

2008 Conference on the Environment To Be Held at St. Lawrence University

The St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council will sponsor the 2008 Conference on the Environment to be held Friday, October 17 through Sunday, October 19 at St. Lawrence University in Canton, NY. The theme of this year's Conference will be *The Future of EMCs and CACs – Research, Education, and Involvement*. Through workshops, field trips, keynote presentations, and the invaluable networking that occurs each year, the 2008 Conference will enable EMCs and CACs to make good use of the considerable research potential around the State to address environmental issues, and to bring results of this research to decision-makers and the public.

Those planning to attend this year's Conference will find that Canton is a beautiful place to visit in October. Situated in the center of St. Lawrence County, Canton is close to the St. Lawrence River, with its working Seaway and massive hydropower project. Canton is also close to the scenic vistas of the Adirondack Mountains, with nearby hiking and canoeing/kayaking opportunities. Mid-October is typically the peak of leaf-peeping season in St. Lawrence County; a trip to Canton in the fall is a tourist's delight. Conference attendees will stay at the Best Western University Inn in downtown Canton. Conference sessions will be held at the Eben Holden Conference Center, on the campus of St. Lawrence University.

As part of the 2008 Conference theme, the idea of "Citizen Science" will be a unifying concept throughout the Conference. "Citizen Science" involves putting interested members of the public together with professional researchers to complete projects that advance scientific knowledge. Conference organizers think that EMCs and CACs are already doing significant amounts of "Citizen Science" in their current local projects. The concept of "Citizen Science" can further stimulate collaborative efforts between EMCs/CACs and professional scientists to research and resolve environmental issues in local communities, and across the State.



Invited speakers for the 2008 Conference on the Environment include Pete Grannis, DEC Commissioner; Janice Dickinson, Director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and a leader in the "Citizen Science" movement. Scheduled workshops will address topics including: biofuels, invasive species/biodiversity, open space issues and the Adirondacks, climate change, water use, wetlands, presentations by local EMCs and

CACs and student presentations among others.

The 2008 Conference on the Environment is open to all interested persons regardless of affiliation. For further information about the 2008 Conference on the Environment, check out the Conference website at <http://www.NYSACO.org> or our website at <http://www.nysaccny.com>. E-mail may be sent to Planning@stlawco.org or call the St. Lawrence County EMC at 315-379-2292.

**Experience the environment in St. Lawrence County.
Come to the 2008 Conference!**

Hurry!

**Submit your entries for 2008
NYSACC Project Awards by Sept. 30.**

Send submissions to:

Arlene Kaufman

3 Andover Drive

**Port Jefferson Station, NY 11776
or e-mail to Teach23456@gmail.com**

**In order to conserve paper we are not
including an award application.
Please download an application from our
website - www.nysaccny.org**

SLU's Johnson Hall of Science Awarded LEED Gold Certification

Participants at the 2008 Conference on the Environment to be held at St. Lawrence University will have the opportunity to tour the University's Johnson Hall of Science facility.

Johnson Hall of Science, dedicated in the fall of 2007, has been awarded Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council. The \$36.9-million, 115,000-square-foot building is the first Gold-certified building on any college campus in NYS and the first science facility in the state to achieve the Gold certification. Across the nation, only 361 projects have been certified Gold; 21 of those projects are higher education facilities, according to the U.S. Green Building Council.

LEED certification requires meeting a stringent set of environmentally friendly and energy-efficient standards. Johnson Hall of Science earned the certification distinction by scoring 41 LEED rating points. The rating system, with the range of LEED points required, is: Certified, 26-32 points; Silver, 33-38 points; Gold, 39-51 points; Platinum, 52-69 points.

LEED-certified buildings lower operating costs; reduce waste sent to landfills; conserve energy and water; are healthier for occupants; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and demonstrate a commitment to environmental stewardship and social responsibility.

