

Tompkins County
Water Resources Council

2010 ANNUAL REPORT



Frank P. Proto, Chairman
Roxy Johnston, First Vice Chair
R. Barry Goodrich, Second Vice Chair

Tompkins County Planning Department
121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850
607-274-5560

<http://www.tompkins-co.org/planning/committees.html>

2010 Membership Roster

Appointed WRC Members

Terms that expired end of 2010:

Municipal Government	Lynn Leopold (Village of Lansing)
Recreation	Dan Karig
At-Large	Darby Kiley
Economic Development	(vacant)
Water Purveyor	Roxy Johnston
Soil & Water Conservation District	Craig Schutt

Terms that will expire end of 2011:

County Health	Liz Cameron
County Legislature	Will Burbank
Agriculture	Gregg McConnell
At-Large	Elaine Quaroni
At-Large	Donna Eschenbrenner (Jan-July)
Municipal Government	Cindy Schulte (Town of Newfield)
Environmental Management Council	Jim McGarry
Cornell Cooperative Extension	Sharon Anderson

Terms that will expired end of 2012:

At-Large	Mary Shelley
At-Large	Frank Proto
Municipal Government	Ed Bugliosi (Town of Dryden)
Tompkins County Planning Dept.	Joan Jurkowich
Watershed Organizations	Barry Goodrich
Business & Industry	Rick Manning
Environment	Marjory Rinaldo-Lee

Ex-Officio Members

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service	Patrick Barry
US Geological Survey	Todd Miller

Associate Members

John Andersson
Dooley Kiefer
Jose Lozano
John Mawdsley
Steve Penningroth
Linda Wagenet
Lisa Wright-Mathews

Staff

Kathy Wilsea, Secretary, Tompkins County Planning Department

INTRODUCTION TO THE WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL

The Tompkins County Water Resources Council (WRC) advises the Tompkins County Legislature on matters related to water resources management and planning, and is charged with identifying problems, proposing priorities, and promoting the coordination of activities in the management and protection of the County’s water resources. The WRC provides a public forum for local communities and stakeholder groups to address and discuss their water resources concerns, and it is the intent of the group to coordinate the water resources-related efforts of local governments, public and private institutions, and agencies and organizations throughout the County.

The WRC also serves as the County’s water quality coordinating committee, responsible for the development of the Tompkins County Water Quality Strategy (WQS), which is intended to help prioritize local water resources issues and concerns and identify strategies to address these concerns. Council and committee goals are drawn directly from the strategies of the WQS.

WRC membership consists of 21 voting members, who are appointed by the County Legislature to represent various water-related interests, and six non-voting members from relevant Federal and State agencies. We also welcome associate members, who have committee-level voting rights.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
Introduction to the Water Resources Council	1
Council Meetings and Collaboration	2
Committee Activities	3
You’re Invited!	6
List of Acronyms	7

COUNCIL MEETINGS AND COLLABORATION

Water Resources Council meetings frequently include presentations by guests. The following presentations occurred in 2010.

Placing lake data and reports, including LSC data, on eCommons for public and research access – *Hilary Lambert, Steward, Cayuga Lake Watershed Network*

Report on the Flood Hazard Mitigation Program – *Scott Doyle, Tompkins County Planning Department*

Bradford County Scenario – *Mike Lovegreen, Soil & Water Conservation District Manager*

Aquifer System in the Lower Sixmile Creek and Willseyville Creek Trough – *Todd Miller, U.S. Geological Survey*

The Floating Classroom – *Bill Foster*

The Stream Monitoring Program at Community Science Institute – *Steve Penningroth*

The Countywide Intermunicipal Water & Sewer Feasibility Study – *Martha Armstrong & Dave Herrick*

City of Ithaca Drinking Water Upgrade – *Scott Gibson*

Impressions from the EPA Public Hearings on Hydraulic Fracturing Research Study – *Carol Chock, Kenny Christianson, Dan Lamb*

In October, the WRC sent a resolution to the Environmental Protection Agency objecting to the proposed Total Maximum Daily Loads for phosphorus and sediment in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Resolutions, agendas, and minutes from the monthly meetings of the WRC are posted on the Tompkins County Planning Department website at: <http://www.tompkins-co.org/planning/committees.html>.

