

TUG HILL TIMES

Bi-weekly newsletter bringing you the latest news, trainings, and updates from in and around the Tug Hill region.



NYS Tug Hill Commission
 tughill@tughill.org
 315-785-2380
 www.tughill.org

VENERABLE FOLKS OF TUG HILL DISPLAY IN MARTINSBURG

Artist and Tug Hill sage Loretta Lepkowski was at Greystone Manor for Old Martinsburg Day this past Saturday, August 8 with the Venerable Folks of Tug Hill informational panels and portraits. Originally a collaborative project between Loretta, Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, Tug Hill Commission, and Traditional Arts of Upstate New York, the exhibit has been touring the Tug Hill region and beyond since 2016. This year's display included an updated remembrance panel to honor the venerable folks that have passed over the past decade. More information on the project is available on the commission's [website](https://www.tughill.org).



SALMON RIVERS AND NORTH SHORE SUMMER MEETINGS HELD



Both the Salmon Rivers and North Shore Councils of Governments met at the end of July for their quarterly board meetings. Salmon Rivers members met at the Orwell Town Hall and discussed Salmon River flow management, received updates on the Salmon River Trails project, and completed a detailed review of the Regional Inventory and Visualization for Environmental Resilience and Sustainability Accord (R.I.V.E.R.S.).

North Shore met at the Central Square Fire Department and reviewed updates on the Southern Oswego County Regional Interceptor Sewer, activities at the Oneida Lake Association, and status of the council's Explore the North Shore community guide. Members did a detailed review of the Oneida Lake Accord for Key Environments (O.L.A.K.E.), the draft North Shore Tug Hill Reserve Act plan. The final 2026 meeting for both councils will be held together on the evening of Wednesday, September 30, at the Greenview County Club in West Monroe.



Newsletter Highlights

- Venerable Folks of Tug Hill Display in Martinsburg
- Salmon Rivers and North Shore Summer Meetings Held
- NYS Woodmen's Field Days
- Associate Circuit Rider Needed in RACOG
- Jefferson County September 9 and 28 Workshops
- Lewis County September 29 Workshops
- Town Budget Workshop August 26
- Environmental Facilities Corporation Q&A Session August 28
- Firewood Banks in Northern Forest Communities Panel Sept. 10
- Snow and Ice Control Workshop September 24
- Little Salmon River Dams Meeting August 24
- ASCE Hazard Tool for Snowload Data and More
- Veterans Capital Restoration Matching Grant Program
- NYS Pro-Housing Program Annual Recertification
- Two-Year Extension of Videoconferencing Amendment
- Community Reforestation Grants Due November 4

NYS WOODSMEN'S FIELD DAYS

EDUCATIONAL FORESTRY SEMINARS AND RECHARGE STATION

NEW LOCATION FOR 2026



**LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO RECHARGE
YOUR BODY AND YOUR ELECTRONIC
DEVICE? FREE WATER BOTTLE FILLING
STATION AND MULTI-DEVICE CHARGING
STATIONS AVAILABLE!**

**EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS ARE FREE TO ATTEND UPON ADMITTANCE TO WOODSMEN'S FIELD DAYS.
GET OUT OF THE SUN, LEARN SOMETHING NEW, AND REFRESH YOURSELF AND YOUR ELECTRONIC
DEVICES ALL IN ONE PLACE. FOR A FULL LIST OF WFD'S FORESTRY SEMINARS, CLICK
[HERE](#) OR [HERE](#).**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



**Department of
Agriculture and Markets
Wood Products
Development Council**



ASSOCIATE CIRCUIT RIDER NEEDED IN RACOG

The River Area Council of Governments (RACOG) is seeking an associate circuit rider to assist with coverage of local municipal board meetings in eastern Jefferson/western Lewis counties. Responsibilities include attending two to three evening board meetings each month, at which the associate reads the RACOG report, takes notes, and sends them to the RACOG circuit rider. Typically, the meetings fall on the second Wednesday and third Monday of each month, with additional meetings on a month-to-month basis. This is a part-time, hourly contract opportunity and includes mileage reimbursement. Contact Mickey Dietrich at mickey@tughill.org or (315) 681-5023 with any questions.



