



Genesee County Soil & Water Conservation District

Summer 2019 Issue

29 Liberty Street, Suite 3, Batavia, NY 14020 * Phone: 585-343-2362 x5

District News and Updates

Genesee County Soil and Water Conservation District (District) hosted the 2019 Envirothon this spring at the Genesee Park and Forest. In total, seven teams representing six school districts in the county learned about soils, wildlife, aquatic ecosystems, forestry, and this year's current event topic of precision agriculture.

Our District would like to thank everyone involved, including sponsors, volunteers, Genesee County Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, and especially the teachers who spend the time working with students to prepare for the event. It is great to see students getting outside, learning about the environment, and hopefully gaining insight for future careers. Notre Dame took home the top prize this year and represented Genesee County in the state-level competition at Hobart William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY. Congratulations!

We hosted our annual tree and shrub sale in April, which is always an excellent opportunity to get bare root trees, shrubs, and groundcovers into the hands of residents for conservation planting purposes. In total, we sold over 15,000 plants this year! I look forward to next year's tree and shrub sale, please be on the lookout for 2020's order form during our winter newsletter. The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago, the second best time is now!



First place Notre Dame High School students (left to right): Dan Bergman, Alee Elliott, Mary Vandenbosch, Hannah Gualtieri, Matt Stevens.

Finally, the District has been very active this summer in many projects, including the development of many cover crop projects for the upcoming fall. The benefits of cover crops are numerous, including reduced erosion, increased soil health, protection of water quality, and carbon sequestration. Jared Elliott and Tim Welch in our office have worked with many landowners to develop cover crops to fit their specific needs.

-Brad Mudrzynski, District Manager

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Upcoming Events



⇒ Fish Stocking Program, order by Sept. 20th



Check out our website at this [link](#).



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Grange

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County Legislator

Streamside Livestock Exclusion



Livestock, like humans, prefer a clean source of water to drink from. Pasture systems that restrict or eliminate livestock access to streams and farm ponds can improve livestock health and water quality. When livestock have full access to streams, the stream banks and streambed become unstable and can lead to erosion issues, loss of aquatic habitat, and turbid water. Livestock will also defecate in the stream, which may deposit harmful pathogens. The pathogens, muddy slopes and bottom, poor footing, and turbid water can lead to livestock health issues and potential exposure to disease.

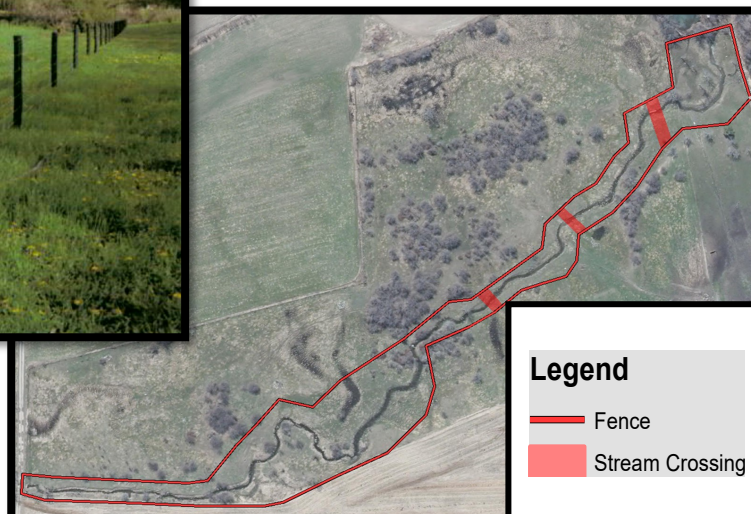
Fencing is commonly used to exclude livestock from streams and adjacent riparian areas. Off-stream waterers and stabilized stream-crossing sections are used to provide the livestock drinking water and pasture access. The District partnered with a dairy farm in Genesee County to install 3,518 feet of fence along a perennial stream (see map below). The fence was set back 30 feet or more from the stream edge to allow a buffer space between the cow pasture and stream. The 4.2 acres of riparian buffer will filter runoff from the pasture to improve water quality, clarity, and will serve as a habitat corridor. Cost-share assistance for this project was provided by the Finger Lakes - Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FOLLOWPA). If you have interest in a project similar to this one please contact Soil and Water and our Agricultural Environmental Management Planner can assist you in planning your project.

Create the streamside livestock exclusion system that works for your operation.

Below: aerial photography showing where fence and stream-crossing sections were installed along a creek in a cow pasture.



Above: example of streamside livestock exclusion, which restricts livestock access to the stream and adjacent area. Photo credit: NRCS.



Planning Your Fall Cover Crop Planting



It's that time of year again! As the harvest of wheat and vegetables began in July, it might have triggered some thoughts about your fall cover crop plantings. If you haven't started planning yet, it's not too late. Trying new cover crops can be a bit overwhelming, so here are a few things to keep in mind as you begin planning your fall cover crop plantings.



