



July 3, 2025

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

Second Annual Oswego County Micron Summit Held

SUNY Oswego hosted the second annual Oswego County Micron Strategy Steering Committee summit on June 20. After a welcome from SUNY Oswego president Dr. Peter Nwosu and an update from Micron’s senior manager of external affairs Joe Nehme, nine workgroup reports were provided. Key 2024 achievements across the work groups included:

- Oswego County Industrial Park expansion to allow space for a semiconductor industry cluster.
- Progress on Downtown Revitalization Initiative and NY Forward grants in Fulton, Hastings/Cicero, Phoenix and Pulaski.
- Workforce development including an advanced manufacturing laboratory collaboration and regional STEM excellence center.
- Official designation of the Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary.
- Significant progress on both the county’s housing strategy study and Oswego County Comprehensive Plan, both to be completed in 2025.
- Progress on improvements in infrastructure, including water, wastewater, and broadband.
- Designation of Oswego County as a Work Ready Community by ACT WorkKeys.

The complete 2024 annual report can be found on SUNY Oswego’s website [here](#).

Micron Draft EIS Released; Public Hearings July 24

The Onondaga County Industrial Development Agency, as lead agency for the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) review and in concert with the U.S. Department of Commerce who is lead agency for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review, released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Micron project last week. The lengthy document can be viewed at ongovod.com/microndeis2025/. There will be three public hearings on Thursday, July 24 at Liverpool High School, and the public can submit written comments until August 11.

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The document’s sections detail: site selection; construction phases; site layout alternatives; growth inducing effects; land use, zoning, and public policy; geology, soils and topography; water resources; biological resources; historic and cultural resources; air quality; greenhouse gas emissions, climate change and climate resilience; solid waste, hazardous waste, and hazardous materials; human health and safety; transportation and traffic; noise and vibration; visual effects and community character; community facilities, open space, and recreation; socioeconomic conditions; and environmental justice.

Micron plans to build up to four chipmaking factories at the corner of Route 31 and Caughdenoy Road in the town of Clay. The project, estimated to cost \$100 billion and to employ 9,000 people, would be the largest private investment in New York state history.

After the public comment period ends, agencies must review and respond before the final EIS is published, likely in October.

Large-Scale Solar Webinar Series for Planners and Municipal Officials

Join Cornell Cooperative Extension throughout July for a free webinar series that will take a comprehensive look at what municipal officials and planners need to know about large-scale solar development. The four sessions run consecutive Wednesdays in July from 5:30-7:00 p.m. For more information, contact Guillermo Metz, Solar & Ag Senior Resource Educator, Cornell Cooperative Extension - Tompkins County, at gm52@cornell.edu.

Session 1, Wednesday, July 9, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.: Working effectively with the community/municipality/developer. Register [here](#).

Large-scale renewable energy projects present many challenges for municipal officials and planners. Good communication and coordination between all stakeholders can be crucial for these projects to move forward without creating strong feelings that can divide a community. The presenters will talk about how to establish an effective framework for bringing all stakeholders into the process and the resources that are available through NYSEDA to help municipalities navigate the process. Speakers are **Jessica Bacher**, Executive Director of the Land Use Law Center at Pace University; **Neely Kelly**, Senior Manager for Stakeholder Relations for the AES Corporation; and **Jennifer Manierre**, Director of Clean Energy Siting with NYSEDA.

Session 2, Wednesday, July 16, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.: Environmental concerns. Register [here](#).

Large-scale renewable energy projects can transform thousands of acres, affecting stormwater management, soils, creating noise and other disturbances during construction, and more. How can municipalities assess what's at risk in their communities and what tools are available for them to manage these issues? Presenters will also talk about real and not-so-real concerns about the equipment itself. Speakers are **Jason Mulford**, Principal Environmental Analyst with the NYS Department of Ag and Markets; and **Annick Anttil**, Associate Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering and AgBio Research at Michigan State University.

Session 3, Wednesday, July 23, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.: First-responder concerns. Register [here](#).

