

Water Resources Council

**TOMPKINS
COUNTY
PLANNING
DEPARTMENT**

2015 Annual Report

Water Resources Council (WRC)

- ◆ Residents of Tompkins County are invited to attend WRC meetings and apply for membership.
- ◆ Meetings typically run every third Monday of the month from 4:15-6:00 p.m. at the Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit Center meeting room, 737 Willow Avenue, Ithaca.
- ◆ To receive agenda and meeting minutes, contact the secretary at (607) 274-5560, or email jjurkovich@tompkins-co.org.
- ◆ Past agendas and meeting minutes are posted on the Tompkins County Planning Department website. Go to <http://tompkinscountyny.gov/planning/committees-wrc>
- ◆ WRC membership consists of 21 voting members appointed by the Tompkins County Legislature who represent various water-related interests and serve on a number of standing and special committees.

Brief History of the WRC

The Tompkins County Water Resources Council, known as the WRC, advises the Tompkins County Legislature on matters related to water resource 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 stakeholders to address and discuss their water resource concerns. The group's purpose is to coordinate the water resource-related efforts of local government, public and private institutions, agencies and organizations throughout the County.

The WRC is responsible for the development of

the Tompkins County Water Quality Strategy, which helps identify local water resource issues and concerns and prioritize strategies to address them. These are then incorporated into the WRC's work plan, which helps guide the activities of several standing and special committees.

WRC membership consists of 21 voting members who are appointed by the County Legislature, representing various water-related interests that include 6 non-voting members from relevant State and Federal agencies.

The WRC welcomes associate members who have committee-level voting rights. County residents are also welcome to attend the monthly meetings as guests.



Rainbow over Cayuga Lake, Ithaca, New York

WRC Grants Committee Report

By Jon Negley, Chair of WRC Grants Committee

In 2015, the Grants Committee met on an as-needed, informal, basis to discuss grant opportunities, applications and awards.

The Committee met to recommend the 2015-2016 Finger-Lakes Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FLOWPA) budget

of \$67,200 to the full Board, which was adopted.

The Committee assisted the Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District with applying for grants through the NYSDEC for hydroseeding roadside ditches, implementing innovative erosion and sediment control practices using compost products, and helping municipalities map their existing stormwater

infrastructure.

Ongoing research, investigation and application submittal is a routine activity of the committee.

As grant announcements are publicized, the Committee works to let the WRC membership know.

In 2016, we look forward to a productive year of grant activity!

Wetlands Report

With the successful completion of a pilot wetland mapping project in 2014, funding was garnered from the County and Park Foundation to complete the wetland mapping in the remainder of Tompkins County. Throughout 2015, the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network and Wetlands Committee members met with and received updates from Nicholas Hollingshead, the GIS consultant working on the mapping. The mapping is complete and outreach will take place in early 2016.

Education Committee Report

Education Committee members attended Hydrilla Outreach Committee meetings to help disseminate information to the public about the invasive aquatic plant hydrilla.

Two projects that the committee is looking into are:

1. The microplastics issue in Cayuga Lake, and

2. Updating the power boating brochure to reflect the changes in NYS clean boating laws that govern the control of invasive species.

We hope to update, reprint and distribute the boating brochure this year. The microplastics study is ongoing, with the hope of creating some kind of educational tool for the public.

Aquifer Committee Report

It was a relatively inactive year for the Aquifer Committee in 2015.

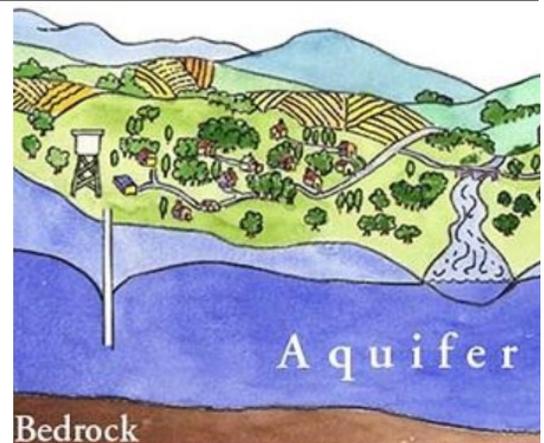
Copies of the Arsenic Factsheet (2014) were published and are available at the Planning Department. The Aquifer Committee met several times during 2015, but no pressing groundwater issues needed attention. The Committee drafted a press release on arsenic in groundwater, but it was not completed.