To foster coordination and collaboration in the management of local water resources, WRC members serve as liaisons between the WRC and other groups, including the Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance, Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization and its Technical Advisory Committee, the Upper Susquehanna Coalition, the Stormwater Coalition of Tompkins County, Tompkins County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, and Tompkins County Environmental Management Council. Informal relationships also exist between the WRC and other organizations and agencies such as volunteer stream monitoring groups, the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network, and the Town of Caroline Watersheds Committee.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Aquifer Committee

Members: John Andersson, Liz Cameron, Todd Miller (Chair), Lyle Raymond, Marjory Rinaldo-Lee

In 2010, the Aquifer Committee of the Tompkins County Water Resources Council conducted a training session for Code Enforcement Officers (CEOs). The training was given to about 50 CEOs from central New York on August 18 at the Dryden Fire Station. The training material was from the New York State Department of Health (DOH) and approved by the Department of State for three continuing education units for CEOs. DOH authorized Liz Cameron (through the Tompkins County Health Department) and the Aquifer Committee to give the training as their proxy. The general topics included individual water, individual sewage, and realty subdivisions. Specific topics included: (1) Essential elements of DOH standards, regulations and policy; (2) Residential Code and its relationship to DOH programs, specifically residential water supply and wastewater treatment; (3) Residential water and wastewater standards; and (4) Role of CEOs in oversight of these programs.

Education

Members: Sharon Anderson, Liz Cameron, Joan Jurkowich, Lynn Leopold, Elaine Quaroni (Chair), Marjory Rinaldo-Lee

The Education Committee expanded the current WRC web site to include the Tompkins County Water Quality Strategy 2009 Update, projects of the WRC committees and their functions, and links to related water resources web site. Additional links to lectures presented to the Water Resources Council and the series of articles "Cayuga 2.0" published by the Ithaca Journal were added to the web site.

Executive

Members: Frank Proto (Chair), Roxy Johnston (First Vice Chair), Barry Goodrich (Second Vice Chair), Cindy Schulte

In lieu of a full Council meeting in January, the Executive Committee held a meeting with committee chairs to organize work items, which were drawn from the 2009 revisions to the Water Quality Strategy. In February the Executive Committee collaborated with the Monitoring Plan Committee to provide comments to DEC relative to monitoring activities in the southern basin of Cayuga Lake. In July, the committee finalized a letter to the Environmental Protection Agency on the topic of their Hydraulic Fracturing Research Study. WRC member and County Legislator Carol Chock also provided verbal comments, drawn from the correspondence, at the September public hearings in Binghamton. In October, the Executive Committee finalized a resolution directed to the EPA concerning proposed total maximum daily loads in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

In addition to the three elected positions, the Executive Committee is also open to two volunteer members from the voting membership of WRC.

Grants

Members: Ed Bugliosi, Roxy Johnston, Darby Kiley, Jose Lozano, Cindy Schulte, Craig Schutt (Chair), Linda Wagenet

The Grants Committee meets as necessary to consider water quality-related grant opportunities. One of the primary duties of the committee is to identify water quality funding opportunities for which the WRC and other entities within the county are eligible and then assist those entities with the application process. Such assistance varies from helping to write the grant applications to providing support for submission of the applications (via support letters or other appropriate means).

The major duty of the Grants Committee is to develop and propose to the WRC a plan and budget for the county's annual FL-LOWPA (Finger Lakes – Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance) appropriation from the state.

Cayuga Lake Monitoring Partnership

WRC Members: Roxy Johnston (Chair), Joan Jurkowich, Dan Karig, Dooley Kiefer, Darby Kiley, Jose Lozano, Jim McGarry, Steve Penningroth, Craig Schutt, Linda Wagenet

The Monitoring Partnership wrapped up a series of articles in the Ithaca Journal about water topics. The series ran through spring of 2010 under the name of 'Cayuga 2.0'. The articles are now available on the Water Resource Council's web page.

John Confer, retired Ithaca College professor, gave a presentation regarding the robustness of total phosphorus (TP) as an indicator of water quality and the misapplication of TP as an indicator in the southern end of Cayuga Lake. We submitted a letter to the DEC restating several of our positions regarding

the state of the Lake and offered our support in any science-based management initiatives. Local radio station WHCU interviewed Roxanna Johnston about Cayuga Lake and the Partnership in March. The podcast is available at: <http://whcu870.com/All-Things-Equal-Podcasts/3425883>

We continue to apply for grants, though funding has so far eluded the Partnership directly. One of our members, Nelson Hairston Ph.D., did receive funding to do work on the food web in the southern basin. The first year of data is being summarized, and results will be forthcoming in 2011.

The Partnership information was again shared at Drinking Water Week, held at the Farmers Market in May. Also, the Ithaca Sail and Power Squadron requested a presentation on lake sediment issues in May.

