

**Resolution endorsing and supporting the adoption of the proposed 2020 Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations by the FINGER LAKES REGIONAL WATERSHED ALLIANCE (FLRWA):**

November 18, 2020

**Mission Statement:** The purposes of Finger Lakes Regional Watershed Alliance are to bring together the members, expertise and desires of the Finger Lakes watershed associations to preserve and protect their watersheds with a collective regional voice; to join forces to advocate for mutually beneficial regional changes, backed by sound research; and to promote collective actions that represent the desires of the entire Finger Lakes region.

Alliance members believe that a common cross Finger Lakes positioning regarding the issues that face these lakes might be more successful than individual lake and watershed associations acting independently. The impact of lake and watershed associations acting together is more likely to produce positive results when dealing with agencies and higher levels of government. Alliance members also believe it is important to draw upon the collective skills and resources of the entire region's lake and watershed associations to launch innovative pilot programs that, if successful, can be shared across the region.

**Background of the Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations :**

- Owasco Lake is the source of public water supply for the City of Auburn, the Town of Owasco, and approximately forty-five thousand water users within Cayuga County.
- The water quality of Owasco Lake is directly impacted by its watershed, which includes the lake, its tributaries, and all watercourses tributary thereto, and comprises approximately 205-square miles over Cayuga, Onondaga and Tompkins counties.
- In 1984, pursuant to Public Health Law Section 1100, the New York State Department of Health adopted Title 10 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, Section 104.1, which is commonly referred to as the Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations (the "Watershed Rules and Regulations").
- The Watershed Rules and Regulations were adopted with the goal of enhancing protection and preservation of the water quality in Owasco Lake.
- Under the Watershed Rules and Regulations, the City of Auburn and the Town of Owasco are responsible for inspecting the watercourses within the watershed and for reporting violations in cases of noncompliance with the Cayuga County Health Department.
- Since 1984, the lands within the Owasco Lake Watershed have witnessed cumulative changes in land use and development.
- In 2016, Owasco Lake showed its first detectable levels of toxins associated with harmful blue green algae blooms in its raw and finished (treated) water.
- These harmful blue green algae blooms have resulted in cooperative efforts by the City of Auburn, the Town of Owasco and Cayuga County, to work with the Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council., to inspect, monitor, test, and, when necessary, treat the

waters of the watershed, in order to protect the Owasco Lake which is the public supply of water.

- In 2017, as a part of the continued efforts to protect water quality, the City of Auburn, the Town of Owasco and Cayuga County passed resolutions endorsing a project to update and revise the 1984 Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations.
- At the outset of the project, a Project Steering Committee was organized to lead the process by which the existing rules would be revised. This Committee included representatives from the City, the Town, the Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council, the Cayuga County Board of Health, as well as interested farmers.
- Over the last three years, the Steering Committee has worked together with staff representatives and Project Stakeholder groups, to hold eight (8) Steering Committee meetings, five (5) public meetings, and more than ten (10) staff meetings, in a coordinated effort to create and recommend a revised draft of the Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations.
- In October 2020, approximately four (4) years after the first harmful blue green algae blooms were detected in Owasco Lake, a final draft of the revised Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations was transmitted to the City Council of Auburn, the Town Board of Owasco, Cayuga County, the public stakeholders, and the general public for review, consideration and support.
- The Finger Lakes Regional Watershed Alliance now wishes to express its support for the adoption of the revised Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations by the New York State Department of Health.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Finger Lakes Regional Watershed Alliance and its members do hereby express its appreciation and thanks to the Watershed Rules and Regulations Project Steering Committee, the Extended Staff Working Group Affiliations, Project Stakeholder Groups, staff and the public at-large for all of the cooperative efforts and time spent in creating the revised Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations.

- That the Finger Lakes Regional Watershed Alliance and its members do hereby endorse and support the revised Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations.
- That the Finger Lakes Regional Watershed Alliance and its members do hereby request that the New York State Department of Health repeal the existing 1984 Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations, which are cited at 10 New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, Section 104.1, and replace the same with the revised Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations.
- That the Finger Lakes Regional Alliance does hereby request that that a certified copy of this Resolution together with a copy of the revised Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations be prepared and transmitted to the Cayuga County Department of Health so that it may be further transmitted to the New York State Department of Health for adoption.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

**Finger Lakes Regional Watershed Alliance Member Votes in support of this resolution:**

| FLRWA members    |   |          |          |
|------------------|---|----------|----------|
| Name             | Lake Assoc  | Yay vote | Nay vote |
| Margaret Creamer | President FLRWA , Otisco Lake Preservation Assoc. | Yay      | xxx      |
| Mark Morris      | Vice President FLRWA, Keuka Lake Assoc.           | Yay      | xxx      |
| William Roberts  | Secretary FLRWA, Skaneateles Lake Assoc           | Yay      | xxx      |
| Addie Mason      | Treasurer FLRWA, Seneca Lake Pure Waters Assoc    | Yay      | xxx      |
| Neil Atkins      | Canandaigua Lake Watershed Assoc                  | Yay      | xxx      |
| Hilary Lambert   | Cayuga Lake Watershed Network                     | Yay      | xxx      |
| Eric Randall     | Conesus Lake Assoc                                | abstain  | xxx      |
| Don Cook         | Honeoye Valley Assoc                              | yay      | xxx      |
| John Maier       | Hemlock and Canadice Lakes                        | yay      | xxx      |
| Peter Rogers     | Owasco Watershed Lake Assoc                       | Yay      | xxx      |