

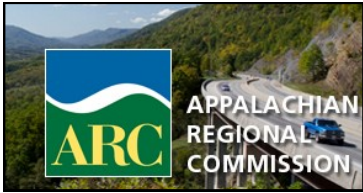
STC Region Today

Serving Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben Counties

New York State

Fall 2017

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Applications Have Been Submitted to NYS Department of State for Review



STC submitted five applications to the NYS Department of State for their review. After the state review, the applications go to the Appalachian Regional Commission.

The ARC project request from STC for 2018 is \$448,728 for the following projects:

Manufacturing Technology Advancement Project (MTAP)

The project will provide Corning Community College with the laboratory space and state-of-the-art equipment necessary to implement a ladder education and training program that will meet the demands of today's manufacturing industry. Furthermore, the addition to active learning simulator technology will allow instructors to implement 21st century collaborative learning in the classroom.

Daniel Zenker Drive Water Looping Project

The project will improve municipal water circulation and flows to downtown Big Flats and other areas by constructing an interconnection along Daniel Zenker Drive from Palmer Road to Hillview Drive and then under I-86 to the Canal Street interconnection.

Finger Lakes Farm County Project

The Finger Lakes Farm Country project will leverage natural assets and promote agri-tourism opportunities in five counties to improve traffic to agricultural businesses and increase tourism to the area.

Pilot Food Processing Business Incubation Program

Develop a business incubation program to grow startup/small food/beverage processors, both farm based and factory based, to reach regional/national markets through technical assistance and online food sector resources portal; create good paying jobs and manufacturing investment.

Town of Big Flats Economic Development Planning Study Expansion

This project will provide the Town with a professionally produced economic development plan that leverages the substantial assets of the town to create an optimal climate for synergistic economic growth throughout the I-86 Innovation Corridor.

Data Breaches: Are You Protected from Identity Theft?

With numerous incidents of technology data breaches, we all risk becoming victims of identity theft. This new reality is unsettling. Everyone should assume that he or she has been affected and focus on dealing with the consequences.

Over the past few years, there have been many data breaches. A few examples of top companies that have been breached are: Anthem Blue Cross (80 million patient records), JP Morgan Chase (76 million households and 7 million small businesses), eBay (145 million customer records), Yahoo (leads the way with 1.5 billion accounts that are now owned by Verizon), Myspace (360 million accounts), Equifax (personal information for 145.5 million people), Target (40 million credit cards and data on 70 million customers), Home Depot (56 million credit card accounts and 53 million email addresses), and many other companies, such as Heartland and LinkedIn.

There are many important concerns: What could happen? Who is impacted? What steps can I take to protect myself? How do I freeze my credit? Should I use a third party monitoring service? How do I avoid scams? What is a smart password strategy? Should I turn on alerts for my accounts?

"Equifax aftermath: How to protect against identity theft," an article by Malwarebytes Labs (and posted on their web site September 14, 2017), provides guidance about what you can do to protect yourself, family, business, and government:

<https://blog.malwarebytes.com/101/2017/09/equifax-aftermath-how-to-protect-against-identity-theft/>

We Should Protect Our Viewsheds!

Since the advent of New York's Regional Economic Development Councils, planning professionals have been challenged to come up with projects that are "transformative." So we ask ourselves, "Why do people visit the Southern Tier?" The clear answer is that people are here for the scenic views, the small quaint towns, and the abundance of farm stands, wineries, breweries and lakes. The Southern Tier is an experience. In fact, it is fabulous! How can we better showcase and protect it?

Picture the beautiful places that you enjoy visiting: beaches in Florida, Adirondack Mountains, rocky coast of Maine . . . There is one thing they all have in common. There are no power lines hanging in front of the scenic views. The cell towers are nicely disguised or tucked away and unobtrusive. Maybe in our region we have become so accustomed to the clutter of utility wires that we forget it is there. There are ways to highlight the aesthetics in our communities.



Hollywood Boardwalk, Florida.

www.floridarambler.com/florida-bike-hike-trails/hollywood-broadwalk-scenic-bike-path/



Lake Placid, NY downtown business district.



She-Qu-Ga Falls, Montour Falls, NY.

