



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara: State aid supports water quality conservation on area farms: Praises long-standing partnership between local farmers and conservation districts

THOMAS F. O'MARA March 17, 2021

| ISSUE: **AGRICULTURE ECONOMY**



We're investing in the long-standing and successful partnership between local farmers and local conservation districts to achieve vital economic and environmental quality protection goals.

Elmira, N.Y., March 17—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) said today that Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in Schuyler and Yates counties have been awarded a combined total of approximately \$920,000 to work with local farms to undertake agricultural

water quality conservation projects.

A total of \$15 million in state aid is being distributed to 26 county SWCDs statewide through the latest round of funding under New York's Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program. Nearly 150 projects on 147 farms will benefit from the new funding. The projects being supported will assist farmers in addressing water quality issues in priority watersheds. The overriding goals are to support on-farm environmental planning and the implementation of best management practices, including preventing water pollution, reducing soil erosion, and limiting the amount of harmful sediments and other deposits in New York's waterways.

"These are wise state investments to keep our farmers competitive and, at the same time, protect our natural resources for the long run and strengthen local economies," said O'Mara, former chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee and member of the Senate Agriculture Committee. "We're investing in the long-standing and successful partnership between local farmers and local conservation districts to achieve vital economic and environmental quality protection goals."

Local conservation districts, including in Schuyler and Yates, work to implement plans in line with the goals of local farms and the needs of local watersheds.

Under this latest round of funding, O'Mara said that the **Schuyler County SWCD** is slated to receive the following three awards:

> \$122,545 to work with two farms within the Seneca Lake Watershed to implement agricultural handling facilities to encourage safe storage and provide protection against potential spills. The project will also include the planting of approximately 1.3 acres of riparian herbaceous buffer and 2.5 acres of riparian forest buffer to reduce risk of sediment

and nutrient loading to Seneca Lake, and address potential sediment erosion;

> \$61,409 to work with one farm within the Cayuga Lake Watershed on a project that will exclude all livestock from surface waterbodies and plant 1.6 acres of riparian herbaceous buffer. The project will also provide for a livestock heavy use area to keep clean water clean and reduce potential of farmstead runoff, as well as support the reduction of potential sediment and nutrient runoff to nearby waterways; and

> \$196,200 to work with three farms in the Chemung River Watershed to implement high priority projects in Chemung and Schuyler counties and assist in meeting the goals defined in the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. The projects will also exclude livestock from surface waterbodies and address potential sediment and nutrient loading issues, as well as plant approximately 5 acres of riparian herbaceous buffer and 9 acres of riparian forest buffer.

O'Mara said that the **Yates County SWCD** has been awarded \$536,290 to work with eight farms across the county in the Keuka Lake Watershed to implement 18 agricultural water quality Best Management Practices Systems. Projects will install stormwater control measures to separate water from the farmsteads, and implement over 5.5 acres of riparian herbaceous buffer to protect surface waterbodies.

Read more [HERE](#).