

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
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www.tughill.org

COMMISSION RETREAT HELD IN OSCEOLA

Commission board members, staff, and associates gathered at the [NYS Old Tyme Fiddlers](#) Association and the North American Fiddlers Hall of Fame and Museum in Osceola last month for their annual summer retreat. Hosted by Leona Chereshnoski and Jackie Hobbs, the group enjoyed an ice breaker round of Tug Hill Trivia, followed by a rapid review and scoring of progress on the commission 2025-2029 strategic plan. After lunch at Cedar Pines, the Tug Hill team enjoyed a tour of the museum and its artifacts. The fiddlers host a [summer concert series](#) every year, with their last concert being held this Sunday, September 13.



EAST BRANCH OF FISH CREEK WORKING GROUP MEETING SEPTEMBER 23

The East Branch of Fish Creek Working Group will meet Wednesday, September 23 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the West Leyden Fire Hall, 1046 State Route 26, West Leyden. Join us for this annual gathering of lessees, landowners, and other stakeholders in the East Branch of Fish Creek area. Representatives from NYSDEC, The Nature Conservancy, and LandVest (land and forest manager for Aurora Sustainable Lands) will give updates and provide the opportunity for questions and answers. Please RSVP to the Tug Hill Commission, 315-785-2380 or gwen@tughill.org, by Wednesday, September 16.

Newsletter Highlights

- Commission Retreat Held
- East Branch of Fish Creek Working Group Meeting September 23
- Commission Staff Trained in Culvert Assessments
- Providing Fire Protection in NYS Workshop October 27
- CTHC Fall Meeting and Dinner September 17
- North Shore & Salmon River Councils of Governments Dinner September 30
- Climate Resilience Planning & Projects Grants Due October 26
- Town Budget Workshop Held in Lee
- Woodsmen's Field Days Highlight: NY Forest Owners Association

COMMISSION STAFF TRAINED IN CULVERT ASSESSMENTS

Staff members Chris Barboza and Maria Covey attended [field training](#) in early September to learn how to evaluate culvert stream crossings for aquatic passage. The program, developed by the [North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative \(NAACC\)](#), has developed a standard protocol to inventory and more effectively address barriers to fish movement and fragmentation of river and streams. A full assessment involves collecting data such as culvert size, damage or deformities, water width and depth, flow rate, and slope. In addition, the program can assist with culvert condition assessments.

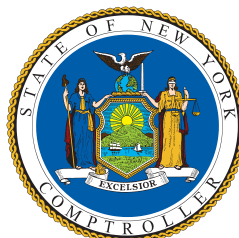
Culvert condition assessments help communities identify structural problems and prioritize culverts for repair and replacement. Using the NAACC protocol, communities can document conditions and assign scores, which helps prioritize projects and provides solid information for grant applications. With two staff members now trained, the commission can conduct culvert assessments for towns and villages as requested, from May 1 through September 30 annually. For more information, or to request assessments, contact Chris Barboza at chris@tughill.org, Maria Covey at maria@tughill.org, or call the commission at (315)785-2380. Click [here](#) to generate a map of sites that have been assessed in your community and to view the associated data.



PROVIDING FIRE PROTECTION IN NYS WORKSHOP OCTOBER 27

The Tug Hill Commission is sponsoring a workshop on how fire protection is provided in New York State on Tuesday, October 27 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the West Monroe Fire Hall, 54 County Route 11, West Monroe, 13167. New York's system for providing fire protection is complex, and many towns and villages are working hard to maintain fire protection for their citizens balanced with fiscal responsibility. This workshop will include: a general overview of firefighting, fire protection by municipality type (city, town, village), fire districts, budgeting, and reporting requirements. Register for this free workshop by Monday, October 26 at www.tinyurl.com/THfire2026. Please call the Tug Hill Commission at (315) 785-2380 or email tughill@tughill.org with any questions.

