

# NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS, INC.



PROVIDING TODAY...  
... PROTECTING TOMORROW

## FYI...

NYACD NEWSLETTER • FEBRUARY 2007

### FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

As you read this issue of the FYI, the 2007 Soil and Water Conservation District formal legislative days will have come and gone. That is the formal one. You will be asked to continue with your contacts with your local State and National Officials as we move forward. In order for you and districts to be successful you must maintain this involvement.

There is change in Albany, as we knew there would be. As reported, Pat Hooker has been recommended as Commissioner of Ag & Markets, and we look forward to working with him. We had a meeting with him during our legislative day and will report on that in the next issue. As many of you know former Assemblyman Peter Grannis has been named to become the next Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation. There has been much written about this announcement. I remind all that we must work with whoever is in that position. Remember your EPF funds are a part of the DEC budget. Assembly Environmental Conservation Chair Thomas DiNapoli has been named to become the next NYS Comptroller; he has been a friend to the SWCD and has always spoken very highly of the work that you do.

Gregg Bell will be in touch with some of you to return to Albany for mini lobby days and to help with visiting some of the downstate legislators.

On February 1, I attended the meeting held by Under Secretary Bruce Knight at the State Fair Grounds where he unfolded the USDA proposal for the Farm Bill 2007. For complete information please check the USDA website.

Brad Rogers and I have just returned from the National Association of Conservation Districts annual meeting in Los Angeles. In addition to operation decisions, the group also shaped and approved Farm Bill core statements as provided by the NACD legislative committee as follows:

1. NACD supports a greater emphasis on working lands conservation programs in the 2007 Farm Bill.
2. NACD supports maintaining a strong locally led implementation process for all Farm Bill programs.
3. Working lands conservation programs must be accessible for all private working lands. NACD believes in the overarching goals of improved air, water and soil quality, and improved habitat, but techniques for reaching those goals are specific to localized conditions. NACD does not support bonus funding for states that undertake specific national standards that are program specific.
4. The delivery of technical assistance is the most critical element to the adoption of conservation practices and participation in Farm Bill conservation programs.
5. NACD will work with Congress and USDA on efforts to streamline conservation programs and ensure that landowners have a full range of program options to meet their conservation resource needs.
6. EQIP remains a priority program. It is important that all private landowners and operators be able to access funding to address environmental resource concerns. Localized priorities and practices should be identified by the local working groups and addressed by the state technical committees.
7. NACD supports CSP as a working lands conservation incentive program and believes all private landowners and operators have access to the program. CSP was established as an uncapped entitlement program and needs to be funded accordingly.

CRP has been successful in targeting the most environmental sensitive lands through CREPs and continuous sign-up. NACD supports continued focus on environmentally sensitive areas (will be looking at the definition of this for the future) and placing more focus on working lands programs rather than large land retirement programs and future sign-ups under CRP. *(Continued on Page 2)*

#### NYACD MISSION:

*The NYACD provides leadership in the wise use of soil, water and related natural resources. This direction is provided through programs that support member Soil and Water Conservation District's scientific, marketing/outreach and financial work and that encourage networking and building alliances with outside groups that have related interests.*

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT. . . *(Continued from Page 1)*

8. NACD supports technical and financial assistance for private, non-industrial forestlands. We believe that these lands and their active management are critical to the resources base of this nation and that this assistance should be integrated into all Farm Bill conservation programs for the benefit of all working lands.
9. NACD supports the development of comprehensive conservation plans for all private working lands participating in farm bill programs.
10. NACD supports the continued flexibility of the use of technical service providers or third party vendors in the delivery of CTA.
11. If an energy crop production program is formed, NACD supports a stand alone energy program with conservation compliance and conservation technical assistance (CTA) for proper management of the land in this program.
12. Conservation program funding should be available for landowners who are converting former CRRP acres that are not environmentally sensitive into crop rotation and other agricultural uses to maintain proper management of those lands.

