

# Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency



## **2025 Work Plan**

**Approved by the Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency  
on March 6, 2025**

**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 2025 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 or programs. 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 through collaboration and partnerships to the Invasive Species Working Group 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 those groups- 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**

Reduce threats invasive species to water quality in Cayuga County brought on by invasive species. The priority species that the Cayuga County WQMA Invasive Species Working Group will concentrate on are those invasive species that have the potential to negatively impact Cayuga County and its watersheds whether terrestrial (e.g., Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (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 support early detection efforts to respond to new priority 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**

*\*Concentrate on the Educational priorities on next page.*

**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 a control event as part of the New York State Invasive Species Awareness Week (NYSISAW).

**ACTION:** The Working Group will work with partners such as FL-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.,” “Play. Clean. Go.,” 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.

*\*Educational Priorities for 2025:*

- Clean. Drain. Dry.
  - Clean, drain, and dry all watercraft, trailers, and equipment when boating or fishing. Comply with watercraft inspection and decontamination requirements.
- Play. Clean. Go.
  - Clean hiking boots, waders, boats and trailers, off-road vehicles, and other gear in between outings.
- Avoid dumping aquariums or live bait into waterways.
- Clean your fishing equipment and don’t dump live bait.
- Buy firewood where you’ll burn it or gather on site when permitted.
- Buy forage, hay, gravel, and mulch that are certified as “weed-free.”
- Take extra care when traveling, gardening, or moving plant material. Buy your plants from a reputable source and plant native species to support your local ecosystem. Avoid using invasive plant species at all costs.
  - Educate on Invasive Species Regulations (<https://dec.ny.gov/nature/invasive-species/resources-regulations/regulations>).
- Surveying practices and best management practices for invasive species detection, prevention and control.
  - How to volunteer to help remove invasive species from public lands and natural areas.