JEFFERSON COUNTY SEPTEMBER 9 AND 28 WORKSHOPS



Jefferson County Planning & Community Development is holding two training sessions in September. Get Grant Ready will be Wednesday, September 9 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Jefferson County Office Building in Watertown. This session is tailored to communities seeking grant funding. Register [here](#) or email planning@jeffersoncountyny.gov. Presenters will be Alicia Dewey, Andy Nevin, and Aileen Anderson from Jefferson County Planning & Community Development.

The second training session on Monday, September 28, Beyond the Basics, is for planning boards, zoning boards, and local officials. Session A, from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., will be on public meetings, hearings and record keeping, and Session B, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., will be on hot button land uses. Register [here](#) or email planning@jeffersoncountyny.gov. Speakers will be from the NYS Department of State Division of Local Government Services.

LEWIS COUNTY SEPTEMBER 29 WORKSHOPS

The Lewis County Planning & Community Development Department is sponsoring an annual training workshop for local land use officials. Training topics "Hot Button Land Uses," "Public Meetings & Hearings," and "Mock Planning Board Meeting" will be presented by staff from the NYS Department of State Division of Local Government Services at Lowville Academy & Central School on Tuesday, September 29 from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. If approved by your municipality, this workshop can provide four hours of training to meet state training requirements for planning and zoning board members. Code enforcement officials can apply to use these courses as professional development electives. To register, please call the Lewis County Planning and Community Development Office at (315) 376-5422, e-mail suekulzer@lewiscountyny.gov or online at tinyurl.com/yxj2zkcc/ by September 22.



TOWN BUDGET WORKSHOP

WITH LAIRD PETRIE

Wednesday, August 26, 2026, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

**Lee Town Hall, 5808 Stokes Lee Center Rd,
Lee Center, NY 13363**

This workshop is designed to assist town officials in preparing their annual budgets. Topics will include:

- An overview of the budgetary responsibilities of town officials
- How to develop a structurally balanced budget
- Key elements of the annual budget
- Tools available for assisting town officials in the budget process
- Monitoring and amending the annual budget
- Operating within the tax cap
- Question and answer period



**Register for this free workshop by
Monday, August 24, 2026
tinyurl.com/2026BudgetWorkshop
or using the QR code! Questions, call
the Tug Hill Commission at (315) 785-
2380 or email tughill@tughill.org.**



ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITIES CORPORATION Q&A SESSION AUGUST 28

The NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) and the Community Assistance Teams invite municipalities to an upcoming Q&A session on [Friday, August 28](#) from 11:00 a.m. to noon. Attendees can ask questions about eligibility for the state's water infrastructure funding programs, requirements, and application processes. The Community Assistance Teams work with municipalities to help them access water infrastructure funding and strengthen cybersecurity, with a focus on small, rural, and disadvantaged communities. Coordinating with partner agencies including the Departments of Environmental Conservation, State, Health, and Homes and Community Renewal, the teams help communities with their water infrastructure needs. On-site and virtual consultations can also be scheduled using this [form](#).

FIREWOOD BANKS IN NORTHERN FOREST COMMUNITIES PANEL SEPTEMBER 10

The Northern Forest Center and Alliance for Green Heat are holding an online panel discussion on Thursday, September 10 from 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. on firewood banks. Firewood banks have become an important part of many Northern Forest communities, bringing together volunteers, local organizations, and forest resources. Panelists across the region will discuss how their organizations have evolved, the partnerships they have built, and what other communities can learn from their experiences. Register for the free webinar [here](#). It is part of the Northern Forest Center's [Building the New Forest Future](#) webinar series that amplifies stories, practices, and lessons from community development, sustainable tourism, and rural economy in the Northern Forest.



