



Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization  
(CWIO)



**News** **November 2022**

**In This Issue:**

Summary of the 10/26 and 11/16 CWIO Meetings and Current Activities ..... 2

FROM CWIO PARTNERS WORKING ACROSS THE WATERSHED ..... 3

    11/29 6:00-7:30 Tour the CSI Database ..... 3

    November CSI news..... 3

    12/1 from 1:00-2:30 – CLWN Presents: Hydrilla in Cayuga Lake: 2022 Updates and Panel Discussion.. 3

    12/5 from 12:30-1:30 - CLWN Presents: Challenges to Cayuga Lake and Opportunities to Protect It .. 3

    12/14 from 6:30-7:30 - CLWN Presents: Challenges to Cayuga Lake and Opportunities to Protect It . 4

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES and FUNDED WORK..... 4

    State and Federal Funding, Financing, and Resources for Municipal Infrastructure ..... 4

    Final Intended Use Plans for State Revolving Fund ..... 4

WATERSHED PLANNING, MODEL LAWS, POLICIES..... 4

    12/7/22 at 7:00 pm - Implementation of the Owasco Lake Watershed Nine Element Plan for Phosphorus Reduction ..... 4

    12/18/22 - 2022 Draft NYS Stormwater Design Manual ..... 4

    Designating Critical Environmental Areas ..... 5

RESEARCH and RESOURCES ..... 5

    Michigan Plan Develops Wetlands to Combat Algal Blooms ..... 5

NEWS AND REPORTS..... 5

    Owasco Lake Watershed Lake Association News..... 5

    12/7/22 at 7:00 – The Owasco Watershed Lake Association Public Forum..... 5

    NYS Releases Final Water Quality Plan for Seneca and Keuka Lakes ..... 6

    9 Element Study Finds Farmland Runoff and Intense Storms Raise Phosphorus Loads that Drive HABs in the Seneca-Keuka Watershed. .... 6

    DEC and FLLT Protect More Than 195 Acres Critical to Water Quality..... 6

    State of the Great Lakes Report ..... 6

    Lake Ontario Action and Management Plan (LAMP) Annual Report ..... 7

    Using Community Preservation Funds for Land Conservation ..... 7

ELAP Certification Required for Labs Conducting Whole Effluent Toxicity Tests.....	7
EPA Issues Final List of Contaminants for Potential Regulatory Consideration in Drinking Water, Significantly Increases PFAS Chemicals for Review .....	7
USDA Report Shows a Decade of Conservation Trends.....	7

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## Summary of the 10/26 and 11/16 CWIO Meetings and Current Activities

- **Speaker on 10/26:** Jenna DeRario from Cornell Cooperative Extension spoke about the [Payment for Ecosystem Services](https://ccetompkins.org/agriculture/payment-for-ecosystem-services)<sup>1</sup> pilot project.
- **CWIO Organizational:** At the October and November CWIO meetings, members reviewed and then adopted the 2023 CWIO budget, work plan, leadership, and committee members. The final document will be sent out soon.
- **Great Lakes Action Agenda:** CWIO voted to authorize their Executive Committee to submit comments on the [Great Lakes Action Agenda](#) by the deadline of 11/25. Cayuga Lake falls within the Lake Ontario watershed.
- **Partners:** More and more CWIO partners are joining CWIO meetings and giving updates on important actions they have taken to protect water quality. These organizations with shared goals are key to CWIO’s work. We are grateful for the combined expertise that helps us move forward and welcome these updates.
- **Watershed Manager** – Erin Norris has been working through the list of CWIO’s prioritized projects to determine their status and need for CWIO’s assistance. She has been making important connections with many in the watershed who are key in water quality work. She also assists with all the active CWIO committees to help their work progress.
  - **Committees:** Erin is involved in all the active CWIO committees and assists them with their work.
  - Erin is currently actively involved in moving forward a stream stabilization project involving both the town and city of Ithaca in conjunction with a vineyard owner.
  - In the Town of Ulysses, Erin is working with a group on ditch Best Management Practices.
  - Erin led a mini workshop for students across the Finger Lakes who attended the 2022 Finger Lakes Youth Climate Summit. In the mini workshop students discussed what resilience and sustainability, and what actions their local community can take to advance watershed health and resilience in a changing climate.
  - A number of CWIO members, including Erin, attended the Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council’s Fall Local Government Workshop in Waterloo where the DEC presented on model local laws for increasing resilience; the FEMA’s Community Rating System that encourages community floodplain management practices was discussed; Monroe County presented on watershed assessment work for restoration projects; and Barton and Loguidice did a review of clean water plans and their uses. Finally, attendees participated in an exercise to discuss watershed issues and the tools available to address them—sharing lessons learned and best practices. The

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ccetompkins.org/agriculture/payment-for-ecosystem-services>

workshop provided a good opportunity to speak with regional partners and stakeholders and learn more about available resources.

