



Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization
(CWIO)



News **October 2022**

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Summary of the 9/28/22 CWIO Meeting and Recent Progress

- Featured speaker:** Tony Prestigiaco is research scientist at the Finger Lakes Hub which is part of the NYS DEC. Tony, along with Aimee Clinkhammer and Lewis McCaffrey, staff the Hub and between them, cover all the Finger Lakes, with Tony being assigned to Cayuga Lake. He explained some of what the organization does and provided links to many agencies, plans, and programs involved in water protection
 - FLW Hub Website <https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/122661.html>
 - NYSDEC DOW monitoring portal <https://nysdec.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=692b72ae03f14508a0de97488e142ae1>
 - CSLAP dashboard- DEMO <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/c32878596a0a47deb5f97ea5e07ec9c5>
 - CSLAP <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/81576.html>
 - HABS, NYHABS <https://nysdec.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ae91142c812a4ab997ba739ed9723e6e>
 - Clean Water Plans <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/23835.html>
 - DEC HABS Research guide: https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/researchguide.pdf
 - HAB Action Plans <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/113733.html>
 - HABS In-Lake Mitigation <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/120970.html>
 - Water Quality Standards Program <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/23853.html>
 - Quality Assurance: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/23850.html>
 - CALM https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/calmmay2021.pdf
 - FLOWPA <http://www.followpa.org/>
 - DOWinformation@dec.ny.gov
- Appreciating Hilary Lambert:** CWIO approved a letter of appreciation to Hilary Lambert, the former Steward and champion of Cayuga Lake working for the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network. Hilary helped CWIO in unending ways, working both behind the scenes and leading out front. We cannot thank Hilary enough for all her time and effort in protecting water quality
- Watershed Managers:** Both our new Watershed Manager, Erin Norris, and Seneca Lake’s Watershed Steward, Ian Smith who has assisted CWIO is getting two grant-funded projects underway in 2021-22 attended the September CWIO meeting. Ian gave an update on the projects he continues to shepherd, and Erin updated the group on her orientation to date. She will soon have touched base with a long list of CWIO members and stakeholders and continues to work with others in her equivalent position in neighboring lakes.

- **Dues:** Budget request letters for CWIO dues were sent out in late August in order to allow this service to be included in the 2023 budgeting process for municipalities. Let me know if you did not receive one.
- **Bond Act:** There is a bond act on the ballot this November that would increase funding for water quality projects. The act is called *The Clean Water, Clean Air, and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022*. The Association of Counties has a good succinct description (included separately in this email) for you to share with residents who have questions.

FEATURE ARTICLE FROM CWIO PARTNERS

The Community Science Institute (CSI) Has Data For Municipalities to Use

Are you wondering about the water quality of creeks in your municipality? CWIO is fortunate to have the Community Science Institute (CSI) collecting and maintaining a long history of data on Cayuga Lake and its tributaries. [See the October CSI update](#)¹ and check out the results of over 20 years of monitoring on [CSI's free online database](#)². The interactive graphs include guidance values from organizations such as Hudson Basin River Watch, NYSDOH, and EPA. Parameters featured on the database include: chloride (related to salt), *E.coli* (related to contamination from septic systems and manure), phosphorus and nitrogen (which can be associated with HAB formation), and turbidity and total solids (both of which are related to erosion), and more. Make sure to click the water quality indicator you want to see for that tributary to see the thresholds.

CSI's data are important for municipalities because the data are regulatory quality and can therefore be used for management projects, including applying for government funding for those projects.

These data are collected as part of CSI's [synoptic](#) stream and lake monitoring program. Samples are collected "synoptically" or all on the same day within a few hours to ensure that stream flow and meteorological conditions are consistent at all locations, therefore providing a "synopsis" or summary of water quality on a given day.

Click on the links below to access data on your local watershed:

Cayuga County:

- [Salmon Creek](#)
- [Cayuga Lake East Shore \(part of Salmon Creek sampling\)](#)
- [Great Gully Creek](#)
- [Milliken Creek](#)
- [Paines Creek, Deans Creek, Mill Creek, Town Line Creek](#)
- [Yawger Creek](#)

Seneca County:

¹ <https://mailchi.mp/683011bd3871/csi-monthly-update-september-5251525?e=7240942499>

² <http://www.database.communityscience.org/monitoringregions/1>

- [Burroughs Creek and Williamson Creek](#)
- [Canoga Creek](#)
- [Johnsons Creek](#)
- [Sheldrake Creek](#)

Tompkins County:

- [Cayuga Inlet](#)
- [Cayuga Lake West Shore](#)
- [Virgil Creek](#)
- [Fall Creek](#)
- [Taughannock Creek](#)
- [Trumansburg Creek](#)
- [Six Mile Creek](#)

CSI is still collecting samples and adding data to the database for the 2022 monitoring season so check back regularly to stay up to date on water quality in the Cayuga Lake watershed!

