



February 14, 2014

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February 17, 2014



Tug Hill Times

Tug Hill Times is published semimonthly by the Tug Hill Commission for its board members, staff and associates, and the local representatives of the region's communities.

NYSDOT Announces Transportation Alternatives Program Grants; Tentative Deadline June 11

The Transportation Alternatives Program projects will be selected through a competitive solicitation process and rated on established criteria that include environmental enhancement to and for the transportation system; connectivity to an existing transportation system; encouragement of smart growth; impact on local or regional economies; availability of matching funds; and level of community support.

Eligible project activities include:

- On-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized forms of transportation;
- Infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities, to access daily needs;
- Community improvement activities, including improving roadway safety in transportation rights-of-way and erosion control; and
- Environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and abatement activities and highway storm water drainage control to prevent flooding.

The funding for these projects is provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and administered by NYSDOT. Up to 80 percent of the proposed project costs will be provided to successful applicants. Project sponsors are responsible for securing the remaining project funding.

NYSDOT will provide technical assistance and required training for potential applicants through a series of workshops statewide. The workshops will address information about this new funding opportunity, an explanation of application requisites and detail the requirements needed to ensure all federally-aided projects are developed, designed and constructed in accordance with federal requirements.

The tentative deadline for applications is June 11. Additional information about the program, including the application and guidebook; technical assistance and regional workshops; and federal project requirements are available at <https://www.dot.ny.gov/tap>.

**25th Annual Local Government Conference
March 27, 2014
See next page for session changes.**

Changes Made to LGC Sessions

A few changes needed to be made to the afternoon schedule of sessions due to speaker availability. The two sessions entitled "Introduction to National Flood Insurance Program: Part I and Part II" have been replaced with "Property Tax Freeze & Rebate Program" followed by "Biomass Heating in the North Country." In addition to these changes, the two sessions entitled "Ethics: What is it, What is it Not & Why Focus On It: Part I and Part II" have been replaced with a new session "Solar Opportunities for Local Governments" and a moved session "Policies and Procedures for Using & Accepting Credit Card Payments." The credit card session was replaced with "Fire Services in Towns & Villages." The end result is the following afternoon schedule.

1:15 - 2:30	3A. Fire Services in Towns & Villages	3B. Property Tax Freeze & Rebate Program	3C. Subdivision Review Procedures	3D. Mechanics of the PB & ZBA	3E. What Does the Town Board Need to Know About the Highway Department?	3F. Solar Opportunities for Local Governments	3G. Stormwater Management	What is Income?
2:45 - 4:00	4A. Shared & Consolidated Services	4B. Biomass Heating in the North Country	4C. Q & A for PB's and ZBA's	4D. ZBA Basics	4E. Choosing the Proper Pavement Repair	4F. Policies & Procedures for Using & Accepting Credit Card Payments	4G. Abandon House Demolition	

The new schedule of sessions has been posted to the Commission's website at www.tughill.org. If you would like to change your choice of sessions you want to attend, please contact the Gwen Decker at the Commission office at (315) 785-2380 or gwen@tughill.org.

Family Fun Night at Maple Ridge Snow Park

Maple Ridge Snow Park, East Road, Lowville will hold a Family Fun Night on Saturday, February 22. Enjoy a pizza (cheese or pepperoni) and soda for only \$10 from 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. Your entire family can tube for \$30 from 4:00 - 9:00 p.m.

For more information call 376-4963 or visit www.mapleridgecenter.com.

Village of West Carthage Water Department Quick Response

A recent house fire in the Village of West Carthage demonstrated again the usefulness of GPS in winter weather. Tim Turck from the Water Department had to respond and shut the water off to the home. He had a general idea of where the curb stop (water shut off) was, but six foot snow banks would make it difficult to find. However, he had a secret weapon in locating this water shut off, which was the GPS the village had gotten through the JIMI project.

He found the location of the water shutoff, dug it out, and turned it off in approximately 5 minutes. Tim said, "It could have taken us up to four hours if we had to go through removing all the snow trying to find that shut off."

Tim is one of the participants from the Joint Infrastructure Management Initiative (JIMI) project that collected infrastructure data, including water shutoffs, several years ago. The village's participation in the JIMI project is providing benefits to the village and its residents through both cost savings and quick emergency response.

