

Department Name	Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District
Account(s)	8730

Department Function
The mission of the Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District is to advance comprehensive natural resource management on a voluntary basis to residents, landowners, and units of government. The District leads by providing science based technical and educational assistance and coordination of resources from Federal, State, and Local governments and other sources. The Conservation District works with landowners, land managers, local government agencies, and other local interests in addressing a broad range of resource concerns.

Current Year Highlights
- Awarded seven municipalities with funding for various conservation-based projects through our Municipality Conservation Assistance Funding – total amount awarded is \$210,742.40. Some highlighted projects include a forest inventory/plan with additional tree plantings, bank stabilization, and culvert rehabilitation. - Continued to implement a Round 26 Ag Non-Point Source Abatement and Control Grant on a beef farm in the Basic Creek Watershed. - Hosted a soilSHOP (Soil Screening, Health, Outreach and Partnerships) with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and NYS Department of Health to offer free lead screenings and education for landowners/community gardens to raise awareness of potential lead presence and provide information on safe levels for food production and how to avoid exposure to lead while gardening. - Partnered with Albany County Department of General Services to hydroseed approximately 2 acres of exposed soil at the former Ann Lee Home. Also worked with the Town of Bethlehem to hydroseed approximately ¼ acre on a town road. - Established a new program to provide Albany County nonprofit organizations the opportunity to apply for up to \$40,000 to complete conservation-related projects that protect the natural resources of the County and beyond. - Distributed over 11,245 tree and shrub seedlings/transplants, 25 flats of ground covers and 169 packets of wildflower seed mixes through our Tree and Shrub Program. This provides appropriate plants for various land management practices, including wildlife habitat/food, reforestation, soil stability, riparian buffers, and windbreaks. - Provided over 7,500 Liatris flower bulbs to customers as part of our pollinator initiative around the County. - Sent free Soil Sampling Analysis kits to 179 landowners to promote soil health awareness. - Assisted with the restocking of 37 Albany County farm ponds through our annual Spring Fish Stocking Program, ensuring appropriate permits were issued from NYS DEC. - Collaborated with Montgomery Co. SWCD, Columbia Co. SWCD, Schoharie Co. SWCD, Rensselaer Co. SWCD, and Schenectady Co. SWCD to coordinate and host the Annual Capital Region Envirothon, an environmental competition for high school students. Two teams from Shaker High School represented Albany County. - Provided funding to two farm operations through the Agricultural Environmental Management Tier 4 Implementation Funding to install Best Management Practices for enhancing the natural resources of the County.

Next Year Projects
- Continue to provide comprehensive natural resource management technical assistance to residents, landowners, and units of government. - Host additional, free waste tire recycling events for Albany County residents to help remove them from the waste stream and the natural landscape. - Continue to apply for and implement funded projects through Agricultural Non-point Source Abatement and Control Grants and Climate Resilient Farming Grants to assist farms in implementing farm conservation practices. - Offer another round of Municipality Conservation Assistance Funding. - Promote invasive species outreach and education using the “Albany County Invasive Species Billboard Roadshow” trailer-mounted display. - Continue to offer the Tree and Shrub Program as well as the Fish Stocking Program.

Link to Website	https://www.albanycounty.com/departments/soil-and-water-conservation-district
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