

**Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency**  
**June 3, 2021 Meeting Minutes**  
**Meeting conducted virtually on 8x8**

Members or Designees Present: Doug Dello Stritto, Jeff Emerson, Seth Jensen, Doug Kierst, Ron Kuck, Steve Lynch, Rick Nelson, Pat Mooney, Dale Powell, Ed Wagner, Dan Welch, Carl Wiezalis

Others Present: Ally Berry, Greg Colucci, Adam Effler, Bruce Natale, Greg Rejman, Michele Wunderlich

**Presentation**

Michele Wunderlich gave a presentation on “Local Prevention and Control Programs for Invasive Species.”

**Old Business**

**Minutes**

The minutes from the May 6, 2021 WQMA meeting were reviewed. Steve Lynch made a motion to accept the May 6, 2021 minutes as written. Seth Jensen seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**WQMA Priority Working Groups Reports**

**Communications Working Group**

Michele Wunderlich reported that the next newsletter is due in June and she will reach out for articles.

**Invasive Species Working Group**

Michele Wunderlich stated that next week is New York State Invasive Species Awareness week and there are many presentations and activities on invasive species. She is doing a webinar on June 10<sup>th</sup> at 10 am on invasive species identification and local prevention and control programs.

**Nutrient and Sediment Working Group**

Dan Welch resigned as chair of the Nutrient and Sediment Working Group due to other commitments. No one offered to take up the role. Michele Wunderlich will get together a list of members and request someone take on the role.

**Agency Reports**

**Cayuga County Buildings and Grounds Department**

Doug Dello Stritto reported that the new buffer zone is installed along the north side of the channel at Emerson Park and there are new no mow areas and signs.

**Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development**

Steve Lynch reported that Jenna DeRario will be their new planner and she starts on June 28<sup>th</sup>. She will be working on recycling and the update to the County Solid Waste Management Plan. He thanked Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County for their assistance during this transition.

### Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)

Doug Kierst reported that they have finalized their annual report and it is available digitally on their website. He stated that they are currently working on many grant applications. They are also working with Cayuga County Parks and Trails on installing a bridge over Muskrat Creek. He also announced that the tire collection event will be on June 12<sup>th</sup> and registration is required.

### Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County (CCE) Update

Dan Welch stated that they have been working with the Farm Service Agency to let farmers who are planting cover crops know that they can get a discount per acres in crop insurance if they fill out a particular form by June 15<sup>th</sup>. He stated they have limited resources to work on water quality since their budget has been cut 30% by the County, which has led to a cut in matching funds from the State.

### City of Auburn

Seth Jensen reported that their Combined Sewer Overflow project and Biosolids project are moving forward on design. He reported that they have a new project which is a capital reinvestment at the slow sand filtration plant and they are working on design. He also stated that the hydroelectric system is in full operation and he offered tours at either the filtration plant or of their hydroelectric system.

### Town of Owasco

Ed Wagner reported that the granulated activated carbon (GAC) system at the water treatment plant is completed. He reported they have to replace the GAC earlier than expected; four years instead of seven. The Cayuga County Health Department and the engineers for the project are looking for funding to determine the life of GAC in the system and when to replace it because it is expensive to replace (\$80,000). He also reported that the wetland project is going well and they are treating the knotweed with wire mesh and doing some spraying with herbicides.

### Lake Reports

#### Cayuga Lake Report

Michele Wunderlich stated that the comment period for the Cayuga Lake TMDL has been extended to July 8, 2021. Steve Lynch stated that the Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development will do their own comments but can bring them to the Agency for possible endorsement. Doug Kierst stated that Cayuga County SWCD will be doing their own as well.

#### Cross Lake/Seneca River Report

Carl Wiezalis stated that the water level in Cross Lake is three to four feet above summer navigation level and it is causing problems with docks, trash and boats have broken loose. He also stated that irresponsible boaters are causing shoreline damage. He reported that he is working with Megan Harris with the Finger Lakes Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management on a macrophyte assessment of Cross Lake in July. He stated that there are rumors that permits are required for private hand pulling of water chestnut and he has been speaking with Elizabeth Tracy and Matt Marko from the NYSDEC about the issue. Elizabeth Tracy is sending him some documents on the permitting process. Carl Wiezalis stated that there are

complaints already about water chestnut on the southeast side of Cross Lake and the Seneca River. He stated that Onondaga County has some financial resources to do some work on the water chestnut.

#### Lake Como Report

Pat Mooney reported that they held their spring meeting. They are looking at treating the milfoil and other weeds in the lake chemically and will have further discussions in July. He stated that the lake level has remained steady due to the beaver dams.

#### Owasco Lake Report

Rick Nelson stated that the Owasco Watershed Lake Association held a hybrid meeting. They honored Paul Lattimore at their meeting. He stated that they are treating the hemlock woolly adelgid at Firelanes 24E and 25E; participating in the cost share ditch remediation program with Cayuga County SWCD; participating in the harmful algal bloom reporting program; participating in the Citizen Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP); conducting outreach to teachers and they planted 2500 willow trees on the Dumond property along Veness Brook.

#### **Partner Reports**

##### Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council

Adam Effler reported that there has been no new response from the State on the Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations but they have gotten endorsement letters from Senator Mannion, Senator Helming and Assemblyman Lemondes. He reported that the Lake Friendly Living program had 480 registrants and the YMCA and Owasco Paddles are doing Lake Friendly Living Conservation. They are doing an educational workshop with YMCA youth on watershed science and harmful algal blooms; received \$16,000 from the French and Metcalf Foundations to purchase an electric vehicle; installed hyfi sensors in Owasco Lake tributaries; and conducted their annual financial audit. They endorsed OWLA's grant application for Hemlock Woolly Adelgid suppression and are part of a Great Lakes Commission grant application on a producer lead project.

##### Partners for Healthy Watersheds

Greg Rejman reported that they have done some social media posts for June which is Dairy month. He reported that Karl Czymmek is leaving PRODAIRY to work for the Environmental Research Team at Dairy Management Inc.

##### Miscellaneous

Seth Jensen made a motion to adjourn. Doug Kierst seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The meeting was closed at 11:15 am.