

**NYSDEC
MOHAWK VALLEY ESD REGION**

Environmental Overview

- The region stretches from the eastern shore of Oneida Lake in the west, easterly down the Mohawk Valley to the Johnstown/Gloversville area of Fulton County. Portion of the Tug Hill and Adirondack Park are also found in this ESD.

Herkimer County:

- Herkimer County is 1458 sq. miles and includes the sparsely populated and wilderness settings found in the Towns of Webb and Ohio within and adjacent to the Adirondack Forest Preserve, the populated and industrialized Mohawk Valley, and the surrounding farmlands in southern portions of the County.
- Seven hydro-electric and one wind farm (Hardscrabble) are located here. Old Forge is an important destination for both summer and winter recreation. With an extensive snowmobiling trail system, Old Forge considers itself the snowmobiling capitol of New York. DEC Region 6 maintains a sub-office in Herkimer.

Oneida County:

- Oneida County is 1257 sq. miles and includes the remote woodlands of the Tug Hill region, the densely populated and industrialized Mohawk River corridor from Rome to Utica, and surrounding farmlands (primarily dedicated to dairy production).
- Oneida Lake is this county's most outstanding natural resource, providing New York's finest Walleye fisheries.
- Three hydropower facilities are located in Oneida County, with an additional three facilities shared with Herkimer County.

Fulton County:

- Fulton County is 533 sq. miles and includes the majority of Great Sacandaga Lake. The northern part of the county is located just within the Adirondack Park.
- Great Sacandaga Lake is known for its large northern pike, an abundance of walleyes, smallmouth bass and a stocked trout fishery.

Montgomery County:

- Montgomery County is 410 sq. miles and is bordered on the north by the Mohawk River barge canal, which runs through the county parallel to the NYS Thruway.
- As is true of other Mohawk Valley counties, periodic flooding has been a significant issue in recent years

Schoharie County:

- Schoharie County is 626 sq. miles. The southern portion of the county forms the northwestern limit of the Catskill Mountains. The Schoharie Creek, with a watershed spanning an area of ~950 square miles, is a northward-flowing tributary of the Mohawk River. The course of Schoharie Creek includes two reservoir-dam systems: the Gilboa Dam and the Schoharie Reservoir, which are both part of the New York City Water Supply System. New York Power Authority operates the Blenheim-Gilboa Pump-Storage Dam and its reservoir to produce hydroelectric power.
- The potential for Marcellus Shale production has become a major issue in the county.

Otsego County:

- Otsego County is 1015 sq. miles and has 20 State Forests (20,000 acres), two smaller WMAs, 22+ miles of PFR, Otsego and Canadarago Lake; Susquehanna River; and 8 boat launch sites (7-DEC; 1-OPRHP, 5 on Susquehanna).
- As is true of Schoharie and Delaware Counties, the county has attracted interest from large gas companies in recent years, with the prospect of Marcellus Shale development looming on the horizon.

Environmental Issues

- **Erie Canalway Corridor National Heritage Commission** – This Commission was established by Federal legislation several years ago. NY’s Governor nominates representatives from several State agencies, including DEC, to serve on the Commission with numerous Commissioners appointed by the Secretary of the Interior. The Commission is working on the implementation of a Canalway Plan adopted by the board.
- **Oneida County Wastewater:** Oneida County owns and operates a sewer system serving approximately 106,000 people including the City of Utica. Wet weather flows that exceed the capacity of the Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) result in untreated discharges from the City’s combined sewer overflows (CSOs), as well as partially treated discharges from the County’s Sauquoit Creek Pump Station sanitary sewer overflow (SSO). During an average year, the CSOs and SSO discharge a combined 0.75 billion gallons of untreated/partially treated sewage to a section of the Mohawk River that is on the Department’s list of impaired waters as not fully supporting aquatic life. The estimated cost of the system upgrades necessary to address these issues is \$187 million.
- **Semiconductor Manufacturing:** The Mohawk Valley Economic Development and Growth Enterprises Corporation (EDGE) is seeking to attract a nanotechnology company (i.e., chip fabrication plant) to a site in the Town of Marcy. The development would result in an additional 6 million gallons of wastewater per day being discharged to the Oneida County WPCP. The WPCP cannot handle such an increase in flow without significant infrastructure upgrades. In light of EDGE’s desire to have a “shovel ready”

site, the Department has been working with State and County officials to identify a solution that would allow development to proceed without causing further impairment to the water quality of the Mohawk River. On January 26, 2011, the Department approved plans and specifications for construction of a dry sewer that ultimately would be connected to the County sewer system once the necessary WPCP upgrades are completed.

- **Beech-Nut Manufacturing Facility Town of Florida, Montgomery County:** This is a new manufacturing plant and Beech-Nut North American Headquarters. This involved a \$124 million Investment (State Aid + County Incentives) and 500 jobs (Retention of existing jobs from Canajoharie and Fort Plain Facilities + 135 new). After a complex multi-permit review necessitating interagency problem solving, DEC Air Pollution Control, Water Supply, SPDES wastewater and stormwater, Freshwater Wetlands and 401 Water Quality Certification permits and SEQR EIS Findings were issued within 10 months. All environmental standards to protect human health and the environment were met or exceeded. A 27 acre open space preserve area was set aside to address NYS threatened species habitat impacts (Short Eared Owl and Northern Harrier). Through cooperative effort, local municipal water and sewer systems were upgraded benefiting the new plant and the communities.
- **NYCDEP Gilboa Dam Reconstruction:** NYCDEP has applied to the Dept. for authorization to construct a new dam to replace the current dam, completed in 1927. The project, to be conducted in three phases, is projected to be completed in 2016. The Gilboa Dam, located in Gilboa, Schoharie County, impounds the Schoharie Creek, forming the Schoharie Reservoir. The dam and system of Catskill region reservoirs operated by New York City's Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) provides unfiltered drinking water to 9 million residents of NYC and nearby downstate communities. Finished in 1927, the reservoir holds about 20 billion gallons of water. The project cost is estimated at over \$500 million