



## Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council (OLWMC)

July 20th, 2021, 10:00am – Director’s Summary

- Watershed Inspector, Drew Snell, departed from his role June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. A celebration event was held for Drew at the Springside Inn on June 24<sup>th</sup> where we recognized Drew’s efforts to implement watershed rules and regulations and help protect the Owasco Lake Watershed. After our recruitment effort earlier this month, we hired our new Watershed Inspector, Mr. Dillon Shults, to the Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection and Protection Division (OLWIPD) on Monday July 12th. Mr. Shults has professional experience in environmental regulations and permitting, as well as technical experience in water quality monitoring, data analysis, and reporting.
- On June 30<sup>th</sup>, leaders for the Owasco Lake watershed community received a joint endorsement letter for the watershed rules and regulations (WRR) update 'process' from Senator Oberacker's (51st District) Office. The joint letter was signed by Mr. Oberacker, Senator Helming (54th District) and Assemblymember Lemondes (126th District). The OLWMC awaits New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Bureau of Water Supply Protection responses to the community consensus updated WRR that are currently under their review. They recently reported that they are still in the process of coordinating a review among involved state agencies including the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets (AgM). Reportedly, they are working as quickly as possible and will update the Cayuga County Department of Health office on the time frame as soon as possible.
  - On Wednesday, July 14<sup>th</sup> the Town of Scipio passed a resolution supporting the updated Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations. OLWMC Director, Vivian Cunningham, wrote a letter to Governor Cuomo, the NYSDOH, and local politicians indicating Scipio’s endorsement of the regulatory update.
- On Thursday, June 24<sup>th</sup> 2021, Ally Berry of the OLWIPD presented on Watershed and Lake Safety to nearly 35 staff members at the YMCA at the south end of Owasco Lake. She developed a printable PowerPoint, an optional 3-question quiz, and prepared additional educational hand-outs. The presentation and tools, including the OLWMC’s physical educational watershed model were workshopped and reviewed with YMCA staff, for their ultimate use for youth education. We are currently leaving our watershed model with camp councilors according to their plans to use the tool for youth education curriculum this summer.
- I’m pleased to inform the OLWMC that the proposed budget was approved by the City of Auburn for 2022 that included the provision of \$10,000 in cost share to match the Great

Lake Commission's (GLC's) Conservation Kick grant program. In partnership with the City of Auburn, and Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD), the OLWMC plans to leverage the Conservation Kick program to offer a small pool of funding for a targeted producer-led watershed conservation project. These funds will meet the implementation costs of installing a water and sediment control basin (WASCOB) on a selected watershed producer's property

- The OLWMC is working with the Cayuga County office of procurement on the advancement of LED flares, rather than incendiary flares, throughout the watershed. Accordingly, the Cayuga County Sheriff's Department is trialing the newer technology, and if the officers are happy with their utility, future procurement efforts will continue to target the LED version.
- The OLWMC's aquatic invasive species (AIS) awareness and 'Clean, Drain, Dry' portable billboard was positioned directly adjacent to the Emerson Park boat launch on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 to increase visibility and watercraft stewardship leading up to, and over, the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday weekend.
- Hyfi water level sensors were recently replaced for improved data coverage in the Owasco Flats retention basins. Additionally, a sensor was installed adjacent to the USGS gauge along the Inlet (State Route 38 bridge, West Cayuga Street, just east of the Warner Road intersection), in part, to track how well the newer technology tracks with conventional gauge height. 14 sensors are installed, and there is one more left to install. A link to the landing page for data and time series tributary level graphs can be accessed on the OLWMC website.
- The Owasco Watershed Lake Association (OWLA) is finalizing its approach among partners for their 2021 volunteer-based tributary monitoring program to benefit modeling work associated with 9 Element Watershed Plan for the Owasco Lake watershed. OLWMC staff is offering support through assistance with sample collection, the provision and use of the OLWIPD's water quality monitoring sonde, and sample transport for laboratory analyses.
- The Martin Point Homeowners Association is resolving to take, the LFL pledge. Information about the LFL pledge program can be found on the OLWMC website. In collaboration with municipal highway departments, associated program signage continues to be installed throughout the watershed.
- The OLWMC is positioning itself to own and hold lands within the watershed for the purposes of resource protection and preservation via land acquisition gifts from The Nature Conservancy (TNC).
- The OLWMC continues to look forward to buy-in 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, Dryden, Skaneateles, and Lansing; we continue to encourage the Board of Directors to reach out to representatives from these towns to elicit municipality buy-in.

**Summary Prepared by Adam Effler, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021**