



TOMPKINS COUNTY WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

121 E. Court Street, Ithaca, NY 14850 ; 607-274-5560; www.tompkinscounty.ny.gov/committees/wrc

FAQ

Residents of Tompkins County are invited to attend WRC meetings and apply for membership.

To receive agendas and meeting minutes, contact the County Planning and Sustainability Department by phone at (607) 274-5560 or via email at planning@tompkins-co.org.

Past agendas and meeting minutes are posted online at: tompkinscountyny.gov/planning/committees-wrc.

WRC membership consists of 21 voting members appointed by the Tompkins County Legislature. These members represent various water-related interests and serve on a number of standing and special committees.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WRC



The Tompkins County Water Resources Council (WRC) advises the Tompkins County Legislature on matters related to water resources management and planning. The Council is also 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. 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.

YOU'RE INVITED!

Tompkins County residents are invited to attend meetings of the Water Resources Council and apply for WRC membership. **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.** For more information, contact the Tompkins County Planning and Sustainability Department at planning@tompkins-co.org or 607-274-5560.



2016 WRC PRESENTATIONS

- February 22, 2016 – **Cayuga Lake Modeling Project Update** – Liz Moran, President, Ecologic, LLC, and **Wetlands Mapping Project** – Nick Hollingshead, Environmental GIS Specialist
- April 18, 2016 – **Emerging Pollutants in Our Watershed** – Damian Helbling, Cornell University, and Jose Lozano, Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility
- May 16, 2016 – **SPDES Permit Annual Report Public Comments** – Angel Hinickle, Resource Conservation Specialist, Soil & Water Conservation District
- June 20, 2016 – **Green Infrastructure Program** – Joan Jurkowich and Scott Doyle, Tompkins County Planning Department
- July 18, 2016 – **Town of Danby Groundwater Protection Local Law** – C.J. Randall, Town of Danby Planner
- September 19, 2016 – **Current Drought and Impacts on Water Suppliers** – Chris Bordlemay, Cornell University, and Liz Cameron, Tompkins County Health Department
- October 17, 2016 – **Impacts of the Drought on the City of Ithaca Water System** – Michael J. Thorne, Superintendent of Public Works, City of Ithaca, and Roxanna Johnston, Watershed Coordinator, City of Ithaca

2016 MEMBERS LIST

Chair

Darby Kiley, Municipal Government

Members

Sharon Anderson,
Cooperative Extension

John Andersson, At-Large

James Balyszak At-Large

A. Fay Benson, Agriculture

Chris Bordlemay, Water Purveyor

Cynthia Brock, Recreation

Ed Bugliosi, US Geological Survey

Liz Cameron, County Division of
Environmental Health, **2nd Vice Chair**

Brad DeFrees, Associate

Sarah Dwyer, At-Large

George Fowler, Associate

William George, Municipal
Government

Barry Goodrich, Watershed
Organization

Michelle Henry, Associate

Roxanna Johnston, Associate

Joan Jurkowich, County Planning
Department

Dooley Kiefer, County Government

Lynn Leopold, Municipal Government

Jose Lozano, Associate

John Mawdsley, Associate

Todd Miller, Associate

Jon Negley,
Soil and Water Conservation District

Jim McGarry,
Environmental Management Council

Steve Penningroth, Associate

Frank Proto, At-Large, **1st Vice Chair**

Elaine Quaroni, At-Large

Marjory Rinaldo-Lee, Environment

Michael Thorne, At-Large

Joanne Trutko, Associate

Tom Vawter, Associate

Linda Wagenet, Associate

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Members: Darby Kiley (Chair), John Andersson, Liz Cameron
Barry Goodrich, Frank Proto

The Executive Committee met to discuss a possible update to the 2010 Countywide Intermunicipal Water and Sewer Feasibility study. The committee believes the study should be updated in light of (1) new upgrades that have been completed or are underway; (2) new projects that might impact capacity; and (3) capacity limitations impacted by climate conditions.

In 2017, a committee will be formed to develop a scope of work for the update project.

2017 WRC MEETING DATES

January 23

July 17

February 27

August 21

March 20

September 18

April 17

October 16

May 15

November 20

June 19

December 12

GRANTS

Members: Jon Negley (Chair), Fay Benson, Jose Lozano, Frank Proto, Mike Thorne

The WRC Grants Committee's main task as identified by the Water Quality Strategy is to identify and seek grant funding for projects related to water quality that are identified and recommended for action by a committee or the whole WRC. In fulfilling this goal, the Grants Committee met early in the year to develop a "Grants Opportunity List" adapted from a list created by the NYSDEC. This list included opportunities from local, state, and federal sources. This list is now published on the WRC website.

The Grants Committee also recommended the 2016-2017 State Fiscal Year FLOWPA (Finger Lakes Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance) budget for the upcoming contract years administered by the Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District.

The Grants Committee received no requests from other committees for water quality related projects they were planning/working on that needed funding. We hope that the committees will continue to engage with the Grants Committee in 2017 to suggest project ideas for funding.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Members: Lynn Leopold (Chair), James Balyszak, Cynthia Brock, Sarah Dwyer, Roxanna Johnston, Todd Miller, Joanne Trutko, Tom Vawter



The Education and Outreach Committee spent this past year working on revising, reprinting, and distributing the paddling brochure, which details safe, clean paddling techniques, where to rent or buy paddling equipment, and where to launch around the south end of Cayuga Lake.

We also continue to work on a complete overhaul of the clean boating brochure, and have had good input from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary as well as our talented committee members.

