



## Rotary District 7170 Annual Update for Environmental Sustainability

### World Environment Day – June 5, 2022

Rotary District 7170 began the development of an environmental sustainability plan in 2018. On world environment day, June 5, 2020, the plan was made public through several club projects and media coverage. The plan is available on the district web site under documents as “District Sustainability Report”. The district has a 46-person Environmental Sustainability Committee representing Rotary and non-Rotary organizations and clubs. All members of the district and community partners are welcome to join our mailing list by contacting Jeff Smith at [jsmith1532@aol.com](mailto:jsmith1532@aol.com). The plan is updated every June 5<sup>th</sup>.

The **Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group (ESRAG)** was initiated in 2015. International participation in ESRAG has been accelerating. Rotary made “Supporting the Environment” the seventh area of focus for the Rotary Foundation. On July 1, 2021, clubs can consider Global Grants for environmental projects.

Rotary District 7170 supports the **ESRAG regional organization for Eastern North America from Canada to the Caribbean**. The organization meets regularly by zoom to promote projects and share best practices. Our district has also held discussions with other districts on forming committees on the environment.

DGE Evan made “**Supporting Our Environment**” a theme for his Rotary year and the district conference. Evan urged each of our clubs to develop a new project or program that supports the seventh area of focus.

Excitement is building for becoming involved on the ground floor of a new area of focus. The environment is of interest to all generations, especially our youth. This topic can lead to stronger collaboration in our communities and in our Rotary families. Please review the goals that follow and offer your thoughts.

During 2021 two major developments have raised the profile of our region. The Ithaca Green New Deal involved major participation with the United Nations and Google and is the most progressive city program for environmental sustainability in the Country. This program was just presented to the World Economic Forum in Davos. The interests of the Forum included:

- Ability to replicate the program across the globe with private developers
- A model for workforce development and job creation
- Inclusion of peace and conflict resolution in required training programs

At the same time major announcements by clean energy technology companies were made in the Southern Tier that are resulting in an industry cluster in clean energy technology and are creating 1,000s of jobs. iM3NY is developing a giga-factory for production of cleaner and less expensive Lithium-Ion batteries. Ubiquity Solar announced a production plant for solar cells. Phoenix Industries purchased the Huron Campus and plans to attract additional companies and suppliers. BAE already is a leader in Hybrid and electric buses. They are now researching electric aviation. Raymond Corporation is a leader in electric forklifts. The region now has over 50 start-up companies involved in the clean energy industry. A Binghamton University led proposal is focused on development of the US supply chain for the battery industry.

The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) is New York’s energy plan. A draft scoping document was issued January 1. Public comments are due in June. The final plan will be issued by the end of the year. The plan requires additional cost analysis.

Environmental sustainability is a vast undertaking. To help clubs and the district to identify goals and interest areas the following information is attached.

**Attachment A** - lists the 6 focus areas of ESRAG and the many supporting initiatives.

**Attachment B** – Eleven Green Themes from ESRAG with project ideas.

**Attachment C** – District Committees for Environmental Sustainability

**Attachment D** – Considerations for ESRAG, ESRAG ENA and Zone

**Attachment E**- New York’s Climate Directives



## District 7170 Goals for Environmental Sustainability: 2022-25

### **For club consideration:**

1. Each club to develop a new project or program that supports our environment. Appoint a lead to the Environmental Sustainability Committee. Identify what the club is already doing in environmental sustainability
2. Discuss environmental sustainability with our Interact and Rotaract clubs. Encourage and support their projects. Consider adding additional Interact and Rotaract clubs.
3. Identify other organizations that support the environment in the community and have them make a presentation to the club. Explore collaboration opportunities.
4. Develop PR opportunities on supporting our environment.
5. Consider district and international grants, and non-Rotary sources of funding to develop projects that support our environment.
6. Develop the first Global Grant supporting our environment.

