

DUTCHESS COUNTY

soil & water

CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Since 1945

Conservation News

Cover Crop Program

The Dutchess County Soil and Water Conservation District is offering a Mini Grant Program to assist farmers in maintaining soil health by implementing cover crops. Cover crops provide multiple benefits such as to minimize erosion during winter months, maximize soil health and organic matter, suppress weeds, reduce pest cycles and herbicide usage. The district will provide reimbursement of funds for up to 100 acres per farmer - for implementation of either single or multi-species crop mix.

Before implementation



After implementation



We encourage both established and new farmers to try it out!

Please contact Lauren Drum, AEM Program Technician, at Lauren.Drum@ny.nacdnet.net or (845) 677-8011 ext.3 before July 1, to create or review your farm plan.

Funding for this program is limited, therefore applications will be reviewed on a first come first serve basis and awards will be distributed until all funds have been allocated.

Visit [our website](#) for an application.

Calendar of Events

May 19 - 20 - Master Gardener Volunteers Plant Sale

August 22 - 27 - Dutchess County Fair

DISTRICT PROGRAMS

Agricultural District Review

Agricultural Districts protect and promote the availability of land for farming purposes.

The Agricultural District Law protects farm operations within an agricultural district from unreasonably restrictive local regulations. An agricultural district is a geographic area which consists primarily of viable agricultural land.

This year, the Dutchess County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board will likely be recommending to the County Legislature that the four districts be consolidated into one district. Therefore, they will not be doing the Annual Inclusion Process, rather they will be accepting applications between May 1st and May 30th.

Please visit [Dutchess County's Government website](#) for more information and for an [application form](#).

Information about the Dutchess County Agricultural Districts

Dutchess County consists of four
different agricultural districts
spanning a total of 196,787 acres
and including 1,537 farms.

District #20

- Spans 42,696 acres
- Includes the Towns of Clinton, Hyde Park, Milan, Pleasant Valley, Red Hook, and Rhinebeck

District #21

- Spans 97,912 acres
- Includes the Towns of Amenia, North East, Pine Plains, Stanford, and Washington

District #22

- Spans 18,059 acres
- Includes the Towns of East Fishkill, Fishkill, LaGrange, Poughkeepsie, and Wappinger

District #23

- Spans 38,815 acres
- Includes the Towns of Beekman, Dover, Union Vale, and Pawling

DISTRICT PROGRAMS

2023 Conservation in the Classroom

Congratulations to Arlington High School and John Jay High School!

In January, the District launched its 2023 Conservation in the Classroom Program, a grant project intended to expand environmental conservation education and/or agricultural education in Dutchess County Schools, aimed at increasing student awareness of local environmental conservation and/or agriculture and enlighten students on the importance of conserving natural resources and how to repair damage and reverse harmful trends.

Arlington High School

Arlington High School will utilize the grant to expand their Pollinator Garden and Greenhouse, providing awareness on the importance of pollinators to the ecosystem. The Pollinator Garden is registered with Pollinator Pathway, an organization of hundreds of pollinator gardens along the East Coast. Students will be able to take part in this project by stratifying seeds in milk jugs and egg cartons throughout the winter, plant new flowers each spring, and participate in garden maintenance such as weeding and watering. Current science research students are conducting research on the germination rates of native plants that will be added to the garden in the spring. Furthermore, they hope to inspire the Arlington community to take action individually by planting native plants in their yards or not using pesticides.

John Jay High School/Wappingers Central School District

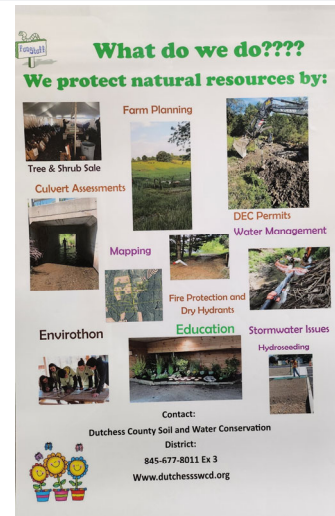
John Jay High School plans to broaden their Pollinator and Serenity Garden, bringing awareness to pollinators and also creating a serene space for students and faculty. Students will plan the layout and perform planting of the garden as well as maintenance such as weeding and watering. The Plant Science students have a curriculum pertaining to pollinators, and will have hands-on learning opportunities from this garden. John Jay is also host to a Future Farmers of America chapter, who will also benefit from their experience with the garden.