SNOW AND ICE CONTROL WORKSHOP SEPTEMBER 24

The Cornell Local Roads Program is holding a Snow and Ice Control Operations for Local Highway Officials [workshop](#) on Thursday, September 24 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Lewis County Cooperative Extension office in Lowville. Winter is on the way! Join Cornell Local Roads to learn the backbone of an effective snow and ice control program including choosing the best anti-icing strategy, reducing tort liability, and reducing costs. This workshop is aimed at established highway/public works officials, crews and crew supervisors who manage snow and ice control operations. The cost is \$90, and lunch will be served. Register for this workshop, and all other fall highway workshops, [here](#).





LITTLE SALMON RIVER DAMS ANNUAL INFORMATION MEETING

**MONDAY
AUGUST 24, 2026**

5:30 - 7:30 PM

AGENDA

VILLAGE OF MEXICO OFFICE

3236 MAIN STREET, MEXICO, NY 13114

5:30 PM	WELCOME	Jennifer Harvill, NYS Tug Hill Commission
5:35 PM	LITTLE SALMON RIVER: DAM DESIGN CONCEPTS FOR DISCUSSION	Connor Moulton and Rylee Smith, Engineers Without Borders at Syracuse University
5:55 PM	YEAR ONE POST REMOVAL BIOMONITORING AT BLACK CREEK	Jeremy Dietrich, Cornell University, New York State Water Resources Institute
6:15 PM	FISHERY RESPONSE TO BLACK CREEK DAM MODIFICATION	Scott Prindle, NYSDEC Fisheries
6:35 PM	AQUATIC ORGANISM PASSAGE AND THE NATIONAL AQUATIC CONNECTIVITY COLLABORATIVE	Jared Popoli, Cornell University, New York State Water Resources Institute
6:55 PM	CO-BENEFITS OF DAM REMOVAL: ECONOMICS, FLOOD RESILIENCE, AND RIVER RESTORATION	Tim Koch, NYSDEC/ New York State Water Resources Institute
7:15 PM	OPEN DISCUSSION AT THE LITTLE SALMON RIVER DAM	Facilitated by Emily Fell, NYSDEC/ New York State Water Resources Institute
7:30 PM	ADJOURN	

[Click here to RSVP](#) so we have a head count for refreshments.

Questions? Contact Jennifer Harvill: jennifer@tughill.org, 315-785-2380

[More background information here](#)

ASCE HAZARD TOOL FOR SNOWLOAD DATA AND MORE

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) has a free, public online [hazard tool](#) with a [mapping feature](#) to look up hazard data for a specific location, including wind, tornado, seismic, ice, rain, flood, snow and tsunami hazards. Sites are selected by entering a street address or latitude/longitude, or select "Find on Map" and drop a pin directly onto the map. The tool uses design parameters based on various engineering standards. Results for each load type will be displayed and can be downloaded as pdfs. on the following page. The hazard tool provides several different ways to view or download data for each load type. Below are screenshots of the data provided by a search of snowload for the Boylston Town Hall.

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS

Address:
580 County Route 13
Lacona, New York
13083

Standard: ASCE/SEI 7-22
Risk Category: III
Soil Class: Default

Latitude: 43.660476
Longitude: -75.964716
Elevation: 1236.3747619426001 ft
(NAVD 88)

ASCE
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS
Snow

Results:

Ground Snow Load, p_g :	194 lb/ft^2
20-year MRI Value:	91.04 lb/ft^2
Winter Wind Parameter:	0.45
Mapped Elevation:	1201.3 ft
Data Source:	ASCE/SEI 7-22, Figures 7.6-1 and 7.6-2 A-D
Date Accessed:	Mon Aug 10 2026

Values provided are ground snow loads. In areas designated "case study required," extreme local variations in ground snow loads preclude mapping at this scale. Site-specific case studies are required to establish ground snow loads at elevations not covered.

Snow load values are mapped to a 0.5 mile resolution. This resolution can create a mismatch between the mapped elevation and the site-specific elevation in topographically complex areas. Engineers should consult the local authority having jurisdiction in locations where the reported 'elevation' and 'mapped elevation' differ significantly from each other.

