

# Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency



## **2023 Work Plan**

**Approved by the Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency  
on March 2, 2023**

## **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.

**CAYUGA COUNTY WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT AGENCY 2023 WORK PLAN**

**COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH WORKING GROUP**

**PRIORITY:** Celebrate the positive water quality activities occurring in Cayuga County.

**ACTION:** The celebration of positive initiatives will be the focus of communication pieces (see next priority) generated by the committee - WQMA Communication and Outreach Working Group

**PRIORITY:** Provide timely information regarding water news, agency activities, and pollution prevention.

**ACTION:** Prepare and send out quarterly newsletters, (March, June, Sept, and Dec) the purpose of which will be to highlight water quality initiatives, watershed resiliency and response, work of member and partner agencies, and upcoming or current classes (i.e. Erosion and Sediment Control Training) or programs (such as hydroseeding availability, or Hazardous Waste Disposal opportunities). Audience will include County Legislators, municipal elected officials, municipal clerks, and planning boards as well as WQMA partners and members- WQMA Communication and Outreach Working Group

**ACTION:** Prepare blog posts at least monthly focusing on educating the public regarding a wide variety of water quality news and topics. These blogs will be posted on the website and links published on Facebook and Twitter- Planning Department

**ACTION:** Provide assistance to other working groups to fulfill their actions – WQMA Working Groups

**ACTION:** Promote and distribute the WQMA residential guidelines to the public as well as provide to all the County watershed groups for use by that group- WQMA Communication and Outreach Working Group.

**PRIORITY:** Update website resources with current and scientific information and promote the WQMA as the source of factual water quality information in Cayuga County

**ACTION:** Distribute WQMA promotional items at meetings and public events-WQMA

**ACTION:** Review and update the WQMA website - WQMA Communication and Outreach Working Group

**ACTION:** Work to improve the resource section of the WQMA website to include more research reports and water resource protection information, as well as presentations from partner lake associations – WQMA Communication and Outreach Working Group

**ACTION:** Gather informational documents on the WQMA website that can be used as Welcome Packages for new homeowners regarding how to minimize their nutrient impact – WQMA Communication and Outreach Working Group

**ACTION:** Promote members and partners as speakers on water quality issues to community groups – WQMA Communication and Outreach Working Group

**ACTION:** Create a stock photo page on the WQMA website. – WQMA Communication and Outreach Working Group

### **INVASIVE SPECIES WORKING GROUP**

The priority species that the Cayuga County WQMA Invasive Species Working Group concentrated on were those invasive species that have the potential to negatively impact Cayuga County and its watersheds whether terrestrial (e.g., HWA) or aquatic (e.g., hydrilla).

#### **PRIORITY: Survey invasive species in Cayuga County**

**ACTION:** The Working Group will work with partners to survey for priority species within Cayuga County.

**ACTION:** The Working Group will work with partners to survey areas suspected of having a new invasive species population.

**ACTION:** The Working Group will conduct Asian clam diving inventory surveys in Owasco Lake to try to determine where the adult population is surviving and then discuss the possible effectiveness of control methods.

**ACTION:** The Working Group will solicit reports of partners doing surveillance and monitoring.

#### **PRIORITY: Education, training and public participation**

**ACTION:** The Working Group will share educational information on priority species of concern to the public on the WQMA website, newsletter, and social media accounts and through other media such as radio and newspapers.

**ACTION:** The Working Group will work with partners to prepare and publish two or more articles per year on invasive species.

**ACTION:** The Working Group will provide and support training programs and/or information on priority species including, but not limited to, meetings such as WQMA meetings, Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council meetings, Bob Brower Scientific Symposium, Conservation Field Days, Lake Friendly Living Coalition events and other public venues.

**ACTION:** The Working Group will provide a training or control event as part of New York State Invasive Species Week.

**ACTION:** The Working Group will promote activities sponsored by the WQMA and its members and partners, including, but not limited to, the Bob Brower Scientific Symposium, invasive species workshops, Lake Friendly Living Coalition events and watershed steward events on the WQMA website and social media accounts.

