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LOCAL SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT PARTICIPATES IN 2017 NYACD LEGISLATIVE DAY EVENT

Collaborative efforts impacting conservation statewide

Albany, NY, March 10, 2017– Margaret Mead once said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever had.” Connecting in Albany on March 6th and 7th, Soil and Water Conservation District Directors and volunteers joined together at the 2017 NYACD Legislative Day Event.

The New York Association of Conservation Districts is hard at work for its members providing information and education to legislators, and promoting programs that positively impact the 58 Soil and Water Conservation Districts statewide. Others attending this event were participants from the following Districts: Cayuga, Cortland, Essex, Montgomery, Onondaga, Orleans, Otsego, Saratoga, Steuben, Warren and Wyoming. With over 30 registered guests, at least 40 legislative appointments took place. Others in attendance were Greg Kist, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service State Conservationist, and Andrew Snell, Owasco Lake Watershed Specialist.

“Our volunteers are very passionate about their roles in ensuring a bright future for natural resource conservation, and I genuinely appreciate their presence here,” comments Amber Paice, NYACD Executive Director. She continues, “NYACD hosts this Legislative Day Event in order that [Soil and Water Conservation] Districts can spread a united message. We make a greater impact when we are working together, and member participation makes this event a success.”

The primary message at this year's event was to say thank you to Legislators for holding steady the Soil and Water Conservation Districts' line item in the Environmental Protection Fund of the proposed New York State Budget for 2017-2018. Efforts are also being made to adjust the language of a Bill proposed for many years which would allow Soil and Water Conservation Districts to become applicants for the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Grant. Since this bill is still in negotiations, the Bill numbers from the previous Session are Assembly Bill A06197, same as Senate Bill S06621.

"Even when the proposed State Budget is in our favor, we need to keep showing up," encourages Doug Kierst, who has attended the NYACD Legislative Day Event for over ten years, and is currently serving as Member At-Large on the New York State Conservation District Employee's Association Board, and as Executive Director of the Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District.

One of the primary functions of NYACD is to ensure that the interests of Soil and Water Conservation Districts are recognized by Legislators, and that there is a line of communication between Districts and their representatives. In order to better communicate the work completed, NYACD published an Information Booklet featuring project descriptions and photos voluntarily submitted by the following Soil and Water Conservation Districts: Albany, Chautauqua, Dutchess, Hamilton, Niagara, Onondaga, Orleans, Otsego, Schoharie, and St. Lawrence.

For more information, and to access tools to promote NYACD and Soil and Water Conservation Districts locally, visit www.nyacd.org. NYACD is 100% member supported, and welcomes interested volunteers to participate. Event sponsorships are still available for the 2017 NYACD Annual Meeting this October, and for the 2018 NYACD Legislative Days Event next year.

The New York Association of Conservation Districts unifies the Directors of local Soil and Water Conservation Districts statewide, and serves as a platform for relationships, networking, advocacy, training, and education.

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