### **For District and club consideration:**

1. Provide support to clubs
2. Continue to support ESAG: Eastern North America
3. Provide periodic zoom presentation opportunities with environmental experts in our region and around the world.
4. Develop a list of speakers and references to be available on the district web site
5. Explore multi-district projects
  - a. A multi-year cleanup of the Susquehanna River from the headwaters in Cooperstown to The Chesapeake Bay. (Some clubs may be interested in a similar effort for the Delaware River)
  - b. Involve neighboring districts in a "Farm to Table" program to improve economic development while improving the environment.
  - c. Support the NY Southern Tier Water Trail project.
6. Develop a data base that can be mapped of all environmental businesses, organizations and projects in the district. Tier Energy Network (TEN) developed a database on all clean energy technology companies, organizations and projects. The district can make use of this work in the development of the Rotary data base.
7. The district and many clubs support food insecurity projects. A special focus was developed to support food service organizations across the district in response to COVID – 19. Follow up on this work by developing a data base on food insecurity in our district and making recommendations for improvement.
8. Develop a methodology to measure environmental progress in our district.

9. Conduct discussions with businesses and organizations throughout the district on environmental sustainability including our 10 colleges and Universities. Often these meetings will address the overall scope of Rotary in our district.
10. Develop PR opportunities including a video of the District. Consider multi-district participation at the State Fair.
11. Form working committees on major projects. See Attachment C: District Committees and Focus Areas
12. Support district merger analysis for Environmental Sustainability
13. Increase public awareness of invasive species and actions that can be taken
14. Improve education and adoption of clean energy projects through use of videos with support of our community partners
15. Explore international collaboration with our universities, businesses and international Rotary partners

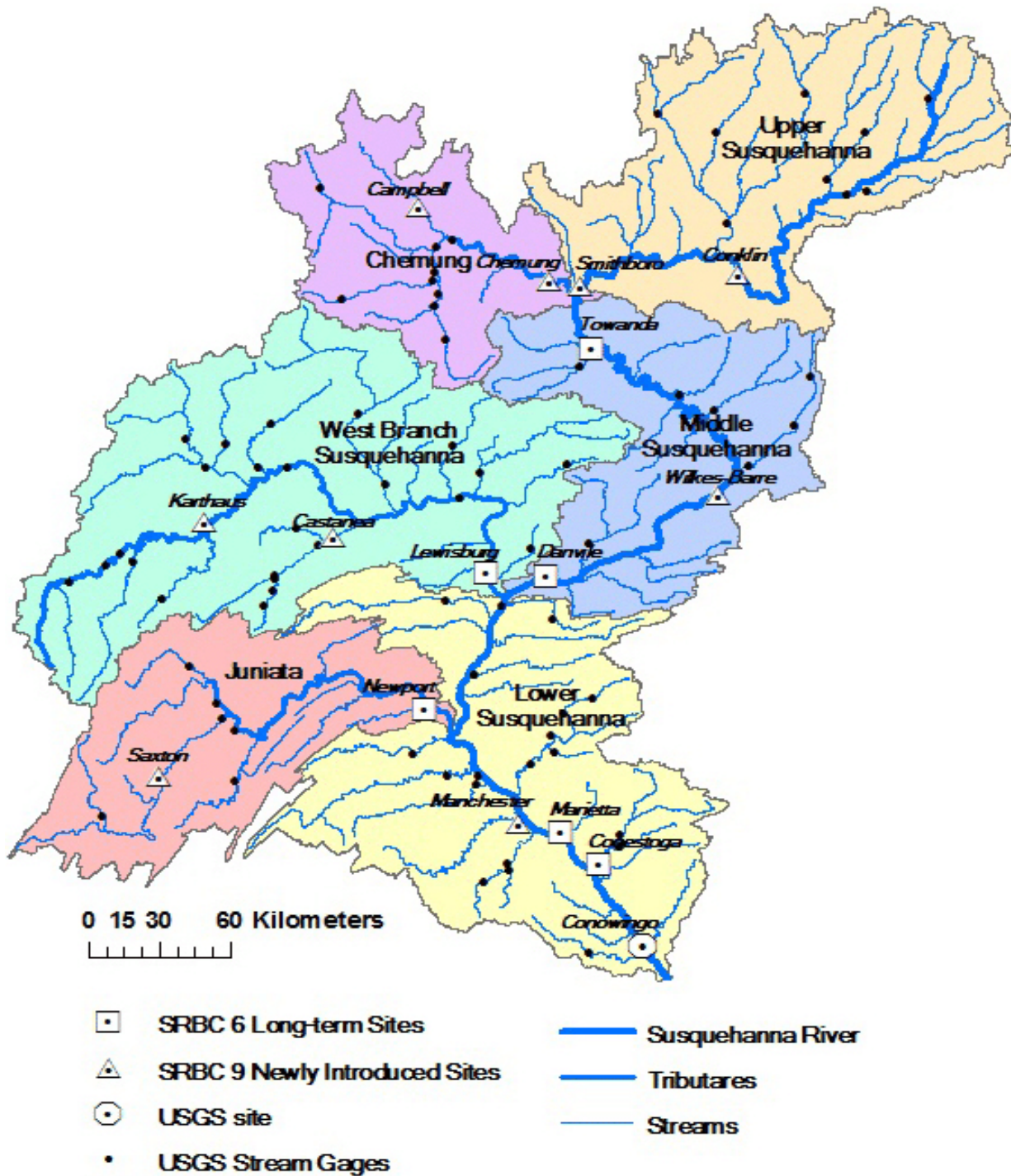
**The Susquehanna River and the Power of Rotary:** Our district is blessed with many natural assets including our rivers, lakes, waterfalls, hills and trails. Many clubs have embarked with projects that support these assets. At the same time Rotary International provides the strength of contacts and experiences around the world. Rotary urges clubs and districts to collaborate within and outside of Rotary in order to make a bigger impact. Rotary also searches for projects that involve the family of Rotary. Working with our regional ESRAG organization, ESRAG: Eastern North America, we have been looking for a project that would be significant and support RI's strategy for the future.

