



Genesee County
Soil & Water Conservation District

SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER

Overview of 2023

We wanted to share highlights of the 2023 year here at GC Soil & Water Conservation District. Last year we sold over 14,000 trees and 9,000 fish, recycled over 4,900 pounds of agricultural plastic, hydroseeded 12.3 acres (537,400 sq.ft.), seeded 17 acres of disturbed soils in critical areas, helped implement over 2,900 acres of cover crop, and reached over 2,700 community members through our education outreach programs! We want to thank you, as much of this wouldn't be possible without your help!

Follow us on Facebook at **Genesee County Soil & Water Conservation District** for updates on programs, highlights, and more throughout the year!



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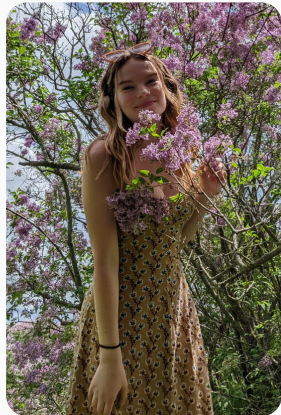
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Hi! I'm Joan, the new Conservation Technician here at Genesee County Soil and Water. I live in Monroe County on the East side of Rochester, but I'm originally from Cayuga County. I grew up right on Cayuga Lake, so I love being in and around the water! I enjoy swimming, paddle boarding, hiking, and camping. When I'm not outside, I'll be trying out new recipes in my kitchen or on the couch reading a book with my cat.

I graduated from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry with a B.S. in Forest Ecosystem Science. There, I was fortunate to take an array of classes focused on forestry, ecology, and hydrology. I also completed a lot of field work, including a summer program at the SUNY ESF Ranger School in the Adirondacks. Outside of school, I worked as an intern for DEC surveying and managing aquatic invasive species. Here at Genesee County Soil and Water, I hope to address issues with invasive species, help our farmers and landowners, and do my best to better this awesome community!



NYS Annual Burn Ban

March 16th - May 14th

This includes...bare tree limbs, limbs with attached leaves, loose leaves, leaf piles, and other brush



Swallow-wort

(*Vincetoxicum rossicum* & *V. nigrum*)

Swallow-wort is an invasive vine that quickly overgrows and outcompetes native species. Although resistant to previous treatment, biological control methods have been approved (2017) and are being tested (even locally!). A moth, *Hypena opulenta*, was approved to combat swallow-wort infestations. Research is being conducted to gather further data on this control method.

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⚠ Japanese Knotweed ⚠

Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) is an invasive species that is spreading quickly across Genesee County. This plant is a nuisance, growing in dense thickets that shade out native plants, cause soil erosion, interfere with roads and bridges, and can even alter waterways.



WARNING

Knotweed sprouts from an underground root system known as a rhizome. **Cutting or mowing does not kill knotweed**, it might spread the infestation more via root and stem fragments!



Identification

- Hollow, smooth, reddish stems growing in zig-zag pattern
- Heart shaped leaves with long pointed tip and flat top
- Clusters of white flowers blooming August-September

Think you see knotweed? **Let us know!**
 585-343-2362 x 5
joan.hodges@ny.nacdnet.net

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Guide to the AEM Program



The Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program is a voluntary program for conservation planning and implementation on farm operations. The program utilizes a five-tier platform to inventory and assess farm operations, plan best management practices that meet the farm's goals, and address a potential impact to natural resources (streams, wetlands, air quality, etc.), and implement these practices on the farm. AEM can be applied to farms of all types and sizes, including Christmas tree farms, small beef farms, or 3,000 cow dairy farms.

AEM is used to provide the technical assistance from soil and water conservation districts to assess, plan, and design best management practices. AEM supports the soil and water conservation district's staff time to work on your farm, so there is no cost to you. Once a plan is finished, that plan can be used to pursue financial assistance programs from local, state, and federal sources.

These financial assistance programs can typically reimburse 70-80% of the implementation cost of a best management practice system. Eligible best management practices for these programs depends on the program goals. Typical projects include grazing systems, cover crop, irrigation, erosion control systems, stream buffers, manure storage, and manure storage cover and flare systems.

If you are interested in technical and/or financial assistance on a project for your farm, please contact your local soil and water conservation district!



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Genesee County Soil & Water Conservation District

2024 FISH STOCKING ORDER FORM

Directions:

Submit completed order form and check or money order payable to GCSWCD at 29 Liberty Street, Suite 3, Batavia, NY 14020. Orders are secured once payment is submitted. Please call if you have questions at 585-343-2362 x5 8am-4:30pm Monday-Friday.

Triploid grass carp permits are required at the time of ordering. Fish Order Forms are accepted January - October each year. Order pick up dates are generally held in the spring and fall seasons.

Order deadline is May 9th, pick up is May 17th @ 10am

Name: _____		Phone: _____	
Alt. Phone: _____		Email: _____	
Address: _____		City: _____	Zip: _____
Species	Price	Quantity	Cost (Price x Quantity)
Flathead Minnows 2-3"	\$23.00/lb. (~150 fish/lb.)		\$
Largemouth Bass 3-5" Order in increments of 5	\$3.50 each		\$
Yellow Perch 3-5" Order in increments of 5	\$3.50 each		\$
Black Crappie 3-5" Order in increments of 5	\$3.50 each		\$
Bluegill 3-5" Order in increments of 5	\$3.50 each		\$
Subtotal:			\$
Subtotal + 8% Sales Tax:			\$
Triploid Grass Carp 10-14" NYSDEC Permit is required prior to order Can purchase individually	\$22.00 each No sales tax on Triploid Grass Carp		\$

NOTE: GCSWCD is not responsible for the fish and does not guarantee the survival of the fish after they leave the pick-up area. No refunds will be given for fish not picked up. Pick up time 10-10:30am



FISH ORDER FAQ:

When is the order deadline? We collect orders for fish distribution in the spring and fall.

