

# Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency

## **2014 Workplan**



**Approved March 6, 2014**

## **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 agencies responsible for, 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  
Bob Brower  
Kathleen Gorr

### **Partners**

Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board  
Finger Lakes Institute  
Institute for the Application of Geospatial Technology, Inc.  
Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection Program

## 2014 Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency

### WQMA Bacteria Working Group Priorities

1. Provide education to residents and lawn care companies regarding proper handling of yard waste.
  - 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.
  - CCE will look into how to reach Golf Course Superintendents and Commercial Chemical Lawn Care companies.
  - 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. Work with agricultural producers on Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce runoff and potential contamination of waterbodies.
  - The Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) will provide soil health and nutrient management seminars for farms.
  - SWCD will work to adopt 6 new nutrient management plans in all watersheds of Cayuga County, while continuing to update existing plans.
  - CCE will discuss benefits of cover crops and risk of overspreading in AgAlert newsletter.
  - SWCD will work to obtain funding for agricultural and non-agricultural BMPs to be installed in the Dutch Hollow Brook watershed.
3. Encourage the Owasco Lake Watershed Inspector to visit properties in Tompkins County in search of problem septic systems.
  - The Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection Committee will make this a priority with the new watershed inspector/steward position.
4. Pet waste
  - 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.
5. Waterfowl
  - Parks will encourage harassment of waterfowl and encourage/promote hunting at Emerson Park.

### **WQMA Invasive Species Working Group Priorities**

1. 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).

2. The Working Group will identify gaps in existing communication programs in regards to invasive species and modify and revise them accordingly.
3. 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.
4. The Working Group will conduct Asian clam diving surveys in Owasco Lake and possibly Cayuga Lake.
5. 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.
6. The Chair of the WQMA or their designee will attend at least two Cayuga County Legislative meetings a year.

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

1. Encourage municipalities to adopt local ordinances to minimize erosion and storm water impacts.
  - 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.
  - Planning will conduct training to selected towns regarding incorporating steep slope protections into their development review process.

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- 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.
2. 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.
    - A sub-group of the Working Group will develop the user's guide in early 2014.
    - Additional materials supporting the user's guide will be developed as needs become apparent.
  3. 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.
    - 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.
  4. Review the priorities of the other working groups' and identify the ones that are the most closely related and synergistic.
    - 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.
  5. Identify sediment and nutrient reduction strategies that also address priorities of the other working groups; recommend three to five strategies in several geographical areas.
    - The Working Group will generally apply its methodology to evaluate strategies that address multiple priorities in priority sub-basins.
    - 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).

### **WQMA Solid Waste Working Group Priority**

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