2010 Monitoring Partnership Committee Members

Bill Foster	Floating Classroom
Todd Cowen	Cornell University, Hydraulics/Hydrology
Jim Adams	Cornell University, Utilities
Dave Bouldin	Cornell University, Emeritus (Fall Creek)
Cheryl Brown	Cornell University, Environmental Compliance & Sustainability
Colleen Kearns	Cornell University, Limnology
Craig Schutt	Water Resources Council, Tompkins County Soil & Water Conservation District
Dan Karig	Water Resources Council, Emeritus (geology)
Darby Kiley	Water Resources Council, Intermunicipal Organization
Dooley Keifer	Water Resources Council, Tompkins County Legislature
John Halfman	Finger Lakes Institute, Hobart & William Smith
Joan Jurkowich	Water Resources Council, Tompkins County Planning Department
Robert Johnson	Cornell University, Macrophytes
Roxanna Johnston	Water Resources Council (Committee Chair)
Hilary Lambert	Cayuga Lake Watershed Network
Jose Lozano	Water Resources Council, Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility
Linda Wagenet	Water Resources Council
James McGarry	Environmental Management Council, Water Resources Council
Nelson Hairston	Cornell University, Limnology
Pat MacNally	Cornell University, Environmental Compliance & Sustainability
Steve Penningroth	Water Resources Council, Community Science Institute
Dan Ramer	Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility
Robert Howarth	Cornell University, Ecology, Phosphorus
Robert Bland	Cornell University, Environmental Compliance & Sustainability
Seth Schweitzer	Cornell University, Hydraulics, Monitoring
Lynn Smith	Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility
Gary Stewart	Cornell University, Public Relations
Wade Wykstra	Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility, City of Ithaca
Greg Nagle	Cornell University, Ecology, Phosphorus

Results came in from comparison of some possible duplicative monitoring sites collected by the Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility and Lake Source Cooling – there was no detectable difference in the water quality at the sites, indicating that eliminating one set of the locations would not lessen the amount of information being tracked in the basin. This sampling effort was funded by the Tompkins County Planning Department.

Near the end of the year we reviewed the then-proposed Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) proposal and provided comments to the WRC. WRC passed a resolution on the TMDL proposal, which was forwarded to the Environmental Protection Agency. This effort led to the development by the committee of a list of low- or no-cost action items we will promote to address sediment and nutrient loadings. It is also leading us to re-engage with the DEC regarding the Cayuga Lake proposed TMDL.

The Lake Source Cooling permit was not changed in 2010, sampling was completed as designed.

Cayuga Lake Recreation

Members: Dan Karig (Chair), Mary Shelley

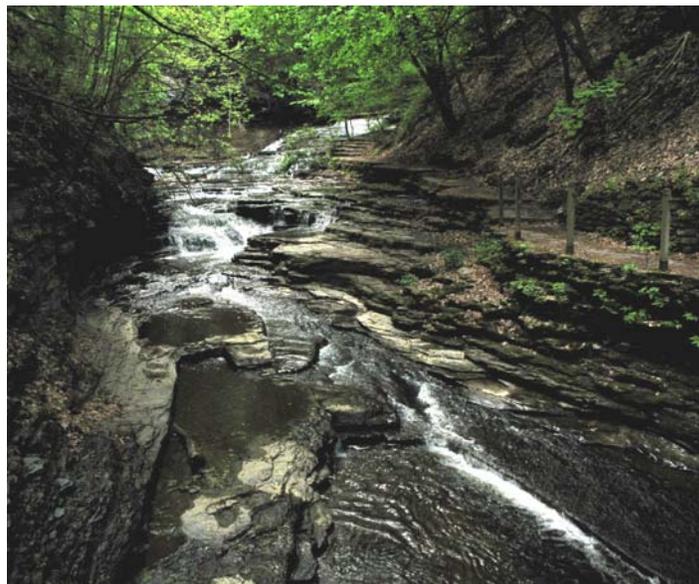
In March the Recreation Committee worked with Rick Manning and the Waterfront Business group in the annual cleanup, which recovered an amazing annual deposition of trash. Work toward the construction of a paddlers dock in the Inlet proceeded intermittently, with the final realization that the process of locating, permitting, insuring, and building this dock belonged to the City of Ithaca. A meeting with the City Parks Commission in December effectively transferred this process to them.

Because of a lack of viable projects at this time and commitment of member time to other WRC work program projects, the Committee has gone into abeyance.

Wetlands Committee

Members: Barry Goodrich, Dan Karig, Dooley Kiefer, Darby Kiley (Chair), Rick Manning, John Mawdsley, Craig Schutt

In 2010, the Wetlands Committee continued to draft a sample wetlands local law. The sample is based on a review of local laws that are currently on the



books in other towns in New York State. The committee will complete the draft in 2011 and distribute it to municipalities.

