



# Lewis County Soil & Water Conservation District Conservation News

SUMMER / FALL 2024

## Trout Unlimited Culvert Replacement Fish Survey & Macroinvertebrate Sampling

### **DIRECTORS:**

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**Andrea Moroughan**  
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### **STAFF:**

**Nichelle Swisher**  
District Manager

**Michael Durant**  
Technician

**Carla Yaw**  
Treasurer

**Alexis Lyndaker**  
WAC Specialist

**Board Meetings**  
are held the second  
**Tuesday**  
of the month  
@ 10:00 AM  
(call to confirm)



Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District has been involved in culvert replacement projects for two Lewis County townships. The Towns of New Bremen and Croghan were awarded grants through the DEC Water Quality Incentives Program (WQIP), as well as the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Sustain Our Great Lakes (SOGL) grant program. These grants were written by Trout Unlimited based on assessments they completed throughout the Beaver River

Watershed. Trout Unlimited deemed these two culverts priority for replacement as fish passage for these classified trout streams is severely restricted. A software program created by the North Aquatic Atlantic Connectivity Collaborative (NAACC) was used to evaluate these culverts. This program helps gather specific information at each crossing site to determine flaws, flow restrictions and passability for fish and other wildlife. Technical assistance has been provided by the District by lining up and assisting United State Geological Survey (USGS) with fish sampling (pictured above), as well as completing macroinvertebrate kick sampling (pictured right) in both streams. Both of these sampling methods will be completed again by the District after the new pipe arch culverts are installed. We want to thank Trout Unlimited for allowing us to help with this collaboration as well as writing and administering these grants for our local townships.



### **Fish Fingerling Sale Discontinued**

Our Fish Stocking Program has been discontinued as our supplier will no longer be offering the service. Unfortunately, we have been unsuccessful in our attempts to obtain another hatchery close enough to be able to continue the program.

# Progressive Agriculture Safety Day®



Above: 2024 Progressive Agriculture Safety Day® Attendees

On Wednesday, May 22, the District held its annual Progressive Agriculture Safety Day® at the Lewis County Fairgrounds. The Safety Day teaches children lessons that help keep them, as well as their families, safe and healthy. At the event, participants were divided into groups and took turns visiting 15 safety learning stations. This year, 274 fifth grade students along with 31 teachers and chaperones from 7 different Lewis County schools attended this event. 31 local volunteers were also on site dedicating their time to teach lessons or provide other program support.

The 2024 lesson topics were: Bicycle Safety (Adirondack Foothills Cycling Club), 911 Emergency Phone Procedures (Lewis County Dispatch), Gun Safety (NYS DEC), Vaping/Tobacco Use Prevention (Lewis County Emergency Management), Fire Safety (Lowville Fire Dept.), Tractor Safety (Cazenovia Equipment of Lowville NY), Tick and Lyme Disease Prevention (Lewis County Public Health), Animal Safety (Lewis County Cornell Cooperative Extension), Grain Bin Safety (Gold Star Feed and Grain), Disability Awareness (Aaron Mayer), ATV Safety (Lewis County Recreation, Forestry & Parks), Snowmobile Safety (Mike Leviker), Look Alike Poisons (Lewis County Public Health), Electrical Safety (National Grid), and Internet Safety (Lake Effect Tech). The stations included hands on and/or visual demonstrations that helped to reinforce the various safety lessons instructed.

Each student that attended received a Progressive Agriculture Safety Day® t-shirt and a take home bag containing a variety of items such as activity books, first aid kits, reusable hot/cold packs, sunglasses, safety brochures, key chains, pencils, stickers, neck gaiters, hand sanitizer and much more. Stewart's Shops donated milk for the event.

We are always looking for local businesses to become involved in this event. To see how you or your business can help, volunteer, or to contribute, contact our office at (315) 376-6122 or email [carlaw@lewiscounty.ny.gov](mailto:carlaw@lewiscounty.ny.gov).

