



Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council  
June 20, 2023, 10:00-11:30 AM

Meeting of the Directors

**Owasco** – Ed Wagner, **Cayuga County** – Aileen McNabb -Coleman, **City of Auburn** – Ginny Kent, **Niles** – Joan Jayne, **Locke** – Thane Benson, **Scipio** – Melinda Pitman, **Fleming** – Karen VanLiew, **Moravia** – Terry Baxter, **Village of Moravia** – Gary Mulvaney, **Village of Groton** – Theodore Skibinski, **Summerhill** – Charlie Ripley, **Sennett** – Tom Blair, **Dryden** – Anne Clark  
**Executive Director**- Adam Effler

Presiding: Dr. Adam Effler

- A. Board of Directors – Roll call: **Owasco**-Ed Wagner, **Cayuga County**-Aileen McNabb-Coleman, **City of Auburn**-Ginny Kent, **Niles**-Joan Jayne, **Scipio**-Melinda Pitman, **Fleming**-Karen VanLiew, **Moravia**-Terry Baxter, **Dryden**-Anne Clark (online). Ex Officio attendees: Ally Berry, Olivia Green, Marissa Jordan, Aimee Clinkhammer, Frank Clarke, Daniel Welch, Andy Zepp, Michelle Wunderlich,
- B. Approval of the Agenda: Motion to approve made by Terry Baxter seconded by Ed Wagner, motion was unanimously approved.
- C. Approval of Minutes from the May 16, 2023, meeting as previously distributed: Motion to approve made by Karen VanLiew seconded by Ginny Kent, motion was unanimously approved.
- D. Public to be Heard: None heard.
- E. Director’s Summary – Adam Effler (distributed for review prior to meeting)

**Staffing Update**

A vacant Watershed Inspector position within the Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection and Protection Division of the OLWMC was posted, and candidate interviews are underway.

**Watershed Rules and Regulations**

Project Update: NYSDOH project updates are posted on the OLWMC’s website (<https://www.olwmc.org/projects>)

The following details were provided within NYSDOH’s project update report (6.20.23 Monthly Owasco WRR Update for OLWMC) delivered to the OLWMC Board of Directors, Ex Officio Partners, and engaged members of the public prior to the June 20, 2023 OLWMC public board meeting:

**General Update:**

Since the OWLMC’s May meeting, NYSDOH convened several interagency agency meetings to discuss proposed regulations and clean water planning approaches. State staff are looking forward to gathering in-person on June 29 to review state agency authorities, discuss additional initiatives and to review the State Administration Procedure Act (SAPA) steps. Below is a tentative schedule which includes the rulemaking milestones.

**Tentative Schedule:**

<i>State-Local Technical Workgroup Meeting</i>	<i>June 29, 2023</i>
<i>Interagency Internal Review **</i>	<i>July 2023 to July 2024</i>
<i>Publication in NYS Register- Notice of Rulemaking</i>	<i>August 2024</i>
<i>End of 60-day public comment period</i>	<i>October 2024</i>
<i>DOH submits response to comments</i>	<i>December 2024</i>
<i>DOH publishes revised rule making</i>	<i>March 2025</i>
<i>Notice of adoption</i>	<i>July 2025</i>

**\*\*This includes putting the regulations into express terms and developing supporting documentation in accordance with SAPA:**

- **Concept paper (DOH only)**
- **Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS)**
- **Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (RFA) or statement in lieu of RFA**
- **Rural Area Flexibility Analysis (RAFA) or Statement in lieu of RAFA**
- **Job Impact Statement (JIS) or Statement in lieu of JIS**
- **Executive Order 17 Assessment**
- **Executive Review Documentation (Proposed Rule Transmittal)**
- **SEQR**

**NYS Tributary Legislation**

**Project Update:**

On April 25, 2023, S1725A passed the NYS Senate. The bill was then referred to the Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee. On June 6, 2023, the Assembly passed the bill and returned it to the Senate. It will be sent to the Governor for signature (approval) or veto (rejection).

**Recognition, Awareness, Education and Outreach Projects Updates**

- Published feature articles with the Citizen newspaper continue to target recognition of watershed residents making strides in watershed protection. The OLWMC’s June feature article with the Citizen

featured Moravia Gives Back Day. On May, 22, 2023 student volunteers from Moravia High School led conservation activities at the Fillmore Nature Preserve.

- The Owasco Lake watershed's 2023 Lake Friendly Living (LFL) event was separated into a series of rain garden expansions held at Emerson Park. For example, on Saturday, June 10, 2023 volunteers planted:
  - 8 pollinator attractors (1 gallon size containers)
  - 10 red osier dogwood
  - 50 foxglove beardtongue and 50 swamp milkweed landscape plugs
  - 25 bare root golden sedges
  - 10 soft rushes (moved from the nearby basin)
- The NYS Assembly's Commemorative Lake Friendly Living resolution will be delivered to all Finger Lakes watershed stewardship organizations that are members of the LFL Coalition and were involved in May 2023 impact events across the region.
- In June, 2023 the OLWMC applied to become a member of the Cayuga County Chamber of Commerce.

