

**Southern Tier ESD Region
NYSDEC
Regions 4,7and 8**

Regional Overview/Unique Natural Resources

The eight counties located in the Southern Tier ESD Region are in three different DEC Regions: DEC Region 4 (Delaware), Region 7 (Broome, Chenango, Tompkins and Tioga) and Region 8 (Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben). DEC has no regional headquarters located in the Southern Tier, but operate sub-offices in Kirkwood, Sherburne, Bath, Elmira and Stamford. DEC owns and operates many flood control structures in the Southern Tier, most significantly in Broome and Chemung Counties.

Each of the Southern Tier counties has unique natural resources as follows:

Broome County – With the exception of the City of Binghamton and some outlying urban areas, most of the county is rural. Adjacent to the Pennsylvania border, Broome County has approximately 15,000 acres of public land managed by DEC including the Whitney Point Wildlife Management Area. Major river systems in Broome County include the Susquehanna and Chenango Rivers.

Chemung County - Is a largely rural county, with the population centers being modestly sized Elmira and Horseheads. Miles of levees maintained by DEC protect the areas adjacent to the rivers, and Elmira has the largest flood control structure in the state.

Chenango County – The County has the largest number of State Forests (40) and total acreage for DEC managed land is approximately 80,000 acres. DEC's Rogers Environmental Center is located in Sherburne. Although recently closed due to fiscal constraints, DEC is working with a local group to maintain some environmental education programs at the Center. DEC also operates a fish hatchery in the Town of Otselic.

Delaware County – Includes Cannonsville and Pepacton Reservoirs, the two largest in the NYC Water Supply system. 14 State Forests (21,000 acres); 1 primary WMA (Bear Spring - 7,141 acres); and almost 60 miles of Public Fishing Rights (PFR). Includes world-class trout fishing streams, 7 boat launch sites on Delaware east and west branches and on main stem Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers. 45,000 acres of Forest Preserve, and DEC administers significant NYCDEP watershed lands in the county for public recreation.

Tioga County – Also located adjacent to the Pennsylvania border, Tioga County has approximately 8,500 Acres of DEC managed public lands, mainly State Forests.

Tompkins County – Includes the City of Ithaca, Cayuga Inlet and portions of the South end of Cayuga Lake. DEC manages approximately 32,500 acres of public lands including State Forests, Wildlife Management Areas and the Reynolds Game Farm.

Schuyler County - Includes the Southern portion of Seneca Lake, where the Village of Watkins Glen, of auto racing fame, is located. The County is largely agricultural, and has a large amount of State and Federal forest land, including the Finger Lakes National Forest, Sugar Hill, Coon Hollow, Texas Hollow State Forests, and several Wildlife Management areas. Outdoor recreation is a major activity in the County, and the population explodes during race weekends.

Steuben County - Includes the southern portion of Keuka Lake and the City of Corning, home to Corning, Inc. Like Schuyler, Steuben is primarily rural with an abundance of State forest and WMA lands.

Regional issues/major projects

Marcellus Shale Issues – The Southern Tier region is likely to be the most active drilling area for Marcellus Shale gas exploration should it proceed in New York State. Pre-drilling activities such as pipelines, wastewater treatment plants, landfill disposal of drilling waste, and the sale of wastewater for hydraulic fracturing are starting to be proposed in the Region's Southern Tier. Most of this activity is related to ongoing gas exploration in Pennsylvania. Some specific Marcellus gas related projects are set forth below.

Chemung County's proximity to the Pennsylvania border has resulted in some issues crossing the border, such as drill cuttings from Shale exploration being disposed of at the County Landfill, which has stirred some local controversy. A large Schlumberger facility is being developed in Horseheads to service the drilling industry, and the public sensitivity about drilling has resulted in some concerns about a vertical well drilled by Anschutz in Big Flats.

Schuyler - The proposed Inergy Midstream (Finger Lakes, LLC) project in the Town of Reading (immediately adjacent to Watkins Glen) which would use old salt caverns for the underground storage of liquefied gas, is pending before the agency and is very controversial. The project includes the construction of a rail yard with truck loading/unloading and a 90 million gallon brine pond just uphill from the shores of Seneca Lake. The project has pitted those seeking to keep industry away from the lake(s) in favor of tourism and a more serene lifestyle, against the economic interests associated with the storage and distribution of the gas.

Broome – The Village of Owego is entertaining the concept of selling its treated wastewater from the Village plant to gas companies for use in hydraulic fracturing. The DEC is currently reviewing Laser Northeast Pipeline Corporation and Laser Northeast Gathering, LLC (Laser) proposal to build a natural gas gathering pipeline to collect gas from the Marcellus Shale wells in Pennsylvania (PA) and New York (NY) and deliver it to the Millennium Pipeline Company, LLC (MPC) transmission line in NY. The gathering line will consist of approximately 42 miles of buried gathering lines through Susquehanna County, PA and Broome County, NY. At the sales point near the town of Windsor, Broome County, the gas will be compressed from the gathering pressure to the sales pressure at a purpose built compressor station.

FEMA Flood Insurance Maps – Under a nationwide effort to update its flood insurance maps, FEMA has undertaken several projects in New York State. The remapping of flood areas in the Binghamton area have resulted in the potential thousands of new properties being included

as flood insured property. The result could mean significant increases for local residents and businesses for new or upgraded flood insurance policies. Several local, State and Federal officials have raised issues with the FEMA process and currently the Binghamton map finalizations have been delayed.

Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) Much of the Southern Tier Region is within the Susquehanna River Basin and is therefore regulated by the SRBC, and interstate Commission formed by Federal Statute and State compacts between New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Although SRBC manages several water resource issues, they only regulate water use and consumption to the extent NY currently does not. The DEC represents NY State on the Commission and participates actively in decision making, especially related to any NYS facilities.

Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) - Similar to the SRBC the DRBC is an interstate compact commission that regulates activity in parts of Delaware and a small portion of Broome County. DRBC has elected to regulate more than just water use and currently has jurisdiction of water discharges in addition to DEC's discharge permits. DRBC is currently proposing comprehensive regulations to oversee the gas drilling industry.

AgroFarma Project -The manufacturer of Chobani Yogurt has significantly expanded its operation over the past year at its facility located in eastern Chenango County. The DEC continues to work with the company to upgrade its wastewater treatment facility and to address an archeological sensitive area on its new warehouse site. The company has indicated that it may be undertaking further expansion in the near future.

Vapor Intrusion Sites - The Southern Tier Region has been one of the most significant areas being impacted by vapor intrusion affecting residences from historical groundwater contamination. In part due to soil makeup and in part due to significant industrial uses, areas in and around the Binghamton and Ithaca areas have been impacted. Most notably is the IBM/Endicott site where over 450 buildings have been mitigated by IBM and other parties. In nearby Hillcrest the DEC has mitigated almost 100 homes under the superfund program and DEC is working with Emerson and other companies in Ithaca to address various plumes in the City.

Ithaca Gun Project – Utilizing Restore New York funds and Brownfield agreements with DEC, the City and a developer are proposing to redevelop this contaminated site into residential units and a public viewing area of the Ithaca gorges. The existing buildings on the site have been demolished and site investigation and remediation is expected to be undertaken this year.