The District would like to express our sincere gratitude to the local businesses, organizations, and volunteers for their time and contributions that made this event possible and to the Lewis County Fair Board for the use of their facilities for the day!

# Riverfest 2024

Naturally Lewis held its annual Riverfest canoe and kayak run on August 3rd. This year's route meandered the Black River from Lyons Falls to Glenfield, totaling 8.6 miles. There were a total of 70 registered participants this year.

Since 2008, the District, Lewis County Water Quality Coordinating Committee (WQCC) and Ronny Raindrop have joined in the fun by creating a **River Trivia Contest**. Various questions relating to the Black River were attached to an assortment of pool floats and anchored at different points along the route to be answered by the river goers. This year the contest was a crossword puzzle and the trivia contest winner took home a giant inflatable moose by Float-Eh, as well as some Discover Tug Hill swag.



# 14th Annual Black River Watershed Conference

Another Black River Watershed Conference is in the history books and was held at the View Arts Center in Old Forge, NY on June 13th. Over 80 presenters, participants and exhibitors gathered for the 14th annual conference illustrating projects being implemented and opportunities and services available to solve water quality challenges in the Black River Watershed. A beautiful day, wonderful venue, great food and networking enjoyed by those of us that work, live and recreate in the beautiful Black River basin. We can't thank everyone enough for making this another successful event.



## Beaver River Central School Career Showcase



On March 19th, the District attended Beaver River's 2nd Annual Career Showcase. This was a full day event for students in grades 7-12. The first part of the day included career exploration and gave students the chance to learn about a diverse selection of jobs and interact with professionals from these varying fields. Businesses from all over the County were in attendance. The second half of the day consisted of these businesses conducting mock interviews with the Juniors and Seniors. The District was happy to be a part of this event and we look forward to continuing our efforts of leading conservation in Lewis County.

*Pictured Left: Alexis Lyndaker and Michael Durant, at the Beaver River Showcase.*

## Conservation Field Days



On May 16th the District participated in Conservation Field Days at the NYS DEC in Dadville. This event was sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Lewis County in efforts to educate 6th graders in all types of conservation. Students from schools throughout the county attended the event.

The District instructed a station on soil erosion and utilized it's EmRiver Geomodel that demonstrates the principles of river behavior, channel morphology, and sediment transport. The students were taught how erosion control practices, such as hydroseeding and vegetative plantings, can prevent sediment and pollutants from entering our waterways.

*Pictured Left: Michael Durant, demonstrating different stream scenarios with the EmRiver Model.*

## Help Us Conserve!

Has your address  
changed?

Would you prefer to  
receive this newsletter  
via email?

Do you want to be  
removed from our  
mailing list?

Please call us at  
315-376-6122 to  
update your address  
and preferences.

Thank you!

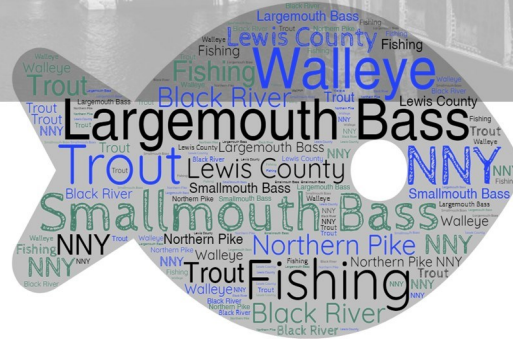


## Fishing Challenge

The District is sponsoring a fishing challenge to  
Lewis County anglers of all ages!

- Submit a picture of your catch (next to a tape measure) along with your name, phone number, date of catch, waterbody caught in & category (Largemouth/Smallmouth Bass, Northern Pike, Walleye, Brook/Brown Trout).
- Prizes in each category (1st-3rd) will include items such as tumblers, coolers, lures, tackle, fishing apparel, etc.