Do you have questions or feedback on our programs, data, or database? Reach out to us at <mailto:info@communityscience.org> or 607-257-6606.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES and FUNDED WORK

10/26/22 1:00-3:00 – Webinar on State and Federal Funding, Financing, and Resources for Municipal Infrastructure.

Syracuse University's Environmental Finance Center (SU-EFC) is hosting a virtual webinar on Wednesday, October 26, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., for those interested in learning more about funding and financing for safe and clean water management, renewable energy, and other community investments. Presenters will include representatives from DEC, NYS Department of Health, Environmental Facilities Corporation, NYS Homes and Community Renewal, and US Department of Agriculture, Rural Development.

[Register](#)³ to attend. Contact [Jes Eckerlin](#) for questions or more information.

12/23/22 – Clean Watersheds Needs Survey is Important for Future Funding

Water quality funding from federal and state governments depends partly on feedback from local governments on their anticipated needs. The NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) has extended the deadline for municipalities to submit their Clean Watersheds Needs Survey to **December 23, 2022**.

Local governments are asked to submit documentation about their anticipated water quality infrastructure project needs. This documentation may include information that municipalities already have available to show estimated costs for needed infrastructure repairs and upgrades. Resources and instructions for participating in the survey are available on [EFC's website](#). Contact EFC at 518-402-6924 or nyscwns@efc.ny.gov with questions.

³ <https://syracuseuniversity.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUvde6vrjsrE9KvqYhZoRH043xnbZ4gldBu>

Wetland Reserve Easements

Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE) help landowners restore and protect wetland ecosystems. Among the many benefits of wetlands, they store floodwaters, clean and recharge groundwater, sequester carbon, trap sediment, and filter pollutants, improving water quality.

Wetland conservation easements are either permanent or 30 years in duration. Eligibility includes **local and tribal governments**, as well as private landowners. Eligible lands include farmed, converted or degraded wetlands that can successfully be restored, croplands or grasslands subject to flooding, and riparian areas that link protected wetland areas. NRCS and the participant work together to develop a plan for the restoration and maintenance of the wetland.

[See more](#)⁴. For more information, Contact Peter Gibbs at peter.gibbs@usda.gov at 315-221-5883, visit our [ACEP page](#), or [contact your local service center](#).

TRAININGS and EDUCATION

10/25/22 3:00-4:00 - Understanding Conserved Lands in Your Community Using the New York Protected Areas Database

New York State contains over 5 million acres of land – about 20 percent of the state – protected for the purposes of conservation, recreation, and open space. Where is this protected land in your town? In neighboring towns? The New York Protected Areas Database (NYPAD) is a comprehensive map and database of lands in New York that are protected or designated as natural areas, conservation lands, open space, or recreational areas. It compiles the best available data about protected areas from a variety of sources. The first phase of a major update of NYPAD was released this summer.

This webinar will introduce the updated NYPAD and show ways to access the maps and data. We will also discuss ways this information can inform municipal land use planning and decision-making and conservation efforts in communities.

[Find more information and registration here](#)

10/17/22 2:00-3:30 - Community Visions After Floodplain Buyouts

Three NY communities that have experienced the devastation of floods have had businesses and residents in these communities voluntarily relocate out of harm's way. After the buildings are demolished, what happens to the land? These three communities have decided to re-envision how flood prone lands. Learn about their community visions following floodplain buyouts, how they were created, and what's next for these communities. [Register here](#)⁵.

DEC Webinars and Trainings for Municipalities Relating to Land Use and Protections of Waters

The DEC regularly offers trainings for municipal elected officials, boards, and staff. [See their upcoming trainings](#)⁶. Below are recordings of past trainings that can still be used for training.

- [Conservation Overlay Zoning \(March 23, 2022, webinar recording\)](#) | [Webinar transcript \(PDF\)](#)
- [Headwater Streams: Values and Threats \(November 3, 2021, webinar recording\)](#) | [Webinar transcript \(PDF\)](#)

⁴https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/acep/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

⁵https://tnc.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_16aph5t8S4SGJrSujBpoZw?_x_zm_rtaid=t3nAozhpQd6kJtqpqZKRaw.1665603427795.357494bc4eeb15775f7c7cc5ca5bf5ce&_x_zm_rtaid=780