Ground Snow Loads for IRC only, p_{gaw} : 135.8 lb/ft^2



VETERANS CAPITAL RESTORATION MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM



Oneida County has launched the Veterans Capital Restoration Matching Grant Program to support the preservation, repair, restoration, and modernization of facilities owned and operated by veterans' organizations throughout Oneida County. Open to chartered American Legion Posts, chartered Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Posts, and other county recognized veterans' organizations, the program was established to help support the important role these organizations play in honoring veterans, supporting military families, and serving as valued community gathering spaces. Grant funds may be used for capital improvement projects including, but not

limited to roof replacement or repair, HVAC systems, plumbing or electrical upgrades, windows and doors, accessibility improvements (ADA), parking lot repairs, structural stabilization, exterior restoration, interior rehabilitation, kitchen or bathroom modernization, energy efficiency upgrade, emergency repairs, and building code compliance improvements.

The Veterans Capital Restoration Matching Grant Program provides reimbursement for up to 50% of eligible project costs after completion of approved work and submission of required documentation. Grant awards range from a minimum of \$2,500 to a maximum of \$50,000 per applicant per funding round. Documentation explaining all matching contributions must be included with the application. Applications may be accepted on a rolling basis until available program funds have been exhausted. For more information click [here](#).

NYS PRO-HOUSING PROGRAM ANNUAL RECERTIFICATION

Certified pro-housing communities must submit for recertification annually by completing two steps: submitting any zoning changes since the original zoning submission by sending an updated zoning map shapefile or PDF and an updated code spreadsheet incorporating those changes; and providing the municipality's permit data through the previous year by filling out this [template](#).

Recertification documents were due by June 15, 2026. If you missed the deadline, your community does not lose their pro housing designation, they simply become ineligible for funds that require a pro-housing community designation. Maintaining pro-housing certification is important related to several grant programs, including the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, the NY Forward program, and the NY Main Street program, among others. More information can be found on the NYS Homes and Community Renewal [website](#). Reach out to Homes and Community Renewal directly via [email](#).

TWO-YEAR EXTENSION OF VIDEOCONFERENCING AMENDMENT

On May 26, 2026, Chapter 58 of the Laws of 2026 was signed into law, which provides for a two-year extension, until July 15, 2028, of the amendment to the Open Meetings Law (OML) established by Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2022, which expanded the use of videoconferencing by public bodies to conduct open meetings, under extraordinary circumstances. See previously issued guidance on this topic, which remains applicable, [here](#). Related to records management, LGS-1 schedule item (51a) currently authorizes destruction of recordings of meetings four months after the minutes or transcripts are created. This two-year extension requires that video-conference recordings be kept for at least five years.

COMMUNITY REFORESTATION GRANTS DUE NOVEMBER 4

\$20 million is available through the second round of the Community Reforestation grant program, which supports tree planting projects that will create or restore forested natural areas in urban communities. Indigenous Nations, municipalities, soil and water conservation districts, not-for-profit organizations, and state agencies may apply for a minimum amount of \$300,000 up to a maximum of \$3,000,000, with no match required. Up to \$4 million of the total funding is available for smaller projects (projects with a maximum funding request of \$499,999).

Eligible projects include planting trees, preparing sites for planting, removing competing or invasive vegetation that would interfere with seedling growth and installing tree protection to prevent deer browse. Projects that serve [Disadvantaged Communities](#) or communities with low [Tree Equity](#) scores will receive additional points during scoring. DEC will host a webinar on Thursday, August 20, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. to provide information and answer questions about this funding opportunity, [registration](#) required. Applications will be accepted until 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 4. Applications must be submitted through the [SFS Grants Management System](#) (SFS). For more details about the grant opportunity, including application and scoring criteria, visit [DEC's website](#) or email urbanforestry@dec.ny.gov.

Contact Us

NYS Tug Hill Commission
317 Washington Street
Watertown, NY 13601
Phone: 315-785-2380
Toll-Free within the region:
1-888-785-2380
Email: tughill@tughill.org

Visit Us

Web: www.tughill.org
[Facebook](#)
[Instagram](#)
[YouTube](#)

Sign up to receive our newsletter electronically. For upcoming trainings, grant deadlines, and meetings, view our calendar.