Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District

Summer 2020

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Celebrating 40 Years!

This summer marks 40 years of conservation work for Wyoming County's Greg McKurth. Greg has received several awards and recognitions from the state throughout his years of work at Soil and Water. Having started his career in 1980, Greg has served as a youth coordinator, a conservation technician, and district manager for many years.

There is no way to measure the number of farms he's assisted, the miles of stream bank that he has helped restore, and the technical assistance he's provided to landowners and business owners alike. Greg's wealth of knowledge and experience continues to be a pillar of Wyoming Co. Soil and Water's success.

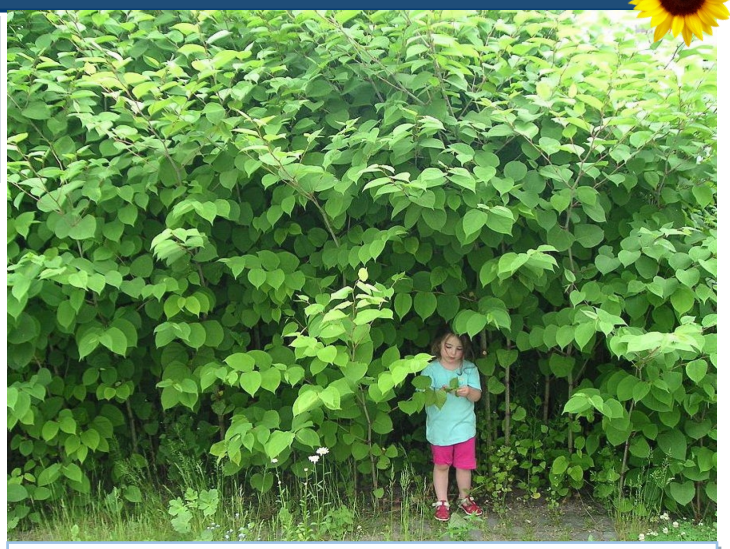
Congratulations Greg!

Invasive Species Corner:

Common Name: Japanese Knotweed

Scientific Name: *Reynoutria japonica*

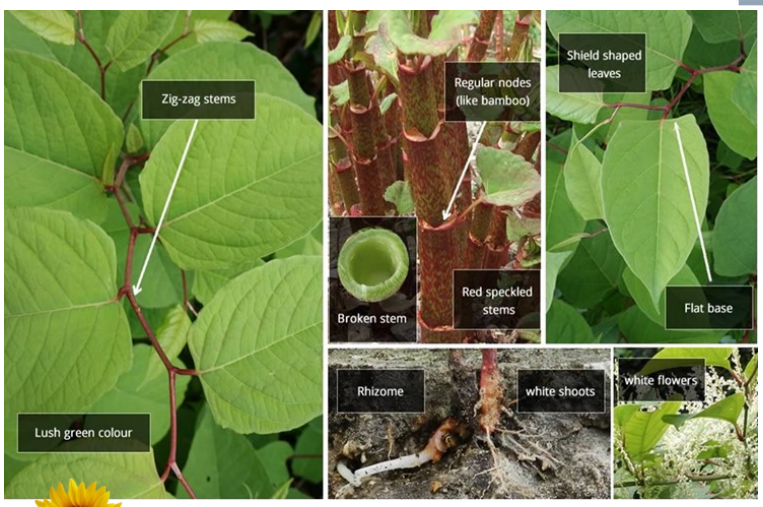
What is Japanese Knotweed:



Native to Eastern Asia, Japanese Knotweed was introduced to the U.S. in the late 1800s as an ornamental plant for estates. It quickly became a problematic pest as the aggressive invader's roots can spread up to 65+ feet tall, taking over disturbed areas, streams, riverbanks, and road sides.

Japanese knotweed can thrive in a broad range of environmental conditions allowing it to spread across 42 U.S. states from the deep Southern Gulf states to the Rocky Mountains.

How to ID Japanese Knotweed:



Japanese Knotweed is an herbaceous, woody- appearing perennial that reaches heights of 15 ft. The smooth, stout, stems are hollow and have a reddish appearance with green spots.

The broad leaves about the size of an adult hand alternate along the stem and are roughly oval and heart shaped. Sprays of white flowers can be seen above the leaves from August to September.

Why it is a Serious Invasive Concern:

Japanese Knotweed shades and chokes out native plants, reducing the overall vegetative diversity, altering the natural ecosystem, and negatively impacting wildlife habitat. The bare ground beneath dense thickets of knotweed leave the soil vulnerable to erosion.

In addition, knotweed has been known to grow through the cracks in cement, between floorboards and through the joints of stone walls. The combined effects on nature, the integrity of manmade structures, as well the extreme difficulty in killing this plant makes it a high priority for most conservation organizations.

How to Manage Japanese Knotweed:

The best management plan is to prevent the establishment of knotweed all together. Be sure to replant any disrupted habitats with native vegetation before an opportunistic invader takes root. A young establishment of knotweed can be pulled by hand, however, if the entire root system isn't removed then re-sprouting will occur.

All parts of the plant and roots that have been removed should be bagged and disposed of carefully. It is not beneficial to mow or weed whack Knotweed as it will likely distribute pieces of the plant further. Glyphosate and triclopyr are herbicides that can be applied to freshly cut stems or foliage. It is important to check with local environmental or natural resource management agencies to find out what chemicals are legal and safe to use on knotweed in your area.