- **Committees**

- **The CWIO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** is updating their ranking criteria in preparation for a new round of project request ideas. More information on project submissions will be coming soon. TAC members toured a project on the CWIO list completed by the Finger Lakes Land Trust at their Van Riper preserve in Seneca County to see the stream stabilization methods employed in this project.
- **CWIO Education, Public Participation, and Outreach (EPPOC)** approved all the segments of the website to go live with the exception of the *Projects* pages which will be reviewed by TAC. EPPOC will be developing ranking criteria for new projects that fall into the education and outreach categories.

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## FROM CWIO PARTNERS WORKING ACROSS THE WATERSHED

### *Community Science Institute*

11/29 6:00-7:30 Tour the CSI Database

Ever wonder how to better understand how to use CSI's data? They will be holding a water and community event at the Tompkins County Public Library for those interested in learning how to navigate through their [database](#)<sup>2</sup>. There will be a tour of the database, followed by time to explore on your own with CSI staff present for hands-on help in case of questions. The event can only accommodate 16 people. [Reserve a spot](#)<sup>3</sup>

### November CSI news

See the new issue of the Community Science Institute's [news](#).

### *Cayuga Lake Watershed Network*

12/1 from 1:00-2:30 – CLWN Presents: Hydrilla in Cayuga Lake: 2022 Updates and Panel Discussion.

Presenters and Panel: Sam Beck-Andersen, Associate Director of Invasive Species Programs and Coordinator of Finger Lakes PRISM; Kate Monacelli, Hydrilla Project Manager, Finger Lakes PRISM; Mallory Broda, Program Coordinator, ESF-NYS OPRHP Watercraft Inspection Program; Richard Ruby, Biologist at US Army Corps of Engineers; Michael Robinson, Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator - NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation

[Zoom registration link.](#)

12/5 from 12:30-1:30 - CLWN Presents: Challenges to Cayuga Lake and Opportunities to Protect It

This talk will focus on the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network's work to identify key threats to the Cayuga Lake watershed and our efforts to advocate for solutions that support a healthy environment and vibrant communities. [Find zoom link here](#)<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.database.communityscience.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tcpl.org/event/community-science-institute-water-quality-database-workshop>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cayugalake.org/>

12/14 from 6:30-7:30 - CLWN Presents: Challenges to Cayuga Lake and Opportunities to Protect It  
Learn about the issues surrounding inflows from Seneca and Keuka Lake, downstream limitations of the Seneca River, and the management challenges related to seasonal changes in water levels and forecasting. [Register here](#)<sup>5</sup>.

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES and FUNDED WORK

### State and Federal Funding, Financing, and Resources for Municipal Infrastructure

Syracuse University's Environmental Finance Center (EFC) held a virtual roundtable detailing various federal and state funding sources. The webinar was titled "State and Federal Funding, Financing, and Resources for Municipal Infrastructure Roundtable Discussions" and a recording can be viewed here: <https://efc.syr.edu/2022-funding-roundtable/>. Additionally, Syracuse University EFC was selected by the US EPA as one of 29 EFCs in the country that will help communities access federal funding for infrastructure and greenhouse gas reduction projects that improve public health and environmental protection. Read the full press release [here](#).

### Final Intended Use Plans for State Revolving Fund

The NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC), Department of Health (DOH), and DEC have [announced the Final Intended Use Plans](#)<sup>6</sup> and associated documents for the State Revolving Fund (SRF). The SRF programs are available to municipalities in New York State to finance water quality and drinking water-related projects. The 2023 IUPs include projects that could receive financing from October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023.

Find the final Clean Water IUP list and associated documents on [EFC's website](#) and the final Drinking Water IUP list on [DOH's website](#)<sup>7</sup>.

## WATERSHED PLANNING, MODEL LAWS, POLICIES

### 12/7/22 at 7:00 pm - Implementation of the Owasco Lake Watershed Nine Element Plan for Phosphorus Reduction

Michele Wunderlich from Cayuga County Planning and Economic Development Department will outline how the newly approved 9 Element Plan will help reduce phosphorus and other contaminants in Owasco Lake. [Registration is required](#).

