

Tompkins County Water Resources Council 2011 ANNUAL REPORT



Frank P. Proto, Chairman
R. Barry Goodrich, First Vice Chair
Marjory Rinaldo-Lee, Second Vice Chair

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

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.

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2011 MEMBERS

Appointed Members:

Terms that expired at end of 2011:

County Health	Liz Cameron
Agriculture	Gregg McConnell
At-Large	Bill Garthwaite
At-Large	Elaine Quaroni
Municipal Government	Cindy Schulte (Town of Newfield)
Environmental Management Council	Jim McGarry
Cornell Cooperative Extension	Sharon Anderson

Terms that will expire at end of 2012:

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

Terms that will expire at end of 2013:

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

Ex-Officio Members

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

County Legislature Liaison

Carol Chock

Associate Members

John Andersson	Helen Slottje
Dooley Kiefer	Tom Vawter
Jose Lozano	Linda Wagenet
John Mawdsley	Lisa Wright-Mathews
Steve Penningroth	

COUNCIL MEETINGS AND COLLABORATION

Water Resources Council meetings frequently include presentations by guests. The following presentations occurred in 2011.

Update on the Groton Wastewater Treatment Plant – *Chuck Rankin*

Update on Dredging Cayuga Inlet – *Dr. Liz Moran, Ecologic*

Water Use & Recycling Program at Chesapeake Energy
— *Dan Lopata, Field Superintendent, and Mike Atchie, Local Government Specialist*

Adapting to Climate Change – *Susan Riha, PhD., Director, NYS Water Resources Institute at Cornell University, and Charles L. Pack Professor, Department of Earth & Atmospheric Sciences*

Barrile Project Inspection Report – *Barry Goodrich, Caroline Watersheds Committee*

Hydrilla Verticillata in Cayuga Inlet – *Roxy Johnston, City of Ithaca*

Faults in south-central NY that are not shown in the dSGEIS and their potential to convey methane-rich fluids to shallow aquifers and to land surface during fracking operations
– *Todd Miller, USGS*

In December, the WRC submitted comments to New York State Department of Environmental Conservation on the revised draft Supplemental Generic Impact Statement on gas drilling. Those comments, along with WRC 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, 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), Marjory Rinaldo-Lee, Damon Rodnac

In 2011, the Aquifer Committee of the Tompkins County Water Resources Council reviewed the proposed regulations for gas drilling (dSGEIS document) of the NYSDEC. Comments were compiled on the Geology and Groundwater sections of the dSGEIS. The comments were then submitted to the Gas Drilling Committee who edited and collated all the comments from other committees. These comments were reviewed and then put into a memo from the Tompkins County Water Resources Council to the NYSDEC.

Education

Members: Sharon Anderson, Lynn Leopold, Elaine Quaroni (Chair)

The Education Committee continues to add pertinent information to the WRC web site. The most recent additions are links to web sites describing the newly discovered Hydrilla and the web site at Cooperative Extension which features important local news about Hydrilla: <http://ccetompkins.org/environment/invasive-species/hydrilla>. The Education Committee participated in activities of the Outreach Group of the Hydrilla Task Force by assisting at a public outreach forum and posting Hydrilla information posters at marinas along the shores of Cayuga Lake. Helping the Outreach Group of the Hydrilla Task Force to reach public officials and the local community will continue into the foreseeable future.



Gas Drilling

Members: Sharon Anderson, Ed Bugliosi, Liz Cameron, Bill Garthwaite, Barry Goodrich, Joan Jurkovich, Dooley Kiefer, Darby Kiley, Rick Manning, Steve Penningroth, Marjory Rinaldo-Lee (Chair), Damon Rodnac, Craig Schutt, Mary Shelley, Helen Slottje, Linda Wagenet, Lisa Wright-Mathews

The Gas Drilling Committee is an ad-hoc committee created to review and comment on the 2011 revisions to the dSGEIS concerning gas drilling prepared by the NYSDEC, and proposed revisions to regulations governing gas drilling in New York. The committee includes members from at-large and designated WRC seats. Our work during 2011 included preparing for and planning our review of the revised dSGEIS and regulations, reviews of these documents and preparing comments on these documents. Draft comment on the dSGEIS and proposed changes to the regulations were submitted to the WRC for their review and comment before submittal to the NYSDEC. Comments on behalf of the WRC were submitted both electronically and by written letter.

Grants

Members: Ed Bugliosi, Darby Kiley, Jose Lozano, Damon Rodnac, Craig Schutt (Chair)

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.

Executive Committee

Members: Frank Proto (Chair), Barry Goodrich (1st Vice Chair), Marjory Rinaldo-Lee (2nd Vice Chair), Damon Rodnac, Cindy Schulte



The Executive Committee supported the efforts of the Gas Drilling Committee, Hydrilla Task Force, TMDL/Chesapeake Bay review, and Wetlands review. They participated in updating the Work Plan and Water Quality Strategy review.

Cayuga Lake Monitoring Partnership

WRC Members: Bill Garthwaite, Roxy Johnston (Chair), Joan Jurkowich, Dooley Kiefer, Darby Kiley, Jose Lozano, Jim McGarry, Craig Schutt, Tom Vawter

The Partnership has not been successful in gaining support from the DEC to date, nor has there been any official movement on LSC permit requirements. This was a major impetus in the formation of the Partnership.

Work items considered this year included: development of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP – required for data used in development of TMDL's) for our monitoring efforts, compilation of the monitoring results into an annual report, updating the Monitoring Plan to reflect accomplishments and promoting items that could be moved forward at little or no cost.

Another major initiative the Partnership undertook was developing an updated Power Point presentation to take to local governments sharing data with them and offering assistance with environmental questions. This project was derailed by the discovery of Hydrilla in Cayuga Inlet. Time commitments

with Hydrilla resulted in a lack of further committee action in 2011.

The Partnership will continue to look for opportunities to cooperate in furthering our knowledge about Cayuga Lake and its watershed and sharing that knowledge with the community.

Wetlands Committee

Members: Bill Garthwaite, Barry Goodrich, Dooley Kiefer, Darby Kiley (Chair), Craig Schutt, Tom Vawter

In 2011, the Wetlands Committee finalized 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 sample local law will be presented to the full WRC in early 2012 for approval and distribution to the municipalities in Tompkins County.

The Wetlands Committee discussed new sections in the NYS Stormwater Design Manual (Chapters 3, 4 and 5) that provide better protection for natural features on a site, including wetlands.

Streams Committee

Members: John Andersson, Bill Garthwaite, Barry Goodrich, Dan Karig (Chair), Dooley Kiefer, Gregg McConnell, Todd Miller, Steve Penningroth, Craig Schutt, Mary Shelley, Helen Slottje, Lisa Wright-Mathews

The Streams Committee was created in 2011 to oversee the Water Resources Council interests in Tompkins County streams and stream corridors. Projects undertaken by the committee during this first year include a compilation of water quality data collected by various groups in County streams, creation of a document outlining regulations concerning water withdrawal in two watersheds (Susquehanna and Great Lakes) in which the County lies, and an attempt to create a means by which the committee might monitor and influence stream management projects. All these projects are still ongoing.

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.

2012 meeting dates: January 23, February 27, March 19, April 16, May 21, June 18, July 16, September 17, October 16, November 19, and December 17. 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