The USGS continued fieldwork to collect geohydrologic data in the Towns of

Newfield and Enfield. The Upper Buttermilk/Danby Creek aquifer report was published in December, and is available online.

Geohydrology and water quality of the stratified-drift aquifers in Upper Buttermilk Creek and Danby Creek Valleys, Town of Danby, Tompkins County, New York:

<https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/sir20155138>



Water Quality Strategy Update

The Water Resources Council updates its Water Quality Strategy every three years.

The 2015 Water Quality Strategy was adopted by the Council at its regularly scheduled meeting on October 19. While the Strategy was drafted by a committee of the Council, the full Council was involved in the process at two key meetings.

January WRC Meeting

Members of the Council were asked to identify any issues, problems or concerns they thought should be considered for inclusion in the strategy. More than 50 items were identified.

Starting with this list, as well as the list of issues included in the 2012 Strategy, the committee considered almost 100 potential activities to include in the Strategy. The committee developed and applied

a series of screening questions and criteria in order to divide the list of activities into four categories:

1. Items to be considered for action by the Council
2. Items to be considered for action by others
3. Ongoing and administrative tasks, and
4. Items not to be included.

July WRC Meeting

Members of the Council were given the list of 45 potential action items to be considered, and asked to identify which the Council as a whole should address, which they were personally willing to work on, and finally, which they would **most** like to work on.

The committee used the results of the voting and discussion to identify nine Priority Action Items for the Council to undertake during the 2016-18 time period of the Strategy. In addition, the

committee refreshed much of the information on water resources in Tompkins County and incorporated maps of watersheds, confined aquifers and wetlands. A draft of the Water Quality Strategy was distributed to members of the WRC in early October.

October WRC Meeting

The WRC reviewed the draft Strategy and made a small number of changes to the text. The modified draft was adopted at that meeting.

Nine Priority Action Items

1. Participate in the update of the NYS Section 303(d) List of Impaired/TMDL Waters.
2. Keep municipal and county officials informed of existing federal/state/local wetland regulations and changes to those regulations.
3. Provide comment on the High Hazard Pipeline Inventory.
4. Encourage completion of watershed assessments on remaining watersheds and disseminate resulting information.
5. Continue participation in DEC's Modeling Study/TMDL development activities.
6. Develop a systematic approach to data collection and analysis for potential pollutants.
7. Review existing watershed rules and recommend appropriate changes.
8. Develop a workshop for municipal officials on the importance of local actions to protect stream corridors, wetlands and aquifer recharge areas.
9. Evaluate the level of protection of existing groundwater sources used for municipal and individual supplies.

Nominating/Membership Committee

The Committee recommends prospective members to the WRC to fill vacancies on the Council, which is comprised 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.

Members recommended by the WRC and appointed by the Tompkins County Legislature for

three-year terms, commencing in 2016, are:

- ◆ At-Large: Frank Proto
- ◆ At-Large: John Andersson
- ◆ Environmental: Marjorie Rinaldo-Lee
- ◆ Municipal Government: Darby Kiley
- ◆ Watershed Organization: R. Barry Goodrich
- ◆ TC Planning Dept.: Joan Jurkovich.

Members recommended by the WRC and appointed by the Tompkins County Legislature for one-year terms commencing in 2016 are:

At-Large: Sarah Johnson Dwyer
Recreation: Cynthia Brock.

Associate members approved by the WRC for two-year terms commencing in 2016 are:

Steve Pennigroth
Linda Wagenet
Joanne Trutko.

This committee is also responsible for recommending a slate of officers for the WRC. The slate of officers approved by unanimous vote are:

Darby Kiley, Chair
Frank Proto, First Vice Chair
Liz Cameron, Second Vice Chair.