**PRIORITY: Invasive species prevention, control and management**

**ACTION:** The Working Group will support existing invasive species prevention, control and management programs including the County's aquatic harvesting program, Finger Lakes Institute/PRISMs' volunteer programs, Hydrilla in Cayuga Lake program, Eurasian Watermilfoil program in Skaneateles Lake, Montezuma Alliance for the Restoration of Species and Habitat program, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid programs through OWLA, Finger Lakes Institute/PRISM, Skaneateles Lake Association and others, boat steward programs including the Skaneateles Lake Boat Launch Steward program, Lake Friendly Living Coalition programs and will assist as able in other control programs.

**ACTION:** The Working Group will work with partners such as the Finger Lakes Institute/PRISM, the Skaneateles Lake Boat Launch Steward program and others on increasing invasive species education to boaters and recreationists.

**NUTRIENT AND SEDIMENT WORKING GROUP**

**PRIORITY: Septic Systems**

**ACTION:** Find homeowners interested in participating in a pilot evaluation of phosphorus removal technologies that are not yet on the market– Cayuga County Health Department, The Nature Conservancy

**ACTION:** Work with SUNY Stony Brook University Center for Clean Water Technology in reviewing current technology and working with Cayuga County Health Department to determine which technologies may be a good match for Cayuga County- Cayuga County Health Department

**ACTION:** Continue to work with Cayuga County Health Department, The Nature Conservancy and Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District with the septic system at the Y-Camp and provide a presentation to the WQMA– Cayuga County Health Department, The Nature Conservancy, Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District

**ACTION:** Provide a presentation to the Cayuga County WQMA on the Cayuga County Health Department Septic System program – Cayuga County Health Department

**PRIORITY: Stormwater**

**ACTION:** Promote and publicize the effective use of green infrastructure such as permeable pavement, rain gardens and rain barrels– City of Auburn, Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development, OLWMC, Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District

**ACTION:** Provide information and/or presentations to the Association of Towns, Association of Villages and Association of Town Highway Superintendents on erosion and sediment control practices during municipal projects– Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County

**ACTION:** Inventory condition of culverts discharging into municipal ditches or streams – Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council, Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District

**ACTION:** Provide a presentation to the Cayuga County WQMA on the Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District’s and City of Auburn’s work on culvert inventories and mapping of outfalls- City of Auburn, Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District

**ACTION:** Provide the Communication and Outreach Working Group with communication pieces on resiliency and flooding and the resources available to assist property owners in addressing them – WQMA Nutrient and Sediment Working Group

**ACTION:** Provide the Communication and Outreach Working Group with communication pieces to encourage landowners to install erosion and sediment control and waterfront protection-Skaneateles Lake Association

**ACTION:** Update the brochures created by the Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection and Protection Division for other watersheds (Owasco Lake New Homeowner Packet, Owasco Lake Rain Garden Brochure, Owasco Lake Stormwater Brochure, and Owasco Lake Green Infrastructure Brochure) and provide to the Communications and Outreach Committee to place on the WQMA website -WQMA Nutrient and Sediment Working Group

**ACTION:** Educate municipal planning board members regarding the importance of including sedimentation and erosion control considerations in site plan review – Cayuga County Planning Department, Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County, Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board

**ACTION:** Purchase, install and evaluate stormwater catch basin filters – City of Auburn

**PRIORITY: Pet Waste**

**ACTION:** Provide the Communication and Outreach Working Group with communication pieces on the importance of properly disposing of pet waste - Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County, Lake Associations

**PRIORITY: Lawn Care**

**ACTION:** Provide the Communication and Outreach Working Group with communication pieces on proper lawn fertilizing, how to get soil tested and appropriate ways to manage lawn waste – Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County, Owasco Watershed Lake Association, Lake Associations

**ACTION:** Encourage homeowners to install and/or maintain buffers along streams and lakeshores - Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County, Lake Associations

**PRIORITY: Agriculture**

**ACTION:** Recognize agricultural operations that have implemented best management practices (BMPs) and promote them through the WQMA Communications and Outreach Working Group – Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District, Partners for Healthy Watersheds, Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County

**ACTION:** Review the Manure Management Guidelines, update if needed, and then promote them through the WQMA Communications and Outreach Working Group – Partners for Healthy Watersheds, Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County

**ACTION:** Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District will provide an annual report on conservation programs at a WQMA meeting– Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District

**PRIORITY: All Areas**

**ACTION:** Promote land acquisition and conservation easements for preservation purposes – Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council, The Nature Conservancy, Finger Lakes Land Trust

**ACTION:** Request a representative from NYS Canal Corporation provide a presentation on lake levels and flooding - WQMA Nutrient and Sediment Working Group