**Program Recommendations**

1. Create an Enhanced EQIP Program that combines the working lands programs including WHIP, FLEP, AMA, and GRP.
2. Restructure CSP into a two tier program, maintaining the current tier II and tier III.
3. Maintain an independent CRP program
4. Maintain an Independent WRP program.
5. Restructure the easement programs into one program including Farm Land Protection Program and the Healthy Forest Reserve Program.

**Specific Program Authorization**

1. Support reauthorization of the Great Lakes Basin Program for Sediment and Erosion Control.
2. Support reauthorization of the Watershed Rehabilitation program.
3. Support reauthorization of the Resource Conservation Development Program.

**Allocation of Conservation Program Funding**

1. NACD will work with broad coalitions to increase the funding allocation for the 2007 Farm Bill
2. Conservation Program funding should be provided to programs in the following breakdown:

**Farm Bill Conservation Program Funding Breakdown**

		Percentage of overall funding			
		Current approx numbers based on 2006	<u>NACD Proposed</u>		
<u>Working Lands Conservation</u>	41%	<u>55%</u>	<u>Specific breakdown</u>		
			Enhanced EQIP	70%	
			GRP		
			FLEP		
			WHIP		
			AMA		
			CSP	30%	
<u>Retirement Programs</u>	56%	40%	<u>Specific breakdown</u>		
			CRP	90%	
			WRP	10%	
Easements	2.5%	5%	FRPP, HFRP		

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

On January 31, I attended the Governor's Environmental Budget Briefing. It was conducted by Judith Enck, the Governor's Deputy Secretary for the Environment, immediately following the Governor's presentation of his full State Budget. This proposed budget has much for conservation and environmental interests to be glad about.

After a decade of job eliminations at the Department of Environmental Conservation, the work of the Department has been hobbled by having 900 fewer staff than it previously had. This new Governor with a new Budget, proposes to add back 109 of those employees, scattered throughout numerous functions of the agency. In addition, he is proposing the addition of 52 other environmental employees in the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Since Soil and Water Conservation Districts are now proposing an expansion of DEC's capacities to handle stormwater via contracting with Districts, you will want to know that the Governor's Budget does not include a significant number of employees being added to the Division of Water.

Concerning the core Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) Budget issues for Districts, there is good news. First, the budget line which directly supports District overhead remains at \$3 million. This is the same as in the '06 Budget. It is the amount we got this line raised to in 2006. In the years prior to that, it had been only \$1.8 million. While the Legislature still has to agree to this, it is heartening that the Governor has seen fit to keep our '06 number the same.

Next, the proposed non-point source pollution budget line in the EPF is also good, providing Districts with funds to implement more projects. You will recall that prior to 2006, the budget combined both agricultural and non-agricultural non-point source expenditures into one line. As a combined line, it totaled \$11.7 in the '05 Budget. Last year, in the '06 Budget, these expenditures were broken out with \$11 million given to the ag non-point source expenditures and \$5.5 million given to the non-ag non-point source expenditures, for a total of \$16.5 million. Now, in the just-released Governor's Budget, there is \$12.8 million given to the ag non-point source expenditures and \$6.4 million given to the non-ag non-point source expenditures, for a total of \$19.5 million. Non-point has seen a consistent five year increase, now 350% higher than in 2002. This obviously illustrates a State understanding of the magnitude of these problems.

Finally, another point needs to be made on the EPF. It is great to talk about more funds being available to spend. However, budgets don't work just on the expenditure side. In order to spend more, more has to be raised somewhere. In this case, this year the new Governor has been absolutely clear that there is a linkage here. He will not propose any increase in the overall EPF above the current \$225 million unless the additional funds come from one source, the proposed Bigger, Better, Bottle Bill (BBBB). While a similar bill has previously been introduced into the Legislature, this Governor has now introduced it as part of his Budget package. It would expand the range of beverage containers covered by deposits from just carbonated ones to non-carbonated ones as well. The 28 page bill contains all sorts of specifics from definitions of beverages and containers and UPC codes to the increased handling fees to grocery stores. It is estimated that the bill would generate \$100 million in unclaimed deposits in the first year (which would be less than a full budget year).

For Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the Governor's tight linkage between increased EPF funds and the BBBB is now forcing us to respond. Since we are requesting \$3 million for our stormwater technical assistance proposal, we will be asked by every legislator if our request means that we support the BBBB to pay for it. One answer to that question is that the current stormwater permit fee system is generating \$2 million and those dollars should be directed to the stormwater program. However, even that answer goes only part way. If we want the full \$3 million which we believe is necessary to properly implement the stormwater program, then the BBBB through the EPF is the most logical source for the rest of those funds.

Procedurally this creates a difficulty for Districts in our State. We have never taken any official position on the BBBB. No resolutions on it were offered at our Annual Meeting. The topic has had little discussion. This is logical, since we try to take positions only on items which directly relate to our work (and there are plenty which already fit that category). The Governor's linkage between increased spending and this source of the funds gives us three choices:

- Ignore the linkage and just tell Legislators that stormwater needs the money and that we are not going to take a position on the BBBB,
- Forge a consensus that we will support the BBBB, or
- Forge a consensus that we will oppose the BBBB.

Without taking too much space to analyze each of these options, you can understand the consequences of each choice as it relates to getting our stormwater proposal funded. I have been asked by the NYACD Board to send out an e-mail poll to all of the Districts to get their position on the BBBB.

Our efforts to get the Districts' stormwater proposal funded will take a big step forward on our Legislative Days on February 12 and 13. To date, we had a small Legislative Day on January 17 which included meetings with six legislators or their staffs. We will have over fifty appointments for February 13, and we have had successful meetings with two other statewide associations which support our proposal. More information will be forthcoming on them later. We hope to see many of you here in Albany on February 13.

By Gregg Bell, Executive Director NYACD

# OUR FOOD, OUR ENVIRONMENT, OUR FUTURE

## *What's on Your Table?*

What preserves our community's open space and scenic views, keeps taxes low, bolsters the local economy, and protects our drinking water from pollution? Here's a hint: Each one produces enough healthy, delicious food to feed an average of 144 people each year. That's right, it's our local family farms.

Two hundred years ago, many of us would have lived on farms. In today's society, agriculture may not appear to be a direct part of our lives. Behind the scenes, though, New York's farm families play a vital role every day by providing fresh, high quality foods, contributing to our communities, supporting our economy and caring for our environment.

The land that is farmed in our community produces more than just the food, beverages and other farm products we enjoy every day. Farmland preserves open space, provides scenic views and helps maintain a rural quality of life in our community. Farms provide recreational opportunities, such as hiking, fishing and cross-country skiing. Tourists are attracted by the scenic vistas farms provide and the opportunity to sample local farm products.

Farms also benefit the local economy. Every dollar a farm earns multiplies four times in the local economy since farms provide jobs and support other local businesses. In addition, farms help keep your local taxes low by requiring far less than the costs of services required by residential developments. Research shows that for every dollar paid in taxes, the cost of providing public services in residential areas is three times more than in agricultural areas. As farmland is developed open space is lost and taxes go up.

As stewards of nearly eight million acres of New York's land, farm families work every day to protect our valuable natural resources. The water that we drink and the lakes and rivers we swim and fish in are all subject to pollution from many sources including runoff from roads, faulty septic systems, construction sites, and agriculture. However, well managed farms protect water quality, as they contribute far less polluted runoff to waterbodies compared with other types of land use. Where agricultural runoff concerns occur, they can be addressed by the implementation of conservation practices.