Water Resources Council

2015 Membership Roster

TOMPKINS COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14830

607-274-5587

planning@tompkins-co.org

http://
tompkinscountyny.gov/
planning/committees-wrc

Chair

Frank Proto, *At-Large*

Members

Sharon Anderson,

Cooperative Extension

John Andersson, *At-Large*

James Balyszak, *At-Large*

Chris Bordlemay, *Water
Purveyor*

Ed Bugliosi, *USGS Ex-Officio*

Scott Carpenter, *Associate*

Member

Liz Cameron, *Environmental
Health*

Sarah Dwyer, *Business/
Industry*

Barry Goodrich, *Watershed
Organization*

Michelle Henry, *Associate
Member*

Roxy Johnston, *Associate
Member*

Joan Jurkovich, *Tompkins
Co. Planning Dept.*

Dan Karig, *Recreation*

Dooley Kiefer, *Legislature
Liaison*

Darby Kiley, *Municipal
Government*

Lynn Leopold, *Municipal
Government*

José Lozano, *Associate*

Member

John Mawdsley, *Associate
Member*

Jim McGarry, *EMC Liaison*

Todd Miller, *Associate
Member*

Jon Negley, *Soil & Water*

Steve Penningroth, *Associate
Member*

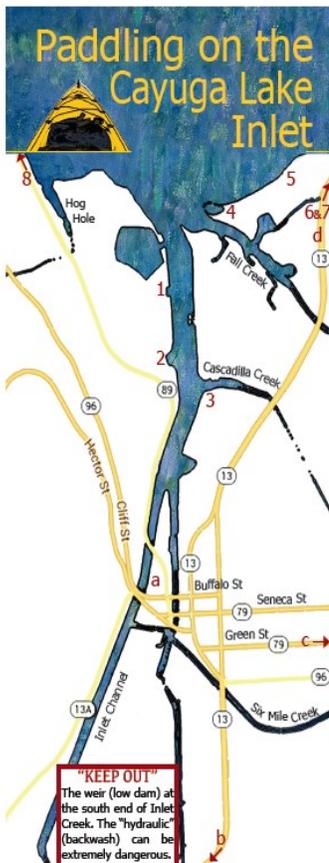
Elaine Quaroni, *At-Large*

Tom Vawter, *Associate*

Member

Linda Wagenet, *Associate*

Member



Recreation Committee Report

By Lynn Leopold, *Committee Chair*

The WRC's Recreation Committee concentrated on getting the paddling brochure distributed to all the various outlets that rent and/or sell paddling equipment.

Committee members learned that the City of Ithaca was considering adding several new access and non-motorized boat/board storage points around the south end of the lake. Lynn Leopold began attending the

City Water Recreation committee meetings as a WRC representative.

The City is in the approval process for installing the new boat and board racks, and hopes to see them finished by the spring.

In the meantime, the WRC Recreation Committee has no specific charge for 2016.

Lynn plans to continue to attend City of Ithaca meetings until such time as they have no more projects to consider.



IT'S THE LAW!

The following five items are not merely suggestions, they are the law:

PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE

Each person on board **MUST** have a Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD). It is recommended that all on board wear a PFD, anyone under 12 years old **MUST** wear a PFD at all times.

The law now requires PFDs to be worn by all on all small boats from Nov. 1 to May 1.

PLANT HITCHHIKERS

When you are done boating, remove ALL visible plant or animal material from your craft, equipment, and gear to prevent the spread of invasive species, such as hydrilla, that are a threat to Cayuga Lake and adjacent waterways.

AT NIGHT

Night paddling and rowing is **NOT** recommended, but if you must, carry a white light and show it in sufficient time to prevent a collision.

RIGHT OF WAY

You have the right of way over powered vessels, but be sensible. Few recognize the law and your safety is more important.

INTOXICATION

It is illegal to operate a vessel while intoxicated. This law pertains to **ALL** vessels.

This pamphlet was prepared and printed with funds from the Tompkins County Water Resources Council. For additional copies contact the Tompkins County Planning Department 121 Court Street in Ithaca, 607-274-5560, planning@tompkins-co.org