Submissions will be accepted through October 15th



Send submissions and inquiries to: [alexislyndaker@lewiscounty.ny.gov](mailto:alexislyndaker@lewiscounty.ny.gov)

## Highway Permit Training Held



Our local highway staff have the tough job of keeping our public roadways safe for travel in all seasons. Municipalities are constantly trying to keep up with the changing environmental regulation, impacts of climate change and even new staff. Maintaining a legacy of staff knowledge regarding water quality and erosion control proves to be difficult. Permit requirements including stormwater construction, general permits, streams and wetlands, pesticides, Federal permits, emergency protocols for culvert/bridge replacements and possible upcoming regulations regarding road salt and Class C streams, there's potential for our municipalities to get into trouble without knowledge of our changing regulatory system. To assist our municipalities in keeping up to date on the latest regulations the District held a local training entitled "Do I need a permit for that?". Representatives from 17 village department of public works, town and county highway and recreational trails attended this training at the 3-G Fire Hall. Presentations were provided by the US Army Corps of Engineers, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Adirondack Park Agency and Lewis County Highway.

# Water Sampling in Lewis County



*Above: Michael Durant filtering samples*

Our Technicians have been water sampling at various sites throughout the County twice a month. Locations that are sampled include the Independence River, Roaring Brook, Mill Creek, Beaver River and Deer River. The sampling sites are all tributaries of the Black River and the analysis will help identify nutrients, prioritize projects, track changes over time, support regulatory compliance, raise public awareness and support future research. All of these efforts are part of phase 1 of the Black River Adaptive Modeling (BRAM) project. The purpose of this project is to identify data gaps, identify new projects and protect water quality.

Two different monitoring methods are used at each site, laboratory parameters as well as YSI sonde parameters. The laboratory parameters measured include total nitrogen, total dissolved phosphorus and total suspended solids. The YSI sonde measures temperature, specific conductance, pH, turbidity and dissolved oxygen.



# Singing Waters Park Campground



The Singing Waters Park Campground, located off the Fish Creek Road in the Town of Greig, has had some major upgrades these past few years. A new bathhouse and pavilion were constructed as well as newly created walking trails and campsites. These upgrades were completed by the crew at Lewis County Recreation, Forestry and Parks (RFP). When grading around the campground was completed, Lewis County RFP asked the District to help with revegetation. Our Technicians used the District's FINN T75 Hydroseeder to seed down the campground sites and steep slopes to prevent erosion. The District was pleased to be a part of this project and the campground looks great. If you haven't visited before, be sure to do so. This beautiful site, in the foothills of the Adirondacks, is accessible by a footbridge crossing the Fish Creek.

*Top: Alexis Lyndaker Hydroseeding at Singing Waters Bottom: Results of Application*

# 2024 Flooding in Lewis County

On July 10th, Lewis County experienced flash flooding that had never been seen before. Homes, businesses and infrastructure were severely damaged. After almost 10" of rain falling, Lowville, and other surrounding towns, received two other flash flooding events, causing harm to the same homes and businesses.

In efforts of helping our own, Naturally Lewis launched a funding portal to support Lewis County businesses, that has reached over \$30,000. 100% of the funds raised will go directly to the Reboot Emergency Relief Fund. To support this relief fund, you can mail a check directly to the Naturally Lewis office at 7551 State Street Lowville, NY 13367, or visit the Naturally Lewis online portal at [Naturally Lewis: Lewis County Economic Development - Reboot Our Business Community Donation Form](#).

Lewis County also created a flood resources and assistance page on their website to inform the public of what tools, resources, and financial assistance is available to them. This includes information on programs for individuals as well as businesses.

Please visit the following link for more information: [Flood Resources and Assistance - Lewis County, NY \(lewiscountyny.gov\)](#)

Lewis County is a special place and the resilience shown these past few months has been nothing but amazing.