Large-scale renewable energy projects can present health and safety concerns that could require emergency services. How can municipalities ensure they are prepared? The presenter will cover the most significant health and safety concerns associated with large-scale solar projects and how to ensure facilities are as safe as possible and emergency personnel are properly trained to respond. The speaker is **Michael Bowes**, Senior Project Engineer with the Energy Safety Response Group.

Session 4, Wednesday, July 30, 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.: Community benefit agreements. Register [here](#).

Host community benefit agreements can be used to return financial benefits from large-scale renewable energy projects into the community they're sited in — to help pay for everything from playgrounds and new trails to emergency response equipment. Presenters will cover how these agreements work and who can/should be part of them. They will also talk about how to use payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) agreements to disincentivize siting these projects on active and/or prime farmland and earmark some of those payments to benefit specific community groups, including the ag community that is often directly affected by them. Speakers are **Matthew Eisenson**, Senior Fellow leading the Renewable Energy Legal Defense Initiative at Columbia Law School's Sabin Center for Climate Change Law; **Joe Lawrence**, Cornell PRO-DAIRY's Dairy Forage Crop Production System Specialist; and **Christie Gross**, Director of Clean Connect Strategies.

NOCCOG 2025 Scholarship Awards

The Northern Oneida County Council of Governments board of directors is pleased to announce the winners of the 2025 NOCCOG Scholarships. Each winner will receive \$500 after the completion of their first college semester.

This year's awardees are - Claire Miller, from Adirondack, Noah Metott, from Camden, Emerson Hanna, from Holland Patent, and Casey Gates, from Remsen.

The award is given to recognize the importance of local government, as well as the unacknowledged service, commitment, and dedication of community members who are essential in the daily operation of our towns and villages. Ideally, the candidate has been involved in school or community organizations, and given their time, often behind the scenes, without the desire for recognition. The award is given with the hope the recipient will someday be involved in their local government.



Emerson Hanna, (right) Holland Patent senior receives 2025 NOCCOG Scholarship Award from John Healt, NOCCOG municipal management consultant.

NOCCOG Executive Committee Meets in Remsen



The Northern Oneida County Council of Governments executive committee met at the new town of Remsen municipal office on Thursday, June 26. The full board was present, along with associate advisors Lisa Bellinger and Joe Rowlands, and GPS mapper Mike Thompson. Representing the Tug Hill Commission were Jennifer Harvill, associate director of community and regional projects, and Gerry Ritter, commission chair.

After the meeting was called to order by chair Bob Sauer, invited guest, Jay Grasso, president of G & G Municipal Consulting and Grant Writing, gave a presentation on his company and the services it provides. The board has been considering assisting NOCCOG members with grant administration after funding is awarded. Jen Harvill updated the committee on Tug Hill Commission programs, trainings, and events. Mike Thompson gave the board an update on the GPS work that is being completed in the towns of Forestport and Boonville. The Diamond Maps program was also discussed, as NOCCOG may need to obtain its own subscription, separate from the Tug Hill Commission. Other items discussed were the location and speaker for the annual dinner meeting, the reference guide and the additional section on the responsibilities of planning boards, the NOCCOG Service Survey, which is underway, the 2025 NOCCOG scholarship awardees, a reduction in the original agreed NYCLASS investment, and rotating the executive committee meetings to the communities of the current directors.

Following the meeting, Tom McDonald, town of Remsen supervisor, and NOCCOG vice chair, provided a tour of the newly remodeled town office.

The next meeting of the NOCCOG Executive Committee is scheduled for Thursday, September 18, at 2:00 p.m., at the village of Camden office.

NYCOM'S 2025 Water Webinar Series, July 9, 16, & 23

NYCOM is pleased to announce its second annual webinar series dedicated to the protection, preservation, and sustainability of clean water and municipal water systems. This summer-long series will bring together experts and state agency representatives to explore emerging water challenges and help local officials navigate their regulatory, operational, and funding responsibilities.



Speakers will share insights, case studies, and best practices on topics including PFAS contamination, biosolids management, wetland regulation changes, and harmful algal blooms. Participants will also learn about funding opportunities and compliance obligations tied to state and federal mandates.

All NYCOM's Water Webinars are from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. and are free to NYCOM members. However, registration is required.

