



**January 15, 2016**

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**Martin Luther**  
**January 18, 2016**  
**King Day**

# 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.

## LGEC Provides Training to Local Officials

The Local Government Education Committee (LGEC) provides training and workshops on pertinent municipal topics for local leaders for 25 years, and is now looking to expand its committee membership.

The LGEC was initially formed under the leadership of then executive director of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County Carol Fitzgerald in 1990. Today, committee members from agencies and municipalities across Oneida and Herkimer counties including NOCCOG, Herkimer County IDA, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Herkimer-Oneida County Comprehensive Planning Program, Digital Towpath, the town of Ava, and village of Barneveld meet monthly to plan and implement trainings for local government officials. Topics in the past have included SEQR, REDC initiatives, drones, and the upcoming newly elected workshop on January 21<sup>st</sup> in Trenton.

By expanding membership, LGEC seeks to expand its range and better serve the training needs of local governments. Individuals interested in participating in the LGEC can find more information by visiting [www.lgec.org](http://www.lgec.org) or emailing Jennifer Armstrong of NOCCOG at [jarmstrong@tughill.org](mailto:jarmstrong@tughill.org).

## Zoning Board of Appeals Paper Updated

The commission's technical paper on Zoning Boards of Appeals (ZBAs) has been updated. This paper was originally prepared in 2003 as a joint effort of the Tug Hill Commission, the Jefferson County Planning Department, and attorney Mark Gebo, a frequent presenter at the annual Local Government Conference in Watertown as well as representing many Tug Hill communities.

The update includes: removing obsolete State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) forms and providing directions to the newly revised SEQR forms on the Department of Environmental Conservation website; updating the procedural checklist; and updating the record keeping checklist. The new paper can be viewed and downloaded on the commission website at <http://www.tughill.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/ZBA-15.pdf>. For hard copies, contact the commission office.

## Local Government Conference - March 31

The Tug Hill Commission will hold its 27th annual Local Government Conference on Thursday, March 31st at Jefferson Community College, 1220 Coffeen Street, Watertown, NY. Registration by March 9 is \$50.

The Local Government Conference brochure and registration form is available on our website <http://www.tughill.org/2016/01/07/local-government-conference-brochure/>.

## **Governor Releases Proposed 2016-17 Budget**

The proposed 2016-17 executive budget was released this week, directly after Governor Cuomo's State of the State address. Budget negotiations with the legislature will now begin in Albany, with a goal of finalizing the budget before the end of the current fiscal year on March 31.

Items of interest to Tug Hill communities include:

- Tug Hill Commission budget is slated to remain level from last year's funding
- An increase in the EPF fund to \$300 million, including \$1 million for the Fort Drum buffer work, and increases to numerous programs including invasive species, oceans and Great Lakes initiatives, Soil & Water Conservation Districts, state land stewardship, municipal parks, and various programs under a new climate change mitigation and adaptation category
- A transportation capital plan for improvements to upstate roads and bridges
- A new municipal consolidation competition
- Continuation of the Upstate Revitalization Initiative and Regional Economic Development Councils
- An additional \$100 million for clean water infrastructure grants
- Phased increase of the minimum wage to \$15/hour

More detailed materials can be found on the Division of Budget's website: <https://www.budget.ny.gov/>.

## **Herrings Dissolution Study Committee Meets**

The first meeting of the Herrings Dissolution Study Committee (DSC) was held on January 6 at the village offices. Comprised of two village board members, a village resident, and two Wilna town board members, the committee plans to meet at least monthly through June to complete a dissolution study as required under GML 17-A. Member of the DSC have 180 days from the first village board meeting (December 6) after the referendum vote (held November 3) to complete the plan and present it to the village board for approval.

Katie Malinowski and Carla Malmgren from commission staff provided an overview of the requirements and process, along with Robert Roeckle from the NYS Department of State. The next meeting of the DSC will be on February 4.

## **2016 Arbor Day Community Grant Notice**

The Urban Forestry Council is accepting applications from small communities for \$1,000 Arbor Day Grants, which are formerly DEC's "Quick Start Grants." Funding is available for projects in small communities to have an Arbor Day event and begin a community forestry program. Grants of up to \$1,000 will be awarded to communities, or non-profits that work in partnership with communities, to celebrate Arbor Day 2016 and form a shade tree committee within the municipality. Communities that are currently a Tree City USA are *ineligible*, as are communities that have any component of the Tree City USA program such as a tree ordinance, tree board, inventory or a management plan. **The intention of this grant is to help communities begin a community forestry program.**

**Applications are due by February 11, 2016** and award recipients will be notified the last week of February. Complete information can be found here: [nysurbanforestrycouncil.com/grants.asp](http://nysurbanforestrycouncil.com/grants.asp). For questions please contact the council at [nysufc@gmail.com](mailto:nysufc@gmail.com). If you would like assistance, please contact the Commission at 315-785-2380.

## **Tug Hill Commission to Meet**

January 25 at 10:00am at the Central Square village offices  
3125 East Ave., Central Square, NY.

## Local Laws Available On-line

Local laws adopted by municipalities are considered "published" upon filing with the NYS Department of State (NYSDOS) in Albany. Recently, the NYSDOS has made local laws filed by municipalities since January 1, 1998 available for viewing in PDF format and downloading by the public on their website at: [www.dos.ny.gov/corps/locallaws.html](http://www.dos.ny.gov/corps/locallaws.html) The NYSDOS local law database is easily searchable, and can both assist the public with information about the local laws that are in effect in their community as well as provide examples of what communities in other areas of the state are doing.