⁶ <https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/120539.html>

- [Headwater Streams: Mapping and Planning \(November 10, 2021, webinar recording\) | Webinar transcript \(PDF\)](#)
- [Headwater Streams: Protection \(November 17, 2021, webinar recording\) | Webinar transcript \(PDF\)](#)
- [Headwater Streams: A Virtual Field Trip in the New Paltz Mill Brook Preserve](#)
- [Online Tools for Conservation Planning in the Hudson Valley \(July 20, 2021, webinar recording\) | Webinar transcript \(PDF\)](#)
- [Wetlands: Values and Threats \(May 5, 2021, webinar recording\)](#)
- [Wetlands: Mapping, Identification, and Field Verification \(May 12, 2021, webinar recording\) | Webinar transcript \(PDF\)](#)
- [Wetlands: Regulatory Status and Local Protection Strategies \(May 19, 2021, webinar recording\) | Webinar transcript \(PDF\)](#)
- [Wetlands: A Virtual Field Trip in the New Paltz Mill Brook Preserve](#)
- [Model Local Laws to Increase Resilience \(April 20, 2021\) - webinar recording Part 1 \(Intro to the Community Risk and Resiliency Act\) | webinar recording Part 2 \(Model Local Laws\) | Model Local Laws Guidance \(leaves DEC website\)](#)
- [Critical Environmental Areas \(Mach 23, 2021, webinar recording\) | CEA Fact Sheet](#)
- [Open Space Inventories and Plans \(February 23, 2021, webinar recording\)](#)
- [Natural Resource Inventories \(January 26, 2021, webinar recording\)](#)
- [Streams 101 \(July 23, 2020, webinar recording\)](#)
- [Best Practices for Local Environmental Reviews \(June 17, 2020, webinar recording\)](#)
- [Wetland Conservation \(March 18, 2020 ,webinar recording\)](#)
- [Stormwater Management \(February 26, 2020, webinar recording\)](#)
- [Wetland and Watercourse Protection: Lessons from Three Hudson Valley Towns and Historic Changes to New York State Wetland Policy | Webinar transcript \(PDF\)](#)
- [Conservation Advisory Councils and Boards \(September 25, 2019, webinar recording\)](#)

11/2, 11/3, 11/9 Understanding and Managing Floodplains for Healthy Watersheds and Resilient Communities.

Understanding and Managing Floodplains for Healthy Watersheds and Resilient Communities local government training workshops. This workshop is geared towards planning, zoning and municipal boards, supervisors, mayors, code enforcement officers, conservation advisory boards, and floodplain mangers, but anyone interested in learning more about floodplains, related risks and ways to maintain/enhance their watersheds. For most municipalities, the Local Government Workshop fulfills state law required training for local planning officials.

[Register for workshop](#)⁷ offered on 3 dates.

RESEARCH and RESOURCES

The DEC Announces Large Scale Pilot Study to Control Phosphorus Impacts in Honeoye Lake
 DEC is studying potential management actions to control internal lake phosphorus loading from sediments on the floor of the lake. Honeoye Lake is a valued recreational asset, but it is currently

⁷ <https://seagrant.sunysb.edu/articles/t/register-now-fall-2022-local-government-training-workshops-coastal-community-development-program-news>

impaired due to high phosphorus concentrations, mostly coming from within the lake itself. High phosphorous concentrations can create water quality issues such as reduced water clarity, low dissolved oxygen, fish die-offs, and may lead to harmful or toxic algal blooms (HABs).

This fall a contractor hired by DEC will apply aluminum sulfate (alum), a nutrient inactivant, to the deepest portions of Honeoye Lake in an effort to trap phosphorus in the sediments, preventing it from being dispersed in the water column where it can harm water quality. [See the entire press release](#)⁸.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Cayuga County and Owasco Watershed:

Owasco Watershed Nine Element Plan for Phosphorus Reduction' Lays Foundation for Additional Efforts to Protect and Enhance Owasco Lake Water Quality

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and New York State Department of State (DOS) announced the joint approval of the Owasco Lake Watershed Nine Element Plan for Phosphorus Reduction to advance efforts to restore and protect the water quality of Owasco Lake and its watershed. The collaborative effort identified focused strategies to ensure the lake's water supply, aquatic habitat, and recreational uses are protected. [See the full story](#)⁹ and [See the plan](#)¹⁰ and plan [appendices](#)¹¹.

Kudos to Owasco Lake watershed partners for achieving this goal!

Cayuga Lake Watershed:

10/18 5:00-6:30 pm: Flooding in Tompkins County: Are you ready? Let's talk about it.

Join the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council for an in-person presentation and conversation on flooding in the county and hear from people with first-hand experience. Plus a Q&A session. Location: Tompkins County Public Library, Borg Warner Room.