Over 10,000 New York farm families are part of the State's Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program, which supports them in their efforts to protect and enhance natural resources. Through AEM, farmers work to decrease their potential to impact the environment by examining their farm operation and implementing conservation practices that reduce their pollution risk and enhance their level of environmental stewardship. New York's farm families work hard and spend millions of dollars annually to implement these conservation practices. For example, if a stream runs through the farm, the farmer may set aside land on each side of the stream as a conservation buffer and plant that land with trees and other permanent vegetation. This conservation buffer works to filter out sediment and nutrients from rainwater runoff flowing across farm fields, while also enhancing habitat for birds, fish and other wildlife.

Farmers are doing their part for the environment, but they need the support of their communities to keep their farm businesses financially viable. When you stop at a roadside stand, shop at a farmers market, or select New York products at the supermarket, you are supporting the farmers who keep our community strong.

To learn more about the AEM program in your area, contact your County Soil and Water Conservation District or visit the AEM website at [www.nys-soilandwater.org](http://www.nys-soilandwater.org).

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## NRCS GIVEN \$16 MILLION IN DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDS FOR NY

Syracuse, N.Y. —State Conservationist Ron Alvarado announced recently New York has received \$14 million in financial assistance to help with natural disaster recovery efforts in the state. An additional \$2 million was provided for technical assistance.

The funding provides recovery assistance for natural disasters that occurred between December 2005 and June 2006 and is being made available through the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program. It will help restore agricultural and community infrastructure disrupted by flooding, severe stream bank erosion, and debris deposits.

"Through EWP, NRCS will provide up to 75 percent of the funds needed to restore the natural function of a watershed and up to 90 percent in limited resource areas damaged by natural disasters," Alvarado said. "The community or local sponsor for the work must pay the remaining cost-share, which can be provided by cash or in-kind services."

EWP assists with the implementation of critical emergency measures such as removal of debris from streams, protecting destabilized streambanks, establishing cover on critically eroding lands, and repairing conservation practices needed to relieve the imminent hazards to life and property created by natural disaster. All measures taken must be environmentally and economically sound and generally benefit more than one property owner.

"The purpose of EWP is to help groups of people with a common problem," Alvarado said. "It is generally not an individual assistance program. All projects undertaken must be sponsored by a political subdivision of the State, such as a city, county, general improvement district, or conservation district. NRCS, is responsible for administering the program."

(Continued on Page 5)

## SWCD INVOLVEMENT IN STORMWATER ACTIVITIES

*And the Survey Says.....*

by Lauren Prezorski, NYSSWCC

Well, you will have to stay tuned for that. At the time of this article, Districts still have another week to submit their survey results. I am pleased to announce that 50 Districts have already responded, so I can tell you a little bit about the numbers.

For instance, over 86 percent of Districts are working on Phase II Stormwater activities! Although not every District is involved at the same level, only seven Districts reported that they are not involved at all. Of these seven, I should add that three reported being involved with stormwater, just not directly related to the Phase II Program. Most of these Districts are also from rural areas.

If you are one of those question asking people like myself, you will now want to know exactly how "involved" is the average District. Since this is my fourth year of conducting this survey I can tell you that the numbers have remained fairly constant. On average, each District has two employees working on stormwater activities. This number is almost exactly the same as last year and only slightly higher than in 2004. Overall, the average amount of time each District spends working on stormwater is just over 15 percent. This is up 2.5 percent over last year. For the 2007 survey, Ron Kaplewicz thought it would be interesting to know how this all relates to funding allocations. For Ron, and anyone else curious to know, the average District allocation to stormwater last year was \$12,500.00. It is actually a little higher but some Districts responded with answers that were not in dollars and I was not able to count them.

This leads us to the big question: what kind of work are Districts doing? To use one of the more common answers from the survey, "lots". So far, Districts have reported performing over 315 compliance checks for construction sites and have provided reviews for over 134 construction site plans. Two-thirds of the Districts have helped provide at least one stormwater training session during the past year and more than half the Districts have implemented one or more stormwater management practices. The list of practices is quite long, but here are a few highlights: over 60 miles of roadside seeding, over 200 acres of critical area plantings, installation and clean outs of many sediment collection basins, three rain garden installations, numerous stormwater retrofit projects, a couple of urban buffer installations and even a stormwater wetland.

