



**ESSEX COUNTY  
SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2024**

# SOME HIGHLIGHTS

5 Tire Drives removing over 53 tons of waste from the county

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2 Septic Workshops

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10 New farms enrolled in Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Program

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Over 5000 stems sold at the Annual Tree Sale

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## EQUIPMENT RENTAL

- No-till drills
- Broadcast seeder
- Post Pounder
- Plastic Baler



## RADIO INTERVIEW



The District was interviewed by North Country Public Radio and was featured on the April 24, 2024 program broadcast of Northern Light. You can find the interview at 16:10 at this link.

[www.northcountrypublicradio.org/news/story/49711/20240424/northern-light-4-24-2024](http://www.northcountrypublicradio.org/news/story/49711/20240424/northern-light-4-24-2024)





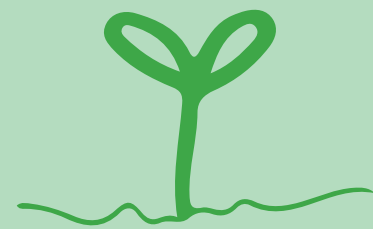
## AEM AWARD

**Congratulations to Echo Farm for receiving the 2024 AEM Award for Essex County.** This award recognizes local agricultural producers for their conservation efforts and stewardship achieved through their participation in the Agricultural Environmental Management Program.



## AEM LEOPOLD AWARD

**Ben Wever Farm was named a top three finalist for the 2024 New York AEM - Leopold Award.** Farms were recognized for being leaders in conservation best practice implementation and environmental stewardship.



## SCHOOL MINIGRANT

4 schools participated in the Essex County SWCD school minigrant program. Left, Bloomingdale Elementary School **students start seeds for their school garden.**

# BOQUET TREE PLANTING

Brought together by the river, organizations and individuals from all walks of life united for a common cause in April, improving habitat along the Boquet River in Wadhams. Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District worked with Trout Unlimited, the Boquet River Association, the Ruffed Grouse Society, and over 75 volunteers to plant 1400 trees in old pasture along the river.

The District was critical in planning, site preparation, and execution, providing equipment, time, and expertise to make the project a success. It was a great community effort that we hope can be repeated in future years.



**75 volunteers**  
**1400 trees!**



**The District continued the Farm Talks series, with 8 farms hosting evening get togethers throughout the year.** These events foster farm connections, with producers coming together to share a meal, discuss farm practices, and share challenges and solutions. Funding for this was provided by the Lake Champlain Basin Program and NEIWPC through an Education grant. Thank you to all those who participated.

# Agricultural Nonpoint Source Protection Project completed



This year a **Waste Storage and Transfer System** and a **Livestock Heavy Use Area Runoff Management System** were **completed through an AgNPS grant**. These systems included 15 practices which will prevent erosion and water pollution, enhance nutrient management, and enable the farmers to better protect their livestock from the elements. This project was done in partnership with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service.

## HYDROSEEDING PROGRAM



In 2024 the District hydroseeded a little over **14 miles of roadway**. We also completed 3 large scale projects that totaled 5.7 acres. A good portion of our hydroseeding efforts were to revegetate disturbed areas after municipalities repaired roads and culverts that were damaged in storm events. The District was also instrumental in acquiring funds from the Lake Champlain Basin Program agricultural grant to assist with hydroseeding over 2000 linear feet of a farm access road to reduce potential phosphorus inputs. Kudos to the producers and municipalities for implementing best management practices that **help maintain water quality standards for Lake Champlain**.

# MOODY POND PROJECT



The town of St. Armand reached out to Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District staff asking for help to install erosion control measures alongside Moody Pond. A combination of inappropriate parking and abundant rains had led to the scouring and erosion of the roadside, allowing sediment and roadway pollutants to be carried directly into the pond that the community recreates on and around. ECSWCD staff worked directly with the Town to formulate a plan and set it in motion. Topsoil was placed, followed by a grass seed mixture applied with the District's hydroseeder, and then biodegradable erosion control blankets, to create a vegetated area that will continue to protect this much-appreciated community resource for years to come.

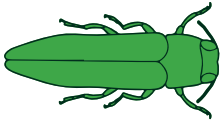
BEFORE  
&  
AFTER



## SILVOPASTURE EVENT



Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District partnered with CCE Essex to bring together technical expertise and multi-disciplinary perspectives to examine a local case-study in silvopasture. Led by experts in the subject, Brett Chedzoy and Peter Smallidge, the field day began with a classroom portion at the Whallonsburg Grange to review the basic principles of silvopasture. The field portion brought folks to one of our participating AEM agricultural producers, Ben Wever Farm, whose agricultural operations exemplify good pasture management. They have been exploring the integration of silvopasture through the implementation of their updated Forest Management Plan. This case study allowed folks to work through the complexity of implementing silvopasture beyond theory and afforded the opportunity to practice field skills, such as sampling basal area. Attendees included local foresters, farmers, loggers, and landowners as well as service providers from multiple agencies.



# Interns Find First Official Sighting of Emerald Ash Borer in Essex County

While monitoring a District tree planting site, interns observed D-shaped holes in ash trees at the Champlain Area Trails (CATS) Beaver Bend Nature Preserve in Westport. They placed a trap on site and caught what appeared to be Emerald Ash Borers. The NYSDEC confirmed this identification. When ash trees become infested with this invasive pest they typically die in 2-4 years. You can learn more about the Emerald Ash Borer on the NYSDEC website.

EMERALD ASH BORER TRAP



## COVER CROPS

Essex County SWCD provided assistance to 13 farms to plant cover crops or seed forage and biomass on **633 acres**. This practice helps to protect soil from erosion and add new organic material to improve soil health and plant yields. Funding from New York State was provided to the Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition of New York (CWICNY) and through the Agricultural Environmental Management cost-share program to support this effort.





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Essex County Soil and  
Water Conservation District

## 2024 DISTRICT STAFF

**Alice Halloran** *District Manager*

**Renee Clark** *District Clerk*

**Daniel Berheide** *Senior Technician*

**Meagan Goff** *Technician*

**Noah Weber** *Technician*

## SUMMER INTERNS

**Olivia Sayre**

**Marta Estrada**

**Emily Pinheiro**

## 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Michael Tyler** *Chair*

**James Monty** *Vice-Chair*

**Anna Reynolds**

**Bernard Leerkes**

**Michael Davis**

