

OWASCO LAKE WATERSHED RULES & REGULATIONS REVISION PROJECT PROJECT BRIEFING & UPDATE

DATE: January 24, 2018

TO: Project Working (“Steering”) Committee
Project Stakeholder Groups
Extended Staff Working Groups
Auburn City Council | Owasco Town Board | County Legislators

The purpose of this correspondence is to provide all of our project partners with a brief project status and update on the Owasco Lake Watershed Rules & Regulations Revision Project (WSRR Project).

RECAP ON WORK TO DATE:

Here is a brief recap on the Project meetings to date:

1. PUBLIC MEETINGS:
 - a. In 2017, there were two (2) Public Kick-Off Meetings held to introduce the general public to the WSRR Project: June 19th at BOCES and June 21st at Moravia High School.
2. STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS:
 - a. In 2017, there were two initial Stakeholder Group Meetings held in the fall:
 - i. Agriculture Stakeholder Group on September 21, 2017; and
 - ii. Lake Association / Shoreline Property Stakeholder Group on October 5, 2017
3. PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS:
 - a. Project Steering Committee meetings have been held consistently since the project started. Between May and November 2017, there have been a total of eight (8) Steering Committee Meetings.

These Public, Stakeholder and Steering Committee Meetings were used to frame the Project by:

- Introducing the WSRR Project to the Public and establishing a framework for Public and Stakeholder participation; and
- Defining the scope of the WSRR Project, identifying key community, stakeholder and municipal concerns and establishing communication channels through the Project Website and staff contacts (website address at end of document).

CURRENT PROJECT STATUS: WHERE WE ARE NOW

Development of Draft Revisions to the Watershed Rules & Regulations

Draft Regulations are being developed internally by an Extended Staff Working Group. This Working Group includes representatives from the Cayuga County Health and Planning Departments, the County Soil & Water Conservation District and Watershed Specialist, the City of Auburn Department of Municipal Utilities, staff from Cornell Cooperative Extension and NYS DEC Staff from the Finger Lakes Water Hub.

The composition of this Staff Working Group will shift as we move between subject areas in the regulations (for example: the Staff Working Group addressing septic system regulations will be slightly different than the Staff Working Group assembled to address agriculture and farm practice regulations).

As we draft the content of proposed revisions, an outline of the proposed changes will be prepared for review and feedback by the Project Steering Committee. The outline of proposed changes, and our review of those changes with the Steering Committee, will form the basis for an Initial Full Draft of the Watershed Rules and Regulations.

Circulation and Review of Full Draft Revisions – Roll Out of Initial Draft

To concentrate and streamline the review and feedback process between the Staff Working Group and our many Project Partners, a decision has been made to wait until a Full First Draft of the Watershed Rules & Regulation Revisions are prepared before we initiate the public review process. By circulating the Full Draft in its entirety instead of sending out the individual subject matter sections as they are developed, we hope that the public will have the opportunity to see the full scope of proposed revisions and how each of the subject matter sections (e.g. Septic, Wastewater, Agriculture, Stormwater, etc.) are being addressed and how they relate to each other.

Procedure for Roll-Out of Draft in Three Phases:

When the Staff Working Groups complete the first Full Draft Revision, circulation and review by the Steering Committee, Stakeholder Groups and the General Public will proceed in three (3) phases:

1. PHASE 1. Project Steering Committee. The first Full Draft Revisions will be presented to the Steering Committee at a working meeting to start their initial review. The Steering Committee Members will then communicate back to their constituent stakeholder groups (e.g., Municipal, Lake Association, Agriculture & Farming, etc.) for discussion and bring comments back to the Staff Working Group. This will be followed by consultation with the Steering Committee and draft revisions as needed.
2. PHASE 2. Stakeholder Group Presentation & Work Sessions. Following the Phase 1 Steering Committee Review, an updated Full Draft of the WSRR revisions will be circulated to the Stakeholder Groups in advance of scheduling Stakeholder Group Work Sessions to review the initial draft and solicit Stakeholder feedback. These work sessions will be followed by meetings with the Steering Committee to update the Full Draft as needed.
3. PHASE 3. Public Meetings and Work Sessions. In Phase 3, the final First Draft resulting from the series of Steering Committee and Stakeholder Work Sessions will be presented at a series of Public Meetings and/or Work Sessions.

TIME FRAME FOR ROLL-OUT OF FIRST DRAFT REVISIONS

Developing the Draft Revisions is a complex process involving staff working sessions, research and consensus building. A number of subject matter areas have been addressed to date and the Extended Staff Working Group is currently engaged in drafting revisions to regulations associated with agriculture and farming. Additional subject matter sections will follow.

THE OUTLINE OF PROPOSED CHANGES THAT WILL BE SHARED WITH THE STEERING COMMITTEE WILL BE READY FOR STEERING COMMITTEE REVIEW AND FEEDBACK IN MARCH OR APRIL.

THE TARGET DATE FOR STARTING THE 3-PHASE REVIEW OF THE FULL DRAFT REVISIONS IS MAY 2018

REMINDER: Project Partners can access the Project Website, linked to the Cayuga County website online. The project site includes Minutes from the Steering Committee meetings, helpful links, various documents related to the WSRR Project and a means to submit feedback on the project.

The Website can be found here: <http://www.cayugacounty.us/Community/Owasco-Watershed-Project>

Thank you for your continued participation and interest in the WSRR Revision Project.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Kathleen Cuddy, Cayuga County Department of Health