Presenters will be Dan Acquilano, manager of local training with the Division of Local Government and School Accountability at the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC), and Katie Hodgdon, association counsel with the NY Association of Towns. Dan has been with OSC since 2005, working as an auditor in the Rochester region until 2014, and now regularly presenting at local government conferences and OSC's accounting schools. Dan is also a 26-year retired combat veteran of the US Navy, where he was a certified master trainer and a faculty advisor at the US Navy War College's Senior Enlisted Academy. Katie has been with the Association of Towns since 2014, where she serves on the senior management team and manages their legal education program and delivers much of the programming herself. Additionally, she hosts monthly roundtables for local officials across the state. Katie received her law degree from the University at Buffalo School of Law.





CTHC Fall Meeting and Dinner

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 17TH 2026

Time: Social Hour 6 p.m., Dinner 7 p.m., meeting to follow

Location: The Timberview Resort
5265 Carpenter Rd., Turin

**Agenda includes 2027 budget, amending bylaws and IMA,
farewell to Denali Dietrich, speaker and much more
Agenda available at www.tughillcouncil.org**

**REPRESENTATIVES DINNERS WILL BE PAID FOR BY THE CTHC.
DINNER COST FOR OTHER GUESTS IS \$26 (TIP INCLUDED)*
PAYABLE AT THE VENUE**

RSVP to Angie at angie@tughill.org or
315-599-8825 or to your circuit rider at a
meeting by September 11th.



please join us for



North Shore & Salmon River Councils of Governments

ANNUAL DINNER

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 30TH 2026

Greenview Country Club - 20 Whig Hill Rd.
West Monroe, NY 13167
Social Hour at 5:30 p.m - Dinner at 6:30 p.m,
COG Meetings to follow

NorCOG and SRCOG representatives dinners will be paid
for by the COGs.

Dinner cost for other guests will be \$25, payable at the
venue

See you there!

RSVP to Heidi 315-761-7987 or
Heidi@Tughill.org by September 23rd 2026

CLIMATE RESILIENCE PLANNING & PROJECTS GRANTS DUE OCTOBER 26

The NYS Department of State's (DOS) Office of Planning, Development & Community Infrastructure has two grant opportunities currently available for plans and projects to make communities more resilient to the effects of a changing climate. The funding, made available through the Environmental Protection Fund, emphasizes natural solutions to resiliency, such as living shorelines, green infrastructure and blue-green infrastructure.

The Countywide Resilience Implementation Strategy Program ([CRISP](#)) provides funding to help counties develop actionable resilience strategies that reduce climate-related risks, strengthen community resilience, and advance projects toward implementation. The Coastal Lakeshore Economy and Resiliency ([CLEAR](#)) Implementation Design Grant provides funding to develop preliminary designs for nature-based shoreline protection measures, resilient stormwater systems, and/or blue-green infrastructure resiliency projects. This program includes Jefferson and Oswego counties in the Tug Hill region. An informational webinar for both programs was held on September 10, with the recording available at either link above.

TOWN BUDGET WORKSHOP HELD IN LEE

On August 26, the Tug Hill Commission hosted a town budget workshop at the Lee Town Hall. The training was very well attended, with 40+ participants representing 13 Tug Hill communities, in addition to several communities outside of the region. The workshop was led by Laird Petrie, who presented a wide range of valuable information on budgetary responsibilities of town officials. Topics included developing a structurally balanced budget, key elements of the annual budget, monitoring and amending the annual budget, operating within the tax cap, and tools available to assist town officials. Participants had plenty of opportunities to ask questions, engage in discussions, and gain useful insights to assist them in their communities. Laird's presentation is available at tughill.org/services/training/.

WOODSMEN'S FIELD DAYS HIGHLIGHT: NY FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

On Saturday, August 22, those attending the NYS Woodmen's Field Days in Boonville had the opportunity to attend educational seminars presented by those with experience in the forestry industry. Presenter Bruce Bennett shared his experience as a North Country forest owner. Following Mr. Bennett's presentation, Dr. Hugh Canham discussed the logistics behind timber sales for private landowners. Both presenters are a part of the [NY Forest Owners Association](#) and emphasized the importance of working with a professional forester to establish a forest management plan tailored to best support a particular landowner's forest and recreation goals. When properly managed, forests can provide extra income to landowners through responsible timber sales and can be planned in a way that supports wildlife habitat for conservation or recreation goals.



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