

## 2018 Tug Hill Local Leaders Survey Results

SEPTEMBER 21, 2018

In keeping with the Tug Hill Commission's unique charge, is a requirement to measure its effectiveness. Article 37, Section 847-e of Executive Law states "The commission shall also report every five years on the results of a survey of local officials throughout the Tug Hill region in regard to the effectiveness of commission programs."

The survey was conducted this past spring, with 369 surveys sent to local and regionally elected and appointed officials. The survey achieved a 64% response rate, the highest response rate since 1990. At least one completed survey was received from every Tug Hill community. The complete results can be found at <http://www.tughill.org/strategic-plan/>. They will be incorporated into a white paper sent to the Governor and legislature in January 2019, and will be used over the next year to develop the commission's 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.

### Importance - Top programs (Essential and Important ratings)

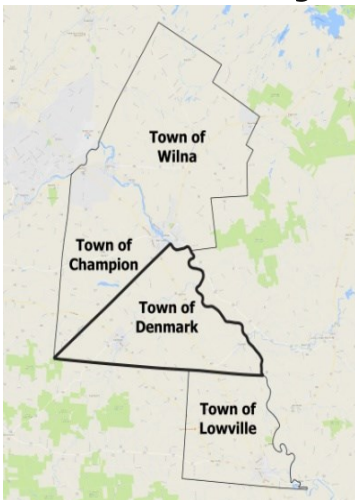
- 96%: **Workshops** to increase local officials' skills including annual LGC
- 96%: **Land use planning** assistance to towns and villages
- 95%: Helping communities find **money** for water, sewer, housing, etc.
- 95%: Support to **groups of communities working together**, especially local councils of governments
- 93%: Helping communities find **money** for parks, recreation, downtown revitalization
- 93%: Helping communities **protect the environment**

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## RACOG Approves New Member Community



At the September 18, 2018 River Area Council of Governments (RACOG) meeting, the board approved the town of Denmark to join RACOG. Upon completion of this addition, RACOG will have four towns (Champion, Denmark, Lowville, and Wilna) and three villages (Carthage, Deferiet, and West Carthage) as members once a new intermunicipal agreement is signed.

To the left is a map showing Denmark in relation to current RACOG towns.

## You Are Invited

### NYS Tug Hill Commission's 45th Anniversary Celebration

Thursday, November 8, 2018  
Grape N Grog  
85 Taberg Street, Camden, NY 13316

Cost: \$25/per person with cash bar

*Please return enclosed card with your check made payable to "NYS Tug Hill Commission" by Friday, October 26th.*

*Please call 315-785-2380 with any questions.*



Photo Credit East Branch of Fish Creek, by Anthony Machia

## We hope you can join us!

## ***2018 Tug Hill Local Leaders Survey Results, continued from page 1***

### Effectiveness - Top programs (Excellent and good ratings)

- 91%: **Workshops** to increase local officials' skills including annual LGC
- 85%: **Land use planning** assistance to towns and villages
- 82%: Support to **groups of communities working together**, especially local councils of governments
- 78%: **Circuit rider attendance** at municipal board meetings
- 77%: Helping communities **protect the environment**
- 72%: Helping communities find **money** for water, sewer, housing, etc.

### Characteristics: Ranked from highest to lowest on the "Excellent and good" responses

- Cooperative (95%)
- Expertise (93%)
- Understanding Area Needs (90%)
- Promptness (90%)
- Objectivity (89%)
- Innovativeness (85%)

### Commission Role

**Should the commission continue?** 81% Strongly Agree, 16% Agree

**How important is local control?** 84% Very Important, 9% Moderately Important

**Does the commission enhance local control?** 57% Almost Always, 21% Often, 7% Sometimes

**How important is intermunicipal cooperation/planning?** 77% Very, 16% Moderately

**Does the commission support cooperation/planning?** 65% Almost Always, 22% Often

**"The commission provides services which local govts need and cannot afford by themselves"** 65% Strongly Agree, 25% Agree

For more information or if you have any questions, please contact commission executive director Katie Malinowski, [katie@tughill.org](mailto:katie@tughill.org), (315) 785-2380.

