

CTHC Spring Meeting April 30

On Thursday, April 30 the Cooperative Tug Hill Council (CTHC) will hold their annual spring meeting at the Tug Hill Hideaway, 1838 Fish Creek Rd., West Leyden. Social hour will start at 6:00 p.m. with dinner at 7:00 p.m. and the business meeting to follow. The agenda includes election of officers and approval of work goals for 2026. Potential updates to the council's bylaws and the intermunicipal agreement, which expires at the end of 2026, will also be discussed, as well as a new associate circuit rider search. The Tug Hill Commission will update CTHC on matters of interest. The speakers for the evening will be Andrew MacDuff and Robert Ripp from NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Region 6, who will speak about natural resources issues and changes, both approved and pending, to the Real Property Tax Law 480a program. The meeting will close, as usual, with supervisor and mayor topics and any other comments from the floor.

Invitations to the meeting have been sent out to CTHC representatives. Attendance at the meeting portion of the event is free of charge and open to the public. CTHC will pay for dinner for two representatives from each member municipality, and any other guests for dinner will be charged \$23. Reservations should be made by April 20 by contacting Angie Kimball at angie@tughill.org or 315-599-8825. The invitation and more information can be found on the CTHC website at www.tughillcouncil.com.

Materials Available from Energy Storage Webinar

Over 50 participants learned about energy storage from NYSERDA, Sandia National Laboratories, and the Electric Power Research Institute presenters on March 31. Links to the recorded webinar and slide deck are available at tughill.org/services/training/. Additional resource links were provided after the training session:

- [NYSERDA Energy Storage Resources for Local Governments](#)
- [NYSERDA Bulk Energy Storage Procurement](#) which includes public information for participating projects
- Electric Power Research Institute's [StorageWiki](#)
- Sandia National Laboratories [Energy Storage Program Page](#)

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Ambulance and Budget Papers Updated

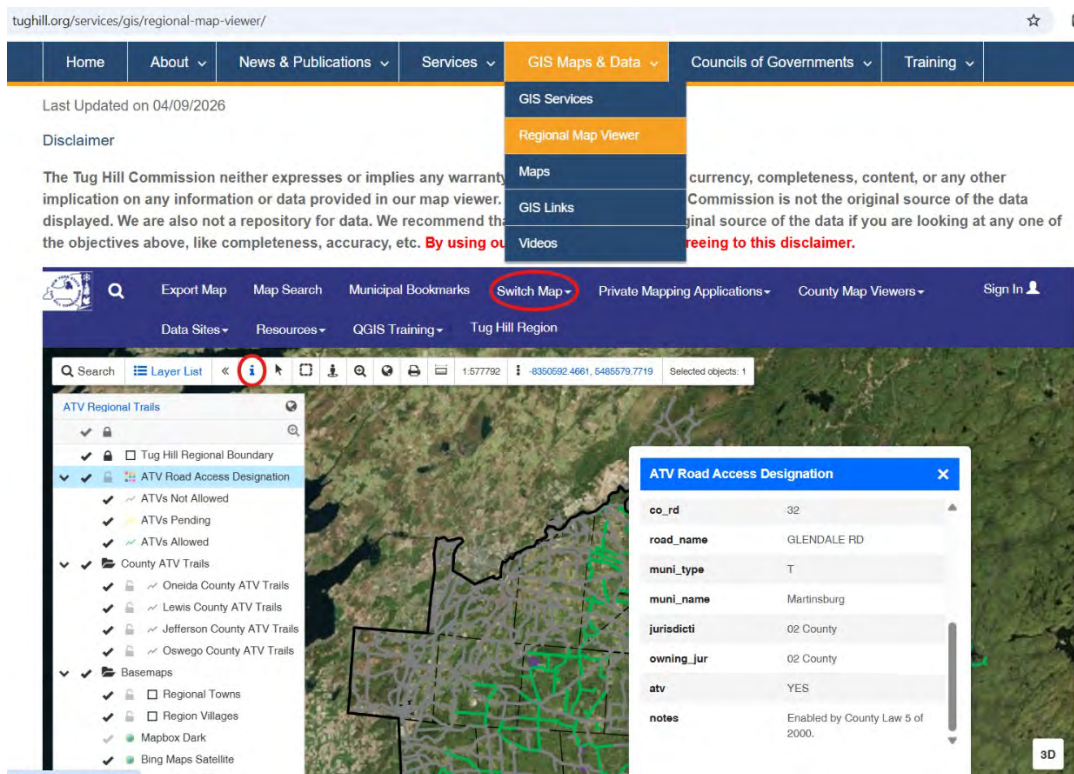
Commission staff recently completed significant updates to the *Ambulance Service in Rural New York State* issue paper and the *Town Budget Process Overview* technical paper. Both are available on the commission's [website](#). The ambulance paper includes information on recent changes to reimbursement processes, a new statewide task force, and a new requirement for counties to develop and maintain countywide emergency medical system plans. The town budget paper expands beyond timelines associated with the town budget process, into additional information gleaned from the budget workshop training the commission has provided with Laird Petrie over the past few years. The next iteration of that two-day budgeting and accounting workshop for small towns is coming up on [June 18 and 19](#).

