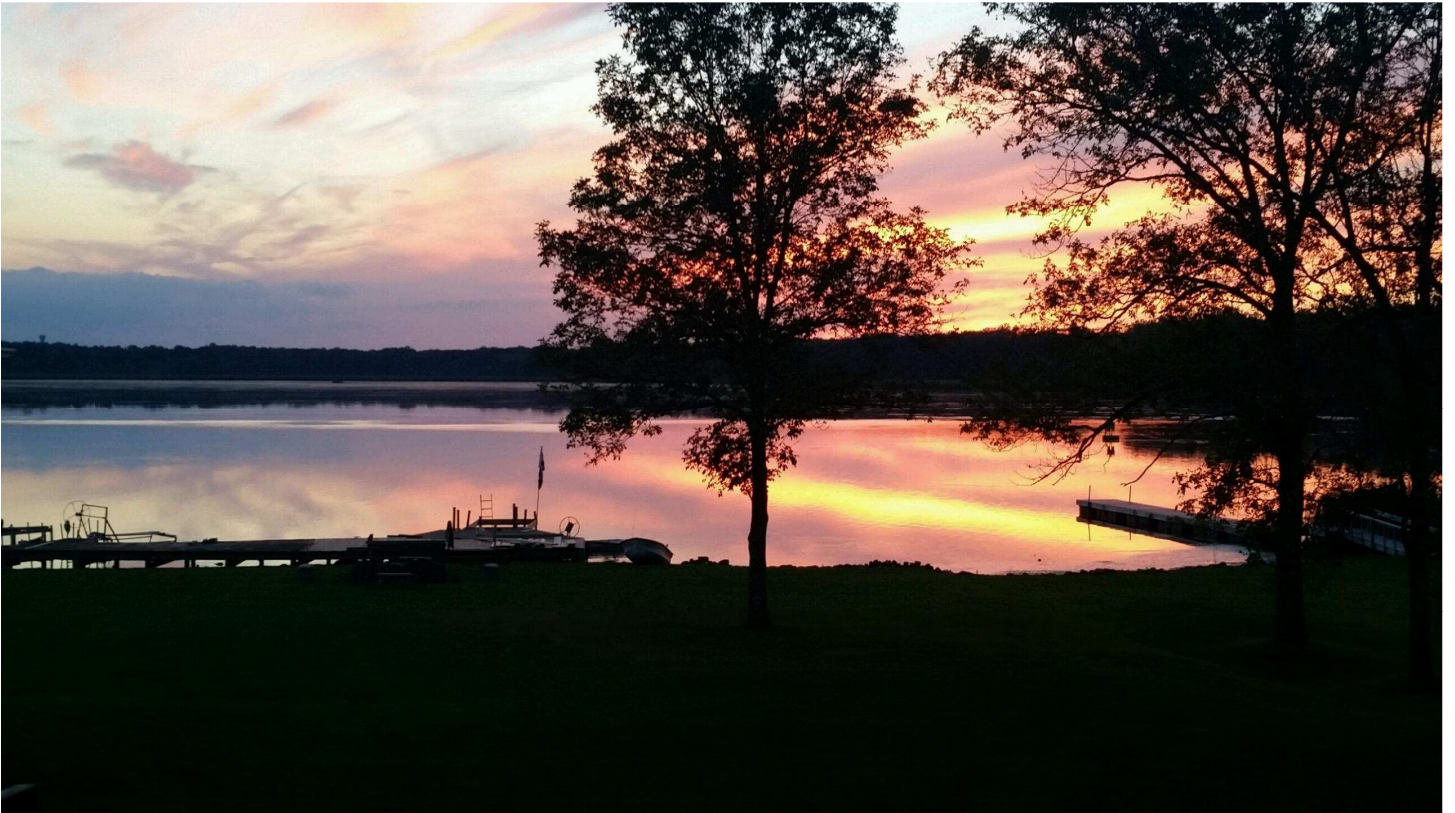


# Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency



**2014 Year End Report**  
Approved 3/5/2015

### **The Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency's Mission**

The Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency (WQMA) was created by County Legislative Resolution #445-90 to serve the Cayuga County Legislature in meeting its responsibilities in the management and protection of the County's water resources.

