

Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council – Watershed Inspection Committee
November 20, 2018– Monthly Meeting

Members present: Ed Wagner, Seth Jensen, Aileen McNabb-Coleman, Debby McCormick

Technical Advisors present:

Others present: Drew Snell, Bruce Natale, Doug Kierst, Eileen O'Connor

Debby McCormick made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2018 meeting. Seth Jensen seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Drew Snell reported that it was a very uneventful month. He responded to 2 complaints regarding potential discharges from RVs but no discharges were seen. One of the units had a discharge pipe, allegedly for discharging water/antifreeze mixture as part of the winterization process. Mr. Snell explained to the owner that such a discharge would be a violation. Mr. Snell also accompanied Val Horning from Soil and Water on a septic system inspection that Ms. Horning was performing and a consultation that Ms. Horning made with a potential client who wanted to upgrade their septic system. Mr. Snell discovered an oil sheen on the road apparently left from a garbage pick-up firm. A letter was sent to the firm, but no response has yet been received. Mr. Snell has noted instances this month of mud tracked on the road from agricultural vehicles as they exit farm fields. Reportedly this problem is quite widespread. The proper way to address the mud was discussed, it needs to be removed and not just pushed into the roadside ditch. Bruce Natale suggested that a street sweeper would be an ideal solution to this problem. Ed Wagner said purchasing a street sweeper could possibly be a shared service project. Mr. Snell said he thinks education to the farmers on the issue should be enhanced.

Mr. Snell said he has visited some on-going projects with Mr. Jensen. One positive project is the fencing on Cheese Factory Road to keep cows out of a watercourse. This project had no required match, making it more appealing to the farmer. Mr. Snell has also toured the watershed with the Nature Conservancy to look at sites with Jason Cuddeback and Sandy Doran for potential future projects.

Mr. Snell visited a Rural Roads Active Management Program kick-off event in Cortland. This program wants to raise public awareness of proper road maintenance and ditch stabilization. Doug Kierst said that Soil and Water has finally received funding to address ditch issues, especially those identified in the Owasco Watershed by a seasonal watershed inspector last year. Eileen O'Connor suggested that the Towns be notified that the funding is now available.

Mr. Snell is continuing looking at purchasing a drone. He sent out information and associated operational costs to the committee. A budget modification may be necessary if the committee decides to purchase one.

Mr. Snell has put together a proposal to cover the cost for a voluntary septic system inspection program for residents in Tompkins County. He will send it to the Tompkins County Health Department in the hope that they agree to the program and will tie it in with their septic system replacement program.

Mr. Snell said he will follow-up with the old landfill in Groton before the next meeting. He also reported that he has not yet heard back from Tompkins County Soil and Water about the sediment plume that originated from erosion occurring on a farm field in Tompkins County. He said he would contact Jon Negley to get an update before the next meeting.

Mr. Wagner asked Ms. O'Connor to forward the draft budget to the OLWMC Directors for their review and comment. Mr. Jensen will also look into how people can call into these monthly meetings.

Eileen O'Connor reported that according to Matt Kazmierski of DEC, for silviculture activities to be exempt from DEC's storm water permit requirements the property owner must have a forest management plan, prepared by a resource management professional. Without this, the harvesting of timber if it disturbs more than one acre does require a permit.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be 9 am on December 18, 2018.

Minutes prepared by Eileen O'Connor, November 21, 2018