

Chautauqua Watershed Notes
For the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy
June 8, 2008

Excavation Without Pollution in 2008
By John Jablonski III, Executive Director
Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy



*Proper road ditch and shoulder stabilization using erosion control blankets in the watercourse, Georidges and mulching.
(Photo courtesy of Fred Kelley.)*

Soil erosion and the resultant sedimentation has been identified as a major problem and root cause of nuisance plant conditions in Chautauqua and other county lakes. Eurasian watermilfoil, the most troublesome plant in our lakes, thrives in lake areas that have received fresh deposits of topsoil washed in from construction sites, stream banks and road ditches.

If you are excavating for highway construction, home, commercial or industrial construction, or planting a new lawn, please take care to save your topsoil from escaping from your site. For 2008, there is more technical assistance available than ever before to help you learn how to control soil erosion and storm water to

avoid contributing to the sedimentation, plant and algae problems in our waterways. Technical assistance, and possibly demonstration project funding assistance may be available to municipalities undertaking public works projects in 2008. The Chautauqua County Soil and Water Conservation District will be supplying erosion control matting and conservation hydro-seeding projects for road banks and ditches with a Water Quality Improvement grant from New York State. The Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy is partnering with the District to document the installation techniques used and distribute this information to area public works agencies.

The county-funded Chautauqua Lake Management Commission has contracted with TVGA Consultants to provide technical assistance to municipalities on public works projects and seed funding to incorporate proper erosion control into these projects. These projects began in 2007 and will continue in 2008. They include storm water management facilities at the parking lot at the Stow Ferry landing, Town of Chautauqua parking lot at the former Mayville School, Town of

Chautauqua water tower project on Route 430, and a culvert replacement on Victoria Road in North Harmony. To control soil erosion and lake sedimentation, several town highway departments are installing “ditch checks,” concrete dams to slow water velocity and trap sediments on steeply descending ditches.

The Chautauqua Lake Management Commission has received additional funding in 2008 from the County Legislature from the enhanced occupancy tax to continue these technical assistance activities and make more funding available for cost-shared storm water and erosion control projects this construction season.

For residential, commercial, institutional and industrial excavation and construction projects, care must be taken to properly manage storm water and protect sites from erosion. Sites of an acre or larger are required by law to develop and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and file a general permit application to the NYSDEC. Any site, regardless of size, which discharges muddy water that pollutes a protected body of water is subject to enforcement. Fines for storm water violations can be as high as \$30,000 per day. If you need help on how to manage soil erosion and storm water on your excavation project, contact the resources listed below:

Dave Wilson, Chautauqua County Soil and Water Conservation District – 664-2351

Dave McCoy, TVGA Consulting - 487- 3133 ext. 1

Brian Hourigan, NYSDEC Storm water management 851-7070

The Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy is holding a Healthy Landscaping ~ Healthy Waters Program at 8:30 AM, Saturday, June 14th at Chautauqua Suites Expo and Conference Center featuring Sharon Anderson, Cayuga Lake Watershed Steward. She will speak on landscaping and maintaining your yard and home for clean waters. Please call the CWC at 664-2166 for registration information.

The CWC is a local 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation with a mission to preserve and enhance the water quality, scenic beauty and ecological health of the lakes, streams and watersheds of the Chautauqua region.