

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS, INC.



PROVIDING TODAY...
... PROTECTING TOMORROW

NYACD NEWSLETTER • MARCH 2007

FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

Hello everyone. At this time, many of you have just participated in our annual legislative lobby days in Albany. Our message was clear and focused on the Environmental Protection Fund and Stormwater Program Implementation. The complete NYACD Legislative Goals for 2007 are outlined on page 3 of this newsletter.

We are not done. The battle is long from being won or lost. The victors are yet to be determined. While our Executive Director Gregg Bell and NYACD leadership have been making the visits and talking the talk to as many as possible, we can not win the battle without **YOU**. You are the important ingredient. If you have not been to Albany yet this year, contact Gregg. He will assist you in meeting with your legislators and even other legislators in Albany. Meet with your legislators back home as well. Your legislators need to hear about the stormwater work which you do. They need to hear about both your success stories and the unmet needs. There is a great deal that can change in the next month; please be prepared to act.

As a part of our Legislative Days, the NYACD leadership met with Acting Ag & Markets Commissioner Patrick Hooker. The meeting was uplifting and we are confident that we will be seeing continued cooperation and growth under his administration. We also look forward to a meeting with our next DEC Commissioner when he is confirmed by the Senate.

Please watch for the announcement of public meetings to be scheduled about the rules and regulations regarding the additional dollars that were gained by soil and water conservation districts in last year's budget and the law which we got passed. These meetings will provide Districts the opportunity to comment on the Department of Ag & Markets' draft regulations.

There are other issues also raising their heads this year concerning our legislative initiatives. One is the Bigger, Better, Bottle Bill. The Governor has tied any increase in funds for the EPF to passage of the Bottle Bill as the source of those additional funds. While 28 pages long, the main purpose of the bill is to expand coverage to additional types of beverage containers which were not popular when the original bill was passed in 1982.

Something great will be happening in October. It is something that can have a remarkable impact on you as a district director, friend of soil and water conservation districts, a district employee or valuable partner. **What is Happening in October?**

NYACD leadership is making plans for the 2007 Annual Meeting in October. We are currently negotiating with hotels in the Finger Lakes area. But, we need to know what you might be looking for in the Annual Meeting. We heard great comments about the programs offered last year in Cooperstown, but we need to be sure that we can offer you as great a line up for this year. Can you help us? Let NYACD know what type of program would bring you to **YOUR** annual meeting. Please let us know today at NYACD@nycap.rr.com.

By Linda Coffin, President NYACD

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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NYACD "SLIMS DOWN" LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

In order for farmers and landowners to comply with state regulations regarding conservation practices, they are seeking increased technical assistance from New York's soil and water conservation districts. To allow the districts to provide the general public with a wide range of soil, water, air and habitat benefits, greater funding for the districts must be approved by the state.

Successful conservation delivery programs are those that are resource-driven and locally-led with sufficient flexibility to identify local priorities and concerns. These delivery systems, including educational and technical assistance to implement the programs, must be easily accessible by potential conservation customers. With continued support and leadership from the New York State Conservation Committee, districts can follow through on delivery of programs tailored to the natural resource needs of the state and local areas. The Governor and State Legislature must continue their funding of the conservation programs provided in the Environmental Protection Fund and must look for opportunities to streamline and improve efficiency within the current program options.

The New York Association of Conservation Districts is a volunteer, non-profit organization that represents the state's 58 conservation districts and the men and women who serve on their boards. The association will work with the Governor and the State Legislature to address districts' needs and, hopefully, improve funding levels for all conservation programs.

On Tuesday, February 12, 2007 over 60 of us directors and employees from 24 soil and water conservation districts visited state legislators, informing them of the importance of being able to offer technical assistance to landowners and municipalities within their counties. We also shared our conservation delivery programs success stories and the requests for more funding. We were not asking our legislators to supply "new" money for our program request; rather, we showed them that the additional dollars needed were already within the present budget. The legislators were aware of our needs and several offered support of measures to provide the necessary funding for districts' conservation programs.

