

JUNE 17, 2016

Staying Connected Initiative Releases New Video

The Staying Connected Initiative has released a new video that provides an overview of the partnership and explains the type of work being done to restore and enhance landscape connections for people and wildlife. It can be viewed at <http://stayingconnectedinitiative.org/about/>.

Tug Hill is the westernmost reach of the Northern Appalachian/Acadian region, and the commission has been working for many years with partners including Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, Adirondack Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, and others on the Adirondack-Tug Hill linkage area. Past activities have included modeling to determine where wildlife is most likely to cross, community values mapping in the Northern Oneida County area to identify important areas, work on comprehensive plans to incorporate language and mapping related to wildlife, and work with NYS Department of Transportation to improve wildlife crossings on NYS Rt. 12.

Currently, Tug Hill Tomorrow has several wildlife cameras located on private land in the area to capture images and collect information on what type of wildlife is crossing, and where. To see some of the images captured to date, visit their Facebook page. Construction is also scheduled to begin on a priority culvert underneath NYS Rt. 12 near Boonville this summer to build a wildlife shelf to improve wildlife mortality and decrease motor vehicle accidents.

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Harold "Hap" Petrie

Harold "Hap" Petrie served as a Marine through both WWII and the Korean War up to the rank of sergeant. He did everything in life with pride and dignity. He was a lifetime member of the "70 Plus Ski Club" and participated in five Disabled American Veteran's Winter Sports Clinics in Colorado. After a tragic accident cutting firewood, Harold was left paralyzed at age 74. Many would have been defeated by such a catastrophe, but with the love and support of his family and wife of nearly 67 years, Harold fought on and continued to live a happy, productive life for another 16 years. Whether it was for his family, his military, or his town, Harold was a *Semper Paratus* man in all aspects of his life.



NEW YORK STATE SENATE
VETERANS
Hall of Fame

The Senate Veterans Hall of Fame is sponsored by Senator Patty Ritchie

Veterans Hall of Fame Honors Tug Hill Sage

In the lobby of the Watertown State Office Building, a display sponsored by Senator Ritchie recognizes the NYS Senate Veterans Hall of Fame. "From America's founding, citizens from all walks of life answered our nation's call to stand and defend liberty, freedom and all we cherish. Each year, the Senate Hall of Fame honors those who served our nation and communities." Tug Hill Sage, the late Harold Petrie is among those honored with a plaque in the lobby. To learn more about the Veterans Hall of Fame and to see other honorees, go to www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/patty-ritchie/honoring-service-our-country-and-our-communities.

Local Communities Participate in Oneida Watershed Discovery Process

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in partnership with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has started a new Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (Risk MAP) "Discovery" project for the Oneida Watershed.

Stakeholders from area communities in Lewis, Oneida, Oswego, Madison, and Onondaga counties were recently invited to review existing Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) and share information regarding potential inaccuracies and other local information such as high water marks, historical flooding problems, infrastructure information, available GIS data, recent development activities, and mitigation activities. Meetings took place in late May in Sylvan Beach, Cleveland, and Lowville in the Tug Hill region.

The input will be used to prioritize needs for a potential future project if funding becomes available, representatives said. Such a follow up project could include the creation of digital flood maps, risk assessment or mitigation planning assistance.

North Country REDC Community Forums Monday, June 20th

The NCREDC is encouraging all individuals, businesses, organizations, labor, and university representatives from the North Country to attend one of the seven scheduled public forums in the region, one in each county.

The forums will include a presentation to the public on Round 6 of the Regional Economic Development Council initiative, competitive funding guidelines, and progress made on the implementation of the North Country Strategic Plan and Progress Report since last year. There will also be a period for attendees to offer comments, information and input to the Regional Council regarding plan implementation and potential projects.

Please register to attend a forum by going to <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/content/ncredc-public-forum-meetings-june>

June 20, 2016 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Dulles State Office Building
1st Floor Conference Room
317 Washington Street, Watertown, NY 13601

June 20, 2016 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.
American Maple Museum
9756 Main Street (Route 812), Croghan, NY 13327

Tug Hill Commission Meeting Cancelled

The Tug Hill Commission meeting for June 20th has been canceled. The next scheduled meeting is September 19th, location TBD.

Upcoming Invasive Species Workshops

The St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario PRISM is holding two invasive species workshops on invasive insects that have the potential to affect the Tug Hill forest. For more information about each, contact Megan Pistoiese at 315-387-3600, megan.pistoiese@tnc.org

Emerald Ash Borer Workshop
Friday, July 15 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Minna Anthony Common Nature Center
Wellesley Island State Park

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Workshop
Saturday, November 12 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Amboy Education Center, 748 Route 183, Williamstown, NY

Community Choice Aggregation Moves Ahead in NY

The NYS Public Service Commission just recently authorized local governments to aggregate utility customers for energy supply. The goal is to secure better energy pricing for all by aggregating demand and negotiating cheaper supply for electricity and natural gas. Any size village, town or city can authorize a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program for its residents. County governments are not eligible for this program. The only limitation is that community must be in the same utility territory and the same NY Independent System Operator load zone.