The WQMA advises the Cayuga County Legislature on matters related to water resource management and planning. The WQMA is charged with identifying problems, proposing priorities, and promoting the coordination of activities in the management and protection of the County's water resources. More specifically, the Agency is charged with:

1. Creating and maintaining a comprehensive planning and implementation program for water quality management in Cayuga County.
2. Coordinating the responsibilities of agencies and watershed associations with interest in water quality management in Cayuga County.
3. Providing greater public input into the process of water quality management and related programs.
4. Providing an effective public education program to develop public understanding and support for water quality management in Cayuga County.

## 2014 Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency Membership

**Chair: Eileen O'Connor**

**Vice-Chair: Doug Kierst**

### **Cayuga County Legislature's Environmental Advisors:**

Director of Cayuga County Planning and Economic Development

Director of Cayuga County Environmental Health

Director of Cayuga County Parks and Trails

Director of Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District

Cayuga County Solid Waste Management Program Administrator

Cayuga County Cooperative Extension Executive Director

Stephen Lynch

Eileen O'Connor

Gary Duckett

Doug Kierst

Bruce Natale

Doug Ververs

### **Non-County, Local Officials**

Town of Owasco

City of Auburn

Cayuga County Association of Town Supervisors

Cayuga County Association of Villages

Edward Wagner

Vicky Murphy

Vacant

Harry Hinman

### **Representatives from Waterbody Associations in Cayuga County**

Cayuga Lake Watershed Network

Duck Lake Association

Lake Como Association

Owasco Watershed Lake Association

Skaneateles Lake Association Inc.

Jim Young

Dale Powell

Barb Harvey

Robert Brower

Kathleen Gorr

### **Partners**

Center for Environmental Initiatives

Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board

Finger Lakes Institute at Hobart and William Smith Colleges

Institute for the Application of Geospatial Technology at Cayuga Community College, Inc.

Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council

### **Staff Support**

Michele Wunderlich, Cayuga County Planning and Economic Development, [mwunderlich@co.cayuga.ny.us](mailto:mwunderlich@co.cayuga.ny.us), 315-253-1107

### **Monthly Meetings**

The Cayuga County WQMA meets on a regular basis, on the 1st Thursday of the month throughout the year at 10 am. All meetings are scheduled for the Natural Resource Center at 7413 County House Road, Auburn unless otherwise noted.

### **Website**

The Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency website is [www.cayugacounty.us/wqma](http://www.cayugacounty.us/wqma).

**WQMA Bacteria Working Group Priorities****1. PRIORITY: Provide education to residents and lawn care companies regarding proper handling of yard waste.**

**ACTION:** Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County (CCE) will publish Eco-talk articles regarding proper handling of lawn waste and provide information at events such as Owasco Lake Day.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- Eco Talk: Lawn care concerns for May, May 2, 2014
- Eco Talk: How and why to start composting, August 15, 2014
- Eco Talk: Don't overlook your yard waste, September 19, 2014
- Participated in Owasco Lake Day.
- CCE has requested that the Citizen make announcements for people to use non-phosphorus fertilizer.

**ACTION:** CCE will look into how to reach Golf Course Superintendents and Commercial Chemical Lawn Care companies.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- CCE provided information on proper maintenance of turf grasses to the Turf Grass Association.

**ACTION:** The Owasco Lake Watershed Inspector will include information as part of welcome packages to new homeowners and will educate residents when poor practices are seen.

**2. PRIORITY: Work with agricultural producers on Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce runoff and potential contamination of waterbodies.**

**ACTION:** The Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) will provide soil health and nutrient management seminars for farms.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- SWCD held a Soil Health Seminar on August 20, 2014 at Cuddeback Farms and over 50 people participated.
- Manure management workshops were held at 3 different locations and times last year. Over 250 people attended total. On-going site specific nutrient management and soil health education is continual.

**ACTION:** SWCD will work to adopt 6 new nutrient management plans in all watersheds of Cayuga County, while continuing to update existing plans.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- SWCD is updating four nutrient management plans and five new plans are being written. SWCD is also working with individuals that are not prepared to have a complete plan at this time, but are adopting components at this time.

**ACTION:** CCE will discuss benefits of cover crops and risk of overspreading in AgAlert newsletter.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- Cover crops, overspreading and Nutrient Management were discussed and reinforced in Ag News, CCE Annual Report articles, CCE blog postings, during on-farm visits, during workshops and in applied research trials across the county.