I am sure that every conservation district in New York State wants NYACD to be successful in its efforts to secure the necessary dollars to fully fund the conservation programs and reimbursement opportunities set forth in the Environmental Protection Fund. However, in order to have a successful year round legislative program, NYACD Board of Directors need local directors to take a more active and vocal roll in NYACD programs such as Legislative Day. Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, "I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving. To reach the port of heaven we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it, but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor." The NYACD Board of Directors, in spite of the obstacles that may lie ahead in working on our legislative agenda, need greater district director participation in order to "sail, not drift, nor lie in anchor".

By Brad Rogers, First VP NYACD

NEW FACES

At the meeting of the New York Soil and Water Conservation Committee in Albany on February 20, Acting Commissioner of Agriculture & Markets, Patrick Hooker, introduced himself and gave a presentation. He explained his desire to support the Department's professional staff and programs and also his need to still get confirmed as Commissioner by the New York State Senate.

As if those two immediate tasks are not enough, the new Acting Commissioner is also trying to fill about a dozen senior positions within the Department. He has completed the hiring of several whom he announced. They include Rich Bennett, Tom Lindburg, Kathy Grand, and

- Troy Waffner - who has been the lead staff member for Assemblyman Bill Magee, chair of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture. Troy was very helpful to Districts in 2006 in getting our bill passed.
- Jacqueline Moody-Czub - was a private agricultural consultant and lives in Rensselaer County. She will be responsible for working with soil and water conservation districts.
- Jerry Cosgrove - is an attorney and was Northeast Director of the American Farmland Trust. We saw him frequently last year at the Legislative Office Building promoting funding and legislation to protect farmland from housing and commercial development.

By Gregory Bell, Executive Director, NYACD

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS, INC

LEGISLATIVE GOALS 2007

Environmental Protection Fund and Stormwater Implementation 2007/2008 Budget

Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)

- **NYACD** recognizes the EPF as a priority for soil and water conservation districts to be able to access funding to address natural resource issues on a county SWCD basis and; therefore, requests the continued funding of soil and water conservation districts from the EPF beyond the \$3 million for the 2008 budget, with increases to \$6.8 million by the year 2010.
- **NYACD** supports the position of the EPF Coalition in support of an increase of overall Environmental Protection Fund to \$500 million by the year 2010.

Stormwater Program Implementation

- **NYACD** supports a strong soil and water district locally led implementation process for conservation with emphasis on stormwater management technical assistance to aid economic development and flood prevention.
- Successful implementation of the DEC's Division of Water's stormwater management program is dependent on stormwater technical assistance from partnership with soil and water conservation districts and others.
- **NYACD** supports a funding proposal to provide stormwater management technical assistance at \$3 million for partnerships with soil and water conservation districts to provide the following sets of stormwater services:
 - Technical assistance for development site plan reviews
 - Construction site compliance checks
 - Technical assistance to regulated MS4 municipalities
 - Provide technical stormwater assistance to municipalities on planning and zoning.
- **NYACD** supports DEC's request from the EPF in order to meet departmental needs regarding their Stormwater Management Implementation proposal.



FEDERAL CONSERVATION FUNDING CUTS

The proposed federal budget recently released by the President will cut funding for conservation programs and has totally eliminated Congressional earmarks for conservation projects.

We have heard from Ron Alvarado, NRCS NY State Conservationist, about the realities of the current appropriations bill as proposed by the President. In addition, new earmarks for both NRCS and EPA are to be eliminated. NYACD leadership has been contacting our Members of Congress to see what can be done. However, as with the State legislature, your support and contacts will make a big difference. We need to understand the programs that you do with earmarks and how the lack of this money will affect the way you do business. Our New York Congressional Members are asking that question. Are you as directors aware of the agreements that you have with some of these federal agencies for programs and how much money you receive from them?

As the Farm Bill legislation starts to take form, the NACD has sent out several requests for information. While the deadline date on getting this information back to them has passed, the information will still be important for us as we go to Washington DC to discuss the needs for New York in this next bill. So I would like to request your help. Please take the time to let us know your District's experience concerning each of the following areas. Please send your responses to our NYACD office.