## **RACOG Board Gets Trained on NY Alerts**

At the River Area Council of Governments (RACOG) board meeting on September 18, 2018, the board was trained on how to use the new NY Alerts system by Jason Willetts. He provided a webinar training on how to create alerts for the RACOG member communities and also how to view reports of events that triggered an alert. RACOG will be rolling out information for the public on how to sign up for alerts very soon. Information will be posted to the RACOG website in the near future. ([www.racog.org](http://www.racog.org))



## **Inactive Landfill Inquiries**

New York State's Clean Water Infrastructure Act of 2017 requires the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to investigate all inactive landfills in the state to determine if they are contaminating a source of drinking water. If your municipality received a letter from the DEC regarding a landfill on property you own and you have questions regarding DEC's Inactive Landfill Initiative, you can contact: in Lewis, Jefferson and Oneida Counties, Peter Taylor, Acting Materials Management Engineer, Watertown Regional Office (315) 785-2513; and for Oswego County, Tom Annal, Regional Materials Management Engineer, Syracuse Regional Office (315) 426-7535.

# Fire Protection Contracts Legislation

Legislation originally proposed by the Office of the State Comptroller (Bill number A-7089/S-5785) was recently signed into law by Governor Cuomo under chapter 294 of the Laws of 2017. The legislation amends sections 176 and 184 of the Town Law and section 4-412 of the Village Law relating to fire protection contracts between incorporated fire companies and fire districts, towns and villages respectively. The purpose of the new legislation is to increase transparency relating to the contract negotiation process between municipal units and incorporated fire companies.

The legislation requires that prior to commencing negotiations for a fire protection contract the incorporated fire company must provide to the municipal agents a statement itemizing the estimated costs of the fire company attributable to the services provided under the contract (a list of the minimum categories of expenses is listed in the legislation). The fire company must also provide an annual report of directors (if required per section 519 of the Not for Profit Corporation Law (NFPCL)); a corporation certificate (NFPCL section 1402-f); a copy of their IRS 990 Form and a report of foreign fire insurance premium tax funds (General Municipal Law section 30a). These documents are not required when a contract is deemed renewed per sections 176 and 184 of the Town Law. For good cause shown, the town or village board or board of Fire Commissioners may waive any and all parts of these filing requirements by the approval of a resolution to that effect.

In most cases, a free exchange of information during the negotiation process as to the cost of fire protection is the norm. However over the years the Comptroller's Office has received inquiries from municipalities which have had difficulties in obtaining this information from the fire companies. It is expected that rather than dealing with this issues on a case-by-case basis this legislation will provide a standard statutory process to ensure that the necessary cost information is provided at the beginning of the negotiation process. This should promote a more transparent negotiation process and result in reaching a fair and equitable price for fire protection services.

For more information or to read the bill text in full visit <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/legislation/2017-18/oscb-fpc-201718.htm>.

## *East Branch of Fish Creek Working Group Meeting*

*Thursday, October 4, 2018*

*5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.*

*The Alpine, 3008 State Route 26, Constableville*

*Pizza and Wings provided*

*Meet and hear updates from a variety of stakeholders in the East Branch of Fish Creek area, including NYS DEC, Molpus, and The Nature Conservancy.*

*Please RSVP to the Tug Hill Commission, 315-785-2380 or [gwen@tughill.org](mailto:gwen@tughill.org) by Wednesday, September 26, 2018.*



## Looking For Interns?

It is already time to start thinking about interns for next summer. There are several potential internship funding programs available, but most have application deadlines at the end of this fall or early winter. If your community has a project that could benefit from having an intern, please contact the Tug Hill Commission as soon as possible, so that we can start canvassing for potential students. You can contact your circuit riders to let them know of your interest, or Mickey Dietrich or Matt Johnson in the Tug Hill Commission office.