Studies have shown that investing in the appearance of commercial areas is a great way to encourage economic development. Beautification of an area needs to include the visual impacts of utilities. Buried utility lines can be expensive, but burying lines can also significantly reduce the cost of maintenance due to weather. Four state commissions have investigated requiring the burying of lines. Although all the states found there were significant savings as far as maintenance (i.e., tree trimming and restoration cost from severe storms), the benefits did not outweigh the initial upfront cost of burying the lines. Yet, a hybrid system of burying some lines does seem to be the answer. Each of the four state commissions concluded that homeowners are willing to pay a premium to purchase homes in a development with buried lines. In addition, commercial districts also see a return on investment by having utility lines buried or moved to the back of the property (off the main street).

There are ways we can reasonably deal with the infrastructure that litters our views and even better ways to deal with any new and incoming developments. Municipalities have implemented scenic overlay zones that highlight significant views within their municipality and require an extra level of review by the planning board or design standards such as required colors for building within certain areas. The Town of Big Flats has an excellent scenic overlay zone that could be used as a model law.

Municipalities have also adopted laws requiring that all new utility lines to be buried. Successful enforcement from the code enforcement officer and support from municipal boards is vital for success. It is not cost effective to require existing lines to be buried or even all lines to be

buried. But what is cost effective is to identify zones and situations in which lines must be buried, such as new housing developments, scenic viewsheds, and downtown districts.

Requiring co-location of communication towers in local laws is also a great tool for reducing the amount of visual impacts that we have. We are finding more and more towers popping up within close proximity to one another. Forcing a tower builder and cell phone company to co-locate on existing towers when technologically possible is imperative to reduce the sheer quantity of towers.

Lastly, a more cost-effective way of dealing with necessary utility lines is simply to require that the lines be placed at the back of the property. This removes the clutter from the forefront. In many downtowns, strategic placement of utility lines would vastly improve the aesthetics of their downtown.

Implementing these tools in all of our local laws in the Southern Tier Central region would enhance our scenic drives and improve the experience for visitors and ourselves. Let's challenge ourselves to take pride in our views, to declutter our skies, and to encourage cell towers and other necessary utilities to find ways to be more discreet. Let's be transformative and let our beautiful places be recognized for their beauty without having to Photoshop out utility lines that hang in front of the view.

Why Is Local Participation in LUCA Important? (And What Is LUCA?)

Preparation for the Decennial Census (2020) is underway! Your Highest Elected Official (Town Supervisor, Village Mayor, or City Mayor) should have received a message from the U.S. Census Bureau about LUCA, the Local Update of Census Addresses. LUCA is a way to ensure that the Census has the highest quality and most recent list of addresses in each community. If all of the addresses are not included in the 2020 Census Master Address File (MAF), it will be difficult to get a complete and accurate count of residents—for the municipality, the county, the 23rd Congressional District, and all of New York State.

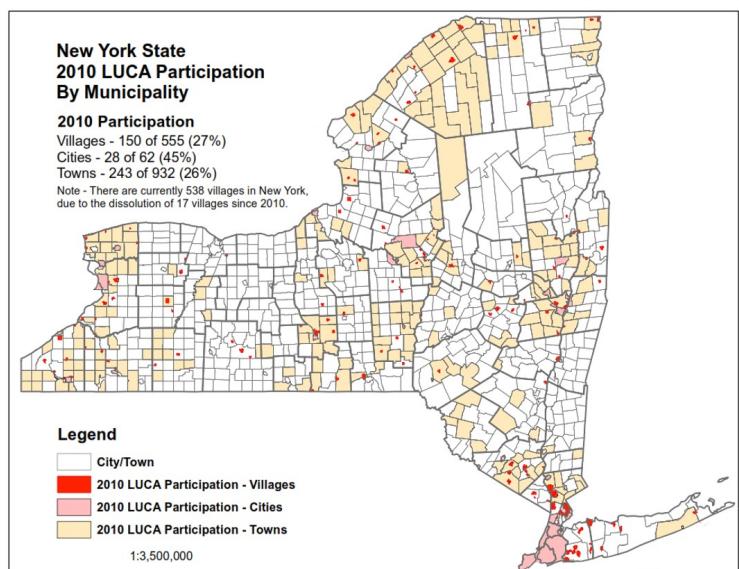
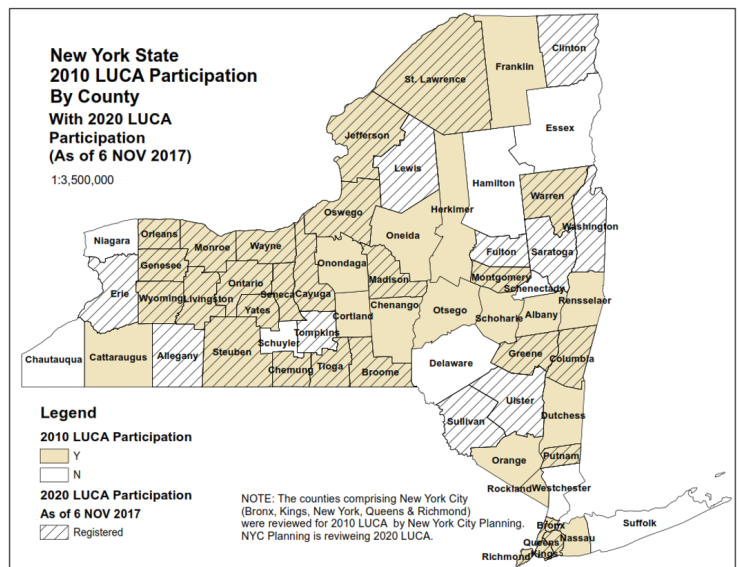
Counting every NYS resident is important for financial reasons and to make sure our region is represented in Congress!