A. Conservation Technical Service: Administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, this program provides technical assistance and support to agricultural producers, landowners, and managers. The CTA program provides the technical capability including conservation planning, design and implementation assistance that helps people plan and implement conservation projects. CTA is used to prepare land and landowners for participation in financial assistance programs and also to provide technical assistance without any financial assistance. The flexibility in the structure of this account is what also allows NRCS to enter into cooperative agreements with local soil and water conservation districts, states and organizations. These cost-share agreements allow local, state and federal resources to be maximized and allow the most efficient delivery of conservation programs. Funding for this program has reached critical lows. It is a part of the discretionary spending account and is not at the current time part of the program funding. NACD supports increased funding for the NRCS Conservation Operations account through the Fiscal Year 2008 Agriculture Appropriations Bill. The President's proposal for FY08 is for \$802 million. The NACD Request for FY08 is for \$903 million. NACD and NYACD are gathering examples of conservation technical assistance provided outside Farm Bill services AND examples of when conservation technical assistance could NOT be provided due to limited resources. These specific examples are key to educating Members of Congress about the value and need for CTA funding.

1. What was the landowner's conservation need?
2. Was the District able to provide assistance through NRCS or an agreement under the CTA Program?
3. If yes, what assistance was provided and what were the environmental and, if available, other benefits (e.g. less fertilizer used, less time spent on clean up, etc)?
4. If no, what are the environmental and other impacts?

B. 319 Grant Program: Administered by the US Environmental Protection Agency, this program provides federal funds to support state and local nonpoint source water pollution clean-up efforts. States, territories, and tribes receive grants which support a variety of activities including technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects, and monitoring. Conservation districts across the nation use these grants to accomplish on the ground projects. NACD supports increased funding for the \$319 grant program in the Fiscal Year 2008 Interior Appropriations Bill. The President's Proposal for FY 08 is \$194 million. The NACD request is \$295-300 Million.

C. State and Private Forestry Program Administered by the USDA Forest Service, the State and Private Forestry Program provides technical and financial assistance to landowners and resource managers to help sustain the Nation's forests and protect communities and the environment from wild land fires. The *State and Private Forestry* (S&PF) division works with a broad range of programs that address the wise use and management of non-federal forested lands, normally in partnership with the state forestry agencies and other partners.

- *Forest Health Management* - direct and implement measures to prevent, retard, or suppress unwanted, native and nonnative invasives affecting trees and forests
- *Cooperative Fire Assistance* - provides State forestry agencies with assistance in delivering wildfire response and in complying with national safety and training standards; also assists States with hazard assessments, fuels treatment projects, and public education efforts
- *Forest Stewardship* - provides technical assistance, through State forestry agency partners, to nonindustrial private forest (NIPF) owners to encourage and enable active long-term forest management
- *Forest Legacy Program* - supports State efforts to protect environmentally sensitive forest lands through voluntary land acquisition
- *Urban and Community Forestry* - provides technical and financial assistance to help improve the livability of cities and communities through managing urban forest resources to promote a healthy ecosystem
- *Also Economic Action Programs, Forest Resource Information and Analysis, and International Program*—NACD supports increased funding for State and Private Forestry in the Fiscal Year 2008 Interior Appropriations Bill. The President's proposal for FY 08 is \$202 million and NACD's request is \$283 million.

(Continued on Page 9)

CANON ENVIROTHON HOSTED BY NEW YORK THIS SUMMER NYACD HOSTS HOSPITALITY ROOM

NYACD is hosting the hospitality room at the Canon Envirothon this year. We need help from all of you in order to do our best. Help can come in the form of volunteer time, donations of food and beverages, or solicitation of those donations.

This national competition will be held in Geneva, NY, from July 29 through August 3, 2007, on the campus of Hobart and William Smith Colleges. The Canon Envirothon is North America's largest high school environmental education competition. It got its start in 1979 as a competition created by the Pennsylvania Soil and Water Conservation Districts. It gained in popularity, eventually becoming a national event, with Canon taking the role as "title" sponsor in 1997. The National Association of Conservation Districts is one of five other sponsoring organizations and corporations. This year, teams from 44 States and 8 Canadian Provinces will take part. The teams that will arrive in Geneva will be those that took top place in their State and Provincial competitions.

