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**HIGHLAND** - Since before the turn of the millennium an exodus has been brewing and in just a few weeks hundreds of millions of 17-year cicada will emerge from the ground to blanket the Hudson Valley region.

According to Ulster County Cornell Cooperative Extension Research Entomologist Peter Jentsch the last time this 17-year species, or *Magicalada*, emerged was in 1996. Since then they have been feeding quietly on the roots of trees, but when environmental temperatures are warm enough the immature cicada will burrow out of the soil, mature into adulthood and complete the final stages of their life cycle.

This should be about the end of May or the first week in June, Jentsch said.

Deciduous trees such as maple, oak, ash, beech, elm, and cedar are optimal habitats for cicada, Jentsch explained, and once they've emerged they typically cluster and stay around the environment and whatever tree or groups of trees they were feeding off of as nymphs.

"In the Hudson Valley we see very high populations right along the river," stated Jentsch, "So here in Highland we have high populations, but across the river in Dutchess county toward Tivoli they have very large forested areas of oak and other deciduous trees that these insects prefer and the populations there are just astounding."

By "astounding" populations Jentsch is referring to an estimated average of 3 million insects per acre in the Hudson Valley. This number is just an average, he explained, and it is variable based on the local environment's proximity to water, deciduous forest density, and level of urbanization or agriculture.

More urbanized areas can expect less than the estimated average whereas more optimal areas can expect upward of 5-7 million insects per acre.

Campers and country folk should be familiar with the distinctive song of the annual cicada, but while the 17-year species is here there will be a near constant piercing rhythmic singing coming from about 1 ½ million males per acre, Jentsch explained.

It is important to understand that the world is not coming to an end, he added, and that by mid-summer they will all die off becoming food for the birds.

Although they will be emerging, signing, and mating en masse these insects pose no physical threat to humans. They do not migrate in swarms creating clouds of biblical proportion that will blot out the sun; as locusts do. They do not bite, nor will they attack, and according to Jentsch the only real danger is caused by individuals who overreact and take inappropriate action to eradicate them.

He said the most significant health risk is created when individuals douse their home and property with insecticides exposing themselves, their families, and their pets to unnecessarily high levels of poison.

The most immediate cause for concern is amongst commercial agriculturalists.

According to Jentsch, "When they do attach themselves onto roots of trees they do reduce the vigor of the tree, sometimes they reduce the overall growth, and if it's a fruit tree like apple it will reduce the quality of the fruit, the size, the number of fruit, the type of flowering that it goes through and so controlling these insects on fruit trees is fairly important for agriculturalists."

As he explained the potential for agricultural injury Jentsch spoke in detail about how the adult female cicada deposits its eggs in first and second year wood significantly compromising the structural integrity of the tree. He said the process of depositing eggs causes unnecessary stress on the tree and fruit bearing branches break under the weight of developing crops.

If action is not taken to control these populations fruit crops will be lost, he said.

There are insecticides specific for this species of cicada and growers will have to implement them during the period of emergence up until their eggs are laid.

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**HUDSON VALLEY-** Environmental Protection Agency Region 2 Administrator Judith Enck was accompanied by Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney on Monday as they toured several Superfund contamination remediation sites in Dutchess and Orange County to give an update on their progress and highlight the importance of the federal Superfund program.

Enck and Maloney traveled to each site to meet with local officials and get a firsthand look at how each project is doing.

Their first stop was the Shenandoah Road Ground Water Contamination Superfund site in Hopewell Junction.

This site was formerly the location of an IBM subcontractor who cleaned and repaired microchips, Enck explained, and had been contaminated with several toxic chemicals which seeped into the ground water and drinking water wells.

According to Enck, more than 10,000 pounds of contaminated soil have been removed since the EPA took emergency action in 2001.

“Under EPA oversight IBM installed a system that began treating the contaminated ground water in 2012. We believe that work is completed at this site with the exception of the ongoing ground water treatment and monitoring which will continue for over a decade,” stated Enck.

While in Hopewell Junction Congressman Maloney highlighted the importance of the Superfund program stating that there is much more work to be done at sites all throughout the state.

“We need to keep working until all of the polluted sites are cleaned up and what this site really shows is how important it is to act soon and to act proactively because it is a classic stitch-in-time-saves-nine situation; they’ll be pumping ground water here for fifteen years through carbon filters to clean up something that could’ve been prevented in the first place,” Maloney stated.

