with cash bar.

Please return RSVP with your check made payable to  
"NYS Tug Hill Commission" by Friday, September 6.

Please call 315-785-2380 with any questions.

Hope to see you there!

Photo credit: Tony Machla

### Evening Agenda



5:00 p.m. Social Hour - Music provided by Cincinnati Creek Band

6:00 p.m. Introductions

6:10 p.m. Tug Hill Commission Year in Review

6:25 p.m. NYS Association of Conservation Commission Awards

6:50 p.m. Buffet Dinner by Pine Tree Inn

7:50 p.m. Speaker - *Katie Petronis, Deputy Commissioner for Natural Resources,  
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*

*Our annual dinner is hosting the NYS Association of Conservation Commission's conference reception. More information about the NYSACC conference at [www.nysacc.net/2024-coe](http://www.nysacc.net/2024-coe).*

## Town Budget Workshops in Altmar and Boonville

Two town budget training workshops will be held in August:

- ◆ **Wednesday, August 7**, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Albion Town Hall, located at 15 Bridge Street in the hamlet of Altmar.
- ◆ **Thursday, August 29**, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Boonville Municipal Building, 13149 State Route 12, Boonville.

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The presenter will be Laird Petrie, and the workshops are sponsored by the NYS Tug Hill Commission, in cooperation with the Cooperative Tug Hill Council, North Shore Council of Governments, Northern Oneida County Council of Governments, River Area Council of Governments, and the Salmon Rivers Council of Governments.

These free training opportunities are designed to assist town officials in preparing their annual budgets. Villages are welcome to attend, but the workshops are aimed at assisting towns to prepare for the 2025 budgeting process. Topics to be covered include an overview of the budgetary responsibilities of local officials, development of a structurally balanced budget, key elements of the annual budget, tools available for assisting town officials in the budget process and monitoring and amending the annual budget. Please bring questions for Laird to address during the question and answer period!

The workshops are free of charge but registration is required. Space is limited, so register soon by calling the Tug Hill Commission at 315-785-2380 or by emailing [tughill@tughill.org](mailto:tughill@tughill.org).



www.nysacc.net/2024-coe

# 2024 NYSACC Conference on the Environment

Highlighting work in & around the Tug Hill region while sharing it statewide for others to understand, relate to, & learn about.

**September 18-20**



**Join us for a virtual day of presentations followed by two days of field trips and in-person social hour and conference reception!**

## A Glimpse of Our Speakers

### **Nick Tackett (Renewable Energy)**

Great Lakes Hydropower Licensing,  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Office of Energy Projects

### **Alanah N. Keddell-Tuckey (Natural Resources Economy)**

Director, Office of Environmental Justice,  
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

### **John Souva, III (Environment)**

Land Protection/Education & Outreach Manager,  
Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust

### **Alicia Lührssen-Zombek (Recreation & Tourism)**

Associate Director of Resource & Development,  
Restore Forward

## Grant Writing Workshop

Learn how to register, prequalify, & search for NYS grant opportunities, especially now as the state transitioned from Grants Gateway to the Statewide Financial System.

## Career Panel For Students

Students can interact with & can ask questions to environmental professionals to learn about their careers.

## NYS Initiatives: 30x30 & 70x30

Learn about the conservation & renewable energy goals being implemented throughout the state.

## Registration

Full Conference: \$75

Virtual Day Only: \$25

The virtual day is free for students!

## Register here!

[tinyurl.com/NYSACC-Conference-Registration](http://tinyurl.com/NYSACC-Conference-Registration)

**Our full agenda can be found on our website.**

Questions?  
Contact Jillian Lee,  
[jillian@tughill.org](mailto:jillian@tughill.org)

# New Advocate Drum Executive Director

Advocate Drum, the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization, has hired Michael S. McFadden to serve as its new executive director. Mike is a 32-year veteran of the United States Army, having served nearly 10 of those years on assignments at Fort Drum. He is a native of Mandeville, LA and has a Bachelor of Science (Criminal Justice) from Touro University, and a Master of Business Administration from Virginia Commonwealth University. He was also a Senior Military Fellow at Syracuse University, a program affiliated with the U.S. Army War College.

After retiring from the Army, Mr. McFadden worked several years at Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation as a senior manager in the manufacturing of executive business/personal aircraft. He and his wife, Shery, a Lowville native, recently moved back to the North Country and now live in Croghan. They have three sons—two of whom are in college.

Advocate Drum is a member-based organization dedicated to protect and enhance Fort Drum's military value; sustain and leverage its economic and cultural significance to the Fort Drum region and New York State; and foster effective communication between the installation and its civilian neighbors to promote mutual support and understanding. Visit at [www.fdrlo.org](http://www.fdrlo.org) to learn more.