Commission Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 20 at 10:00 a.m. at the
Orwell Municipal Building, 1999 County Route 2, Orwell, New York.
The public is welcome to attend.

Regional Maps Update

The Tug Hill Commission has been updating several of its interactive online maps, including adding a new map to reflect ATV data, available on the commission's website [here](#). Click on the "Switch Maps" tab to toggle between different topics. Shown below is one of the recent updates, to provide an interactive version of the "ATV Highway Access and Off-Road Trails" map available as a static map in the commission's [ATV Recreation: Considerations for Municipalities](#) issue paper. This map depicts off-road trails in Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego, and Oneida counties, as well as highway trail connectors that can be verified back to local or county law, as of September 2025. This dataset will be routinely refreshed for accuracy.



To learn the details of specific road segments, click on the "i" tool at the top of the toolbar (circled) and click the segment with your cursor. The roadways segments are styled by roads that are not enabled by a local jurisdiction (grey), roads where the data or language of the law is unclear (yellow), or roads that are enabled as an ATV connector (green) based on best available information.

Boonville Comprehensive Plan Open House April 28

The town and village of Boonville are updating their comprehensive plan with help from Labella Associates and are seeking input at a public open house on Tuesday, April 28, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Boonville Municipal Building (13149 NY-12). The open house will be in a come-and-go format to allow flexibility for attendees. The event will give residents a chance to help shape the vision and goals for Boonville's future. Community input is a key part of the planning process and the development of the comprehensive plan. For those unable to attend, the draft vision, goals, and recommendations will be posted on the town and village websites (townofboonvilleny.gov and villageofboonvilleny.com) following the open house for review. Please share comments and feedback with Jonathan Derworiz, Senior Planner at Labella Associates jderworiz@labellapc.com or (315) 427-9711.

Winter Wildlife Webinar Series: Pollinators Complete, Final Session April 30

On Thursday, March 26, webinar participants heard from Cierra Williams, Horticulture and Natural Resources Educator at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County. She spoke about pollinators and the important role they play in our day-to-day lives. Those interested in watching the webinar or accessing the slide deck can find those resources [here](#).

The final session of the 2026 Winter Wildlife Webinar Series will take place on Thursday, April 30, at 7 p.m. Participants will hear from Linda Gibbs, Community Programs Director at Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, and Irene Mazzocchi, retired Region 6 NYSDEC Wildlife Biologist. They will highlight several species of owls that can be found in Tug Hill backyards and address some of the challenges these birds face. Registration can be found [here](#). Please reach out to maria@tughill.org with any questions.

MUNICIPAL TRAINING



PREPARING YOUR MUNICIPALITY FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY APPLICATIONS

Renewable energy applications are becoming increasingly common across New York State. Join us for this training designed to give municipal officials, board members, and interested residents a clear overview of how municipalities can prepare before an application is submitted. The program will conclude with a Q&A, allowing participants to ask questions and discuss common municipal concerns.