Seneca and Keuka Watershed

Seneca-Keuka Watershed Partnership

The autumn edition of the [Seneca and Keuka Watershed news](#)¹² is a joint effort and an excellent example of effective collaborative work. Articles included:

- Exploring a New Method for Wastewater Source Tracking – this article describes the use of a tool that detects optical brighteners used in laundry detergents and some toilet papers. Their presence in surface waters makes them a good indicator of wastewater contamination.
- Crooked Lake Canal Riparian Runoff Reduction Ecosystem Project Update – this \$300,000+ EPA funded project through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is along the outlet

⁸ <https://www.dec.ny.gov/press/126201.html>

⁹ <https://www.dec.ny.gov/press/126145.html>

¹⁰ https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/owascoge.pdf

¹¹ https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/owascogeappendix.pdf

¹² https://senecawatershedio.files.wordpress.com/2022/09/skwpnewsletter_fall2022.pdf

between Keuka and Seneca Lakes. Their goal is to reconnect remnants of the old canal to capture and treat stormwater flows—essentially creating wetlands that can absorb excess water during high rainfall events.

- Funded Agricultural Best Management Practice Projects – With the receipt of \$195,000 from the Great Lakes Commission and the NYS Dept of Agriculture, funds are going to increase planting of cover crops to reduce runoff from agricultural fields, and water and sediment control basins (WASCOB). Both types of best management practices are shown to reduce nutrient runoff from fields.
- Benefits of Biochar – this article explains the various benefits of biochar to both crops, water quality, and carbon sequestration.
- And MORE: Updates on the Seneca-Keuka 9-Element Plan, SWCD Community Outreach, Soil Health Workshop offered by Ontario and Yates SWCD offices...
- This newsletter is really worth a read.

Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District News

[This newsletter is FULL of great projects](#)¹³ being implemented. Check out their articles on:

- A funded manure storage facility that enables flexibility on the timing of manure spreading to target conditions that keep the most nutrients on the fields.
- A large erosion control project funded through the NYS Agricultural Environmental Management program (AEM) that reduces stormwater runoff in retention areas and releases waters slowly to a wide grassy waterway.
- Explanations of the different types of erosion and soil loss associated with each.
- Septic system (or onsite wastewater treatment systems) inspection and tracking program in Canandaigua Lake.
- A stormwater diversion project funded through the Agricultural Non-point Source Pollution Abatement and Control Program, and MORE

Great Lakes Watershed (Cayuga Lake is included in this watershed)

Public Comment Period is Open for Draft Great Lakes Action Agenda- deadline 11/11/22
DEC has released the draft *New York's Great Lakes Action Agenda 2022-2030*, a multi-year action plan to guide restoration and conservation, and foster sustainable, resilient, communities in New York's Great Lakes region. The Action Agenda advances a wide range of efforts to safeguard water quality, improve habitats for fish and wildlife, manage invasive species, promote sustainability, and enhance community resilience to climate change.

[The draft Action Agenda is available](#). Submit comments to greatlakes@dec.ny.gov by 11/11/22. A webinar on the topic is on **10/25 at 3:00**. [Register to attend](#).

State

State's Asset Management Program to Improve Local Wastewater Systems

Governor Kathy Hochul has announced 27 municipalities were selected to participate in a program that will help develop asset management programs to evaluate, monitor, protect, and responsibly plan upgrades for wastewater infrastructure facilities. The program supports

¹³ https://www.ontswcd.com/_files/ugd/e6fc30_deba2442f2bc4b20bfadbe7073a66a98.pdf

ongoing efforts to ensure the responsible stewardship of clean water infrastructure and builds upon a successful \$3 million pilot completed in 2021 administered by DEC and Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC).

The second phase of the State's Asset Management Program will continue New York's proactive approach to managing wastewater treatment by providing engineering consultant planning services, software management systems, and technical training to local governments.

[Read the press release and learn more](#)¹⁴.

The EPA Seeks Local Government Input.

EPA Seeks Nominations for Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC), which advises EPA on critical environmental issues impacting local governments. The agency is also accepting nominations for LGAC's Small Communities Advisory Subcommittee (SCAS). **Applications are due 10/31.** [Learn more](#)¹⁵.

A New Tool Tests Lake Erie Algae to Protect Drinking Water.

The City of Toledo, Ohio draws drinking water from Lake Erie and is testing a new tool that can identify which types of algae threaten drinking water to prevent “do not drink” orders in the future. [See the full story](#)¹⁶.

FOR YOUR RESIDENTS

EPA's Septic System Information

Residents with

Septic or decentralized wastewater treatment systems are commonly used in sparsely populated areas. A properly installed, sited and maintained system are a cost-effective method to reduce the risk of disease transmission and recharge groundwater and aquifers. Decentralized systems help communities reduce the large infrastructure and energy costs associated with collecting and treating wastewater.

[See EPA's information on how to properly maintain septic systems](#) or the NYS [Department of Health website](#).

¹⁴ <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-27-municipalities-selected-participate-clean-water-infrastructure>

¹⁵ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/10/04/2022-21491/local-government-advisory-committee-and-small-communities-advisory-subcommittee-request-for>

¹⁶ <https://www.13abc.com/2022/09/20/new-tool-tests-lake-erie-algae-protect-drinking-water/>