No-till wheat cover and no-till red clover/tillage radish mix side by side.

What's your objective?

Every good plan begins with goals and objectives, cover crops are no different. Your objectives likely vary from field to field. Some fields may need winter cover for erosion control, some fields may need an increase in organic matter, maybe you want to cut down your fertilizer bill, or maybe carbon sequestration is the goal. The goals and objectives will dictate the cover crop species that you choose to plant, as well as your planting rates.

So what types of plants can be used?

There are several classes of cover crops that have varying benefits and planting requirements. For example, legumes, such as clovers, vetch, or even soybeans, can fix nitrogen in the soil that will be

available for future crops. Brassicas, such as turnip, radish, canola, or rape, can effectively "scavenge" nutrients, preserving this crop year's fertilizers for next year's crops. These plants can be used in a mix to reduce the amount of fertilizer that you need to apply, but often they must be planted before the end of August to meet that objective. Then there are the winter small grains, which can grow late into the fall and provide good winter cover.

How do I handle these cover crops in the spring?

A big concern when applying cover crop is termination. Your methods will vary depending on the species and planting rate. A radish/oat mix for example will winter kill, but you will have to work through the oat residue in the spring (radish will likely be completely gone). Typically, when using a mix like this, your oat planting rate will be reduced and easier to work through the following year. Cereal rye is a tougher one to handle. In a wet spring, when you cannot terminate early (chemically or mechanically), rye can grow rapidly. This is where it is important to not over-plant your cover crop. A lower seeding rate of cereal rye will be easier to handle in the spring but be sure to put down enough to meet your objectives.

How do I get started with cover crops?

Luckily, there are plenty of resources available to assist with planning your cover crops. Crop consultants, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and Cornell Cooperative Extension all have professional staff that are trained to answer these types of questions. Also, look around at your neighbors. More people around you are using cover crops than you might think, and as we get later into the fall, that will become more apparent. There are also meetings and workshops held throughout the year that may trigger some ideas and answer some questions. Use as many of these as you can to make your cover crop experience more successful.

- Jared Elliott, District AEM Planner.



A six species mix of oilseed radish, clovers, and annual ryegrass.

Summertime Conservation Tips

to make your yard more environmentally friendly.



Working *with* nature instead of *against* it can help you more easily maintain a beautiful yard that is not only aesthetically pleasing, but also environmentally friendly. Consider the tips below.

Water Smart!

- ⇒ Timing is everything, irrigate in the morning or evening when it's the coolest.
- ⇒ Water in short intervals to promote deep root growth and reduce runoff.
- ⇒ Consider drip irrigation to maximize water efficacy.
- ⇒ Install a rain barrel to capture clean water.

Insect Galore



- ⇒ Promote insect predators, install bat houses and bird houses!



Life by the Water

- ⇒ Don't mow up to it, but buffer it!
 - ⇒ Zones of grasses, shrubs and trees along a stream or pond edge have many benefits, such as filtering runoff from your yard, protect your yard from erosion, reduce flooding, and provide habitat. See photo above.
 - ⇒ Buffers can self-establish or consider planting perennial wildflowers, flowering shrubs, or edible fruit and nut trees.
- ⇒ Maintain and regularly pump out your septic system.



Compost it

- ⇒ Reduce waste and create your own, natural fertilizer.

Wet Spot?

- ⇒ Consider planting a rain garden in that too-wet-to-mow section of yard. View water-loving flowers instead of ruts.



Reduce Lawn Maintenance

- ⇒ Mow high: the taller the grass blade, the deeper the root. Taller grass is more drought tolerant.
- ⇒ Leave dandelions and clover, they are essential for pollinators.
- ⇒ Leave grass clippings, they serve as a natural fertilizer.
- ⇒ Know when to water. Step on your grass, if it bounces back it does not need watering.

Combat the Invasion!

- ⇒ Learn to ID invasive plants and insects, they can create serious weed problems and disrupt your current landscape. Check out: fingerlakesinvasives.org.
- ⇒ Plant native! These plants typically require less care and are essential for local wildlife.

District staff can provide technical advise for designing your buffer, rain garden, or other management area.

Invasive Species Highlight: Spotted Lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*)

A new threat to NYS agriculture and forests is on the horizon. Spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) is an invasive planthopper that appeared in Pennsylvania in 2014, and moved to New York State. In Western New York, the insect has been found in Monroe and Livingston Counties.

Threat:

Feeding nymphs and adults damage plants by sucking sap from the stems and leaves, ultimately weakening the plant. Exposed sap and “honeydew” fluids produced by the insect further weakens the plant by promoting mold growth and other insects.