July 9: Managing Harmful Algal Blooms, with *Doug Merrill, professor emeritus Rochester Institute of Technology and councilmember-at-large, City of Canandaigua and NYSDEC*

July 16: PFAS & Biosolids - After the Flush, with *NYWEA*

July 23: Wetland Regulations - What's Changed? With *NYSDEC's Krista Spohr, environmental program specialist, Bureau of Ecosystem Health*

Sessions are subject to change.

For more information, visit [NYCOM's Water Webinar Series](#) webpage here or contact Rebecca Ruscito, rebecca@nycom.org or 518-463-1185.

SLELO PRISM Invasive Species Symposium Held on June 12



The St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM) Eastern Lake Ontario Invasive Species Symposium was held June 12 at SUNY Oswego, beginning with keynote speaker Robin Wall Kimmerer, who spoke on bridging indigenous and western science. Presenters highlighted the Haudenosaunee's deep connection to the land and shared traditional approaches to managing invasive species. Speakers emphasized the importance of collaboration through regional initiatives, such as the St. Lawrence River Strategy and the Great Lakes Action Agenda. Tools like eDNA, adaptive mapping, and iMapInvasives support ongoing monitoring and response efforts for invasive species. Across all topics, a recurring theme was the need to listen to nature, respect Indigenous stewardship, and build resilient ecosystems through both scientific and cultural collaboration.

Community Forest Grants Due September 17

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has announced \$1 million for grants available through the third round of the [State's Community Forest Conservation Grant Program](#). Municipalities can use this funding to purchase land or conservation easements to create or expand community-owned forests to sustain and protect wildlife habitat, promote clean air and water, preserve biodiversity, and increase access to recreation opportunities and open space.

Municipalities may apply for a minimum of \$50,000 up to a maximum of \$300,000. Awarded applicants will receive the funding in installments as they complete specific stages of the land acquisition process. Expenses eligible for reimbursement include, but are not limited to, the purchase price of the land or conservation easement, appraisal, survey and boundary marking, title search, environmental assessment, and management plan. Acquired properties must be ten or more contiguous acres, have forests on at least 75 percent of the property, be accessible to the public, and provide public benefits such as recreational opportunities, flood mitigation, wildlife habitat, clean water, and forest products. Applications are due by September 17, 2025.

New York State EFC announces \$325 million in funding

The New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation has announced that \$325 million in grant funding is now available to support critical water infrastructure projects. These grant monies are only available to municipal entities, including: county, city, town, village, district corporation, county or town improvement district, school district, Indian nation or tribe recognized by the State or the United States with a reservation wholly or partly within the boundaries of New York State, any public benefit corporation or public authority established pursuant to the laws of New York, or any agency of the State that is empowered to construct and operate a water quality infrastructure project.

The following projects are considered to address some of New York's most urgent water quality needs:

- PFAS treatment to address emerging contaminants (70% net eligible costs)
- Small and rural sewer projects are eligible for funding (50% net eligible funding)

Other eligible projects include:

- Wastewater treatment plant construction or upgrades
- Sewer system extensions or rehabilitations
- Disinfection and advancement treatment technologies to improve water quality
- Installation or improvement of drinking water treatment systems
- Replacement or rehabilitation of aging water mains and service lines
- Replacement of lead service lines
- Collaborative projects between municipalities to share services or infrastructure
- Cost-effective regional approaches to water and sewer infrastructure challenges

Grant applications and required supporting documentation are due by 5:00 p.m. on September 12, 2025.

For detailed eligibility information and access to the application materials, please visit www.efc.ny.gov/wiaa. For more general information on this program's round of funding and how to apply, a webinar will be hosted on July 11 at 10:00 a.m. To register for this webinar opportunity, see [here](#).

New York Sea Grant's New Crosswalk Tool

The New York Sea Grant developed a Climate Smart Communities Crosswalk tool to help communities save time, energy, and money by exploring opportunities for achieving points for Climate Smart Communities (CSC) certification actions. The tool is designed for communities that have or plan to complete activities and requirements for water-focused programs, such as the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program, and want to participate in the CSC certification program. For more information, [visit their website](#). Questions can be directed to Mary Austerman, NYSG Great Lakes Coastal Community Specialist at mp357@cornell.edu.

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