



New York Association of Conservation Districts
c/o Steuben County SWCD
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www.nyacd.org

NY Association of Conservation Districts February 2020 Flooding within New York

I would like to thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of the NY Association of Conservation Districts of New York to address the current flooding emergency & mitigation efforts and the need for future flooding assistance due to the increase in extreme weather.

I would like to share with you the “best kept secret” within New York, which is Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD’s). There are sixty-two Soil & Water Conservation Districts within NY counting the five NYC Burroughs. These Districts work along side Farmers, Landowners, Counties, Towns, & State Highway Departments to continue to protect NY’s soil and water.

I’d like to share with you just a small portion of programs and projects in place that SWCD’s provide as a service to do just that.

Delaware County SWCD has created a Flood Emergency Plan, which is countywide, and this plan is now being used as a model for other SWCD’s, counties and town highway departments. With this Flood Emergency Plan in place they are being proactive and prepared for the next flood.

- Delaware County SWCD has thirty (30) declared flooding events they are working on
- Water Quality is a great concern due to the erosion issues of the stream/riverbanks
- Delaware County SWCD has a pilot program in place where they are analyzing the water For loads of phosphorus, nutrients, etc. due to the erosion

Tioga County SWCD in just one year

- 24 Projects Completed
- Stream bank stabilized or rehabilitated: 4,780 Ft.
- Culvert/Post Flood Emergency Stream Intervention Training(ESI):
 - 15 attendees from local highway departments, one day training as follow up to previous trainings, visited site of active storm recovery to spur further discussion and demonstrate proper techniques.
 - Conducted “round table” discussion with highway department attendees to discuss new regulations for culverts, funding and design needs.
 - New environmental regulations require larger spans, potential designation as bridges (over 20 ft.), discussion centered on the need to facilitate dialogue and towns to formally work with County DPW.
 - SWCD can do design work and plans to facilitate discussions with County DPW.
- NYS DEC Stream Disturbance Permits: 6
- NYS DEC Emergency Authorization Permits: 13

- Army Corps of Engineers Stream Permits: 24
- Advice/Technical Assistance to landowners and municipalities: 44
- Oversaw construction of four NRCS EQIP Stream stabilization projects under contribution agreement with NRCS.
- Completed Field assessment (inventory and analysis) of two watersheds: Huntington Creek and Appalachian Creek.
 - All eroding banks, debris jams, and other significant features were mapped and recorded. An analysis and reporting to the communities were completed in 2018, with prioritizing of sites and completing demonstration projects.
- Assisted Towns of Tioga, Nichols, Barton and Owego with technical assistance, permitting and construction oversight after July Flash Flooding.
- Successfully completed “Cost Share Program” pilot project with private landowner.

As well as all these projects SWCD’s provide they also provide:

- Monitoring and mapping of stream issues
- Education and outreach
- Technical Assistance/Advice
- Permit Assistance
- Grant writing and Administration
- Design work and Engineering.
- Construction Oversight
- Hazard Mitigation Planning
- Culvert inventory, analysis, and design
- Flood response

As you can see SWCD’s are working hard to protect, care, and preserve the soil & water of NY. With the Climate Changes and the State Legislation passed and the increase of flooding concerns with 5-6-7” of rain fall in a 24 hour period and how we are having a lot more 100 year storms it is vitally important to solve these issues/problems **before** the flooding happens.

You as Legislators can utilize SWCD’s because this is what they have been and are doing by being proactive not reactive to a very serious flooding issue/concern. For SWCD’s to have the ability to help Farmers, Landowners, Counties, Towns & State is to beef up their ability to do their job by increasing funding to provide additional staff to handle the workload and increase their flooding programs. The Soil & Water Districts are the only entity that can work with public and private landowners.

Thank you sincerely for allowing me to be here today and to be heard on behalf of NY’s “**best kept secret**” NY Soil & Water Conservation Districts!!

Sincerely, *Blanche*, Blanche L. Hurlbutt, Executive Director NYACD, 24 North Street, Edmeston, NY 13335 Telephone: 607-965-6316