The Susquehanna River has great historical significance and according to some may be the oldest river in the world. The headwaters for the river are located in the beautiful community of Cooperstown NY. This year will mark the fifth annual cleaning of the river in the broader Cooperstown area by Cooperstown Lions, Rotary and other community partners. This project is the inspiration for a focus on the full length of the river.

The river leaves Cooperstown and meanders 444 miles to the Chesapeake Bay. Six Rotary Districts line the entire length of the river. The Watershed for the river is noted below.

The proposed project is to involve all six Districts and many established non-Rotary organizations to focus on the health of the river and to support the surrounding communities. In addition to a clean-up of the river, we would also focus on related topics including eco-tourism, farm to table, food insecurity, flooding and other topics. To promote the river and environmental sustainability more generally the annual paddle event was developed.

**Phase 2 of this project will include the Chesapeake Bay.** This extension allows ESRAG Eastern North America to focus on an entire water system. The Chesapeake water basin serves a population of 22 million. Lessons learned on this project can be applied to other water systems in the world.



## **Attachment A: Six Themes of ESRAG**

### **Biodiversity at ESRAG**

Our focus on biodiversity includes addressing and tackling issues related to the following topics:

**Adaptation, Afforestation, Agriculture, Agroforestry, Community Gardens, Composting, Coral Reefs, Deforestation, Desertification, Ecosystems, Endangered Species, Indigenous Peoples, Invasive Species, Landcare, Oceans, Plantings, Pollination, Regenerative Agriculture, Resilience, Soil, Tree Planting, Water Ecosystems, Wind Power.**

### **Circular Economy at ESRAG**

Our focus on circular economy includes addressing and tackling issues related to the following topics:

**Adaptation, Clean Up, Composting, Education, Equity, Food Waste, Justice, Recycling, Resilience, Waste Minimization.**

### **Climate at ESRAG**

Our focus on climate includes addressing and tackling issues related to the following topics:

**Adaptation, Afforestation, Agriculture, Agroforestry, Air pollution, Carbon Offsets, Clean Cookstoves, Climate Solutions, Composting, Deforestation, Desertification, Education, Empowering Women, Energy Efficiency, Energy – renewable, Food Waste, Freon, Green Events, Greenhouse Gases, Indigenous Peoples, Insulation, Landcare, Oceans, Plant Rich Diet, Plantings, Recycling, Refrigerant Management, Regenerative Agriculture, Resilience, Soil, Solar Energy, Sustainable Buildings, Sustainable Cities, Transport-Clean, Tree Planting, Wildfires, Wind Power**

### **Food Systems at ESRAG**

Our focus on food systems includes addressing and tackling issues related to the following topics:

**Adaptation, Agriculture, Agroecology, Composting, Deforestation, Desertification, Education, Equity, Food Waste, Fresh Water, Justice, Oceans, Plant Rich Diet, Pollination, Regenerative Agriculture, Resilience, Soil, Sustainable, Fishing, Water Conservation**

### **Pollution at ESRAG**

Our focus on pollution includes addressing and tackling issues related to the following topics:

**Adaptation, Air pollution, Clean Cookstoves, Clean Ups, Education, Equity, Fresh Water, Health, Justice, Oceans, Plastic Pollution, Refrigerant Solutions, Resilience**