He said it is critical that Superfund receives the proper funding from Washington and that polluters continue to pay.

The second stop on Monday’s tour was Consolidated Iron and Metal in Newburgh.

This seven-acre waterfront property was once used to process and smelt scrap metals, she said, so the EPA came in back in 1999 and removed over 6,000 tons of soil contaminated with metals, volatile organic compounds, and PCBs.

Now, after more than a decade, all of the contaminated soil has been removed, a berm has been put in place to prevent storm water from carrying lingering pollutants into the Hudson River, and the task of developing the property is now in the hands of the city of Newburgh, said Enck.

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**NEW PALTZ-** The Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation assembled key business leaders, community members, educational partners, and public officials together Thursday morning at the SUNY New Paltz Campus to announce a \$1 million investment into creating a 3D printing technology cluster in the Hudson Valley and an advanced manufacturing center at SUNY New Paltz.

According to President and CEO of the Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation (HVEDC) Laurence Gottlieb a reduction in the cost of 3D printing technology has led to an

increase in its popularity and he believes that the Hudson Valley is poised to become a global leader in 3D printing applications.

“We feel that by investing in this technology upfront we can rapidly accelerate the growth of this industry to the benefit of all seven counties that we cover in the Hudson Valley,” he said, “in this instance we feel that there are so many people that are right on the edge of using 3D technology that we can pull these people into a cluster, offer a hub which will be SUNY New Paltz where they can learn how to use the technology, and also to allow entrepreneurs to come in and hopefully have spin-off businesses.”

As part of Thursday’s conference HVEDC Board Member and President of Hudson River Ventures Sean Eldridge announced that he is spearheading a \$1 million investment to spur this economic development and create the Hudson Valley Advanced Manufacturing Center at SUNY New Paltz.

\$250,000 of this investment is coming from Eldridge which Central Hudson Gas & Electric is going to match for the next three years.

“From automobile and aircraft parts to medical equipment and countless consumer products, there is no question that this technology is on the rise and that it is changing manufacturing forever. Although there is no silver bullet for economic growth in the Hudson Valley 3D printing has tremendous potential to grow our economy, spark innovation, and create jobs,” stated Eldridge.

SUNY New Paltz President Donald Christian said that as a major partner in this initiative SUNY New Paltz will be adding certifications in 3D design and printing to its curriculum in order to provide both a workplace for the future and the workforce that will fill it.

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**KINGSTON** – The release of turbid water into the West Basin of the Ashokan Reservoir in Ulster County ended Friday as the New York City Department of Environmental Protection began flushing the system with clean water releases.

DEP Commissioner Cas Holloway met with County Executive Michael Hein Friday to announce the action, which the agency said it would accomplish no later than February 13.

Hein has complained for weeks that the turbid water was bad for residents of the area and the economy and he wanted it to end immediately.

He said that the people of Ulster County have certainly won a great victory with the outcome of Friday’s meeting, but for the DEP to cease the release of this turbid water is only the first step in making things right.

“The truth of the matter is that it will all come down to their commitment to making things right. And what I mean by that is making sure they fund the repair of the damage that they have caused, that they make sure that this never happens again, that Ulster County has a seat at the decision-making process in a way that is unprecedented.”

Holloway said that the DEP began its clean water releases Friday and that they would last for about three days with a total release of 1.5 billion gallons, three times the volume of water in the Lower Esopus Creek.

“Throughout this operation, DEP has worked hard to balance the need to maintain drinking water quality for nearly half of New York State, and at the same time protect tributaries, like the Lower Esopus, that are critical elements of the water system and are part of the daily life of the communities that live near and rely on these waterways,” he said.

Senator John Bonacic was in attendance at Friday’s meeting and afterwards he stated, “Certainly, this fiasco and the violation of the Clean Water Act should not have occurred from the beginning. The good news is that it’s stopped and now, as we go forward into the future, we have to bring justice to the people in Ulster County for all the damages they have suffered.”

Bonacic said that he will continue to work closely with County Executive Hein to ensure that proper restitution is bestowed.

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**POUGHKEEPSIE-** Here’s the buzz at the CIA, Baking and Pastry Chef Rudy Spiess has donated a beehive to be used as an extra-curricular activity on campus to promote the education and awareness of bees and their contribution to agriculture and the environment.

The hive that Chef Spiess has donated currently contains around 24,000 bees all of which were raised in Georgia and just recently transported to their new home at the CIA. Spiess donated the hive to a campus organization called CSA, or Chefs Sustaining Agriculture, and the hive is being housed in an on-campus garden run by the Garden Society.