Each year teams compete to solve problems in four categories: soils/land use, aquatic ecology, forestry & wildlife, as well as a topic of current interest. This year that topic is renewable energy. While they are in our area the students will take field trips to sites relating to the test questions. Top-scoring team members are awarded scholarships that can be used at the college or trade school of their choice.

NYACD members will set up, stock and work in the hospitality room. This room will be available to Canon executive committee members, advisors and volunteers. It will be a place they can relax and get a "taste" of New York. The theme for this year is New York's waterways. We will need to decorate the room and offer beverages and snacks. We hope to showcase New York products. Donations can include wine, beer, juice, coffee, tea, soda, water, cheese, fruits, vegetables, chips, pretzels – you get the idea.

In this issue of FYI you will find a sheet you can use to solicit donations. Please make several copies and send them to businesses and organizations that can provide food, beverages, paper products or cash contributions. All donors will be recognized at the hospitality room, opening ceremony and awards program.

We also need your time at the event. If you or any of your friends or relatives can spend some time helping out at the hospitality room, please contact me. My email address is mgoodwi1@rochester.rr.com (that's a number one, not a letter I in the address); or call 585-398-2817 evenings or weekends.

The room is scheduled to be open during the following dates and times:

Saturday, July 28, set up; Sunday, July 29, set up starting 7 AM, serving 1:30 PM to 7 PM and 10 PM to midnight; Monday, July 30, set up and organize; Tuesday, July 31, serving 7 AM to 4 PM and 9:30 PM to midnight; Wednesday, August 1, serving 9 PM to midnight; Thursday, August 2, serving 8 AM to midnight; and Friday, August 3, serving 7:30 AM to noon and 9 PM to midnight.

I hope all our members will pitch in and help New York State be a good host for the 2007 Canon Envirothon.

By Mary Beth Goodwin, Secretary NYACD



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ENVIROTHON NEEDS MORE VOLUNTEERS

The 2007 Canon Envirothon committee is recruiting volunteers for the upcoming competition. It will be held from July 29th to August 4th in Geneva, NY. If you are a seasoned volunteer, a first-timer, energetic, have a knack with teenagers or just want to get out of the office, we need you. A list of dates, jobs, and descriptions are posted on our online volunteer sign-up form. Don't miss out on getting involved with this event.

<http://www.nysenvirothon.org/Canon/FormEventSignUp.htm>

Please pass this message on to anyone you think might be interested in volunteering.

Thanks for your consideration.

Best Regards,

Sharon Frost, Volunteer Coordinator

2007 CANON ENVIROTHON



NORTH AMERICA'S LARGEST ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

July 29th - August 4, 2007

Hobart William Smith Colleges
GENEVA, NEW YORK

A TASTE OF NEW YORK HOSPITALITY AT THE 2007 CANON ENVIROTHON

In July of 2007 teams of high school students and their advisors from 44 States and 7 Provinces of Canada along with 200 volunteers will come together during the 2007 Canon Envirothon. The Planning Committee is putting together a solid program for the competition, filled with opportunities to learn, meet, and take time for fellowship. A New York Hospitality Suite is planned, and donations are needed! The Hospitality Planning Committee is looking for donations of food and beverage or monetary donations of \$50.00 or more for the Suite, which will be open to the advisors and volunteers from Monday, July 30th - Friday, August 3rd. A bountiful variety of food and beverage is needed. Beverage options include wine and beer, regular and diet sodas, juice, bottled water, coffee, tea and more. Foodstuffs can range from chips, pretzels and other snack foods to meat and cheese trays, veggie trays, dips, fresh whole fruit. Bakery items and beyond! What's your delicious local specialty?

All Hospitality Suite Sponsors will be listed on our Sponsor Recognition Sign, which will be prominently displayed in the Suite during Hospitality hours and in the Opening Ceremony Program and the Awards Ceremony Program.

Would you like to be a Hospitality Sponsor? If so, please complete the information below and fax the form to 1-888-394-9191. We will contact you to follow up.