APRIL 27, 2026

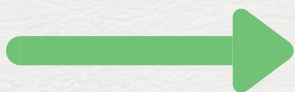
Monday | 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Croghan Fire Hall | 6860 Fire Hall St, Croghan, NY 13327

TOPIC HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Municipal Authority
- ✓ Local Law Considerations
- ✓ Municipal Review Team Roles
- ✓ Project Application Review Process

PRE-REGISTER



PRESENTER

 **Bridget O'Toole, Esq.**

Ms. O'Toole is a partner at Heath & O'Toole PLLC with extensive experience assisting municipalities, applicants, and community groups participating in Local, State and Federal siting proceedings for renewable energy facilities and transmission lines.



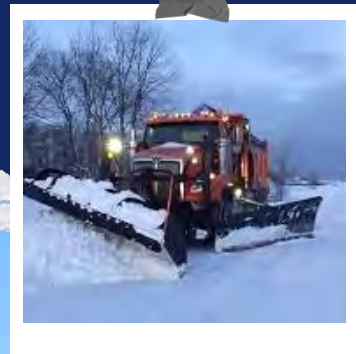
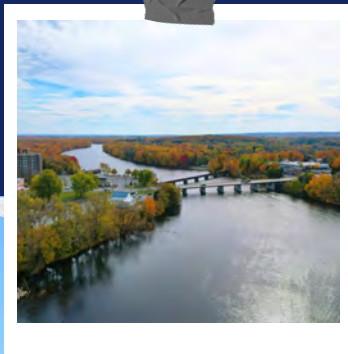
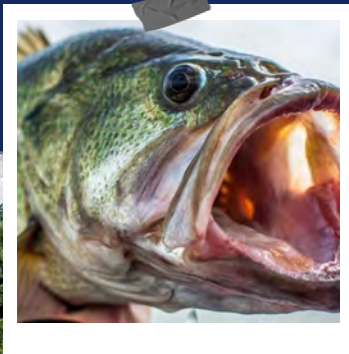


Save the Date!

BLACK RIVER WATERSHED CONFERENCE 2026

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2026

TUG HILL ESTATE
40551 YANCEY RD, LOWVILLE, NY 13367



Learn about projects focused on protecting and preserving the Black River Watershed, hot topics such as water quality and deicing salt, and much more!

REGISTRATION COMING SOON!

Questions?
Contact Jillian Lee
☎ 315-785-2406
✉ jillian@tughill.org

Agricultural Development Conference Well-Attended

On Friday, March 27, Jefferson County Economic Development (JCED) hosted its annual Agricultural Development Conference at the Hilton Garden Inn in Watertown. This year's conference celebrated JCED's 25 years of assisting in the retention, growth, and promotion of Jefferson County's agricultural industry. To mark the occasion, Senator Mark Walczyk conveyed a certificate of recognition for these efforts in promoting agricultural development in the county. Agricultural Coordinator and Deputy CEO of JCED Jay Matteson credited this year's conference as being the result of its partnership with Jefferson Farm Bureau, Cornell Co-operative Extension, and the Jefferson County Board of Legislators.

The theme of this year's conference was "Keeping Up with the Evolution in Agriculture," taking a short and long-term look at how cutting-edge technology is currently operating on farms, and how advanced technologies and AI will help long-term agricultural operations improve operating efficiency, manage risk, and communicate and connect with the public. Dr. Todd Schmit, Faculty Director of Cornell's Agricultural Marketing Research Program, spoke on the last three years' worth of updated research statistics in Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties. Dr. Julio Giordano, professor in the Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, presented on his group's pioneering research with AI machine-learning algorithms, dairy cattle reproductive health and biology, precision technologies, automation of management tasks, and development of data-driven solutions for dairy herd management. Kesley O'Shea, an Industry Relations Specialist with the American Dairy Association North East, focused on her work with creating farm-focused education media and managing farmer coordination at consumer-facing events. Paul Barton, the founder at Barton Consulting Group, presented his work with companies to accelerate growth and enhance service excellence through intelligent revenue operations leveraging AI applications.



Attendees included local farmers and food producers, local businesses, members of the Farm Bureau, educators, soil and water conservation districts, commission staff, legislators and stakeholders in Jefferson County, and elected state and county officials.