## Lake Ontario Fisheries Meetings in Henderson and Mexico

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) recently held public meetings to discuss Lake Ontario fisheries management and research. The meeting in Henderson was held on June 4 and hosted by the Henderson Guides Association. The meeting in Mexico was held on July 17 and hosted by the Eastern Lake Ontario Salmon and Trout Association. These annual meetings highlighted Lake Ontario sport fisheries and discussed with anglers a wide array of management actions and research taking place on the lake and its tributaries.

Around 30 people attended the meeting in Mexico, including Tug Hill Commission staff. There, DEC staff entered into a wide-ranging conversation with attendees. Topics covered included fluctuating salmon and trout populations in Lake Ontario, and the correlated abundance in prey species such as alewife and smelt. The crowd discussed DEC's switch from fin clipping to maternal DNA collection at spawning, to mark and track hatchery produced fish. This switch will save a large amount of staff time needed for fin clipping, and now adult, wild-caught fish will only be identifiable as hatchery born via genetic testing. Volunteers and DEC staff collect these genetic samples as one piece of data that educates the annual creel survey. Sea lamprey populations were reported to be stabilizing after a spike in populations after a lapse in lampricide treatments of Lake Ontario tributaries during the Covid-19 pandemic. A key concern voiced by attendees was the large loss of newly stocked fish to cormorants and gulls. DEC staff reported improvements meant to decrease losses at stocking, although increasing cormorant populations seem to be an ongoing concern. The annual steelhead trout and salmon runs inland from Lake Ontario are a key economic and tourism driver for portions of the Tug Hill region, especially the Salmon River area.

For more information on Lake Ontario fisheries management and a summary of the 2023 creel survey results, visit [DEC's website](#).

## Bridge NY Funding Announced

Several bridge projects in and near Tug Hill were awarded funding in NYS Department of Transportation's recent [announcement](#):

- \$2.509 million to Oswego County for the replacement of Route 23A bridge over Scriba Creek Bridge
- \$1.437 million to Oswego County for the replacement of Route 17 bridge over Fish Creek
- \$1.986 million to Oswego County for the replacement of Powers Road bridge over Little Sandy Creek
- \$2.772 million to Oneida County for the replacement of Brewer Road bridge over West Branch Fish Creek
- \$2.502 million to Oneida County for the replacement of Route 50 bridge over Stony Creek
- \$1.496 million to Lewis County for the replacement of Eatonville Road bridge over Otter Creek Bridge
- \$1.069 million to Jefferson County for the replacement of Brown Road bridge over Fish Creek
- \$3.189 million to Lewis County for the replacement of Wood Battle Road bridge over Cobb Creek
- \$1.036 million to Lewis County for the replacement of Pine Grove Road culvert carrying Harvey Creek
- \$1.500 million to Lewis County for the replacement of Boshart Road culvert carrying Hufcut Creek
- \$1.173 million to Jefferson County for the replacement of Millens Bay Road culvert carrying Shaver Creek

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Help document local flooding and storm impacts through community science

The MyCoast New York portal is used to collect and analyze photos of flooding, changing shorelines, and hazardous weather impacts across New York's varied coasts and waterbodies.

Photos are linked to real-time environmental conditions to create reports that help emergency managers, local planners, residents, and state agencies understand our changing environment and make informed decisions.

## REPORT TYPES



**FLOOD WATCH -**  
Tracking flooding  
across the state



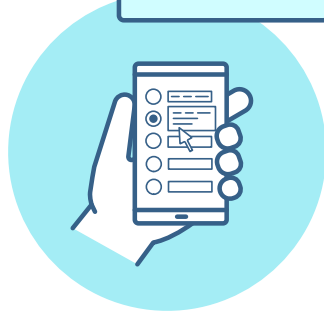
**STORM REPORTER -**  
Documenting  
storm damage

Download the **MyCoast app** or visit **MyCoast.org/ny**

DOWNLOAD



REGISTER



SNAP PHOTO



SUBMIT REPORT



Need more info?  
Contact Jessica Kuonen,  
jak546@cornell.edu



NEW YORK STATE  
WATER RESOURCES  
INSTITUTE

# Septic System Replacement Funds Available

Round four of the Septic System Replacement Fund was recently announced and all four counties in the Tug Hill region are now eligible for funding. Funding is available for cesspools or septic systems that are failing or in need of repair and are located near a priority waterbody. Property owners can be reimbursed for up to 50% of the costs (up to a maximum of \$10,000) of their eligible septic system projects. Visit your county's website or the NYS website to see if the waterbody near your property is eligible! If you are unsure of your system status, free dye testing may also be available.