Questions? Contact mgoodwi1@rochester.rr.com.

_____ I would like to donate the following food and/or beverage to the Suite (please list quantity):

_____ I would like to make a monetary donation of \$_____ to the Suite.

Organization Name: _____

Organization Address: _____

Contact Name: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

If you know of another organization that would be a great Hospitality Sponsor, please forward this form on to them, and thank you for helping to give our North American guests a Taste of New York!

CAN YOU AFFORD A MINUTE?

Well, actually it will be a little more than a minute. We need your help to be on a committee with the NYACD. NYACD welcomes your participation on a committee. NYACD, at this time has several standing committees and several special committees, with more focused objectives. Each committee has a chair named by the NYACD president unless otherwise stated in the NYACD bylaws. Committees make policy recommendations, plan events, focus on future growth of the organization and provide assistance. It is an opportunity for directors to become involved on statewide issues on a smaller scale than serving on the Board of Directors. We hope you will agree to help in the continued growth of the NYACD by volunteering today for one or more of these committees. The committees are as follows:

Outlook Committee keeps the broad NYACD goals and picture in mind. The committee focuses on future direction and growth. NYACD currently needs to build a strategy for the next five years. We need your help.

Legislative Committee reviews proposed legislative activities, including plans for New York and Washington; currently chaired by our vice presidents, it is hoped that we can get a representative from each district to serve as a contact on this one.

Communications Committee reviews and manages the NYACD ongoing communication methods. In addition, it will review and provide annual marketing and outreach plan for NYACD. We need individuals who are willing to help us tell the story and reach out to others.

Resolutions and bylaws Committee reviews and prepares for distribution those changes necessary to positions and policies of NYACD and its by-laws to address identified needs of the organization.

Finance Committee manages the financial affairs of the NYACD, prepares the annual budget, provides financial reporting needs and prepares a long range financial plan. Members of the NYACD board are currently working on a long term financial plan; this committee needs those who want to provide this insight.

Annual Meeting Committee while not a standing committee, it is one that is very important. It is the committee that works to plan, implement and review the NYACD annual meeting.

Education and Training Committee, again, is not a standing committee, but one that is very important. In addition to planning and implementing leadership training programs, the committee is also involved with educational programs such as the Envirothon.

There could be others if there is an interest and the desire on YOUR part to become involved. The committees usually meet once or twice in the year, with others such as the annual meeting committee that might meet in person more often. Conference calling and computer messaging has been great ways in the past year to stay connected and completing tasks.

Please consider getting involved today. If interested in any of those listed or if you have further suggestions such as an urban committee, or forestry, as we have heard in the past, please let us know by contacting our office at nyyacd@nycap.rr.com.

By Linda Coffin, President NYACD

SUCCESSFUL STORMWATER PROGRAM EXAMPLE BY GREENE SWCD



Serta Manufacturing: Cossack NY

In 2003, a new 250,000 square foot production facility for Serta Mattress was being constructed in the new Kalkberg Commerce Park. The project's designer/builder was Clayco Inc, a leader in tilt slab construction. Based in Saint Louis MO, Clayco's staff was unfamiliar with NYS regulations for stormwater management. While the Kalkberg Commerce Park provided all final stormwater treatment facilities, Serta was responsible for sediment and erosion control within their site. After several visits to the site with little success in having Clayco understand permit requirements, the NYSDEC contacted the GCSWCD for assistance.

While DEC was sympathetic that the contractor was trying to come into compliance, the situation had stretched on too long and enforcement action was eminent. Before taking action to fine the company, DEC asked GCSWCD to help. The District visited the site on a Thursday and spent the weekend rewriting the project's sediment and erosion plan. The following Tuesday, a follow-up visit by DEC revealed the site's stormwater plan to be in full compliance. DEC was so pleased, they asked the District if they could distribute the plan as an example to other applicants. DEC action against the project would have resulted in a project shutdown costing the developer significant money.

Excerpt from Greene County Soil & Water Conservation District flyer "Case Studies: Soil & Water Role in Stormwater Management—Greene County"

NEWS YOU CAN USE

News From NY Farms!

