



E-BULLETIN FROM OTSEGO COUNTY CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION
May 14, 2009: Vol. 2, No. 15

OCCA NEEDS YOUR HELP TO KEEP FIGHTING THE THREATS TO OUR NATURAL RESOURCES. Got a minute? Visit our website and look at everything else OCCA is doing – and please consider an online donation whenever you can. Visit www.occainfo.org and look for the Network for Good logo at the top right of the home page.

DEADLINE IS MAY 29 FOR NEW ORGANIC FARMING INITIATIVE ANNOUNCED BY NRCS: Anthony Capraro, district conservationist with the National Resources Conservation Service in Cooperstown, has asked OCCA to share the following information. **More than \$800,000 will be available for New York agricultural producers through a new initiative to encourage more organic agriculture production.** Capraro said, “As per the NOFA-NY website, Otsego County has 15 registered, certified organic farms; and with numerous farms in the process of transitioning to organic farming, this is a great opportunity to take advantage of special funds that have been set aside for the organic producers of Otsego County.” Funding for the initiative is being made available as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). New York State Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Hooker said, “With the growing trend of organic agriculture here in New York, we are particularly pleased that the new Farm Bill is helping farmers fund conservation practices that will in turn aid in their transition to organic production. Farmers who are currently in the transition process, as well as those who are certified organic, are eligible to take advantage of USDA’s EQIP Organic Initiative funding and encouraged to do so.” The 2009 EQIP Organic Initiative is a nationwide special initiative to provide financial assistance to National Organic Program (NOP) certified organic producers as well as producers in the process of transitioning to organic production. Organic producers may also apply for assistance under general EQIP. **Applications received from organic producers or producers in transition to organic farming will be accepted under this initiative until May 29.** Ranking criteria has been established based on resource concerns that link to the NOP objectives and the core conservation practices. Interested producers in Otsego County should contact their USDA Service Center at (607) 547-8337, and ask to speak with Capraro or Jeanine Harter to determine eligibility and to apply for the program.

OCCA IN THE NEWS: **OCCA’s initiative to support renewable local fuels was lauded recently in the Syracuse “Post-Standard.”** To read the article, titled “Alternative Fuel: Students convert pickup truck to run on waste vegetable cooking oil,” click on <http://www.syracuse.com/madison/index.ssf?/base/news-13/1241427371243011.xml&coll=1>. In 2008 OCCA received grant support from the Norcross Wildlife Foundation for the conversion and, this winter, partnered with SUNY-Morrisville instructor Graham Jones and his automotive technology class to retrofit the pickup’s diesel engine, which was running on biodiesel, to run on WVO. **Also as part of efforts to support renewable local fuels, OCCA featured an article on Greg Schnabel and his Walton-based company, Greasecyclers, in its spring 2009 newsletter, “The Lookout.”** The waste vegetable oil-based biodiesel fuel produced by Greasecyclers can

be used in any vehicle that runs on diesel, without engine changes. Schnabel's story was later picked up by the Oneonta "Daily Star." To read that article, click on http://www.thedailystar.com/local/local_story_108041600.html.

WATERFALL, WILDFLOWER WALK SET FOR MAY 24: The first in OCCA's series of 2009 Nature Walks will take place on Sunday, May 24 when **botanist Connie Tedesco will lead a walk to two waterfalls in the Town of Hartwick**. Wildflower identification will be part of the mildly strenuous excursion, which includes some uphill walking and will take about one hour, plus time devoted to wildflower discussion and a question and answer period. Participants will meet at 9 a.m. at Horace and Hazel Tabor Drive, across from John Bush Used Cars on County Route 11 in the Town of Hartwick. Since 2001, OCCA has organized nature walks on local trails. This year's series includes eight walks on four trails featured in the OCCA publication "Otsego County Walks & Paddles" and three additional Otsego County trails. **For the complete 2009 Nature Walks schedule, click on <http://occainfo.org/documents/NatureWalksposter2009.pdf>**. For more information, call OCCA Assistant Director Teresa Winchester at (607) 547-4488.

FIRST "BIKE TO WORK DAY" DEEMED A SUCCESS: Otsego Regional Cycling Advocates' first-ever "Bike to Work Day," held on Wednesday, May 13, went off without a hitch according to OCCA Board President Martha Clarvoe. **Clarvoe reported that 76 bikers and 54 walkers took part in the event, for a total of 129 participants**. Bike to Work Day was co-sponsored by OCCA and Bassett Healthcare. **ORCA, a standing committee convened by OCCA, promotes bicycling in Otsego County as an enjoyable, healthy, safe, and environmentally-friendly activity for people of all ages and abilities**. Bike to Work Day was featured on WKTV. Click on <http://www.wktv.com/news/local/44918027.html> to view that news report.

SONGS RAISE AWARENESS OF AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES: Carl Good sent along this link to "music with a message" created through the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Department of Life Sciences. The website reads, "Research shows music can influence how people respond to messages, influencing memory and recall, emotion, information processing, attitudes, and even behavior. **To explore how music can help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species, Environmental Communication Specialist for UW Extension and Assistant Professor in the Department of Life Sciences Communication, Bret Shaw, worked with a group of singer/songwriters to produce these songs to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species in Wisconsin and beyond**. The songs have been vetted by natural resource professionals to assure they are scientifically accurate and recommendations are consistent with current laws. Listen to these songs and share with others to promote simple behaviors that can protect the quality of our lakes and rivers for future generations." **To listen to the song "One Bait, One Lake" by Andrew Isham, click on http://www.uwex.edu/erc/music/song_one_bait.html**. Thanks, Carl! Visit the UW website, click here <http://www.uwex.edu/erc/music/>

FUNDS RAISED FOR OCCA THROUGH GOODSEARCH: Thanks to all of you who are now using the GoodSearch search engine, and who have selected OCCA as your charity of choice. Through GoodSearch, we have earned a total of \$7.61 to date. That's 725 searches, with \$7.25 raised from those searches and an additional \$0.36 raised from shopping. **According to the website, each web search generates approximately \$0.01 for your designated charity or school, which can add up over time. For instance, 100 supporters at an average of two searches per day will earn an estimated \$730!** GoodSearch is a search engine which donates 50-percent of its revenue to the charities and schools designated by its users. GoodSearch is used exactly as you would any other search engine. **To learn more about GoodSearch and how it works, visit www.goodsearch.com. If you haven't already done so, please consider selecting OCCA as your designated cause!**

ECO-FRIENDLY TIP: If your water heater tank is a bit past its prime, wrap it up in a fiberglass blanket. One of these can be picked up cheaply at a home center, and within a few months it will have paid for itself in lower heating bills.

From the book "1,001 Ways to Save the Earth," by Joanna Yarrow.