The reason for Chef Spiess’ donation is that he hopes by introducing the bees’ presence to the students they will be more aware of the contribution bees have to agriculture as well as eliminate any fear they might have of the bees themselves. Spiess said that he hopes the students, “learn as much as possible and that they give it on to other students which are going to come in.”

A sophomore at the CIA and member of the Garden Society Julie Le is one student responsible for taking care of the garden in which the bees reside. She said that aside from tending to the various flowers and plants, “the bees pretty much care for themselves.” Le, who has done some primary bee keeping prior to her involvement with this extra-curricular, explained that the hive really gives students a better sense of “what it takes to have a sustainable ecosystem.”

A sustainable ecosystem is an ecosystem that puts out as much energy as it consumes and Julie Le said that working with the bee hive is a great way to “really round out what I know about sustainability.”

Sophomore and member of CSA Dale Litz is highly allergic to bees and, although he has been hospitalized in the past as a result of getting stung, he says that the knowledge Chef Spiess has brought to the school gave him the confidence to work closely with the bees.

“I was actually really nervous,” Litz said of working with the bees, “and then Chef Spiess brought a whole assortment of knowledge here to the school to allow us to learn as much as we can, showing us that bees are aggressive only when they’re threatened.”

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**ROSENDALE-** Upwards of one hundred hunting enthusiasts filled the student lounge at SUNY Ulster on Monday night as NYSDEC officials held a public meeting to gather input from the community regarding potential changes to New York’s deer program. The meeting at SUNY Ulster was part of a statewide series of public forums, held throughout Orange and Westchester counties, for the purpose of hearing what ideas local sportsmen have about managing New York’s deer population.

According to NYSDEC Deer Biologist Kevin Clarke these meetings are a way to, “address some issues that we have with management, to get across to the public what these issues are and get some feedback from them on what the issues are that have been pointed out to us.”

“We have areas across the state where we simply can’t take enough deer,” said Clarke explaining that certain scenarios of extremely high deer density develop because of, “an unwillingness of hunters to take antlerless deer or the fact that there is just no access for hunters to get in to some of these areas.”

Some key issues that Clarke discussed with the public were how to get hunters to harvest the deer that the DEC wants them to harvest as well as how to increase access to areas where deer populations are too high, and hunters are prohibited.

Of all the public comments heard the major priorities expressed by the hunting community were changes to the length of the regular season and weapon restrictions, improved access to hunting areas, and incentives to take antlerless deer.

“Deer hunters are the major deer management in the state,” said president of the Federated Sportsmen’s Clubs of Ulster County Joe Liuni. Access and availability to more hunting sites is what Liuni said the hunting community needs in order to work more effectively with the DEC on this issue.

Stone Ridge resident Joe Montalbano agreed that in addition to negotiating access to prohibited areas the biggest priorities the DEC should be focusing on are the opening date of the regular season, bow hunting restrictions, and antlerless deer incentives.

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**NEW PALTZ-** The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation announced an expansion to the Bigger Better Bottle Bill that will reduce the amount of litter here in the Hudson Valley, while also generating extra revenue for the State, Monday evening at their office in New Paltz.

According to DEC regional director Willie Janeway the expanded Bigger Better Bottle Bill will build upon the 70 percent reduction in litter already achieved by the original Bottle Bill by applying the 5-cent deposit upon return to water bottles.

Roughly 80% of bottles that have a 5-cent deposit get recycled Janeway said while only 17 percent get reclaimed or returned and recycled without a 5-cent deposit.

Director of Public Policy for Scenic Hudson Andy Bicking said that one specific thing it's going to do to improve the quality of life for people who live and recreate along the Hudson River is reduce the total litter stream by about 12 percent.

He explained that litter surveys done by Scenic Hudson from 2001-2003 show that water bottles make up 12 percent of all litter found and 2/3 of all beverage litter. "We know through these studies that the redeemable beverage containers, the beer and the soda, were not as well represented in our public parks," he said, "by creating that incentive in the deposit we make it so that the bottled waters are more likely to be redeemed."

Janeway noted that in addition to significantly reducing the amount of litter right here in the Hudson Valley the uncollected 5 cent deposit if a bottle is not returned will go directly to the State generating millions of dollars for, "environmental programs, land acquisitions, clean water, and clean air work."

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