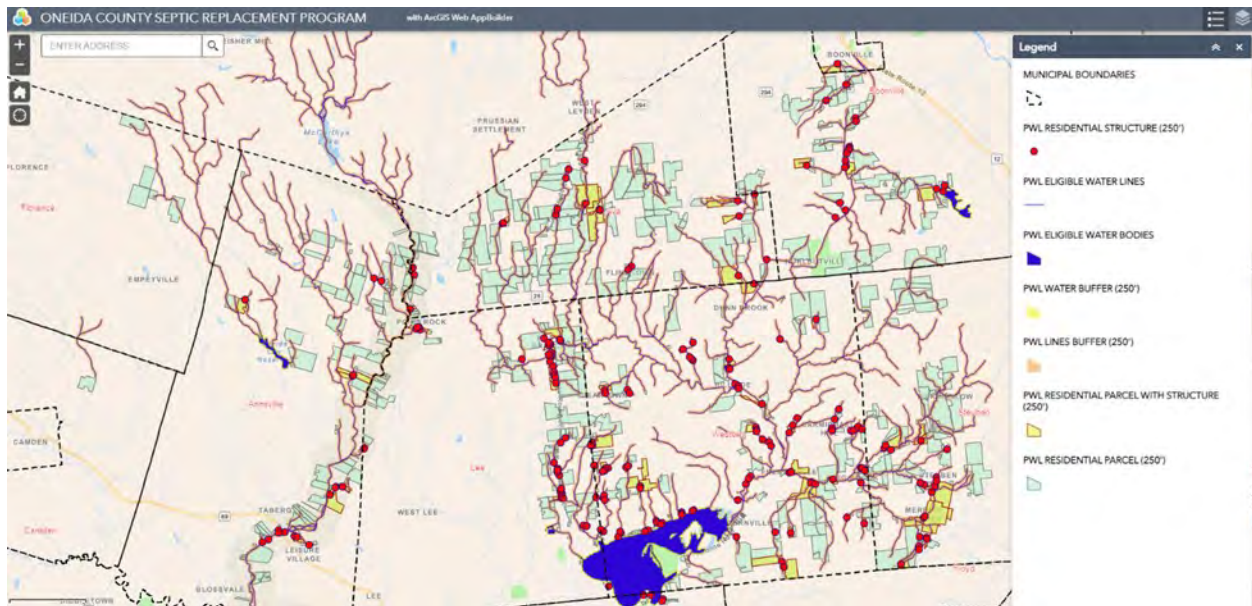
**Lewis County:** Website, mapping tool, and contact information [here](#).

**Oswego County:** Contact Tim Stahl; [tim.stahl@oswegocounty.com](mailto:tim.stahl@oswegocounty.com); website and map [here](#). Little Sandy Creek, Upper, and tributaries are also eligible, but not mapped.

**Jefferson County:** Contact Sara Freda; [sfreda@co.jefferson.ny.us](mailto:sfreda@co.jefferson.ny.us), 315-785-3144, website [here](#).

**Oneida County:** Contact Jerry Jose; [jjose@ocgov.net](mailto:jjose@ocgov.net); 315-798-5064, map [here](#).

NYS Septic System Replacement website: [efc.ny.gov/septic-replacement](https://efc.ny.gov/septic-replacement)



# Vacant Property Clearance Grant Program

The NYS Office of Community Renewal (OCR) is currently accepting applications to its [Vacant Property Clearance Program](#) (VPCP). Eligible applicants are non-entitlement units of general local government (county, town, city, or village), excluding metropolitan cities, urban counties, and Indian Tribes that are designated entitlement communities. A list of eligible communities is available on the OCR [website](#). Joint applications between two or more eligible local governments may be submitted, where the joint effort is required to solve the problem.

The VPCP provides Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for the clearance, demolition, and removal of blighted buildings in commercial and mixed-use neighborhoods that pose a threat to public health and safety. These funds are intended to provide assistance for “demolition-only” activities where a qualified end-use has not been identified or where the property will remain vacant post clearance. Activities will fall into one of two categories:

1. Slum/Blight Area (SBA) – Clearance and/or demolition of one or more buildings and/or structures in an area officially designated by the grantee that meets the definition of a slum, blighted, deteriorated or deteriorating area.
2. Slum/Blight Spot (SBS) – Clearance and/or demolition of a single building or structure to address and arrest a specific instance of blight or deterioration. An aggregation of scattered spots may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Interested applicants must complete a two-step process, beginning with a pre-application form within the NYS [Consolidated Funding Application \(CFA\)](#). Based upon the results of the consultation and the pre-submission information, the applicant may be invited to submit a full application for funding within the CFA. Applications will be accepted, and awards made on a rolling basis through December 31, 2024, or until all funds are committed.