*Above: 2024 Lewis County Flooding & Aftermath Pictures*

# Streambank Protection Project

With the intensity of our rainstorms increasing and greater amounts of precipitation, many of our streams are experiencing significant erosion. In addition, rapid freeze/thaw cycles from our mercuric spring season causes rivers to freeze up and then quickly thaw leading to ice jams and severe streambank erosion. The first solution that many reach for is to simply clean out all the material in the stream and line the entire bank with rock. Cleaning out the stream theoretically provides more space for water to flow in during flood events, until the next storm brings the next flush of sand, gravel and cobble. While most understand that waterways carry water, they don't necessarily think about the rock, sand, gravel, silt, clay and dissolved particles it normally carries. The higher the flow, the heavier the material it carries. So when a stream's raging from heavy rainfall or snowmelt, it carries heavy material constantly. During a flood you can hear rocks hitting hard surfaces as they roll and bounce down the river, sometimes pulling trees and streambanks with them along the way. As the water slows down, large boulders and cobble drop out forming large islands of rock. As it slows down even more, gravel, sand and silt drop out forming sand and gravel bars. Basically, waterways are constantly changing adding and subtracting land as they flow downstream. Sometimes that leaves downed trees, caused by water and rock action eroding land, endangering culverts, houses, bridges or anything in its way.



What's the solutions - Natural Stream Design! These designs use flat, angular, natural rock (that doesn't roll) that interlock together and are dug in to the toe of the bank for stabilization. Three main types of designs are installed based on the needs of the river; straight vane, j-hook and grade control. This application includes straight rock vanes around a bend in the stream. These straight rock vanes fan out upstream up to a 30 degree angle from the bank and slope downhill going upstream. What is the purpose? As the water hits the pocket of the v, it slows down, dropping larger material out of the water column and building bank. As the water slows down it also has less erosive action on the streambank. Water filters through crevices in the rock vane, sending the force of the water to the center of the stream and not against the bank. An added benefit is added oxygen to the water as it is aerated through the carefully placed rock.

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## 2024 Ag Inclusion Period

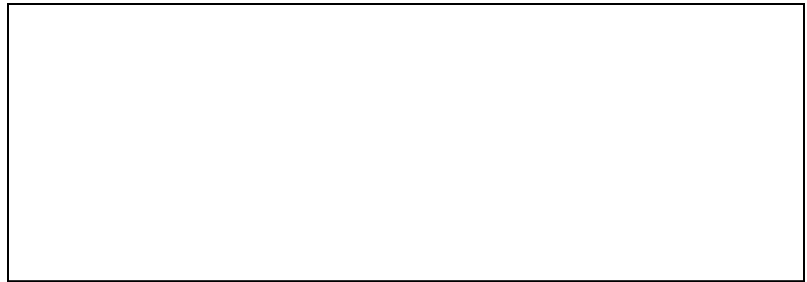
The 2024 Annual Ag Inclusion Period will be from November 15th to December 15th. This time period is when active agricultural land, that is not already in the Agricultural District, can be added. This period has been assigned in Lewis County to occur every year from November 15th to December 15th. Property can only be removed from the Agriculture District during the eight-year recertification process, which will occur in 2032, as the last recertification process just occurred in February of 2024.

Currently, there is one active agricultural district in Lewis County, which is #6. This district encompasses 246,368 acres and 213 farms. Agricultural districts provide our local farming community safeguards, with the end goal of keeping agricultural land in production. For more information, or to obtain the Ag District 6 Review Worksheet for property inclusion, please visit the Lewis County Planning and Community Development webpage, agriculture tab.



Lewis County Soil & Water  
Conservation District  
7356 East Road  
Lowville, New York 13367  
[www.lewiscountysoilandwater.com](http://www.lewiscountysoilandwater.com)  
Phone (315) 376-6122

**Bulk Rate**  
**U.S. Postage**  
**PAID**  
**Permit No. 97**  
**Lowville, NY**



## Office Location Update



We have made our final move!

Now co-located with Lewis County Recreation, Forestry and Parks, we can be found within the Outdoor Services Building at 7356 East Road, Lowville.

We are the first office on the right as you enter the building.