Equally as important as the projects on the ground, is the support that Districts have been providing to those communities regulated under the Phase II Stormwater Program. In March 2003, regulated communities were given the responsibility of developing and implementing a stormwater management program for their municipal jurisdiction. A stormwater management program needs to meet what is called, the six minimum measures (you can go to the DEC or EPA website for details, or just ask you District Manager) and be fully implemented by January 2008. Not much time left.

So far, 23 Districts have reported that they are helping their regulated communities. Assistance is being provided with all six minimum measures, including 22 Districts helping with Public Education and Outreach, and five Districts that are even helping with Minimum Measure 3: Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination. Surprisingly, 46 percent of these Districts are providing these services without funding assistance. The deadline for these municipalities is just around the corner so I hope that all Districts with regulated communities within their county take the time to meet with their municipal stormwater contact person. Districts may want to provide them with a list of activities and services that they provide. Municipalities may be able to use some of these activities toward reaching their goals.

On a final note, it is my hope to have the 2007 SWCD Stormwater Participation Survey results tallied by the end of February. These results will be distributed to each District office, so remember to put it on your March meeting agenda.

## DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDS FOR NY (Continued from Page 4)

Some of the rules of the program are that all EWP work must reduce threats to life and property and must be economically and environmentally defensible and sound from an engineering standpoint. EWP funds cannot be used to solve problems that existed before the disaster or to improve the level of protection above that which existed prior to the disaster. EWP cannot fund operation and maintenance work, or repair private or public transportation facilities or utilities. EWP work cannot adversely affect downstream water rights, and EWP funds cannot be used to install measures not essential to the reduction of hazards. In addition, EWP funds cannot be used to perform work on measures installed by another federal agency.

Project sponsors are responsible for providing land rights to do repair work and securing the necessary permits. Sponsors are also responsible for furnishing the local cost share and for accomplishing the installation of work. The work can be done either through federal or local contracts.

In July 2006, nine New York counties were declared a state of emergency by then Governor Pataki. The most serious damage was in the Mohawk Valley and Susquehanna River Basin Watershed.

Additional information about EWP and other USDA conservation programs is available at USDA Service Centers nationwide and online at: <http://www.ny.nrcs.usda.gov/programs>.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

### **Cortland County SWCD Chairman Recognized for Service**

At the November 30, 2006 legislative session, Eugene Wright, Chairman of the Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board of Directors, was recognized for his outstanding service to the community, County Legislature, and the SWCD. Marilyn Brown, Chairman of the Cortland County Legislature, presented Mr. Wright with a certificate of recognition in appreciation of his continued service. Mr. Wright has served as the Grange Representative to SWCD since 1966, and has served as Chairman of the SWCD Board for 38 years. Mr. Wright is active in various organizations, is a member of the Town of Homer Planning Board and continues to farm on a full-time basis in the Town of Homer.

### **Farmers' Markets: Building Blocks for New York's Communities**

This conference is an effort to bring together governmental and civic leaders with community farmers' markets to create awareness of the value of farmers' markets to our state's communities. While many communities currently host a farmers' market, there is often a lack of understanding on the benefits that a farmers' market brings to a community, as well as the needs of the market to achieve its goals of serving its host communities. For a full conference agenda, visit [www.nyfarmersmarket.com/workshop.htm](http://www.nyfarmersmarket.com/workshop.htm) and click on the "Farmers' Markets: Building Blocks for New York's Communities" conference. For more information, please call the Farmers' Market Federation of NY at 315-475-1101 or email [diane.eggert@verizon.net](mailto:diane.eggert@verizon.net).

### **Agriculture in the Hudson River Valley: Success Stories from Our Own Backyard**

This one-day conference, from the Hudson Valley Agricultural Partnership, is being held on March 16, 2007 at the Columbia Greene Community College in Hudson, NY. Register now. Download forms at [www.hvap.org](http://www.hvap.org).