If a local government decided to participate in this new program, residential and small commercial customers within the municipality would be aggregated on an "opt-out" basis if they are not currently receiving supply from a third party energy services company (ESCO). The program has a significant community outreach component. Benefits for residents within a participating municipality include:

- much fewer, if any, door-to-door, direct mail or telephone solicitations from energy marketers
- energy pricing will be transparent and compare favorably over utility rates
- community choice over the energy supply company chosen

The NYS PSC has authorized administrators to work with municipalities to set up the CCA programs. Administrators do not charge the municipality for their services. They are authorized to receive an administrative fee from the energy services company supplying the electricity or natural gas for the aggregation.

This program is new in NY, although has been adopted in many other states, including Illinois, where participation rates by residents have been quite high. The PILOT program for this in NY is in Westchester County, more information available at www.sustainablewestchester.org.

One administrator of CCA in NY is the Municipal Electricity & Gas Alliance (www.megaenergy.org), who presented at the Clean Energy Economy Conference this week in Utica.

If municipalities in the Tug Hill region are interested in learning more about this new program, please let your circuit rider know and a local workshop will be organized.

Commission Staff Attend Clean Energy Economy Conference

Tug Hill Commission staff attended the Clean Energy Economy Conference in Utica this week. There was no shortage of interesting topics to hear about and a lot is happening in the state, especially in the world of solar power. We heard about possible landowner consequences of solar land leases and the importance of having an attorney review any lease agreements before signing them. We also heard about regional growth patterns in the development of solar across the state, with the Ithaca area growing rapidly in solar power. Success stories were showcased and we plan to learn more about Community Choice Aggregation and how it might present a cost savings for our municipalities.

Town of Ava to Submit CFA for Park Development

In 2015, the Town of Ava acquired a 6.6 acre parcel located on NYS Route 26 near the historic Ava Town Hall for the purpose of developing a community park. The town will apply for funding through the State's Consolidated Funding Application (CFA), due July 29, to fund 50% of park amenities including a pavilion, restrooms, ballfield, playground and parking area. Providing an area for community recreation is a recommendation of the town-adopted 2012 Ava Comprehensive Plan, identified by community members through that planning process.

The town will apply for funding through the Environmental Protection Fund Program for Parks, Preservation and Heritage. For more information on the program, please visit <http://nysparks.com/grants/>. Applicants must use their Regional Economic Development Councils online application process, the CFA, which is available at <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov>.

Webinar Available

The Office of the State Comptroller is hosting the archived recording of the 2015 Webinar for Newly Elected Town Officials. For information go to <http://nytowns.org/node/1407>

Find the Really Cool Birds in Forest Park This Saturday

Sponsored by Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, a family-friendly walk will be guided by birding expert and Tug Hill Sage Bob McNamara at Camden's Forest Park on Saturday, June 18 from 8 :00 - 10:00 a.m.

Parts of the walk will include walking in the woods to find the best bird habitat, so attendees should wear comfortable shoes, and pack your binoculars, camera, and bug dope for this adventure. Water and snacks will be provided by THTLT.



Bob spends much of his free time outside watching and illustrating birds, and he drew all of the illustrations of wildlife and birds in the "Tug Hill: Four Season Guide to the Natural Side." ****As a special for people who attend this program, the guide book will be on sale for only \$15 (normally \$27).****

Plan to meet in the Forest Park parking area at the end of Ripley Road. If you are using a GPS, type in 19 Ripley Road, Camden and then drive 100 feet farther to reach the parking lot.

If you would like to attend this field trip, please RSVP to Community Programs Manager, Lianna Lee at tughilloutreach@nnymail.com or call 315.779.8240.

Exploratory Hike of the East Branch Fish Creek State Forest

Join Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust (THTLT) for an off-trail exploration along the East Branch of Fish Creek on Saturday, July 16 from 10:00 a.m.-2 :00 p.m. Naturalist, and Tug Hill Sage Robert McNamara will lead this walk through the woods.

Throughout the hike there will be lovely views of the creek and woodlands. Please wear comfortable shoes, and pack your camera, sunscreen, and bug dope for this adventure. Water and snacks will be provided by THTLT.

Plan to meet in the West Turin, DEC Parking area. From NYS Rt. 26 in Constableville, take Main Street west to High Market Road. After 8 miles on High Market Road pavement ends and becomes Michigan Mills Road. Proceed slowly on Michigan Mills Road, it is a minimum maintenance gravel road, another 3 miles to a grass parking area with a kiosk on the north side of the road, just before the bridge across the East Branch of Fish Creek.

To celebrate summer, anyone who attends this hike will receive a free THTLT 25th anniversary metal water bottle. As a special for wildlife lovers and Tug Hill enthusiasts the 200-plus page *Tug Hill: Four Season Guide to the Natural Side*, illustrated by Robert McNamara will be on sale for only \$15 (normally \$27). This is an amazing opportunity to buy the premier guidebook to our beloved Tug Hill region and have it signed by the illustrator.

To reserve your book and RSVP, please contact Community Programs Manager Lianna Lee at 315.779.2239 or email tughilloutreach@nnymail.com. This outdoor program is free thanks to generous community support.

Contact Us

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