Streams Committee

Members: John Andersson, Barry Goodrich, Dan Karig (Chair), Gregg McConnell, Steve Penningroth, Cindy Schulte, Craig Schutt, Mary Shelley, Lisa Wright-Mathews

The Streams Committee was created during 2010 to cover an area of interest that the Water Resources Council felt was not been adequately addressed. Initial goals were to compile available data concerning stream water quality, and to create a synopsis of regulations concerning gas drilling involving hydrofracturing insofar as they involve surface water withdrawal and disposal. Work toward both these goals is ongoing.

Nominating/Membership

Members: Dooley Kiefer, Marjory Rinaldo-Lee, Cindy Schulte (Chair), Craig Schutt, Mary Shelley

The Nominating/Membership Committee for the Water Resources Council (WRC) in 2010 was comprised of an appropriate blend of experienced and new members. The group worked well together to set aggressive recruitment goals, examine issues concerning a long-standing seat vacancy, and solicit and discern feedback from the WRC as well as the Planning, Development, and Environmental Quality (PDEQ) committee of the County Legislature to plan ahead for effective Council work concerning both existing and emerging water resource issues.

The Committee recommended that the Water Resources Council convert the vacant Economic Development seat to an At-Large seat; the change was approved via resolution by PDEQ and the County Legislature. For 2011 and beyond, there will be an additional At-Large seat on the WRC.

After obtaining feedback from the members of the WRC, the Committee came up with five categories to pursue when recruiting new members for 2011 and beyond: water chemistry, water law, environmental law, municipal planning board, and economic development. These priorities, along with some specific suggestions from PDEQ, were used as guidelines as the recruitment effort was expanded to include local law firms. Several inter-

views were conducted during the month of October, and a final slate was approved by the full WRC, then presented and approved by PDEQ and the Legislature in December.

The group decided that it would be a good idea to have discussions on WRC priorities for the fall recruitment and nominating season EVERY year in June to help shape a productive effort to maintain a strong, vibrant and effective WRC.

The Nominating/Membership Committee is also responsible for identifying members who are willing to serve as officers and conducting annual elections for Chair, First Vice Chair, and Second Vice Chair.



You're Invited!

We welcome visitors! Residents of Tompkins County are invited to attend meetings of the WRC and apply for WRC membership. Membership in the WRC is a great opportunity for citizens to provide input into the decisions that are made about our local environment. The Water Resources Council meets the third Monday of each month from 4:15 to 6:00 PM at the Transit Center (737 Willow Avenue, Ithaca). Meetings that conflict with federal holidays are rescheduled (feel free to phone the Secretary at 274-5560 about dates, or check our website). The WRC typically does not meet in August.

2011 meeting dates:

January 24
February 28
March 21
April 18
May 16
June 20

July 18
September 19
October 17
November 21
December 19

For more information about the WRC or how to apply for WRC membership, please contact the Tompkins County Planning Department at 274-5560, planning@tompkins-co.org, or 121 East Court Street, Ithaca, NY.

LIST OF ACONYMS

BACI	Before After Control Impact
CCE	Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County
CHWWTF	Cayuga Heights Waste Water Treatment Facility
DEC	New York Department of Environmental Conservation
EMC	Tompkins County Environmental Management Council
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
FLI	Finger Lakes Institute
FL-LOWPA	Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance
IAWWTF	Ithaca Area Waste Water Treatment Facility
IO	Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization
LSC	Lake Source Cooling
NETWORK	Cayuga Lake Watershed Network
NYS	New York State
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NYSDOH	New York State Department of Health
PRISM	Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management
RPP	Restoration and Protection Plan (prepared by Network)
RUSS	Remote Underwater Sampling Station
SEQR	State Environmental Quality Review
SMP	Strategic Monitoring Plan (for the southern basin of Cayuga Lake)
SPDES	State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
SWAR	Source Water Assessment Report
S(W)CTC	Storm Water Coalition of Tompkins County
SWCD	Soil and Water Conservation District
SWG	Storm Water Group
TCAD	Tompkins County Area Development
TCHD	Tompkins County Health Department of Health
TCL	Tompkins County Legislature
TCPD	Tompkins County Planning Department
(TC)SWCD	Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
UFI	Upstate Freshwater Institute
USC	Upper Susquehanna Coalition
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USGS	United States Geological Survey
WQS	Water Quality Strategy
WRC	Tompkins County Water Resources Council