

TOWN OF BEDFORD

Westchester County



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666-5140

November 17, 2023

To Supervisor Calves and members of the Town Board:

The Conservation Board recommends that the Town of Bedford urge Governor Kathy Hochul to sign bill A5949/S5947, which would allow municipalities to prohibit the use of pesticides in specific wetland areas. The Wetlands Control Commission would be more empowered to make thoughtful decisions when it comes to wetland pesticide use in the community.

Currently, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation only regulates wetlands 12.4 acres or larger. Smaller, ecologically significant wetlands are unregulated, and would benefit from local oversight. Bill A5949/S5947 maintains a balanced approach by allowing targeted pesticide application when the DEC finds it essential for controlling invasive species, pests, noxious weeds, and for the protection of native plant species. This approach allows management of invasive species while providing some protection for vulnerable ecosystems.

Last year, this bill passed the New York State Assembly and Senate, but was vetoed by Governor Hochul. We hope that this year Bedford will join other towns in advocating for this legislation.

Sincerely,

Gentian Falstrom
Chair
Bedford Conservation Board