

Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency



2024 Work Plan

**Approved by the Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency
on March 7, 2024**

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 2024 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- Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development

ACTION: Provide assistance to the 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.

ACTION: Provide recordings of meetings and presentations on the WQMA YouTube Channel- Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development

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 Communication and Outreach Working Group

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 by homeowners on how to minimize their impacts on water quality – WQMA Communication and Outreach Working Group

ACTION: Promote members and partners as speakers on water quality issues to community groups and local governments – 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 distribute reports of partners doing surveillance and monitoring and will assist with finding volunteers for surveillance and monitoring programs.

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 promote invasive species training programs and activities.

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

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 for boaters and recreationists; including education on “Clean. Drain. Dry.” and the promotion and monitoring of boat cleaning stations.

PRIORITY: Invasive species prevention, control and management

ACTION: The Working Group will support existing invasive species prevention, control and management programs in Cayuga County and the Finger Lakes Region.

NUTRIENT AND SEDIMENT WORKING GROUP

PRIORITY: Septic Systems

ACTION: Work with SUNY Stony Brook University Center for Clean Water Technology to review current phosphorus removal technologies, determine which technologies may be a good match for Cayuga County and find residents who may be interested in participating in a pilot evaluation of new phosphorus removal technologies. Cayuga County Health Department.

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

ACTION: Provide education and outreach to residents who are eligible to participate in the expanded septic system replacement grant 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 municipalities, 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 – Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District, Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council

ACTION: Provide presentations 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- Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District, City of Auburn

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

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 Department of Planning and Economic Development

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: 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: Land Preservation

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