### **Sustainable Living at ESRAG**

Our focus on sustainable living includes addressing and tackling issues related to the following topics:

**Adaptation, Carbon Offsets, Clean Cookstoves, Clean Transport, Clean Ups, Composting, Education, Empowering Women, Energy Efficiency, Equity, Food Waste, Fresh Water, Green Events, Justice, Natural resources, Plant Rich Diet, Renewable Energy, Resilience, Sustainable Buildings, Sustainable Cities, Waste Minimization, Water Conservation, Wildfires Planting, Water Ecosystems, Wind Power.**

ESRAG: <https://esrag.org/>

#### **Attachment B: Eleven Green Themes from ESRAG with project ideas:**

1. Host a World Environment Day Event. Include media coverage.
2. Adopt a river or lake shore
  - a. Clean up events
  - b. Plant trees in feeder streams in conjunction with Susquehanna River Association, DEC and others.
3. Organize a clean up
4. Measure and improve air quality
5. Monitor and improve water quality

- a. Solar power for Grande Saline, Haiti
  - b. Water treatment projects for developing countries
  - c. Further support AguaClara Reach in development of gravity water treatment systems
  - d. Reduce algae blooms in NYS lakes
6. Plant trees and restore forests
    - a. Implement major tree planting with DEC
    - b. Develop tree plantings in developing countries
7. Connect with nature
    - a. Develop and maintain trails and parks
8. Help a community go solar
9. Build a community garden
    - a. Promote farm to table programs
10. Reduce solid wastes
    - a. Reduce use of plastics and increase recycling of plastics. Evaluate the Trex project.
    - b. Reduce food wastes
11. Reduce our ecological footprint
    - a. Offset carbon footprint through use of "myclimate.org".
    - b. Support Rotary's program to eliminate cfcs.
    - c. Use emission credits to help finance environmental projects

## **Attachment C: District committees and focus areas:**

### Committees:

- District Committee
- Protecting our Natural Resources



- Susquehanna River Project (Phase 2 involves the Chesapeake Bay)
- Delaware River Project
- Cayuga Lake Project (Can evolve to the Finger Lakes Project)
- NY Southern Tier Water Trail
- Net Zero Waste
- Net Zero Carbon Footprint
- Food Insecurity

Focus Areas: Some members want to focus on a specific topic.

- Microbes for water treatment
- Net zero schools
- Pollination
- District tree planting
- Vegetarian diet
- Composting

## **Attachment D: Considerations for ESRAG, ESRAG – Eastern North America and Zone**

1. Discussions are required to further ESRAG's interest in developing a program on the entire Chesapeake water shed. Rotary district 7170 will continue to develop our program on the Susquehanna River, identify all of the critical partners and their efforts, and share information with the relevant districts. We will continue to do a literature search on the Chesapeake water basin to identify the major issues and opportunities.
2. The World Economic Forum is interested in the Ithaca Green New Deal as noted in the report. Should ESRAG and RI consider a supporting role in this endeavor. The Forum is interested in including peace and conflict resolution in the training programs for clean energy jobs.
3. Tier Energy Network (TEN) is continuing a collaboration with the Watson College at Binghamton University. Binghamton University receives many international students that would like paid projects to support their home countries. Our district has companies with international offices. Rotary has a presence in 215 countries and territories. The US is beginning to identify grant opportunities to transfer clean energy solutions to other countries. There is a potential to develop another pathway to accelerating clean energy progress in other countries. Many other Universities have similar capabilities and interests.

4. The NY Southern Tier Water Trail is an emerging project to create a world-class water trail for environmental sustainability, recreational use and tourism. Projects like this improve the attractiveness of our districts and improve the ability for our communities to attract and retain the employment required to address the clean energy agenda.
5. The approach of district 7170 links environmental sustainability to entrepreneurship, economic development and social development. Our region has improved its eco-system for high tech entrepreneurs. There is a need to better develop an eco-system for social development.

### **Attachment E: New York's Nation-Leading Climate Directives**

- 85% Reduction GHG Emissions by 2050
- 100% Zero-Emission electricity by 2040
- 70% Renewable Energy by 2030
- 9,000 MW of Offshore Wind by 2035
- 6,000 MW of Energy Storage by 2030
- 6,000 MW of Solar energy by 2025
- 185 trillion BTU of End-Use Energy Savings