LEED is the nationally accepted benchmark for high-performance green buildings. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

Among the sustainable design features of the Johnson Hall of Science are:

- Landscape design informed by water management strategy, and the creation, recreation or preservation of on-site ecosystems.
- Building sited on a solar axis to maximize natural lighting.
- Incorporation of 100% renewable technology use in the future is anticipated.
- Passive/active solar design, energy-saving technologies, efficient lighting strategies.
- Design strategies to conserve water resources.
- A planning process involving students and faculty collaboration.

NYSDEC Grants

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is offering the following grants for which applications are accepted continuously:

Landfill Closure Program - provides assistance to municipalities for closing inactive solid waste landfills. For a municipality with a population of 3,500 or more, the maximum amount of assistance is 50% of the project's total eligible costs, or \$2 million, whichever is less. For a smaller municipality, the maximum is 90%, or \$2 million. Awards are made once a year to as many projects as can be reached with available funds. Applications are available from Pauline Morrissette at pxmorrissette@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Household Hazardous Waste Program - provides incentive for municipalities to conduct environmentally sound collection and disposal of household hazardous wastes (HHW). The HHW program provides up to 50% reimbursement to local governments limited to \$2 million per project. Applications are available at www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4776.html.

Municipal Waste Reduction & Recycling Program - provides up to 50% reimbursement funding for municipal waste reduction, recycling and composting programs limited to \$2 million per project. Applications are available at www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4776.html.

For further information concerning these and other grants available from NYSDEC go to www.dec.ny.gov.

Northern Forest Grants

The Northern Forest Partnership Program has announced \$142,000 in grants to fund community-based projects that promote investment and create or maintain jobs in the Northern Forest by developing social, cultural, economic or environmental well-being. Non-profits, businesses and local government entities (including schools) are eligible to apply.

The program will award grants for projects in eight categories of work including training, wood-products manufacturing, recreation and tourism, energy, agriculture, arts and culture, conservation and ecosystem services.

Applications must be submitted by Sept. 30. For guidelines and an application form go to <http://northernforest.org/nfpp-grant-program.shtml>

The competitive grant program is jointly administered by the North East State Foresters Association and the Northern Forest Center. Funding for the NFPP is made possible by a grant from the USDA Forest Service Economic Action Program and support from U.S. Senator Judd Gregg and U.S. Rep. Paul Hodes of New Hampshire.

Tonawanda Goes "Green"

With a two-page news release printed on recyclable paper, Town of Tonawanda officials announced in July a "Green Initiative" to find ways to save money and energy. In this particular case, "Green" stands for Government Response to Energy Efficiency Needs. The project involves identifying specific action steps for the Town to employ to reduce its carbon footprint, contribute to long-range climate protection goals, and save taxpayer dollars.

The Tonawanda CAC has established an energy efficiency subcommittee comprising Peter Rizzo (NYSACC Director) and two other Commission members, which is preparing a report consisting of a set of seven recommendations on appropriate energy efficiency policy initiatives and community education programs that can be implemented in the Town.

The subcommittee is considering such things as the practicality of "greening" the Town's vehicle and equipment purchasing policies (i.e. purchasing the most fuel efficient vehicles and leasing only Energy Star products, where possible), the adoption of energy efficiency construction standards (LEED) for new Town-owned public facilities, the potential for community environmental education and outreach programs (working with the local school district, an environmental speaker series, etc.) and others.

One thing to be determined is the size of the Town's "carbon footprint," defined as the tonnage of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that daily activities produce. Reducing that footprint is one of the initiative's goals.

Tonawanda is not starting from scratch when it comes to going "green". "Green" measures already implemented include:

- A comprehensive recycling program, dating back almost two decades, that recycles about 40% of the town's total waste annually. This program yields about \$100,000 a year in revenues and "host community" fees from the Allied Waste Services recycling facility in the Town.
- Planting trees, including more than 700 last year alone to replace those lost during the snowstorm of October 2006.
- An annual holiday lighting contest utilizing energy-efficient products.
- Cleaning up brownfield sites along River Road.
- And, most recently, voting to proceed with an energy audit of 20 town facilities.

