



SOUTHERN TIER WEST REGIONAL FOCUS

SERVING ALLEGANY, CATTARAUGUS, AND CHAUTAUQUA COUNTIES IN NEW YORK STATE

FALL/WINTER 2011

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WELCOME to the first issue of the **REGIONAL FOCUS**, a bi-yearly publication from the Southern Tier West Regional Planning & Development Board. The purpose of this newsletter is to inform interested readers about events, programs, and services we offer to our constituents in areas including: economic development, information services, local government, telecommunications, transportation, and health care.

Southern Tier West seeks to improve the quality of life for the region's people and provide them with access to adequate employment, education and recreational opportunities, health care services, and transportation. We work closely with and serve as the local contact for the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Economic Development Administration (EDA).

Southern Tier West also has four affiliations that take part in many successful projects to enhance our region. These affiliations include: Southern Tier West Development Foundation (STWDF), Southern Tier Enterprise Development Organization (STEDO), Southern Tier Extension Railroad Authority (STERA) and the Western Region Corporation (WRC).

The articles in this newsletter highlight the details and status of current projects that Southern Tier West staff coordinate and lead. We hope the **REGIONAL FOCUS** becomes a resource that you will use and come to anticipate. Please contact us at (716) 945-5301 if you would like more detail on an article or if you have any questions. You can also visit www.southerntierwest.org for further information.

Sarah Phearsdorf, Publisher

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Broadband Development

In support of an **Allegany Wireless Project**, Southern Tier West was awarded a grant in 2008 from the New York State Office for Technology under the New York State Universal Broadband Access Grant Program. This project brings broadband connectivity to the northern portion of Allegany County to include the Towns of Allen, Almond, Birdsall, Burns, Caneadea, Centerville, New Hudson, Grove, Granger, and Rushford. These towns did not have access to affordable broadband services, and by providing an innovative broadband solution to this area the average citizen is able to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the Internet.

As of this date, Southern Tier West and its project partner, Southern Tier Wireless, has reached 487 customers - 12 businesses, 6 governmental entities (libraries, town halls, fire halls) and 459 residents. Of special note, this project was able to bring Internet access to

Swain Ski Resort. Another 322 customers have shown interest in subscribing. This initiative is expected to reach as many as 9,000 customers over the next two years.

To further enhance the Allegany County Wireless project funded through New York State, Southern Tier West participated in the 2010 ARC funded **Municipal Technology Outreach Program** sponsored by the Allegany County Town Highway Superintendents Association. The Program is designed to assist Allegany County municipalities in addressing current communication shortfalls within the radio, computer and Internet arenas. The ability to deploy additional wireless access in Allegany County creates a necessary linkage and leverage to allow the highway superintendents to quickly access information over the Internet. The 2010 project provided the necessary funding for the purchase of wireless supplies to serve the Towns of Amity, Friendship, Scio and portions of the Towns of Andover and Wellsville.

Committed to providing universal high-speed Internet access to all citizens, businesses and visitors in the three-county region, Southern Tier West applied for and received funding from ARC in 2010 to extend wireless access into the north-eastern portion of Cattaraugus County. The **Cattaraugus County Wireless Project** brings broadband services to the Towns of Ashford, Farmersville, Freedom, Machias, and Yorkshire. Once again, Southern Tier West is partnering with Southern Tier Wireless to provide much needed service. The Southern Tier West Development Foundation awarded the necessary match for the ARC funds to Southern Tier West. The Foundation has adopted broadband as one of their goals and continues to support Southern Tier West in this effort. See page 7 for what is being proposed in Chautauque County.

For further information, contact Richard Zink at (716) 945-5301 ext. 203.



Swain Ski Resort - Allegany County

Regional Local Foods Program

Across the nation, the trend of eating local is being encouraged for its economical, environmental, and nutritional benefits. Local food markets account for a growing share of the total U.S. agricultural sales, although rural farmers continue to experience difficulty entering the market.



- In 2007, direct-to-consumer marketing amounted to \$1.2 billion in current dollar sales, compared with \$551 million in 1997.
- The number of farmers' markets rose to 5,274 in 2009, up from 2,756 in 1998 and 1,755 in 1994, according to USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service
- In 2005, there were 1,144 community-supported agriculture (CSA) organizations, up from 400 in 2001 and 2 in 1986, according to a study by the National Center of Appropriate Technology. In early 2010, estimates exceeded 1,400, but the number could be much larger. Community-supported agriculture is a form of an alternative food network. It's a community of individuals who pledge support to a farming operation where the growers and consumers share the risks and benefits of food production. CSAs usually consist of a system of weekly delivery or pick-up of vegetables and fruit, and

sometimes include dairy products and meat.