Thank you for your devotion to conserving the environment!

DISTRICT PARTICIPATION

Dover School Career Fair

The District participated in the Dover Career Fair on March 29, 2023. The Dover Career Fair focused on bringing attention to local career opportunities. District staff educated students on the importance of environmental conservation, and the ways in which they assist landowners and municipalities to practice conservation.

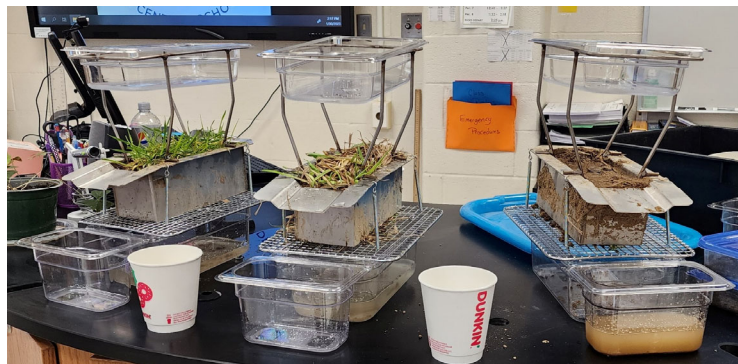


Pleasant Valley Green Fair

Our staff attended the Pleasant Valley Climate Smart Task Force Green Fair on April 15, 2023. Climate Smart is a program that helps local governments take action in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change. At the Green Fair, staff displayed their emriver EM2 Stream Table, demonstrating how river flow causes erosion, and the effects that erosion has on landforms.

Rainfall Simulator at John Jay

The District utilized its new Conservation Demonstrations Expo Rainfall Simulator to demonstrate the affect rainfall has on soil erosion. Students were shown the difference between soil with healthy erosion control and soil with poor erosion control, and how proper erosion control impacts land production and the health of the surrounding environment.



LOCAL PROGRAMS



Celebrate and Protect the Housatonic Valley we love!

Come out and Celebrate our Watershed! This virtually managed event celebrates the Housatonic River Valley and helps protect our waterways and lands.

[Visit their website for more information!](#)



Trails are now open for the 2023 season!

The Cary Institute's hiking trails immerse visitors in a range of ecosystems, from old fields and upland forests to wetlands. These varied habitats are great for nature observation. Look for signs of ecosystem disturbance, examine lichens on a fallen tree, or just relax and enjoy the soothing sounds of bird song.

Visit [their website](#) for more information, and for a [map of their hiking trails!](#)



Department of
Environmental
Conservation



HUDSON RIVER
National Estuarine Research Reserve

The Norrie Point Environmental Center is home of the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve's core programs, offering interpretive exhibits, classroom space, and educational programs to the public side-by-side with the Reserve's research lab, weather station, and conference space for our professional training programs. [Visit their website for more information!](#)

Another Reserve site, extending two miles along the eastern shore of the Hudson River, Tivoli Bays allows for extensive hiking and recreation through incredible wetlands which support a rich ecosystem of fish, wildlife, and plant species. Tivoli Bays is now part of the New York State Birding Trail! [Visit their website for more information!](#)



About the Dutchess County Soil & Water Conservation District

The Dutchess County Soil & Water Conservation District was founded in 1945 in an effort to conserve and protect natural resources. A conservation district focuses on natural resource problems and solutions, authorized under the State Law to coordinate state and federal conservation programs at the local level. The district is directed by a seven member board and hires technical and administrative staff to oversee day-to-day operations.

The district provides technical assistance and education on soil, water and related natural resources. Municipalities, farmers and landowners use this information in making proper land use decisions. In addition, the district assists other environmental organizations in the expansion of public service.

Board of Directors

David Coon, Chair; Sandy Washburn, Vice-Chairperson; Tim Bontecou, Treasurer; A. Gregg Pulver; David Koehler; Michael Lawrence; Don Sagliano

District Staff

Brian Scoralick, Executive Director; Erin Sommerville, MS4 Coordinator; Lauren Drum, AEM Program Technician; Amy Titcomb, District Technician; Meghan Lane, Office Manager

Board Meeting Schedule

The Dutchess County Soil and Water Conservation District holds monthly Board of Directors Meetings on the third Wednesday of each month. Upcoming meeting dates are: May 17, June 21, July 19 and August 16

Visit Us on the Web
www.dutchessswcd.org

Contact us
(845) 677-8011
admin@dutchessswcd.org