How are my fish transported? The hatchery truck delivers the fish to our parking lot at 29 Liberty St., Batavia. Your fish are to be picked up at 10 a.m. Please be prompt.

What containers & water should I use? We recommend a large cooler or clean garbage can with lid filled with at least 20 gallons of water per 100 2-3" fish, and 20 gallons per 50 4" fish. The water should be collected from your pond just prior to pick up. Do not use chlorinated water to transport your fish. Multiple containers may be needed for large orders or orders containing multiple species of fish.

How do I get triploid grass carp? A DEC permit is required to obtain triploid grass carp. Our office can assist you with your application. The DEC will notify you how many grass carp you are allowed based on the size of your pond and the weed cover. You must present your permit when ordering your triploid grass carp. NYSDEC permit applications for stocking Triploid Grass Carp are available at <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7975.html>

FARM FISH POND LICENSE:

Prior to stocking fish in your pond, you should obtain a **Farm Fish Pond License** from DEC. The license allows the licensee, their immediate family, and their employees to take fish at any time, in any size, in any number, and in any manner as stipulated in their individual license. The farm fish pond license also serves as a stocking permit, eliminating the need to obtain a separate DEC fish stocking permit which is required to stock fish into any waters of the state. The Farm Fish Pond License is free and is good for five years. See <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7975.html> for information.

WARM WATER POND RECOMMENDED STOCKING RATES:

Largemouth bass/ bluegill combination, bass/bluegill/perch combination, or bass/ minnow combinations are generally recommended. See Table 1 for standard stocking rates. The largemouth bass/minnow combination is satisfactory in ponds one-sixth acre or larger, a minimum 8ft deep, where plants are present but not abundant.

Note stocking bluegill with the bass provides another species for the angler to enjoy, especially children. However, an intensive amount of fishing pressure must be placed on the bluegill because of its high reproductive ability. In time, if an adequate number of bluegills are not removed, they will overpopulate the pond and become stunted. Research by Cornell University indicates that 15 times as many bluegills as bass can and should be harvested. The average bass/bluegill pond can support annual harvests of only about eleven adult bass per acre. Overharvest of adult bass will obviously tip the balance in favor of bluegills.

Black crappie can do well in ponds and provide excellent fishing; however, they are unpredictable in ponds. Often, crappie reproduction is high and small crappies overpopulate. They prey heavily on fry bluegills and bass, whose population can then decline. When stocking crappies, it is recommended that a high adult bass density be maintained to "crop" off small crappies. Not recommended in small ponds.

Table 1. Recommend Standard Stocking Rates

Fish Species	New Ponds or Following Fish Kill	Supplemental Stocking in Existing Ponds
Flathead Minnows 2-3"	400 - 1,000 / acre	1,000 / acre multiple times/yr. if only prey fish
Largemouth Bass 3-5"	100 / acre	50 / acre if excessive harvest occurs
Yellow Perch 3-5"	100 / acre	Rarely recommended
Black Crappie 3-5"	-	100 / acre, then rarely recommended
Bluegill 3-5"	500 / acre	Rarely recommended

Water Quality Monitoring (WQM)

Please be cautious & give us room if you see us sampling alongside a bridge!

Water protection and restoration is at the heart of many of the District's programs. One of these programs is the District's Water Quality Monitoring Program. District staff perform visual surveys and collect chemical and biological samples from streams in Genesee County to assist in the development of effective plans to maintain, manage, and restore the streams and their watersheds. The collected data also assists the District with securing grant funds to implement a variety of voluntary conservation practices to improve the watersheds and the water quality of the creeks.



District technicians monitor and collect samples from the creeks periodically throughout the year. Using a multi-probe meter, the technicians record the pH, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, temperature, and specific conductivity of the water. These parameters are considered your baseline health indicators. Multiple water samples are carefully collected and delivered to the New York State certified Limnology Lab located at The SUNY College at Brockport for analysis. The samples are analyzed for concentrations of suspended sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus in the water. These parameters were selected because an over abundance of sediment and nutrients in the water can impact the aquatic organisms and the other wildlife that depend on the creeks, recreation, aesthetics, and drinking water quality.

In addition to collecting water samples, the technicians also measure the flow of water, document streambank disturbance, and survey the aquatic insect communities. Aquatic macroinvertebrate insects are great indicators of water quality because the presence or absence of certain insects can indicate good or poor water quality conditions. The District monitors all of the major tributaries in Genesee County annually and the District has recently expanded the program to include an annual in-depth analysis (segment analysis) of a particular watershed each year that funding is available. Funding for this program is supported by the Finger Lakes - Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FOLLOWPA) through the NYS Environmental Protection Fund.



The District's current plan is to focus on monitoring the Oak Orchard Creek watershed, which spans across the northeastern portion of Genesee County, running through the town of Alabama, Oakfield, Elba, Batavia, and Byron. The District has selected numerous sites throughout the watershed to sample from in order to assess different tributaries that supply water to the main channel of Oak Orchard. This data will be collected in the same manner as the other sites across the county and will be analyzed by SUNY Brockport. The data collected will be used to plan voluntary conservation practices and watershed management plans.

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