There was a possibility that the New York State Canal Corporation would help with the development and dissemination of a new brochure with an area map of both Seneca and Cayuga Lakes, but that project turned out not to be workable. We will continue to move forward on developing the clean boating brochure for Cayuga Lake.

UPDATE: CAYUGA LAKE MONITORING PARTNERSHIP

The Cayuga Lake Monitoring Partnership (CLMP) was formed to create a monitoring plan for the southern end of Cayuga Lake instead of using Cornell's Lake Source Cooling (LSC) permit as a surrogate for those needs. A plan was developed in 2008 but not endorsed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

In the spring of 2013, DEC approved a revised permit for the LSC facility that included a one-time \$2.1 million monitoring and modeling effort to lay the groundwork for a total maximum daily load (TMDL) regulation. That revised permit included many of the components of the 2008 CLMP monitoring plan.

Sediment Plume from Taughannock Creek



photo by Bill Hecht

CLMP and DEC representatives have met regularly since 2013 to discuss lake science, monitoring details, and public participation as Cornell has implemented the new permit work. DEC held a public meeting at The Space in Ithaca in March 2016 to discuss progress. Another meeting focused on agricultural stakeholders was held at Tompkins County Cornell Cooperative Extension on October 4th. At that meeting DEC announced the intention to apply the TMDL to the entire lake.

Conditions of the 2013 permit for LSC were met in December 2016 when the final report was submitted to DEC. This includes a watershed model, a lake model, a variety of monitoring data, and an outfall redesign study.

2016 CLMP MEMBERS FROM THE WRC

Roxanna Johnston (Chair)

Ed Bugliosi

Joan Jurkowich

Dooley Kiefer

John Mawdsley

Jim McGarry

Elaine Quaroni

Linda Wagenet

The CLMP will continue to be engaged in the TMDL public outreach and implementation phase through regular interaction with DEC staff.

The CLMP also circled back to its original goal of developing a monitoring plan. Since 2014, there has been no large-scale monitoring effort on the lake. There is a concern that without new, coordinated monitoring, we will lose the ability to see changing water quality trends or determine whether or not the TMDL is having an impact. The CLMP considered Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program, or CSLAP, membership but decided it was too limited in scope. The Community Science Institute, Cayuga Lake Watershed Network, and Floating Classroom have proposed a more robust monitoring program that will not have to be suspended periodically and will build a dedicated pool of local stakeholders. Funding and implementation details are still being worked out.

REPORT: Nominating/Membership Committee

Members: Elaine Quaroni (Chair), Chris Bordlemay, Marjory Rinaldo-Lee, and Linda Wagenet

The committee recommends prospective members to the Water Resources Council (WRC) to fill vacancies on the Council, which is composed of 21 voting members, non-voting ex officio members from relevant Federal or State agencies, and associate members with committee-level voting rights. Members are chosen with the following criteria in mind: credentials, skills, experience, background, diversity, location and length of residence in Tompkins County, and other watershed-related activities.

2017 WRC Voting Members

- At Large: Michelle Henry
- At Large: George Fowler
- Municipal Government: Lynn Leopold
- Water Purveyor: Chris Bordlemay
- Recreation: Cynthia Brock
- TCSWCD: Jon Negley



Associate members approved by the WRC for two-year terms commencing in 2017 are Kristen Hychka, Roxanna Johnston, Emelia Jumbo, Jose Lozano, Darren MacDougall, John Mawdsley, Todd Miller, and Tom Vawter.

This committee is also responsible for recommending a slate of officers for the Water Resources Council. The slate approved by unanimous vote of the members of the Water Resources Council for 2016 are Darby Kiley (Chair), Frank Proto (First Vice Chair), and Liz Cameron (Second Vice Chair).

WATERSHED ASSESSMENT REPORT

Members: John Andersson (Chair), Barry Goodrich, Joan Jurkowich, Steve Penningroth, Marjory Rinaldo-Lee

Committee mission, as found in the Water Quality Strategy: “Encourage completion of watershed assessments in remaining watersheds and disseminate resulting information.” The Strategy notes that Owasco Inlet and Cascadilla Creek are the major watersheds remaining to be studied. (However, the four Lakeshore, as well as the Susquehanna, watersheds have also not been studied.)

Flood mitigation, a well-understood objective, was the original focus of the assessments. Later assessments broadened the scope to include the general health of the stream and its riparian corridor, and stream channel stabilization.

We recommend that the broader scope be continued because all issues are interconnected.

The Committee recommends the following priority listing, understanding that priorities may change due to funding, newly identified problems, or other reasons.

Highest Priority for larger watersheds with no current assessment:

- Owasco Inlet (especially since the Owasco Lake Management Plan is being developed)
- Cascadilla Creek

Next Priority for updating older assessments of the larger watersheds that focused on flooding:

- Cayuga Inlet (especially because of dredging issues, and the flood of 2015)
- Fall Creek (the drinking water source for Cornell University)
- Salmon Creek (less studied so far, and the Ludlowville Project will impact the stream)
- Six Mile Creek (the drinking water source for the City of Ithaca, dredging issues and 2015 flooding)



Low Priority due to nature of small but numerous streams. At the time of funding opportunity, decide whether the entire area or specific streams are studied:

- East Cayuga Lakeshore
- North East Cayuga Lakeshore South (most developed)
- West Cayuga Lakeshore South

Lowest Priority, the Susquehanna Watershed, due to low population, much state forest, and small portion of watersheds in Tompkins County:

- Cayuta Creek
- Catatunk Creek
- West Branch Owego Inlet

The assessment area should include the portions of the watershed outside Tompkins County. Cooperation with the surrounding areas is necessary both for funding and to gain stakeholder support.