# Community-Scale Wasted Food Reduction in Municipalities

How can we help?

You are invited to join the Development Authority of the North Country (DANC), ANCA's Compost for Good team, Syracuse University, and Clarkson University for a gathering of North Country municipal leaders and champions to share your goals, plans, needs and curiosities about wasted food and to learn more about:

- Federal and state level plans to support the reduction of wasted food including several grant opportunities
- How private/public partnerships can boost capacity to meet food waste reduction goals
- Updates to the NYS Food Waste Reduction and Recycling Act and how it might impact your constituents
- Municipal success stories including opportunities for support of food waste reduction

Wednesday,  
**August 7**  
**12-1:30**

**Register  
here!**



Clarkson 

 **compost  
for good**  
*reimagining waste*

**S** **Syracuse University**  
College of Engineering  
& Computer Science

Center for Sustainable  
Community Solutions

Hope to see you on the 7th!  
For more information, contact Organics Recycling  
Coordinator Jennifer Perry ([jperry@adirondack.org](mailto:jperry@adirondack.org))

## Tug Hill Commission Receives Driving Simulator

The Tug Hill Commission recently acquired a distracted driving simulator system. This advanced simulator offers a variety of realistic scenarios such as driving in adverse weather conditions, driving on rural roads and busy urban streets, and driving at night. The simulator provides comprehensive training for various types of driving environments. It can also simulate distracted driving and impaired driving, ensuring that drivers understand the dangers of these types of behaviors. The simulator provides detailed feedback using a grading scale that identifies violations and the driver's reactions, promoting safer driving practices. The use of the driving simulator can assist with improving driver safety, reduce accidents, and promote overall road safety throughout the region.

Contact Chris Barboza at 315-785-2389 or [chris@tughill.org](mailto:chris@tughill.org) if your community is interested in a demonstration of the system.

## New York State 2024 Driver Opinion Survey

The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) is conducting the New York State 2024 Driver Opinion Survey to gather information on driver behavior. The survey seeks feedback on various traffic safety topics, including seat belt usage, speeding, distracted driving, and impaired driving. The GTSC encourages organizational partners to participate and share the survey with others to help create a comprehensive understanding of driving habits in the state. The insights gained will aid in implementing effective highway safety measures and reduce the number of crashes and fatalities that occur on New York State roadways.

The survey is anonymous, with no email information collected. The survey is available on the GTSC main page at [trafficsafe-ty.ny.gov/](https://trafficsafe-ty.ny.gov/) or directly through this link: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/2024nydriversurvey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2024nydriversurvey). Your feedback and cooperation are greatly appreciated.

## Lewis County Riverfest August 3

Riverfest will be held on the Black River in Lewis County on Saturday, August 3, starting at the Lyons Falls boat launch and ending at the Glenfield boat launch. The 8.6-mile paddle includes a midpoint stop at the Burdick's Crossing boat Launch. Learn more and [register here](#).

## NYPF Wetlands Webinar August 14

The New York Planning Federation (NYPF) will be providing the next session in their Learn at Lunch series of webinars on updates to the NYS Freshwater Wetlands Act.

**WHEN:** Wednesday, August 14 from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Online via Zoom, link will be provided with registration

**WHAT:** Freshwater wetlands are lands and submerged lands—sloughs, and bogs—that support aquatic or semi-aquatic vegetation. New York's Freshwater Wetlands Act was enacted in 1975 and modernized as part of the 2022-2023 Enacted State Budget. The proposed rule would take effect in January 2025 and clarify jurisdictional status of smaller wetlands of "unusual importance" that meet one of 11 specific criteria contained in the newly amended Freshwater Wetlands Act. In addition, the draft regulations provide a revised wetlands classification system and a process for the public to request and appeal jurisdictional determinations.

**WHO:** Presenter will be Krista Spohr, DEC Environmental Program Specialist

**HOW:** Email [nypf@nypf.org](mailto:nypf@nypf.org) with your name, email address and municipality to register by August 12 at 4:00 p.m.

The session is open to NYPF members and non-members and NYPF members may receive one hour of training credit toward their annually required training. For more information on the New York Planning Federation check out their website at [nypf.org](https://nypf.org).

### Contact Us

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Visit us at:

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

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