Target:

Tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) is used as a host tree for the spotted lanternfly (SLF). Tree of heaven is invasive itself, and needs to be removed.

Spotted lanternfly has also been found feeding on apple, plum, cherry, peach, and nectarine fruit trees, as well as grape and hop vines. The full extent of the economic damage to New York’s multi-million dollar fruit industry is unknown at this time.

Other trees also impacted by this planthopper are maple, oak, and walnut trees, among other natives to our forests. More than 70 plant species could be impacted.

Action:

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) are conducting extensive trapping surveys, inspecting nursery stock and commercial transports from Pennsylvania, and the agencies have set up protective areas and quarantine areas. More information about the quarantine area and produce is available at NYS Dam’s website (see references).

What You Can Do:

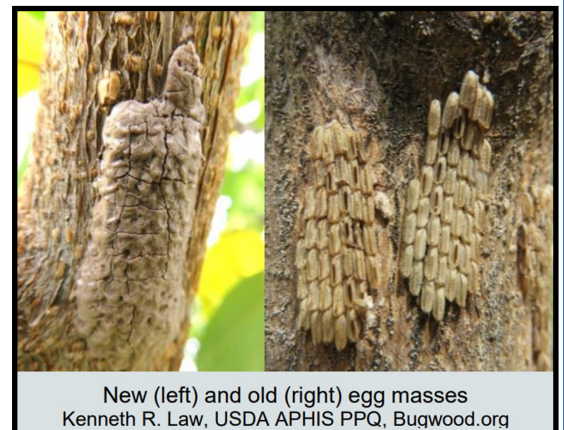
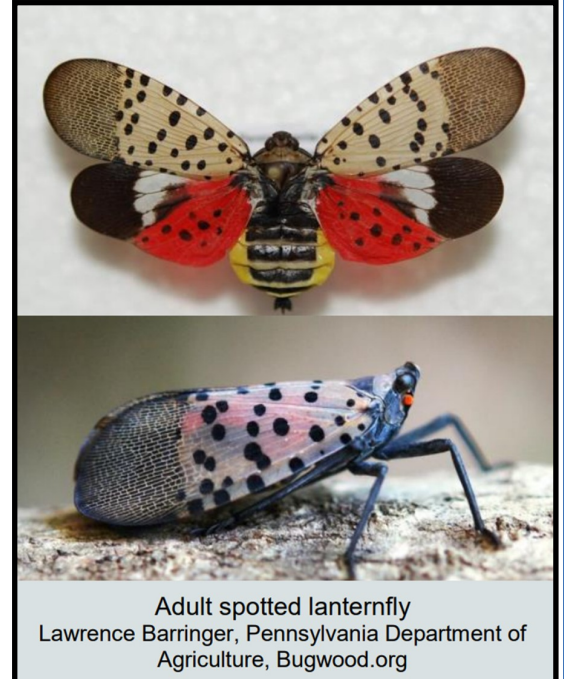
Learn to identify SLF. Since SLF spreads primarily by human activity, inspect outdoor items such as firewood, vehicles, and furniture for egg masses and the insect.

If you think you found SLF, report it! Take pictures of the insect, eggs, or infestation signs (sap) with a coin or ruler and email the pictures to spottedlanternfly@dec.ny.gov.

References:

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. 2018. Spotted Lanternfly Fact Sheet. [Online.] Available at: https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/slffs.pdf.

New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. 2018. Agriculture News. [Online.] Available at: <https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/AD/release.asp?ReleaseID=3821>.





Genesee County Soil & Water Conservation District 2019 FISH STOCKING ORDER FORM

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

**Order deadline is September 20th
for September 27th Fish Pick Up Event.**

Directions:

Submit completed order form, necessary permits, and check or money order payable to
Genesee County SWCD 29 Liberty Street, Suite 3, Batavia, NY 14020.
Orders are secured once payment is submitted.

Species	Price	Quantity	Cost
Largemouth Bass 3-5"	\$60.00/25		\$
Fathead Minnows 2-3"	\$22.00/lb. (~150 fish)		\$
Blue Gill 3-6"	\$30.00/10		\$
Black Crappie 3-5"	\$30.00/10		\$
Perch 2-3" <i>Please call prior to ordering perch</i>	\$60.00/25		\$
Subtotal:			\$
Subtotal + 8% Sales Tax:			\$
Triploid Grass Carp 10-14" NYSDEC Permit is required prior to order	\$22.00 each No sales tax on Triploid Grass Carp		\$
<i>Feel free to inquire about other species</i> Total Cost:			\$

Notice:

* GCSWCD is not responsible for the fish and does not guarantee the survival of the fish after they leave the pick-up area. No refunds will be given for fish not picked up. Pick up time is 10:00- 10:30 AM.*

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