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Upcoming Great Lakes Program Action Agenda Meetings

DEC's Great Lakes Program will host a Spring 2026 Great Lakes Action Agenda (GLAA) virtual kickoff meeting, followed by in-person sub-basin work group meetings for regionally focused discussions. Meeting objectives include sharing DEC updates, partner updates, reviewing and discussing the sub-basin work planning process, and discussing upcoming funding and collaboration opportunities. Work group meetings are held twice a year and are open to everyone, including environmental and community-based organizations, academic institutions, state and federal agencies, Indigenous Nations, local government, and private citizens.

The virtual [kickoff meeting](#) will be held on Friday, April 24, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Two in-person meetings relevant to Tug Hill will [follow](#):

- **May 4: Southeast Lake Ontario Sub-Basin Work Group meeting** at the Cayuga Lake Nature Center in Ithaca, with an optional tour of the nature center facilities.
- **May 7: Northeast Lake Ontario/St. Lawrence River Sub-Basin Work Group meeting** at the Grasse River Natural Heritage Community Room in Canton, with an optional tour of Heritage Park.

More information is available about the [Great Lakes Action Agenda](#), including the [Sub-basin Priority Outcome Tracker](#), which offers a user-friendly way to understand baseline conditions relative to 10-year targets for each goal of the GLAA and supports an ecosystem-based management approach to setting and advancing implementation priorities.



AOT Finance & Personnel School April 27-28 and May 6-7

The New York Association of Towns (AOT) will offer its 2026 Finance & Personnel School at two locations this spring, providing two days of training for municipal officials and staff involved in finance, human resources, and personnel administration. The program includes concurrent finance and personnel tracks, allowing participants to customize their schedule based on their role and interests while gaining practical tools and insights from statewide experts and peers.

Sessions will be held April 27–28 at Hotel Canandaigua and May 6–7 at Marriott Albany. Advance registration is \$250 for members and \$300 for non-members, with higher rates available for on-site registration. Overnight accommodations are available at both venues, with discounted room blocks and reservation deadlines in early and mid-April. Municipal leaders and staff are encouraged to register early and take advantage of this opportunity for professional development and networking with colleagues from across the state. For more information visit www.nytowns.org/.

Kubota Hometown Proud Grants Due May 7

For six years, the [Kubota's Hometown Proud grant program](#) has invested in nonprofit organizations striving to make a difference in their hometowns. Funded community-led projects have ranged from building fairground facilities and farmer incubator programs to creating parks and recreation spaces. Kubota seeks applications from 501(c)3 organizations located within 50 miles of an authorized Kubota dealer (Canastota, Cicero, Lowville, Remsen, Watertown) for hometown projects and initiatives. The program will invest in communities across the country by awarding 10 grants, valued at \$50,000 each (\$25,000 cash and \$25,000 in Kubota equipment).

Community Resilience and Flood Risk Reduction Grants Due June 26

The NYS Department of State is now accepting [grant applications](#) for community resilience and flood risk reduction projects. Project types include coastal rehabilitation and resilience efforts as well as inland flooding and Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) implementation. An informational webinar was held on April 7, and a recording is available on the [grant website](#).

Communities Awarded DEC Grants for Invasive Species

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation recently [announced](#) more than \$5.1 million in grant money awarded to reduce the negative impacts of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species on natural resources, infrastructure, agriculture, and local economies. Projects are spread across four categories, including aquatic invasive species, early detection/rapid response of invasive species, research projects, and restoration and resiliency projects. Two communities in and around the Tug Hill region were awarded:

- **Town of Forestport: \$45,000** – Project will provide staffing for a seasonal Aquatic Invasive Species and Decontamination Station.
- **City of Watertown: \$80,000** – Project will involve continued invasive species control in conjunction with the restoration of site habitats by planting tree and shrub seedlings and wildflower seeds.
- **Oswego County Soil & Water District: \$15,701** – Project will involve monitoring for and controlling hemlock woolly adelgid to protect the threatened eastern hemlock at Independence Park and Camp Hollis.

Contact Us

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