For further information on Tonawanda's "Green Initiative", e-mail Peter Rizzo at pcrizzo@gmail.com.

New York State Climate Registry

The New York State Climate Registry is a system for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reporting that provides accurate, complete, consistent and verified emissions data. It is a part of the nationwide Climate Registry, which invites leading corporations, government agencies, universities, municipalities and nonprofit organizations in North America to participate as reporters. The Registry encourages voluntary, early actions to increase energy efficiency and decrease GHG emissions.

Reporters to the Climate Registry agree to calculate, certify and publicly report their GHG emissions annually:

- **Identify** all sources of GHG emissions
- **Calculate** their emissions according to The Climate Registry's protocols
- **Verify** their emissions through an approved third-party contractor
- **Report** verified, entity-wide emissions data to the public through The Climate Registry

Any organization may join the Registry by signing and faxing a completed Statement of Intent, which may be downloaded from www.TheClimateRegistry.org.

The Climate Registry has a tiered annual fee structure that allows organizations of all sizes to participate. Reporter staff time will be necessary to collect and report data, but that time should decrease significantly after the first year. Reporting organizations are responsible for the cost of third-party verification of their emissions inventories.

Further information on The Climate Registry and New York State participation can be found at www.TheClimateRegistry.org and at the NYSDEC website - www.dec.ny.gov/

NYSACC News

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For additional copies of NYSACC News and address changes, contact the Newsletter office.

Vice President's Message

Today, we read and hear daily how climate change is affecting our planet. And it truly is. What makes the issue of global warming such a critical factor in our lives is that it impacts every aspect of our lives: from the cost of food, to the the relocation of plant and animal species, to the increased frequency of violent weather, drought and rising ocean levels. While our planet will survive no matter what actions we take, we humans are fighting for the continuance of our civilization as we know it. Recently even the climate change doubters have grasped this concept, especially now that the cost of petroleum is beginning to reflect its actual value and scarcity. The impact of rising energy costs will be felt in all sectors of our economy.



For the past 14 months, in addition to being the Chair of the Town of Bedford Conservation Board, I've been a member of the Town's Energy Advisory Panel, which is working to provide my local government and its residents and businesses with recommendations on reducing our carbon footprint. I believe that if change is possible in our country (and the jury's still out on this), it must come from both a rational federal government and behavior changes from each of its citizens. So I remain optimistic that we can reverse (if only partially) the damage done over the past decades.

So what does this have to do with NYSACC? There is a belief among those involved in trying to correct the damage done, that it simply means cutting back the carbon based energy we use. By getting the carbon out of our atmosphere, we reduce, and perhaps reverse, global warming. The idea that the debate is defined by energy is where we come in. NYSACC is

not an energy based association. We are land based. Our local advisory boards review land use decisions and provide recommendations that assist our governments on land use matters. In the spectrum of activists who care about our future, NYSACC members stand alone as the only volunteer municipally appointed groups around New York State who concentrate efforts to improve our environment by reviewing new development projects, by introducing educational programs that bring the concepts of good environmental planning to both our elected and appointed officials and the public, and to introduce laws and ordinances that protect fragile lands within our towns, villages and cities. While energy issues feed into this on-going dialogue we have with our municipalities, they are not our main focus.

Our main focus has been, and I hope will continue to be, the protection of our environment. While that environment certainly includes ourselves and our way of life, it principally should include the natural world we live in. Over the past decades, we have been losing the biodiversity of our natural world at a staggering rate. If we don't defend that, who else will?

So what I'm saying is: be part of the solution to lower our use of green house gases and help individually, municipally, and globally to preserve our human interconnected world, but realize that as NYSACC members it is our obligation and duty to protect the natural habitat and environment which we are very much part of during this period of transition from an energy inefficient to an energy efficient civilization.

I believe this topic affects the entire membership of NYSACC. Let's talk about it at the Conference.

Simon Skolnik
NYSACC Vice President

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