SAVE THE DATE: March 30, 2007 for the NY Farms! Annual Meeting. This year's meeting will be at the NYS Grange Headquarters in Cortland, NY. Come learn about the 2007 Farm Bill. Find out why your help is needed now and how you can participate at this stage of the process. The Food Policy Council and the Wholesale Farmers Market are moving forward. Discover how these initiatives may include you. NYS Agriculture and Markets Commissioner Patrick Hooker will share his vision for agriculture in NY State. Do you share his vision? Join NY Farms! on March 30th to find out.

The NY Farms! Calendar of Events has been cited as the most comprehensive agricultural conference and events calendar available. Don't forget to send us your listing. If you don't see your listing it could be a computer error. The computer crashed while uploading data and the list had to be regenerated. Hopefully we were able to retrieve everything, but if we didn't, please resend your listing. <http://www.nyfarms.info/calendar.html>

Maple Weekend

On March 17, 18, 24 and 25, you can enjoy Maple Weekend. Coordinated by the New York State Maple Producers Association, it is a series of events across the maple syrup-producing regions of New York. You can watch maple syrup being made at a sugar house near you, or you can enjoy a pancake breakfast near you.

On the web site of the Association at www.mapleweekend.com, you will find complete lists by county of where each of these activities can be found. You can also find directions to the Maple Museum (it is in Lewis County) and recipes for more than just pouring syrup on waffles.



Noxious & Invasive Species Conference

The American Wildlife Conservation Foundation Presents: Using Oneida Lake as an Example to Discuss Noxious and Invasive Species—Past, Present and Future Threats and Opportunities. This conference takes place on March 24th from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm at the Marx Marriot Renaissance Hotel in Downtown Syracuse, New York. For more information and registration please go to: <http://hosts.cce.cornell.edu/invasives-conference/index.html>.

The global effect of introduced microbe, insect, plant, and animal species influences physical, economic and cultural aspects of native species within the firm and infirm habitats. From SARS to VHS, round goby to silver carp, golden nematode to Asian long horned beetle, and honeysuckle to buckthorn, man's expanding influence is reducing species diversity and may be limiting our long term survival capabilities. Discussing local, personal examples may be the best path to understanding greater consequences.

New NACD Comic Book Shows the Riches of Woody Biomass

Money may not grow on trees, but heat, electricity, liquid fuel, and even plastics do. Children can learn how, with the release of *The Hidden Treasure*, an educational comic book from NACD, the National Association of Conservation Districts. This new teaching tool shows young people and families how woody biomass from our nation's woodlands can provide a wealth of products and energy resources.

NACD developed *The Hidden Treasure* through a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of the Interior and the Forest Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. The comic book presents messages that are closely tied to the goals and objectives of the Forest Service's National Fire Plan.

The Hidden Treasure helps children understand the real worth of our valuable forest resources, so their treasure can be fully revealed. *The Hidden Treasure* provides an engaging and educational story for children in late elementary to middle school to help them understand that forest renewal improves the health of forests and provides biomass for many productive uses and how wood biomass will play an important role in our nation's future, including energy security through the production of biofuels, biochemicals, and other sources of energy.

The book can be previewed at www.discoverycomics.com/review/TheHiddenTreasure.pdf (6.3 MB).

To order copies of "The Hidden Treasure," please Fax Nancy Hammond at (402) 437-5712 or send an email to nhammond@fs.fed.us. Minimum order quantity is 500.



FEDERAL CONSERVATION FUNDING CUTS *(continued from Page 4)*

- D. **Coastal Zone Management Program** Administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Coastal Zone Management Program is a voluntary partnership between the federal government and U.S. coastal states and territories that provides for management of the nation's coastal resources, including the Great Lakes. It balances economic development with environmental conservation. CZM grants are awarded to States and Territories only, for projects addressing management issues which are regional in scope, including interstate projects; demonstration projects which have high potential for improving coastal zone management, especially at the local level; emergency grants to State coastal zone management agencies to address unforeseen or disaster-related circumstances; awards recognizing excellence in coastal zone management; and to provide financial support to for investigating and applying the public trust doctrine to implement State management programs. Conservation Districts in Designated Coastal Zones can partner with the state conservation agency to receive federal Coastal Zone Management grant funds for local projects including educational materials, nonpoint source pollution abatement projects, and associated staffing. NACD supports increased funding for the Coastal Zone Management Grants in the Fiscal Year 2008 Commerce Appropriations Bill. The President's proposal for FY08 is \$66.15 Million. NACD's request for FY08 is \$75 million.

