



Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council

April 21, 2026, 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** – Nancy Hart, **Fleming** – Karen VanLiew, **Town of Moravia** – Terry Palmer, **Village of Moravia** –Chris Fulton, **Village of Groton** – Theodore Skibinski, **Summerhill** – Charlie Ripley, **Sennett** – Tom Blair, **Dryden** – TBD, **Lansing** – Joseph Wetmore
Executive Director- Adam Effler

Presiding: Dr. Adam Effler

- A. Board of Directors – Roll call: Owasco-Ed Wagner, City of Auburn-Ginny Kent, Niles-Joan Jayne, Scipio-Nancy Hart, Fleming-Karen VanLiew, Town of Moravia-Terry Palmer, Ex-officio: John West, Jesse Lloyd, Carol Sutkus, Phil Gioia (online), Tim Schneider, Gabriel Yerdon (online).
- B. Approval of the Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda made by Ginny Hart and seconded by Joan Jayne. Motion unanimously approved.
- C. Approval of Minutes from March 17, 2026, Board Meeting as distributed via email: Motion to approve the March 2026 minutes made by Terry Hart and seconded by Nancy Hart. Motion unanimously approved.
- D. Public to be Heard: None Heard
- E. Director’s Summary – Adam Effler (distributed for review prior to meeting) For an audio/visual of Dr. Effler’s report please visit <https://www.olwmc.org/news>.
Watershed Rules and Regulations-no new updates

Recognition, Awareness, Education and Outreach Projects Updates

The Lake Friendly Living Coalition is underway this year with planning a series of public events over the month of May. The Owasco event, scheduled for Saturday, May 9, 2026, from 9AM-noon, will involve litter pickup from roadside ditches and the lakeshore at the northern end of the lake. A promotional flyer was developed for distribution. As in previous years, the OLWMC is engaging with NYS officials to request NYS’s annual proclamation of support for the coalition’s efforts. The OLWMC is also seeking a proclamation or commemorative resolution from the Cayuga County Legislature.

The OLWMC's March 6, 2026, staff feature article in the Citizen newspaper highlighted the adverse impacts of sediment deposition in, and lake discharges from, watershed ditches.

The OLWMC coordinated with the Owasco Watershed Lake Association (OWLA) to gain an Owasco Lake community presence at EPF Lobby and Finger Lakes Advocacy Days in Albany, February 10-11, 2026.

The Senate and Assembly each proposed budgets that exceeded the governor's proposal for \$425 million in funding for the Environmental Protection Fund. Each proposed an allocation of \$500 million. In addition, the senate budget specifically proposed a new budget line of \$500k for the Finger Lakes Watershed Grants. This was a new grant category introduced a few years ago that received many more project proposals from regional watershed stewards than could be funded. Senator Rachel May, of the 48th District, requested renewal of the Finger Lakes Watershed Grants request.

The OLWMC is working with the Auburn Wegmans to develop the 'Make a Splash' program to advance watershed and lake protection education and to fundraise. This program replicates a program developed between Canandaigua Lake stewards and their local Wegmans, whereby patrons could learn more about lake protection and purchase a watershed protection themed reusable bag, with proceeds and donations going to watershed stewardship organizations.

Nine Element Watershed Plan (9EP)

Project Update:

The next 9E Committee meeting will be held on April 29, 2026. The meeting will host EA Engineering to present their final report for Sucker and Veness Brooks' corridor assessments and provide project recommendations.

Watershed Lake and Tributary Monitoring

Projects Update:

The OLWMC partnered with OWLA to capture storm event sampling of the Owasco Lake tributaries on April 1, 2026.

On April 13th, the OLWMC hosted an Owasco Lake tributary monitoring program training with the Cayuga County Planning Department and OWLA.

NYS-awarded Drinking Water Source Protection Program (DWSP2)

Municipal Codes, Ordinances, and Projects

Project Update:

The OLWMC will endorse the Town of Fleming Highway Department's grant proposal to increase the size of its salt storage shed.

Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) Identification and Programming:

The New York Harmful Algal Bloom System (NYHABS) link will be available when the 2026 monitoring season begins in May.

Land Holdings

Fillmore Nature Preserve Project Update:

Fillmore Nature Preserve stewards are communicating to share contact information and plan their approach for trails maintenance.

Venice Preserve Update:

Two stewardship hunting agreement contracts have been signed by neighboring landowners, both college students focused on environmental studies.

Potential OLWMC Acquisitions Review:

TNC has expressed interest in having the OLWMC own an additional property poised for long term stewardship and preservation within the Owasco Lake watershed, a 100-acre mixed farmland parcel in the Town of Groton. TNC will present the remaining acquisition opportunity to the OLWMC Board of Directors.

Partner Land Acquisitions/Targets Review:

Camp Casowasco has officially announced its closure. The FLLT is interested in exploring ways to conserve the landmark property and buildings.

NFWF SOGL Project Update:

Landowners have given permission to move forward with streambank stabilization for all but one of the designed sites

NYS Relevant Bills Review:

Harmful algal bloom monitoring and prevention act (S8356/A8867): Reintroduced under the 2025 legislative session, under new print, NYS Senate bill S1833 Enacts the ‘Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring and Prevention Act.’ On June 10, 2025 Senate Bill S1833, which enacts the "harmful algal bloom monitoring and prevention act," was passed by the New York State Senate, delivered to the NYS Assembly, and referred to the Environmental Conservation Committee. A hearing was held on May 21, 2025, Chaired by Peter Harckham Chair Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, Co-sponsor Senator Rachel May.

Bill Update:

- Jan 7, 2026 - REFERRED TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
- Feb 24, 2026 - REPORTED AND COMMITTED TO FINANCE
- Mar 24, 2026 – BROUGHT TO SENATE FLOOR

This bill is not expected to move forward until next year.

F. Board of Directors/Municipality Representatives Feedback: None heard.

G. Treasurer’s Audit and Finance Report

- i. March 2026 Financials Approval – Joan Jayne reported financials as of March 31, 2026: Total Current Assets \$427,977.90; Total Liabilities and Equity \$460,078.63. Motion to approve the financial report made by Nancy Hart and seconded by Ginny Kent. Motion unanimously approved.

H. Lake Level Report – John West reported the lake elevation at 712.95 ft. It has been a very active the past few weeks with more water than seen in a few years. He is trying to finesse the lake level with the Seneca River, Owasco Lake and Cayuga Lake levels. He will continue to monitor weather and water elevations.

- I. Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District Projects Update – Tim Schneider: For an audio/video of this presentation please visit <https://www.olwmc.org/news>.
- J. NYSDEC Finger Lakes Watershed Program– Gabriel Yerdon-to access the report visit <https://www.olwmc.org/news>. Save the date for this Friday for Great Lakes Kickoff for workgroup meeting. 1-2:30.
- K. Owasco Watershed Lake Association Update –Carol Sutkus-Beginning in June Dr. Phil Gioia will become president of OWLA. In June at Owasco Yacht Club, 6/24/ 26 at 5 Pm OWLA will host “Business after Five”. The organization is coordinating a roadside cleanup for June, the Woolly Adelgid program second round is starting with funding events to replenish coffers. Volunteers are checking ‘lake critical’ hemlocks in need for retreatment. They have discovered new trees needing treatment and will start with targeted treatment with each tree.
- L. Cornell Cooperative Extension Update –unavailable
- M. Watershed Inspection Monthly Report – Jesse Lloyd-for an audio/visual of the report visit <https://www.olwmc.org/news>.
- N. Communications: At next month’s meeting Cayuga Co Parks and Recreation will provide and update on their projects. Finger Laker Prism is in the process of seeking high school students to hire for the Finger Lakes Water Stewards Summer Program.
- O. Issues of Concern: None heard
- P. Next Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 19, 2026.
- Q. Adjourn: Motion to adjourn made by Joan Jayne. Vote was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 11:19 AM.

Respectfully submitted.

Vivian Cunningham