- The number of farm to school programs, which use local farmers as food suppliers for school meals programs and promote relationship between schools and farms increased to 2,095 in 2009, up from 400 in 2004 and 2 in the 1996-97 school year, according to the National Farm to School Network.

Agriculture is a \$3 billion industry in New York State with 37,000 farms that productively use 25 percent (7.6 million acres) of the State's total land mass. New York State is a leader in a variety of farm products, ranking first in cottage cheese, second in apples and cabbage, and third in milk, maple syrup, grapes, sweet corn, snap beans, and cauliflower. (Department of Agriculture & Markets News Friday, February 25, 2005)

Even though there is a growing trend to eating local, rural farmers continue to experience difficulty in entering the local food-market. The U.S. Economic Research Service and USDA in a May 2010 report, *Local Food Systems*, specifically outlined barriers to local food-market entry: "limited research, education, and training for marketing

local food; and uncertainties related to regulations that may affect local food production, such as food safety regulations." Food safety regulations are often very confusing to potential producers. Inadequate education leads many farmers to sell their goods to non-local processors - missing out on value-added production. With busy schedules, most farmers cannot properly research existing options for their business. In addition to a lack of education for regulations and value-added production, producers are not sufficiently educated on basic techniques to market their goods.

Due in part to these barriers, the Southern Tier West Region has not effectively developed its local food system. The Regional Local Foods Program (funded in part by ARC in 2011) sponsored by Southern Tier West proposes to demonstrate the nutritional, economical, and environmental benefits of consuming locally grown produce and locally made goods. Program activities include designing and maintaining a website for farmers' markets, individual producers and CSAs across the region; providing outreach and education to both consumers and producers to expand and develop the local food system in our region; help in developing community gardens throughout the region; and the Cattaraugus County Business Development Corporation will establish an agri-business revolving loan fund to help finance local agri-businesses.

For further information, contact John Buzzard at (716) 945-501 ext. 208 or jbuzzard@southerntierwest.org

Three Water Quality Grants Awarded



Muddy Water Blues Stormwater and Equipment Demonstration

In April 2011, Southern Tier West received funding from NYS Department of Environmental Conservation under Section 604(b) of the Clean Water Act for three projects: the Southern Tier West Baseline Program, Western New York Watershed Protection Planning Project (Erie County), and the Chautauqua Institution Storm Water Quality Treatment Program.

Under the **Southern Tier West Baseline Program** (Water Quality Program), Southern Tier West is assisting the county Planning Boards and interested municipalities with implementing land use/stormwater management ordinances; mapping and inventorying municipalities' stormwater infrastructure using GIS and GPS technologies; forming coalitions to address stormwater management issues and creating districts to provide sustainable funding; and lastly, improving coordination between the multiple Chautauqua Lake Coalitions.

Southern Tier West is providing training, education, and outreach to regional contractors, municipal officials, developers, and residents through the

“Muddy Water Blues Stormwater and Equipment Demonstrations” and other events.

Southern Tier West is also a member of the Water Quality Coordinating Committees (WQC) in Cattaraugus and Chautauqua Counties; and is working to re-establish the WQC Committee in Allegany County. The goal of working with these committees is to research funding and encourage more activity in gap analysis and outreach to regional municipalities.

The **Western New York Watershed Protection Planning Project** will involve planning, prioritizing, and coordinating regional watershed activities within Western NY with the goal of improving water quality and reducing non-point source pollution.

The **Chautauqua Institution Storm Water Quality Treatment Program** will redirect the existing water quality flow amounts from the 250-acre Chautauqua Institution and an additional 450 acres of Institution-owned recreational golf course development, to rain gardens and constructed wetlands.



GIS/Information Services Program

In the past year, six new members were added to the Community GIS Program. The new members are the Town of Poland, Town of Hanover, Town of Dunkirk, Town of Ellicott, Village of Silver Creek, and the Village of Celeron. All previous members retained their membership in the program, bringing the total membership to 39 communities. Various examples of data collected includes Water Infrastructure, Sewer Infrastructure, Street Signs, and Cemetery Information. The Community GIS Website (www.communitygis.com) was updated with new program content and the launch of the new Community GIS (CGIS) Flex Viewer using ESRI's Flex API. The CGIS viewer was also updated with new data released by the New York State Office of Cyber Security, NYS Department of Transportation, and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Southern Tier West entered into an agreement with the Allegany County Real Property Department to design, host, and maintain a GIS Parcel Viewer for Allegany County. The Viewer launched earlier this year can be accessed through the Property Search link at the Allegany County Website (www.alleganyco.com). The viewer works seamlessly with Systems Development Group, Inc. Image Mate Online searchable database, so you can search either within the viewer or from Image Mate Online to get property information and still bring up the same GIS maps.