**ACTION:** SWCD will work to obtain funding for agricultural and non-agricultural BMPs to be installed in the Dutch Hollow Brook watershed.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- Funding has been obtained. Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is in the planning and design stages for the BMPs. BMPS include five streambank stabilization sites, three in-field erosion control, one livestock exclusion fencing, five critical area seedings, one riparian buffer, one grass waterway, and one water and sediment control basin.
- SWCD is constructing one manure storage and one livestock exclusion project, has applied for grants for more manure storage and 2,400 acres of cover crops in Cayuga and Owasco Lakes Watersheds, held manure handling workshops, and is collecting data in the Dutch Hollow Brook Watershed as part of their Dutch Hollow Brook Watershed Restoration Project.

**3. PRIORITY: Encourage the Owasco Lake Watershed Inspector to visit properties in Tompkins County in search of problem septic systems.**

**ACTION:** The Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection Committee will make this a priority with the new watershed inspector/steward position.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- Drew Snell, the Watershed Specialist, reached out to Tompkins County Environmental Health and is going to review their septic system records.

**4. PRIORITY: Pet waste**

**ACTION:** Cayuga County Parks and Trails (Parks) will provide collection stations at Emerson Park and install signage that it is a violation to leave dog waste.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- Emerson Park installed two new pet waste stations on the Fleming side of the park.

**5. PRIORITY: Waterfowl**

**ACTION:** Parks will encourage harassment of waterfowl and encourage/promote hunting at Emerson Park.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- Emerson Park security and lifeguards continue to harass geese as time permits.

**WQMA Invasive Species Working Group Priorities**

- 1. PRIORITY: The Working Group will review available studies and reports of federal and state agencies and other organizations and compile a list of species ranked according to the risks they represent based on how directly their attributes correlate with invasiveness; the vulnerability of existing populations and ecological communities to their invasion; and the severity of the biological and economic consequences that could result from their spread. The Invasive Species Working Group will leverage the activities of the Finger Lakes Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM).**

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- Michele Wunderlich of Planning and Stefan Lutter of CCE became members of the FL-PRISM Aquatic Species Working Group. This group is working to develop a purpose statement, strategy for accomplishing purpose, priority focus areas and a priority species list for the aquatic invasive species.
- 2. PRIORITY: The Working Group will identify gaps in existing communication programs in regards to invasive species and modify and revise them accordingly.**
  - 3. PRIORITY: The Working Group will provide educational materials to aquarium sellers and owners; fishing bait sellers and owners; companies who sell or repair boats; companies that sell personal watercraft and boating/water recreation equipment including docks and lifts; fishing equipment suppliers; fishing tournament sponsors, marinas and boat launches. Concentrate on the Cayuga County Invasive Species Law; commerce; aquarium sellers and owners; and fishing bait sellers and users.**

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- Finger Lakes Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FOLLOWPA) funding allowed for the building and installation of New York State Department of Environmental Conservation designed invasive species disposal stations at boat launches in the County. Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development (Planning) conducted the logistics of locating the stations and SWCD built and installed the stations. All boat launches into Owasco Lake now have disposal stations as well as the village launches into Cayuga Lake and Little Sodus Bay.
  - FOLLOWPA funding also allowed for the building and installation of an educational kiosk at Emerson Park. This kiosk currently houses information on invasive species but the information can be changed as needed. It is located next to the invasive species disposal station between the two boat launches. It was designed by Planning and built by SWCD.
- 4. PRIORITY: The Working Group will conduct Asian clam diving surveys in Owasco Lake and possibly Cayuga Lake.**

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- An Asian clam diving survey was conducted off of Emerson Park on Friday, August 8th. Participants included Cayuga County Planning, SWCD, the Owasco Lake Watershed Inspector Program, the Owasco Watershed Lake Association, FL-PRISM and Finger Lakes Institute.

- Major observations were:
  - Overall there were fewer clams found this year.
  - Over half the clams on the east side off the Pavilion Beach were older clams.
  - Almost all the clams on the west side off of the Deauville Island Beach were young of the year.
  - Drawdown appears to cause 100% mortality of clams in areas where the substrate was exposed during the winter.
  - On the west side, it appears young of the year clams are transported into the shallow areas since there are no mature clams there to reproduce.
  - There are some occasionally denser population areas but these areas are less dense than ones in Lake George.

**5. PRIORITY: The Working Group will invite other stakeholders and partners to activities sponsored by the WQMA and its members and partners including Owasco Lake Day, invasive species workshops, and watershed steward events.**

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- Invited other stakeholders to the Owasco Lake Day at Emerson Park, to the Bassmaster Classic Governor's Challenge at Emerson Park and to the Bassmaster Elite Series Tournament at Union Springs.