## New GIS Local Government Video Released

The NYS GIS Association has recently released a second video in their "Emerging GIS" series. This video was funded by "The Fund For The City Of New York". The new video can be found on the NYS GIS Association YouTube channel. It is called "Success Breeds Success" and highlights different agencies, like the Development Authority of the North Country and the Tug Hill Commission, as well as, other city, county, state, and private organizations. It discusses how GIS has evolved and where it might be headed to in the future.

Also, the first video of the series, "Emerging Response" can be found on the same NYS GIS Association YouTube channel. This video highlights what GIS is and how it can be used for emergency response. It includes a few case studies of how the technology is being used by local governments and fire departments.

For more information on the NYS GIS Association initiatives for "Emerging GIS", go to [www.nysgis.net/featured/emerging-gis-resources/](http://www.nysgis.net/featured/emerging-gis-resources/). This site also has the videos posted there, as well as other information that has been obtained by NYS GIS Association for local governments. You can also contact Mickey Dietrich [mickey.nysgisa@gmail.com](mailto:mickey.nysgisa@gmail.com) or (315) 785-2380.

## SLELO Prism 2015 Annual Report

The St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM), which includes all of the Tug Hill region, recently released its 2015 annual report. Highlights include:

- Completed habitat restoration efforts along the Salmon River by suppressing 86% of Japanese knotweed populations and restoring 21 sites with native grasses and live plantings.
- Initiated two intensive forest pest surveys for Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*) and Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*).
- Completed early detection surveillance on nine priority conservation areas within the PRISM region, including the Tug Hill Invasive Species Prevention Zone

The complete report will be available shortly at [www.sleloinvasives.org/](http://www.sleloinvasives.org/).

## Public Comment Period Open on Proposed Conservation Easement Modification and Extinguishment Regulations

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is accepting public comment through February 13, 2016 on draft regulations to address conservation easement modifications and extinguishments. The new regulation provides standards and a procedure for DEC staff to use, and provides the public an opportunity to comment in the amendment.

The Environmental Notice Bulletin can be found at [www.dec.ny.gov/enb/20151230\\_not0.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/enb/20151230_not0.html). Supporting documents can be found here: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/2359.html#part592>.

DEC holds conservation easements on almost 48,000 acres of land on Tug Hill in the East Branch of Fish Creek watershed.

Contact us at:

**NYS Tug Hill  
Commission**

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## New GPS Technology Tested

Commission staff has an opportunity to test out a new GPS receiver designed to connect to a smartphone, tablet, or laptop. It is a submeter accuracy unit, but has the ability to obtain centimeter accuracy level data collection through any one of these device using real time correction. The GPS receiver should be able to work directly with the Commission's GIS Cloud mobile application that can be loaded on a smartphone or tablet. If any local government has a project they might want to use this technology on and see how it works, please let contact the Tug Hill Commission's GIS Specialist, Mickey Dietrich, at (315) 785-2380 or email [mickey@tughill.org](mailto:mickey@tughill.org).

## Annual Tree Sale

Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District's annual tree sale is underway. Order by March 1 for best selection. Trees will be available for pick up on April 14 at the JCSWCD office located at the USDA Building, NYS Route 232, Watertown, NY. Visit [www.jeffersoncountyswcd.org/](http://www.jeffersoncountyswcd.org/) for tree varieties, online orders and order forms. For more information call the JCSWCD at 315- 782-2749.

## NY-SUN PU Trainers Network

The PV Trainers Network was developed under the **NY-Sun Initiative** (<http://ny-sun.ny.gov/>) to increase access to education, training, and technical assistance for local governments and stakeholders. Funded by New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), Meister Consultants Group has partnered with Entech Engineering, the City University of New York (CUNY) and Pace University to identify opportunities, remove barriers and create programs to drive solar development in New York State. Previous webinars and resources are available online. To view the calendar go to: <https://training.ny-sun.ny.gov/>

## Sustain our Great Lakes 2016 Funding Available for Restoration Projects

On January 6<sup>th</sup>, the public-private partnership, consisting of federal agencies and environmental organizations, announced their request for proposals for 2016 funding for stream, riparian, and coastal wetland restoration projects in the Great Lakes basin. Up to \$5 million will be awarded, with individual awards ranging from \$50,000 to \$1,500,000. Grants are supported with funding from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and other sources. A 1:1 match is highly encouraged for the project to be competitive, and may include in-kind and materials and services donated.

Eligible activities include stream bank stabilization, , dam removal, bridge and culvert replacement, fish passage structure installation, stream meander restoration, and invasive species control and native plant restoration. SOn January 13<sup>th</sup>, at 11am a webinar will be held to provide guidance to applicants, and on January 28<sup>th</sup> at 11am a webinar will be held to inform applicants on how to navigate the fishworks tool. **Pre-proposal applications will be due February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016**, and those invited to provide full proposals will have applications due April 21<sup>st</sup>. More information is available at: [www.sustainourgreatlakes.org/apply/](http://www.sustainourgreatlakes.org/apply/) Interested applicants are encouraged to connect with stakeholders to develop competitive project proposals.