The federal government uses census results to distribute approximately \$600 billion in federal funding annually. NYS has received \$53.2 billion each year, depending on

the population, to support education, health care, infrastructure, and other programs.

Due to national migration trends and birth rates, New York State is expected to lose at least one congressional seat due to reapportionment following the release of the 2020 total population counts. With an accurate and complete report of addresses through the LUCA process, local governments can limit the likelihood of losing a congressional seat. The NYS Office of Children and Family Services has offered the assistance of interns to help local governments participating in LUCA—so that the “hard to count” population of NYS will be included in the 2020 Census results.

Counties, Cities, Towns, and Villages are all eligible to participate in LUCA. The address databases for 911 are kept very up-to-date and accurate. Local governments can contribute these data to LUCA to ensure an accurate count of their residents. For more details, please visit <https://www.census.gov/geo/partnerships/luca.html> or reach out to your county government.



Where It Rains It Can Flood

This year's hurricane season—particularly Hurricane Harvey—demonstrated the folly of focusing flood protection only on the FEMA-mapped floodplain. Nationwide, nearly 25% of flood insurance claims are for properties outside of the mapped high hazard flood zone—despite fewer flood insurance policies in these “low risk” areas.

Why are the flood hazard maps inadequate?

- The regulated flood zone is determined using engineering models for a flood with a 1% probability of occurring in any given year. A calculated probability (even one based on the best available analytic techniques and the best available data) only provides an indication of what is likely to happen—not what will actually occur. So the sharp line on the map marking the edge of the flood zone is misleading.
- Mapping is based on historic data. So land use changes that alter runoff amounts and changing weather patterns aren't accounted for. And many flood hazard maps are old—including those for the STC region.
- Real floods carry debris that can block and divert flows (but isn't anticipated in engineering models).
- The maps show flood zones along rivers, streams, and lakes—but not in areas with poor drainage or under-sized storm sewers.
- Mother Nature can produce larger storms than the model events used for maps. And nationwide news draws our attention to the most extreme occurrences.

What can we do to protect our communities?

Remember that floods don't read the map. During a deluge, flood damage can be caused by water that hasn't yet made its way into a stream or river. Road ditches are particularly susceptible to erosion damage.

Make room for water. There are areas that are not safe for development due to potential water depths, flow velocities, or erosion risk. Consider open space or recreational uses in floodplains and along streams.

Let floodplains flood. When water spreads out on the floodplain, less water is rushing downstream, which reduces the severity of downstream flooding. The slower-moving water is also less likely to cause erosion damage.

Build high to stay dry. In low-lying areas—within or outside of the mapped flood zone—elevate or otherwise protect vulnerable items.

Protect the levees. Levees provide valuable flood protection for many communities but do not guarantee safety. Don't allow bikes, vehicles, or other activities to damage the grass, which helps to resist scour.

Stay safe. Never drive through floodwaters, which can hide washed out roads or sweep away a vehicle. Have an

emergency plan; be prepared to gather essential items (documents, medications, pets, etc.) and evacuate if asked to do so.