Olympian Erin Hamlin Medals in Woman's Luge



Remsen native Erin Hamlin slid her way to the bronze medal in Sochi, the first singles luge medal in U.S. Olympic history. In the sport's golden anniversary as part of the Olympics, Hamlin came up with bronze, a feat that will surely go down as perhaps the greatest moment in USA luge history.

Hamlin finished third behind German lugers, Geissenberger and Huefner in the race on February 11. When

Hamlin crossed the line, that medal finally clinched, she threw her arms skyward, then covered her face briefly with her hands.

Several family members and friends traveled to Russia to support Erin and were able to witness the historic event for the U.S. luge team. Supporters in the town and village of Remsen and neighboring communities have gone all out to support Erin and her family. "Go Erin" signs can be seen everywhere. A welcome home party is being planned to welcome Erin and her family on their return from Russia.

Applying for a GIS Grant from the New York State Archives

The State Archives has funded GIS grants for two decades through its Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund grants program. In the past, this funding has helped local governments plan for and implement geographic information systems. As GIS has changed dramatically over these past decades so has the Archives' funding of GIS projects.

A one-hour webinar by the NYS GIS Association Professional Development Committee will be held on **February 19th, 2014 from 12 pm to 1 pm** with Geof Huff, Director of Government Records Services, to provide participants with an overview of the type of projects the State Archives fund, an explanation of the application process, and advice on putting together a successful GIS grant application. If you are considering attending this webinar, keep two things in mind: GIS projects now must be shared services projects involving more than one local government, and these projects must be focused on better managing the records within the GIS. Improved records management in a GIS includes improving access to, ensuring the preservation and security of, and managing the retention of GIS records.

The grant application deadline is March 3, 2014, so this webinar will also be a good refresher for anyone already working on a GIS grant application. The session is open to all members of the NYS GIS Association and non-members are also welcome to join in on this presentation. However, if we meet our registration limit, members will get first priority as a participant. To register for the session, go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TRGHKMM>

Not an Association member yet? Then, go to: <http://www.nysgis.net/joinus/join/joinform> to join today!

If you have any questions contact Mickey Dietrich at the Tug Hill Commission. His phone is (315) 785-2380 and his email is mickey@tughill.org.

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World Record Attempt in Osceola

On Saturday February 1st the Osceola Snowmobile Association attempted to set a new world record for the longest parade of snowmobiles. The current record according to the Guinness Book of World Records is 820, set in 2004 in Roseau, Minnesota. The Osceola Snowmobile Association organized the event as a fundraising effort, to help raise money for trail grooming and maintenance. A stipulation for the record breaking attempt, according to Guinness World Records, was a single-file ride through a fenced area, so the ride of 2.8 miles was to begin and end at the Cedar Pines Restaurant and Campgrounds on Comins Rd. in Osceola. A total of 524 snowmobiles turned out for the event, leaving the Snowmobile Association unfortunately short of the record. Though they may have fallen short of the World Record, they remain tops in the hearts here on the "Hill"! Organizers have not ruled out another attempt at the record after club members evaluate the first attempt.

Annual Tree Seedling and Shrub Sale

The Jefferson County Soil & Water Conservation District Annual Tree Seedling and Shrub sale has begun! To request an order form, call Jefferson County Soil & Water Conservation District at 782-2749 or go to www.jeffersoncountyswcd.org. The order form is available on our website, along with the ability to order through PayPal.

For best selection, orders should be received by March 12. Quantities are limited. Prepaid orders will be available for pick up at Washington Park, Adams, on Saturday, April 5, 2014.

For questions or more information call 782-2749.

2014 Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Annual Meeting

The New York State Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association will hold their Annual Meeting March 25-27 at the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel, 40 Civic Center Plaza, Poughkeepsie, NY.

For questions or more information contact William Nechamen at 518-402-8146.

Tug Hill Snowkite Rally

For the 7th year, Lewis County will be hosting the Tug Hill Snowkite Rally, which has been gaining popularity over the years for its consistently great conditions that rival anywhere else in the Northeast! Hundreds of kites have come to our festival, and it is growing every year. The sites available to fly are scattered across Lewis County, and are also growing in number every year. The best way to experience snow kiting on Tug Hill is to make the festival, get the tour of sites, and have a great time. This event will be held February 15th - 17th with the base camp being held at Deer River Ranch, NYS Rt. 177, Copenhagen, NY 13626. You can find the details at <http://tughillsnowkiting.com/rally>.