For further information, contact John Buzzard at (716) 945-5301 ext. 208.

Regional Road Management Program

At the New York State level, it is more beneficial to develop an efficient and high impact strategy for corridor development and maintenance for the state highway system because there is a standardized statewide road scoring process that uses standardized road scoring criteria. Information about pavement condition and performance is critical to the decision making that occurs to successfully manage highway pavement. Accurate and timely data is used to assess system performance and deterioration, identify maintenance and reconstruction needs, and determine financing requirements.

However, many strategically important highway corridors are comprised of a combination of state, county and local highways, which typically transcend local and/or county boundaries.

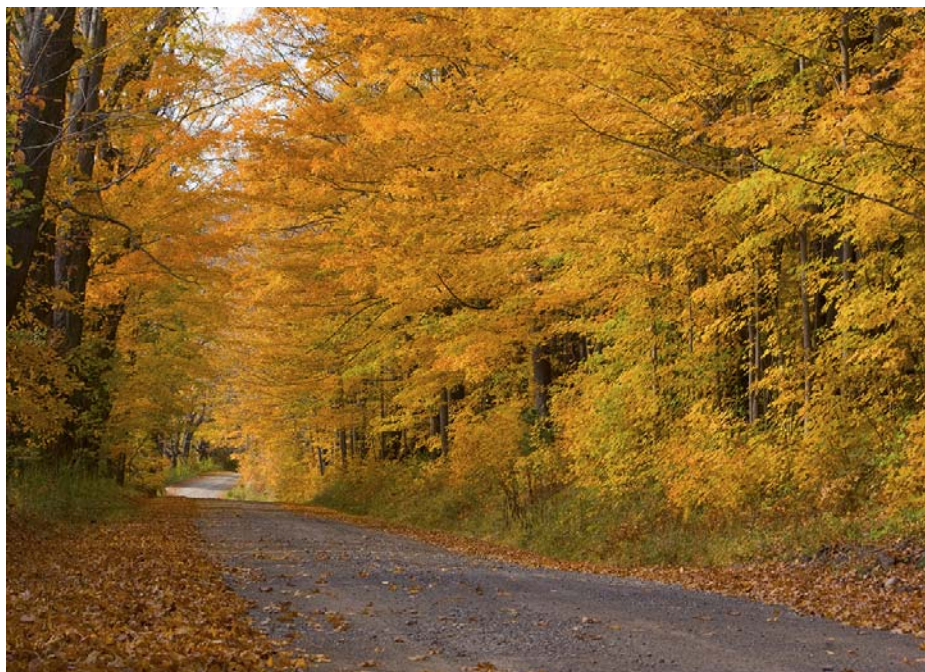
Development and maintenance of these highway corridors are placed at a disadvantage by the lack of such a standardized road scoring process and the absence of standardized road scoring criteria for county and local roads.

In order for Southern Tier West to provide transportation planning capacity to the region, it is necessary to have a “standardized” way of evaluating roads within all three counties of the region - comparing apples to apples. More specifically, corridor analysis is an important element of regional transportation planning. If a corridor runs through several counties and standardization does not exist, then a consistent method of maintaining that corridor does not exist - making it difficult to apply planning principles.

The **Regional Road Management Program** (funded in part by ARC in 2010) sponsored by Southern Tier West will create and implement a standardized road scoring system for local roads in the three counties, which includes a standardized road scoring process and a web-based/GIS-based inventory for county roads. The project activities include: 1) utilizing the NYSDOT E-Score electronic recording system and purchasing hardware and software components for the system; 2) training on the State System; 3) data collection of signage, small culverts, box culverts, guide rails, guard rails and attributes such as location (GPS coordinate), date/time, segment identifier, rating/score, and condition will be collected; and 4) implementation of the road scoring system.

2010 Census Activities

As a New York State Data Center Affiliate, Southern Tier West continued to partner with US Census Bureau in the promotion of participation in the 2010 Census through outreach and trainings. As data began to be disseminated, STW staff helped in distributing the information to key partners in various formats, including GIS layers for use in redistricting efforts among the counties. Demographic Profiles for all STW region municipalities are available at the Southern Tier West Website (www.southerntierwest.org). STW continues to act as the local expert in most census related activities.