**6. PRIORITY: The Chair of the WQMA or their designee will attend at least two Cayuga County Legislative meetings a year.**

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- WQMA members attended Cayuga County Legislative Committee meetings.

**WQMA Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Working Group Priorities**

**1. PRIORITY: Encourage municipalities to adopt local ordinances to minimize erosion and storm water impacts.**

**ACTION:** The Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development (Planning) will work with Towns adjacent to Owasco Lake to encourage adoption of ordinances similar to Owasco's Erosion and Sediment Control Plan for Small Homesite Construction ordinance.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- Gabriel Holbrow of the Planning Department initiated work on a mechanism that the towns and villages can adopt for erosion and sediment control at small project sites.
- Gabriel Holbrow of the Planning Department worked with the Owasco Lake Watershed Specialist in collecting information from all the towns and villages in the watershed regarding what they have in place for erosion, sediment control and stormwater.
- Gabriel Holbrow of the Planning Department worked with the Towns of Fleming and Owasco to see how their laws work.

**ACTION:** Planning will conduct training to selected towns regarding incorporating steep slope protections into their development review process.

**ACTION:** Planning will investigate the adoption of storm water regulations within the County and explore viable catch basin maintenance programs that could be implemented at the local level during subdivision and other development review procedures.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- Gabriel Holbrow of the Planning Department initiated work on a mechanism that the towns and villages can adopt for erosion and sediment control at small project sites.
- Gabriel Holbrow of the Planning Department worked with the Owasco Lake Watershed Specialist in collecting information from all the towns and villages in the watershed regarding what they have in place for erosion, sediment control and stormwater.

**2. PRIORITY: Create additional educational materials including a user's guide to assist in the use of the sediment and nutrient reduction practice evaluation methodology created by the Working Group.**

**ACTION:** A sub-group of the Working Group will develop the user's guide in early 2014.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- A video, "A Methodology for Evaluating Nutrient Reduction Practices," created by Nick Colas was placed on the WQMA website. This video is the user's guide to a methodology for use in evaluating alternative techniques for reducing nutrient loading of waterbodies and selecting those that have the potential to be the most effective.

**ACTION:** Additional materials supporting the user's guide will be developed as needs become apparent.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- Additional materials supporting the user's guide were placed on the WQMA website.

**PRIORITY: Specify sub-basins in which to focus sediment and nutrient reduction activities based on the priority waterbodies list and the Working Group's map of areas having the highest relative potential for phosphorus loading based on their land cover characteristics.**

**ACTION:** Information in the report previously submitted by the Working Group will be supplemented by additional local knowledge to identify the specific sub-basins of primary interest in March 2014.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- The sub-basins the group focused on were those on the priority waterbodies list and the Dutch Hollow Brook watershed.



**3. PRIORITY: Review the priorities of the other working groups' and identify the ones that are the most closely related and synergistic.**

**ACTION:** The Working Group has already met to evaluate the other Working Groups' priorities and has preliminarily identified five of them as the most synergistic. The Group will finalize the list following additional discussion and review of any updates or revisions offered by the other Working Groups in early 2014.

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- The group took one of the Bacteria Working Group's priorities as one of their own: "Encourage municipalities to adopt local ordinances to minimize erosion and storm water impacts."

**4. PRIORITY: Identify sediment and nutrient reduction strategies that also address priorities of the other working groups; recommend three to five strategies in several geographical areas.**

**ACTION:** The Working Group will generally apply its methodology to evaluate strategies that address multiple priorities in priority sub-basins.

**ACTION:** The Working Group is especially interested in evaluating promising strategies for implementation in sub-basins where interest in sediment and nutrient reduction has already been demonstrated. (For example, cover crops in the Dutch Hollow sub-basin).

**5. Additional Work Requested by WQMA in 2014:**

- The group discussed whether the Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations should be updated and recommended not to work on updating the Owasco Lake Rules and Regulations at this time, and instead look at education.
- The group meet to discuss Natural Resources Conservation Service Conservation Practice Standard, Nutrient Management, Code 590, and Michele Wunderlich put it on the WQMA website.

**WQMA Solid Waste Working Group Priority**

**1. PRIORITY: Develop a work plan for the Solid Waste Working Group.**

**WORK COMPLETED IN 2014:**

- In process.