### **New American Farmland Trust Report Available**

AFT has released a new report on the status of farmland protection in New York state. You can download a copy of the report at: <http://www.farmland.org/programs/states/NewYorkPolicy.asp>.

### **Add Another Exotic Species to Lake Ontario Uninvited Guest List**

From the Sea Grant Website at <http://www.seagrant.sunysb.edu/Pages/ANSP011607.htm>:

**Contact:** Dave MacNeill, NYSG Fisheries Specialist/Chuck O'Neill, NYSG Coastal Resource Specialist, Phone:315-312-3042/585-395-2638

**OSWEGO, NY, January 16, 2007** - Add another name to the list of uninvited guests for Lake Ontario, say New York Sea Grant invasive species experts. New York Sea Grant is working as part of a multi-state, bi-national group coordinated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (GLERL) to develop what David Reid, director of NOAA's National Center for Research on Aquatic Invasive Species, calls a "rapid research response" to the discovery of *Hemimysis* in Lake Ontario.

A non-native invertebrate species, *Hemimysis anomala*, closely related to the possum shrimp that is native to the Great Lakes, was identified in a Lake Ontario water sample collected by a survey team from Normandeau Associates, Inc. of Bedford, NH, working near Oswego in spring 2006. *Hemimysis anomala* was found in Lake Michigan in November 2006 by scientists at the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory.

Chuck O'Neill, Jr., an invasive species specialist with New York Sea Grant and a member of New York State's Invasive Species Task Force and the national Invasive Species Advisory Committee that advises the National Invasive Species Council, says, "The Lake Ontario discovery included both juvenile and adult *Hemimysis*, suggesting that the population has had time to establish itself and reproduce in Lake Ontario."

*Hemimysis*, native to the Ponto-Caspian region (Caspian and Black Sea areas) of Eurasia, is presumed to have arrived in the Great Lakes system in the ballast of oceangoing ships. Adult *Hemimysis* can grow to almost five-eighths of an inch in size.

#### **Public Will Be Invited to Help Locate Hemimysis**

Reid says the public will be invited to help the researchers identify where *Hemimysis* may exist. A fact sheet is being prepared to help shoreline residents and Great Lakes users spot *Hemimysis*, often seen as a large reddish swarm in the water. Research technicians will collect samples for confirmation. *Hemimysis* move largely at night and are swift swimmers that will test technicians' collection skills.

New York Sea Grant fisheries specialist David B. MacNeill says, "According to European studies, *Hemimysis* hides in areas of rocky substrate and may be seen swimming around the water's edge near piers and other structures at night in calm, clear water by using a light. Research is needed to determine how the *Hemimysis* will affect the Great Lakes' food webs and fisheries. Despite this uncertainty, some of the top scientists in North America are already developing a research plan for *Hemimysis* in the Great Lakes."

New York Sea Grant will share information on *Hemimysis* as it becomes available. For the new fact sheet and more information, contact New York Sea Grant in Oswego at 315-312-3042.

## 2007 WQS INFORMATION.....

It is that time of year when we start to think about the Water Quality Symposium. This year's session will be held at the Holiday Inn in Auburn NY from Tuesday, March 13<sup>th</sup> to Friday, March 16<sup>th</sup>. Jeff Carmichael and his posse have assembled some good classes and will be offering another well-rounded session.

The agriculture section includes CNMP Certification, AEM Tier 5, Ag Practices: What Went Wrong? And AG BMP Designs. Non-Ag technical courses include: Stormwater Pond Planning and Design, Engineering BMP's, Environmentally Sensitive Stream Management and District Education Tools. Office related courses are: Using GIS for Walk In Customers, Leadership, Media Training and Effective Web Sites. Now the names of the courses may change, but this will give you a flavor. I have listed 12 courses, but there are actually 30, so keep your eyes open for the registration form.