### **Nine Element Watershed Plan (9EP)**

#### **Project Update:**

During its May 25, 2023 meeting, as part of the group's 2023 work plan, the Owasco Lake 9E Watershed Plan Coordination Committee discussed next steps towards preparing project proposals and fundraising for watershed streams inventorying and engineering planning in 2023 (Phase 1) to direct stream restoration projects between 2023-2024 (Phase 2). The Committee will continue to convene on a monthly basis with the next meeting scheduled for June 22, 2023.

### **Watershed Lake and Tributary Monitoring**

#### **Project Review:**

- Owasco Lake and watershed monitoring partners prepared a comprehensive monitoring budget for 2023 that includes costs for 1) a new Owasco Lake monitoring role by the Finger Lakes Institute, Hobart William Smith Colleges, 2) laboratory analysis for watershed tributary samples collected by the Owasco Watershed Lake Association (OWLA), 3) continued funding of the USGS gauge station along the Inlet, 4) continuation of the Citizen's Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP) and 5) the continuation of Hyfi level sensor use for monitoring water levels within the Owasco Flats constructed retention basins. The Cayuga County Planning Department submitted elements of the program budget to the NYSDEC as part of their 2023 Finger Lakes Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FLOWPA) budget.
- The Cayuga County Planning Department and Owasco Lake and watershed water quality monitoring partners finalized a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) that reflects monitoring logistics for the 2023 field season.
- The Owasco Watershed Lake Association is underway with its 2023 watershed tributaries monitoring program designed to include both baseline monitoring and storm event-based sampling.

### **NYS-awarded Drinking Water Source Protection Program (DWSP2)**

#### **Project Update:**

The Town of Owasco is receiving consultant support through NYS to develop its DWSP2. The second Town of Owasco DWSP2 group meeting held on June 8, 2023 hosted a group discussion on plan objectives.

### **Municipal Codes and Ordinances**

#### **Project Review:**

The Village of Moravia adopted the Sediment and Erosion Control Plan, and associated Appendix E, prepared and proposed by the OLWMC for advancing municipal control requirements for new construction activities.

### **Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) Identification and Reporting**

#### **Project Update:**

- Generally, year over year, observations of HABs are increasing throughout the eastern Finger Lakes Region.
- Regarding HABs, the NYSDEC encourages the community to “know it, report it, and avoid it.”
- Consistent with previous years, in 2023, the Owasco Watershed Lake Association (OWLA) is leading the volunteer HABs surveillance program for Owasco Lake.
- The NYSDEC recently hosted Finger Lakes HABs Shoreline Surveillance Training.

### **Land Holdings**

#### **Fillmore Nature Preserve Project Review:**

- The OLWMC closed on the property transfer of the Fillmore Nature Preserve from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) on January 10, 2023. Fillmore Nature Preserve property boundary signage was installed by OLWMC staff with the help of TNC on March 8, 2023. The associated field trip accommodated the first annual property inspection to meet the OLWMC’s annual property inspection commitment.
- TNC has expressed interest in having the OLWMC own and steward two additional properties poised for acquisition and preservation within the Owasco Lake watershed. These include:
  - 100-acre parcel in Locke, mixed farmland
    - 72-acre parcel in Venice, dense wetland
    - **Fillmore Nature Preserve Project Update:**
- On May 22, 2023, student conservation work at the Fillmore Nature Preserve was one of the activities included as part of Moravia High School’s 'Moravia Gives Back Day.' Students collected litter along the roadway adjacent to the preserve, pulled invasive species, and identified species to inform a conservation database. Moravia High School students were the first to assess biodiversity at the preserve. Now, every time someone uses iNaturalist© to identify a species found there, the uploaded information will contribute to their initiated project.
- The Town of Owasco is providing trail maintenance support at the Fillmore Nature Preserve.
- A grant proposal is being developed to create a public access lot and educational kiosk at the nature preserve.
- **Programs, Funding, and Related Opportunities**

## SOGL

### Project Review:

- The OLWMC submitted a Sustain Our Great Lakes (SOGL) 2023 project pre-proposal that targets funding stream restoration and improvement projects along stream reaches of the Owasco Inlet in the southern municipalities of Moravia and Locke. Prior surveys and monitoring by Cayuga County have identified several locations of streambank erosion and flooding along the proposed reaches. This proposed project serves to address streambank erosion in two main tributaries that encompass 60 percent of the acreage of the lake's watershed and are responsible for approximately 40 percent of phosphorus loading into the lake. This proposed project is in conjunction with the Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District, with project monitoring that ties into tributary monitoring plans by the Owasco Watershed Lake Association.
- Total Amount Requested: \$299,640.00
- Matching Contributions Proposed: \$100,360.00
- A full Sustain Our Great Lakes funding proposal was developed in partnership with Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD) and EA Consulting, targeting stream restoration along the Owasco Inlet. Proposed project partners also include the Cayuga County Planning Department, OWLA, and SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. Based on a successful pre-proposal the OLWMC submitted a full project proposal for streambank restoration project sites between Booth Hill Road and Cat Path Road in the Town of Locke. Landowners who reside along the targeted Owasco Inlet reaches have expressed concern about severe streambank erosion in those areas.