### 12/18/22 - 2022 Draft NYS Stormwater Design Manual

The NYS DEC has announced the availability of the final draft of the New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual (Design Manual) for public review. Comments will be accepted until December 18, 2022.

The 2022 draft Design Manual includes new stormwater management practices (SMPs), clarifies calculations for designing SMPs, provides enhanced guidance for implementing several SMPs, updates precipitation data criteria, improves document organization, provides enhanced guidance for addressing pollutants of concern, adds green infrastructure SMPs for poor site conditions, and provides guidance on addressing climate change.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZYrduCurj8tH9DQx-GIVAu-jOcNcXv1FLfX>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.dec.ny.gov/enb/20221019\\_noto.html](https://www.dec.ny.gov/enb/20221019_noto.html)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/water>

Find the draft [Design Manual](#)<sup>8</sup> on DEC's website. View the October 19th Environmental Notice Bulletin for information about [how to submit comments](#)<sup>9</sup>.

### Designating Critical Environmental Areas

[Municipalities can designate critical environmental areas](#)<sup>10</sup> (CEAs) to bring attention to unique and exceptional natural areas during State Environmental Quality Reviews (SEQR). The designation serves to alert project sponsors of the community's concern for the CEA's resources, which then need to be considered and addressed during environmental review. The DEC describes the process of adopting and implementing CEAs in Chapter 2 of The SEQR Handbook (2020) and [maps of existing CEAs can be viewed](#)<sup>11</sup> on the DEC website.

## RESEARCH and RESOURCES

### Michigan Plan Develops Wetlands to Combat Algal Blooms

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is developing and protecting wetlands to protect Lake Erie from algal blooms. Since blooms commonly occur when runoff from farmland carrying fertilizer enters a body of water, a wetland that can intercept runoff from farms would act as a barrier, slowing down the flow of the water and giving the phosphorus time to absorb into the soil. [Read the article](#)<sup>12</sup>.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### *Cayuga County and Owasco Watershed:*

#### Owasco Lake Watershed Lake Association News

[This newsletter](#)<sup>13</sup> is full of great articles including an update on the HAB status and

- Harmful Algal Bloom update
- What is CSLAP
- 3/11/23 from 9:00-noon--save-the-date for the Bob Brower Scientific Symposium
- A check-in on the health of Hemlocks
- How Micron could affect the waters
- And MORE.

### 12/7/22 at 7:00 – The Owasco Watershed Lake Association Public Forum.

Michele Wunderlich, Associate Planner at the Cayuga County Planning and Economic Development Department, will be the speaker at the December OWLA Public Forum discussing the implementation of the Owasco Lake Watershed Nine Element Plan for Phosphorus Reduction. Hear how this important document will help shape on-going efforts to protect Owasco Lake. [Registration](#) required.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/29072.html>

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.dec.ny.gov/enb/20221019\\_noto.html](https://www.dec.ny.gov/enb/20221019_noto.html)

<sup>10</sup> <https://hudson.dnr.cals.cornell.edu/conservation-planning/local-conservation-policy#toc-critical-environmental-areas>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6184.html>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.lenconnect.com/story/news/environment/2022/10/23/michigan-plans-swamp-lake-erie-algal-blooms/69582061007/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://mailchi.mp/b978af47b06b/voice-of-the-lake-newsletter-november-2022?e=bddobc5237>

## ***Seneca and Keuka Watershed***

### **NYS Releases Final Water Quality Plan for Seneca and Keuka Lakes**

*Seneca-Keuka Watershed Nine Element Plan for Phosphorus' Outlines Science- and Community-Based Program to Restore and Protect Two Treasured Finger Lakes*

The NYS DEC and DOS announced the joint agency approval of the Plan to reduce phosphorus pollution. Excess phosphorus can trigger harmful algal blooms (HABs) that can impair water quality and opportunities for recreation. This collaborative planning effort identified focused strategies, programs, and projects to enhance the lakes' water supplies, aquatic habitats, and recreational uses. [Read the whole press release](#)<sup>14</sup>.

### **9 Element Study Finds Farmland Runoff and Intense Storms Raise Phosphorus Loads that Drive HABs in the Seneca-Keuka Watershed.**

A comprehensive plan to cut phosphorus pollution in the Seneca-Keuka Watershed won final state approval this week, providing a roadmap for protecting the two lakes from toxic algal blooms and flooding driven by climate change.

Phosphorus is identified as a “primary driver” of outbreaks of cyanobacteria, or harmful algal blooms (HABs), that have plagued the lakes for at least the past seven years. Polluted runoff from increasingly intense storms and waters warmed by climate change exacerbate phosphorus’ negative effects, according to the 326-page document.