Appalachian Regional Commission



The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is a regional economic development agency that represents a partnership of federal, state, and local government. Established by an act of Congress in 1965, ARC is composed of the governors of the 13 Appalachian states and a federal co-chair, who is appointed by the president. Local participation is provided through multi-county local development districts.

ARC funds projects that address the four goals identified in the Commission's strategic plan:

1. Increase job opportunities and per capita income in Appalachia to reach parity with the nation.
2. Strengthen the capacity of the people of Appalachia to compete in the global economy.
3. Develop and improve Appalachia's infrastructure to make the Region economically competitive.
4. Build the Appalachian Development Highway System to reduce Appalachia's isolation.

Each year ARC provides funding for several hundred projects in the

Appalachian Region, in areas such as business development, education and job training, telecommunications, infrastructure, community development, and transportation. These projects create thousands of new jobs; improve local water and sewer systems; increase school readiness; expand access to health care; assist local communities with strategic planning; and provide technical and managerial assistance to emerging businesses.

To ensure that funds are used effectively and efficiently, and to strengthen local participation, ARC works with the Appalachian states to support a network of multicounty planning and development organizations, or local development districts (LDDs), throughout the Region. The 73 LDDs cover all 420 counties in Appalachia.

The LDDs' most important role is to identify priority needs of local communities. Based on these needs, the LDDs work with their board members and other local citizens to develop plans for their communities' economic development, to target and meet the most pressing needs, and to build community unity and leadership.

Southern Tier West serves as the Local Development District for the three counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua. As an LDD, Southern Tier West:

- Oversees the direction and coordination of all ARC-funded economic and social development in the three county region
- Provides a comprehensive rational basis for future federal investments in the region through planning, project development, monitoring, and evaluation
- Evaluates and consolidates all requests for ARC funds and recommends funding priorities.

All projects from the Southern Tier West region requesting ARC funding under the Area Development Program must:

- Address one of the three goals and implement one of the New York State strategies under the goal
- Limit ARC's portion of the project to \$150,000
- Limit ARC's portion of the total eligible project costs to 50 percent
- Not exceed 18 months in duration

For the Federal Fiscal Year 2012 ARC funding, Southern Tier West received twelve preapplications for review. Six projects were invited for submission of a final application and were recommended to the NYS Department of State for funding. The six projects include:

Appalachian Regional Commission (Continued)

Career Literacy in the Southern Tier of New York sponsored by the Cattaraugus-Allegany Workforce Investment Board, the project will ensure the availability of career literacy services in 12 counties - Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany, Steuben, Schuyler, Chemung, Tompkins, Broome, Tioga, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego - in order to promote student success in college as well as provide adults with the necessary skills to access training or re-enter the workforce.

Equestrian Trail System sponsored by Chautauqua County Department of Economic Development and Planning, the project will create an equestrian trail network in Chautauqua County to generate increased entrepreneurial activity and job opportunities, strengthen the local and regional economy through diversification, and build on the natural assets of the region.

Chautauqua County Wireless Project sponsored by Southern Tier West and working with DFT Communications, the project will deploy wireless technology in areas not covered by other broadband services in Chautauqua County, serving the Towns of Hanover, Pomfret, Sheridan, and Villenova.

Crossroads Development Water Infrastructure Project sponsored by Allegany County Department of Development, the project will develop the I-86/Rt. 19 Crossroads Site in Allegany County to support numerous retail, business, light industry, warehousing and distribution centers, and other development that will spur economic growth and stability in the County. This project involves installation of water system infrastructure necessary to support development.

Small Wind Laboratory sponsored by SUNY Alfred State College, the project will install a community-sized small wind turbine in Alfred NY to be used to train electricians and mechanical engineers in this latest wind technology.

3-D Forensics sponsored by Jamestown Community College, the project will expand its curriculum to provide education and training in 3-D forensic laboratory activities, which will prepare graduates for their work in Criminal Justice fields, strengthen the public safety workforce, and increase the quality of public service for the area.

For further information, contact Ginger Malak at (716) 945-5301 ext. 201 or gmalak@southerntierwest.org.



Small Wind Laboratory sponsored by SUNY Alfred State College



Crossroads Development Water Infrastructure Project sponsored by the Allegany County Department of Development



Equestrian Trail System Project by the Chautauqua County Department of Economic Development



3-D Forensics Project sponsored by Jamestown Community College

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