# Fishing Events along the Salmon River

On **Saturday, September 22** the Salmon River Fish Hatchery will hold its annual open house from 9 am to 4 pm. The open house will feature guided tours of the facility throughout the day, providing attendees with behind-the-scenes access to the hatchery's inner-workings. The popular fish ladder will also be on display, offering the opportunity to view salmon as they migrate. Additionally, children will have the opportunity to learn to cast a fishing rod, tie flies, participate in a laser shooting range, observe the aquatic life of Beaverdam Brook, and learn about rare and threatened fish species in New York State.

In addition to the scheduled program events, several conservation organizations, fishing and hunting clubs, and outdoor recreation groups will be on hand with displays and activities to provide information about their role in the Salmon River Corridor and the Lake Ontario ecosystem. For more information, see the Department of Environmental Conservation's website, <https://www.dec.ny.gov/press/114625.html>.

On **Saturday, October 6** the Salmon River International Sport Fishing Museum will host a "Celebrate Fishing Show and Sale" from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Located at 3044 State Route 13, west of the hamlet of Altmar, the museum and visitors center is located on 10 acres of land with a pond and fishing access to the Salmon River. The museum will be open for tours, fishing will be held in the pond for Largemouth Bass, and fishing seminars will be provided for young and old. In addition, there will be a hands-on kids pool with live fish to touch and experience, a kids casting contest, fishing games, free books, and fishing tackle for all that attend. There will be raffles and door prizes as well. All proceeds benefit the museum.

Volunteers are invited to display or demonstrate the latest fishing tackle, present seminars on specific fishing skills or techniques, teach children how to cast, spool a reel, tie a fisherman's knot and other skills, help with kids' fishing seminars, and demonstrate fly-tying, casting, equipment, taxidermy or related topics. For more information, contact Mike Riordan at 374-2997 or email [mrmikemuseum@gmail.com](mailto:mrmikemuseum@gmail.com)

## Contact Us

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Visit us at:

Web: [www.tughill.org](http://www.tughill.org)

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[www.facebook.com/  
TugHillCommission](https://www.facebook.com/TugHillCommission)

If you would like to receive our newsletter electronically please email your request to [gwen@tughill.org](mailto:gwen@tughill.org) or call 1-888-785-2380.

Electronic versions appear in full color!

# Preparing Your Woods for More Frequent Disturbance

**Saturday, October 13, 2018, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM**

As extreme weather and pest outbreaks become more common, do you wonder if your woodlot is in a strong position to recover and thrive? This workshop will focus on The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) 17,000 acre Tug Hill conservation area, where we are using both tried and true and new techniques to make the forest more resilient. Learn about the history of Tug Hill forests and TNC's goal to guide them toward increased species diversity and structural complexity using familiar forestry practices.

Through plantings, timber stand improvement and medium-sized patch cuts, TNC has begun managing a number of stands to withstand the impacts of a changing climate. Staff from the project team, will discuss how they decided on the various management techniques, the challenges of a tight timeline and expected outcomes. They will also explain how the project inspired the creation of a forest health and productivity report card with CCE Onondaga that you can use in your woods to guide your management plans.

Morning session begins at 9 :00 a.m. at Snow Ridge Resort and afternoon is in the field – please dress for Tug Hill weather! Workshop will be rain or shine. Morning refreshments and lunch will be served.

Registration is FREE but REQUIRED for refreshments and handout count. Register online at [https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/CCETNCResilience18\\_231](https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/CCETNCResilience18_231) . **Registration deadline is October 9.** If you have questions about the workshop contact Kristina Ferrare, CCE Onondaga County by email [kaf226@cornell.edu](mailto:kaf226@cornell.edu) or phone (315) 424-9485 ext. 231.