Wyoming Co. Soil and Water in Action!

Wyoming Co. Soil and Water Conservation District is designating considerable time and resources for Japanese Knotweed removal. Select locations along the East Koy and Wiscoy with severe Knotweed invasion are first cut by hand and later sprayed with herbicide as the new growth sprouts. The targeted areas were chosen as they are high traffic fishing locations and are more susceptible to erosion along a stream bank.

A New Partnership With Beaver Meadows and Western NYS PRISM

Beaver Meadow Audubon Center, located in Java, NY is a 324– acre nature preserve with one of the most pristine natural habitats in Wyoming County. A popular place for hiking, educational events, and bird watching.

Beaver Meadow's ecological sensitivity has lead to a partnership between Soil & Water and Western NYS PRISM for a joint effort in surveying invasive species and accessing overall habitat health. It is our hope to continue our relationship with these organizations and later develop a management strategy for the removal of invasive plant species.

Featured Farms:

Pingrey Farm II & Swiss Valley Farm

Pingrey Farm II

We are pleased to highlight Pingrey Farm II in this summer's newsletter as another successfully completed Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation Waste Storage and Transfer Project. Having received funding through the Round 2 CAFO Grants, Pingrey Farm II began construction this summer on a 3.12-million-gallon concrete waste storage structure, waste transfer system, waste reception pit, and access drive way.

This waste structure will provide 7 months of storage for silage leachate, milk-house waste, and manure, allowing the farm operators to spread the waste only under the most ideal conditions to minimize nutrient runoff. The completion of this project is a huge benefit to water quality given the farms proximity to Silver Lake and is a demonstration of good agricultural conservation that benefits both the farmer and the community.

Excavation Work for storage location.

Leveled stone, rebar, forms, and dry seal in place for the concrete floor pour.

Rebar and forms set for the first section of the concrete wall pour.

Excavation and construction for a covered reception pit and transfer line that will connect to the new storage structure.

Completed and backfilled concrete manure storage structure.

Swiss Valley Farm

After applying in the Round 24 Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution Abatement and Control Program, Swiss Valley Farms was awarded funds for the installation of a satellite storage facility. The 6-million-gallon concrete waste storage structure was constructed to support the waste of a 1,000-cow milking operation along with hundreds of other dry cows, heifers, and calves.

The storage is located in the Middle Genesee River Basin, specifically the Oatka Headwaters, and supports our efforts to reduce nutrient and sediment runoff from agricultural lands in such a high priority watershed.

Completed manure storage structure with backfilling underway.

First concrete wall section completed, rebar and forms going up for the second.

Early excavation work for the satellite storage location.

Pouring the concrete floor for the manure storage structure with the rebar, forms, and dry seal in place.

Both of these farms have been involved in Wyoming County Soil and Water's Agricultural Environmental Management program and have implemented several best management practices (BMPs) that continue to benefit the farm and the community. We look forward to maintaining a working relationship with these farms in the future!

NAACC

North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative

https://streamcontinuity.org/

Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District has received funds through the New York State Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution Planning Grant to implement the North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative (NAACC) Culvert Assessment Program. Currently, the Wyoming County NAACC program involves assessing culverts for aquatic passage in the headwaters of the Cattaraugus and Oatka Creek Watersheds. District Technicians will follow the NAACC program standards and requirements for proper data assessment and evaluation.

After the culverts are entered into the database, they are given a possibility score. In conjunction with that score, the culverts will be assessed for severity of erosion, and physical integrity. After considering all concerns the culverts can be prioritized for replacement. Wyoming County SWCD works closely with municipalities and having a priority replacement list will give each organization a focus point for funding applications. The main goal for the project is to evaluate the culverts for passibility, erosion impacts, and physical integrity, therefore, encompassing environmental concerns and public safety.

https://streamcontinuity.org/naacc/assessments/aquatic-connectivity-non-tidal

Culvert Assessments include measurements of culvert height and width, stream bank fill width, condition of culvert, water flow conditions, and presence of undercutting and scour pools.

Other News:

Check out our new informational sign about the Tonawanda Creek Watershed located at the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Fishing Access in Varysburg, NY.

Got Dirt?? ... Need Grass??

Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District offers hydroseeding services at a per acre rate. Call (585) 786-3675 for more information.

Invasive Species Word Search

Words to Find:

-BUCKTHORN

-GARLICMUSTARD

-GIANTHOGWEED

-HONEYSUCKLE

-MUGWORT

-MULTIFLORAROSE

-WILDPARSNIP

F O V Z S T J S R X O E J E G
V R H D R R E A I G F R S I I
N L E O O O F U A J K O M N A
R R M R D W L N T J R P T H N
Z X O H Z G W A B A K L O X T
T U J H I U D R R Q U N G D H
A M S K T M P O Y I E C I O O
A L I U Z K L X Y Y B C C I G
M K Q F I F C H S T Z G I O W
G A R L I C M U S T A R D U E
E W G T E A C P B U W F J N E
S U L N Q K Z N C Z W H P E D
H U Z U L A X H X W G Z Y P L
M H N E P I N S R A P D L I W
T W S L R D W D G M U X S D G

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This publication is the quarterly newsletter of the Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District and is available at no cost to all District cooperators, all interested landowner and land users, and to the general public. To receive this newsletter, simply email us at wcswcd@frontiernet.net or send your complete mailing address to our office.

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