Free time will once again occur on Tuesday evening. As I recall last year there was a Texas Hold 'Em tournament; will it come back for a second??? Division meetings will once again be held at lunch on Wednesday, and the annual meeting will occur immediately following dinner on Wed. night. Entertainment will be provided all three evenings. Don't forget your best bib and tucker for the banquet, spit shine those shoes and slick back your hair, we want to make sure to look our best.

Prices for registration packages will be increased \$15.00 this year. The Executive Board has been raising the prices on average \$5.00 per year, but reimbursement from the State Committee for classes (instructors) is not going to be there this year. I know that they would love to have it, but as we have been saying, the money is drying up. I suppose we could buy them a printing press to make more, but I believe the FBI looks sourly on that. Anyway, that is the cost of having these quality events.

By Jim Lieberum, NYSCDEA

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## TENNESSEIN' IS BELIEVIN'!

Way back in November of 2006, NYSCDEA's Amanda Barber and Jeff Carmichael attended the Cooperative Conservation Leadership Workshop in Nashville, Tennessee. This was an opportunity to bring together conservation partners which included state associations, state conservation agencies, representatives from employee associations, NRCS and RC&D's. The goal of this program was to get all of these groups together in one room and look at the roles and duties within the organizations at the state level.

There were a number of speakers that focused on how to work better and more effectively as agencies, partners and individuals. Coaching session, inspirational session, training sessions and the dreaded, yet effective "*role playing*" were conducted to get folks in attendance focused.

What qualities does a leader possess? This was an important issue that was brought up. Instructors discussed that a leader (an effective leader) needs to be able to act, needs to be focused, innovative, honest, passionate, visionary, possess charisma and have the clout necessary to move ideas/projects/programs forward. In all of the people that I consider to be good leaders, I can see those qualities. In other leaders that I have seen, some or many have been lacking. Just because you think you will be a good leader, that doesn't make you one.

A second issue focused on was the empowerment of individuals to work effectively at a local level. Have you ever asked yourself who is your "customer"? Have you wondered if you are meeting their needs and are they able to participate in this process? Do you have community involvement and support? We, as District employees, need to remind ourselves that we work for local government, which translates to the people. We serve the needs of the people in our respective counties. Input from communities and individuals can be vital to creating an effective strategic plan.

Overall Amanda thought that this was very good and helpful training and hoped that it would translate to NY. These types of workshops and trainings are the things that we should be taking advantage of to grow as a group and as individuals. If the opportunity presents itself, try to attend sessions such as these for your professional development.

While in Tennessee, she and Jeff were able to visit the state museum and state capital building, which she commented was very different from NY's. One question remained unanswered however, she and Jeff both wondered why Johnny Cash calls SOOOOiee during his songs? Any help out there would be appreciated.

By Jim Lieberum, NYSCDEA

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF  
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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **NYACD Legislative Days**, February 12-13, 2007, Albany, NY
- **NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee Meeting**, February 20, 2007, Albany, NY
- **The 2007 Farm Bill: Implications for State & Local Food & Agricultural Policy in NY**,  
February 27, 2007, Warren Hall 401, 3:00-4:30pm, Cornell University  
One of CaRDI's "Future of Rural New York " Seminar Series 2007
- **2007 Water Quality Symposium / CDEA Annual Training Session**, March 13-16, 2007, Auburn, NY
- **"Graze-A-Palooza" Spring Grazing Conference**, March 31, 2007, Hamilton, NY
- **2007 New York State Envirothon**, May 23-24, 2007, Cobleskill, NY
- **2007 Canon Envirothon**, July 29– August 4, 2007, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY

**March FYI**—Deadline for Articles —February 28, 2007.

Please send articles to Maggie Atkins at [matkins@frontiernet.net](mailto:matkins@frontiernet.net); Phone: 585-396-9973; Fax: 585-554-4077. **Thanks.**