### TAIP Project Review:

The Tributary Assessment and Identification Pilot Project (TAIPP) “pilot” project, which led to the installation of tributary signage in the northern portion of the watershed, provided a starting point to engage the public for tributary protection and education. OLWMC staff plan to expand this initiative and propose that additional tributary signage be placed within the Town of Moravia, Village of Moravia, and Town of Locke. Consistent with existing signage, new signage will include the name of the sub watershed/tributary flowing at a specific road crossing, as well as “quick response” (QR) scan codes that will link smartphone users to the Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection and Protection Division’s project webpage. Emergency contact information will also be included for the public to report observed water quality issues at the location. OLWMC staff are finalizing a grant proposal to fund the expansion of tributary identification signage in the southern portion of the Owasco Lake watershed.

### NYS Finger Lakes Watersheds Grant Program -Round 1 Project

#### Update:

The OLWMC will act as a lead applicant for the submission of a grant proposal targeting watershed tributary monitoring and data integration in a public facing database.

#### **Municipality Buy-In**

Project Review: The OLWMC continues to encourage participation and directorship from the remaining towns within the watershed that have yet to join to help direct project initiatives. They include the Towns of Venice, Sempronius, Groton, Genoa, Skaneateles, and Lansing.

- F. Board of Directors/Municipality Representatives Feedback: Discussion of monitoring of Van Ness Brook upstream beyond what is being done. This would be part of the new grant proposal. Still working on developing details and hoping on any data on streams will be available to the public. Terry Baxter asked about grants for parking area/kiosk for the Fillmore nature preserve. Hopefully the adjacent towns would like to be involved with donating gravel. Positive feedback about Moravia students' involvement on iNaturalist and plant assessment of the Fillmore nature preserve.
- G. Treasurer's Audit and Finance Report
- i. May 2023 Financials Approval – Joan Jayne reported the financials as of May 31, 2023, Current Assets were \$214,627.60 and Total Assets and Liabilities were \$ 286,046.31. Motion to approve made by Terry Baxter seconded by Ed Wagner, motion was unanimously approved.
  - ii. Draft 2022 Financial Audit Draft Approval – Motion to approve made by Ed Wagner seconded by Ginny Kent, motion was unanimously approved. Financial information has been delivered to Towns and will be delivered to the villages.
- H. Lake Level Report – Ed Wagner delivered a report on Owasco Lake with the elevation at 712.86 and keeping an eye on upcoming expected rain and will adjust outflow accordingly.
- I. Source Water Protection through Land Acquisition – Andy Zepp, Director of the Finger Lakes Land Trust, a partner of OLWC, this presentation is available on a video of the June 20, 2023, Director's meeting at: <https://www.olwmc.org/news>
- J. 'Our Owasco' Behavioral Change Project Update – Marissa Jordan discussed a capacity building webinar-had a good turnout. They are starting to write articles for the Auburn Citizen regarding their experience.
- K. The Nature Conservancy Update – Olivia Green attended a workshop on opportunities for funding. Monday from 6-8PM. Has the final 2 properties they are looking at in this round. Did a small-scale Spring planting in Owasco flats and larger one planned for the Fall. Still working on the demonstration project for the phosphorus sequestration for septic tank at Camp Owasco.
- L. NYSDEC Hub Update – Aimee Clinkhammer reported there are two virtual meetings on funding opportunities and planning for funding, round one for Finger Lakes Watershed grants due in July 2023.
- M. Owasco Watershed Lake Association Update – Ann Robson unavailable but OWLA is actively involved in the tributary stream monitoring program and the Woolly Adelgid program continues.
- N. Cornell Cooperative Extension Update – Frank Clarke announced an 80-gallon compost bin sale sponsored by Nucor- first 100 purchased cost \$40, then \$50. For Cayuga County residents only. Contact Cooperative Extension office.
- O. Partners for Healthy Watersheds Update – Greg Rejman unavailable
- P. Watershed Inspection Monthly Report – Ally Berry's watershed inspection report may be accessed at <https://www.olwmc.org/news>
- Q. Communications: Finger Lakes Institute is still recruiting for summer positions; Prism still has traps for lantern flies.
- R. Issues of Concern: None Heard.

- S. Next Meeting will be Tuesday, July 18, 2023, at 10 am in Memorial City Hall, Auburn, NY
- T. Adjourn motion to adjourn made by Terry Baxter at 11:00 AM seconded by Karen VanLiew, motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Vivian Cunningham