When you let us know about your District's experiences and needs in these four federal programs, please include your contact information.
By Linda Coffin, President, NYACD

HUDSON MOHAWK RC&D COUNCIL VISITS VALUE ADDED DAIRIES IN COLUMBIA COUNTY

Members from the Hudson Mohawk Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D) and their guests visited two value added dairy farms in Columbia County in January. By selling directly to their consumers, the two dairies are able to make a profit while maintaining small herds. The Council visited them to learn what they are doing right so they can help spread the word to other dairy farmers interested in direct marketing.

"It costs more money for the farmer to produce milk than they get for it," said Seymour Vander Veen, Chairperson of the Hudson Mohawk RC&D and owner of Seven View Farm, a dairy in Schenectady County. "Higher taxes and production costs give New York dairy farmers an unfair disadvantage. In order to survive, we may have to look at direct marketing."

The first dairy visited was Hawthorne Valley Farm, a certified organic and biodynamic farm in Ghent. The farm raises and milks approximately 60 cows and produces raw milk, yogurt, and hard and soft cheese, with yogurt being their most profitable product. Raw milk can be sold from the farm only in New York and Hawthorne Valley Farm is the largest producer in the state.

"Some people feel raw milk has significant health benefits and we get customers driving several hours just to buy milk from the farm," said Dan Demaine, herdsman for Hawthorne Valley. He explained the challenge of producing raw milk is that inspection by Ag and Markets is done once a month as opposed to once a year. He also pays close attention to herd health and the farm does additional bacterial testing of the milk to ensure food safety. The benefit of selling raw milk is the price - it retails at the farm store for \$7.00 a gallon.

The second farm on the tour was Gumaer Farms in Stuyvesant Falls where Bill Gumaer bottles and home delivers milk from his 36 cow mixed herd made up primarily of red and white Holsteins. Bill relies on word of mouth advertising and has built a successful business by producing a reasonably priced, superior product with the convenience of home delivery for the busy family. "I'm not a salesman. I want to be able to look my customer in the eye and tell them that this is the best milk they can buy," says Bill.

Bill uses the old fashioned style of vat pasteurization versus a high temperature process and bottles milk in glass to preserve and enhance flavor. Milk is delivered weekly and retails for \$2.60 per half gallon for whole, 2%, or skim and chocolate costs \$3.85 per half gallon. In addition to milk, Bill can also deliver cream, half and half, free range eggs, maple syrup, honey, pies, cookies, cottage cheese, sour cream, butter, buttermilk, and orange juice. Most of his stops are in Columbia County and nearby. For more information about delivery contact Bill at (518) 799-2571.

Representatives from both Hawthorne Valley and Gumaer Farms will be speaking at the "Agriculture in the Hudson River Valley: Success Stories from Our Own Backyard" conference which will be held Friday, March 16th at the Columbia Greene Community College in Hudson. For more information about the conference visit www.hvap.org.

The Hudson Mohawk RC&D Council is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization that promotes regional, economic and natural resource conservation development in Albany, Columbia, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer and Schenectady counties and is funded in part by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services. For more information please contact Hudson Mohawk RC&D Coordinator Elizabeth Marks at (518) 828-4385 x105.

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF
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PROVIDING TODAY...
... PROTECTING TOMORROW

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
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UPCOMING EVENTS

- **2007 Water Quality Symposium / CDEA Annual Training Session**, March 13-16, 2007, Auburn, NY
- **Noxious & Invasive Species Conference**, March 24, 2007, Syracuse, NY
- **NY Farms! Annual Meeting**, March 30, 2007, Cortland, 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

April FYI—Deadline for Articles —March 26, 2007.

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