Reduce runoff into streams. We can all be good neighbors by managing water near where it falls. Undisturbed soils and forests naturally absorb water. Stormwater management practices can be designed to hold back runoff.

What Is a Rain Garden?

A rain garden is a garden that takes advantage of rainfall and stormwater runoff in its design and plant selection. Usually, it is a small garden that is designed to capture runoff and withstand the extremes of moisture. Ideally, rain gardens are sited close to the source of the runoff and serve to slow the stormwater as it travels downhill, giving the water time to soak into the ground and less opportunity to gain momentum and erosive power.

Rain can carry pollutants like oil, chemicals, pesticides, nutrients, and sediments into storm drains and ultimately into streams and rivers. A rain garden utilizes a process called bioretention, in which plants and soil remove these pollutants from stormwater before it gets to the curb, ditch, or storm drain. Rain gardens are built in low-lying areas using layers of soil, sand, and organic mulch that filter the rain. This soil absorbs and stores the rainwater and nourishes the trees, grasses, and other native plants. This reduces the amount of runoff and prevents water pollution, while also providing attractive landscaping.

The Chemung County Stormwater Coalition developed a How-To Guide for design and construction of rain gardens, available at www.chemungstormwater.org.



Rain gardens at the Schuyler County Soil and Water Conservation District office use runoff from the roof to reduce downstream flooding and protect water quality. This is called a “green infrastructure” or “nature-based” practice because it replicates natural processes for managing runoff near where it falls. (Photo courtesy of Schuyler Co. SWCD.)

The Fate of Our Forests

Without efficient silviculture it would not be possible to sustainably manage forests while also achieving a variety of environmental, social, and economic goals. Each step of the harvesting process, including initial site inspection, construction of access roads, and transport of logs, can play a major role in both the quality of materials being produced and the quality of the environment. Without proper management, runoff from timber operations can greatly impact local water quality and public roads. Local regulations can ensure that foresters are taking precautions to protect the natural resources that exist on every work site, while also providing flexibility to allow for necessary action. Though regulators and foresters struggle with a variety of concerns, it is imperative to understand that without this industry, many everyday commodities would not exist.

The following are some of the ways in which sustainability can be achieved by foresters:

- Evaluate each site for waterbodies, including streams and wetlands, and develop strategies for avoiding or mitigating impacts.
- Implement good site design and stormwater management practices in order to prevent runoff and erosion problems.
- Create barriers to avoid intrusion of wildlife, such as deer, which can damage young forests.
- Utilize excess materials such as sawdust to create renewable energy for business operations.



Log yard at Wagner Lumber, Cayuta, NY.

One of the concerns foresters have with current regulations is with setback requirements from the road. While it is vital to protect viewsheds, those engaging in sustainable silviculture raise concerns about creating more and more access roads. By allowing access to lands near the highway, excessive land alterations can be avoided.

As regulators and government entities, it is imperative to balance multiple considerations. There is a legitimate

public interest in protecting the environment, preventing damage to roads, and avoiding adverse impacts to neighbors. However, laws and regulations should strive to address concerns of various stakeholders. The shared objective is to promote harvesting of timber in an environmentally appropriate way to support the local economy and other industries.



Sawdust utilized for boiler fuel in Wagner facilities.

Online Maps Are Easier to Create

ArcGIS Online is expanding the audience for GIS (Geographic Information System) maps. ESRI has created an online mapping and development environment that makes GIS available to the non-GIS user.

Before ArcGIS online, GIS users needed to have a GIS server or pay to have an application hosted. This typically required a programmer to create the application.

With ArcGIS online, **anyone with some computer skills can create web maps and very functional applications.** Maps can be created from spreadsheets, and virtually no GIS skills are required to get map-based information to constituents.

ESRI offers accounts that range from free personal accounts to Enterprise accounts. A free public account (not associated with an organization) allows you to use and create maps and share your maps and apps with others. With an Enterprise account, you can create groups, have rights and privileges within accounts, and host a large amount of content.

ArcGIS online applications with large volumes of traffic can be hosted by ESRI in order to keep the traffic off local servers. ArcGIS online also allows users to share content so it not necessary to host duplicate information. ArcGIS online is a major step toward making GIS tools available to more than just GIS users. To create a public account, go to: <https://www.arcgis.com/home/signin.html>.

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