Like similar studies carried out for Cayuga, Owasco and Honeoye lakes, the Seneca-Keuka 9E plan found that most phosphorus reaches the lakes through runoff from farmland. [Read the whole article](#)<sup>15</sup>.

## ***Ontario and Schuyler Counties***

### **DEC and FLLT Protect More Than 195 Acres Critical to Water Quality**

Through a joint effort, the NYS DEC and the Finger Lakes Land Trust have protected 57 acres of land in the Honeoye Inlet Wildlife Management Area and 140 acres of the Catharine Creek Wildlife Management Area. The lands will provide environmental benefits including protecting water quality by filtering runoff and preserving wildlife habitat. Additionally, the lands will increase recreational opportunities along the scenic lake, hillsides, and wetlands. [Read the entire press release](#)<sup>16</sup>.

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

### **State of the Great Lakes Report**

The [State of the Great Lakes 2022](#)<sup>17</sup> reports have been released. These reports provide an overview of the status and trends of the Great Lakes ecosystem. Nine main indicators and 40 sub-indicators of ecosystem health were used to assess the state of the Great Lakes. You can also explore the reports by visiting our new [State of the Great Lakes microsite](#).

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.dec.ny.gov/press/126413.html>

<sup>15</sup> <https://waterfrontonline.blog/2022/10/22/farmland-runoff-intense-storms-raise-phosphorus-loads-that-drive-habs-in-seneca-keuka-watershed-study-finds/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.dec.ny.gov/press/126333.html>

<sup>17</sup> <https://binational.net/2022/07/29/sogl-edgl-2022/>

## Lake Ontario Action and Management Plan (LAMP) Annual Report

The 2021 [Lake Ontario Lakewide Action and Management Plan](#)<sup>18</sup> (LAMP) Annual Report has been released. The report provides a summary of the accomplishments of the Lake Ontario Partnership agencies.

## Using Community Preservation Funds for Land Conservation

Learn how the Hudson Valley is employing Community Preservation Funds (CFPs) as a dedicated account for local land conservation. [See article.](#)

## ELAP Certification Required for Labs Conducting Whole Effluent Toxicity Tests

Starting January 1, 2023, the DEC will require municipal and industrial wastewater treatment facilities to use labs certified under the NYS Department of Health (DOH) [Environmental Laboratory Approval Program \(ELAP\)](#) for all Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) testing. The DEC encourages the wastewater treatment facilities that are required to complete WET testing after January 1, 2023, to ensure that the lab they are using has received the DOH ELAP certification or is in the process of obtaining it.

Direct inquiries about ELAP to DOH at [elap@health.ny.gov](mailto:elap@health.ny.gov). Contact DEC at [WET@dec.ny.gov](mailto:WET@dec.ny.gov) for questions about the WET testing program.

## EPA Issues Final List of Contaminants for Potential Regulatory Consideration in Drinking Water, Significantly Increases PFAS Chemicals for Review

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published the Final Fifth Drinking Water Contaminant Candidate List (CCL 5), which will serve as the basis for EPA's regulatory considerations over the next five-year cycle under the Safe Drinking Water Act. This update includes a substantial expansion of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), an important first step towards identifying additional PFAS that may require regulation under the Safe Drinking Water Act. [Read the entire press release.](#)<sup>19</sup>

## USDA Report Shows a Decade of Conservation Trends

A new US Department of Agriculture (USDA) report shows use of no-till, crop rotations, more efficient irrigation methods and advanced technologies have climbed in recent years. The report from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) demonstrates progress made through voluntary conservation over a 10-year period.

Because of this increased conservation, the report estimates:

- Average annual water (sheet and rill) and wind erosion dropped by 70 million and 94 million tons, respectively, and edge-of-field sediment loss declined by 74 million tons.
- Nitrogen and phosphorus losses through surface runoff declined by 3% and 6%, respectively.
- Nearly 26 million additional acres of cultivated cropland were gaining soil carbon, and carbon gains on all cultivated cropland increased by over 8.8 million tons per year.
- Average annual fuel use dropped by 110 million gallons of diesel fuel equivalents, avoiding associated greenhouse gas emissions of nearly 1.2 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalents.

[See the full article](#)<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://binational.net/2022/08/22/lake-ontario-lakewide-action-and-management-plan-annual-report-2021/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-issues-final-list-contaminants-potential-regulatory-consideration-drinking-water>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/conservation-by-state/idaho/news/usda-report-shows-a-decade-of-conservation>

