



## NEWSLETTER

Spring 2008

### Oatka Creek Watershed Committee, Inc.

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*WWW.OATKA.ORG*

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#### **Message From the Chairman**

Richard VenVertloh

It is my pleasure to inform you that the Oatka Creek Watershed Committee (OCWC) has been active in moving closer toward our goal - the development of a Watershed Management Plan. Central to our effort is the newly awarded ***Environmental Protection Fund*** grant that will provide funds for professional watershed planning in the Oatka and Black Creek watersheds. The Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council will be conducting the work with our assistance. We are hopeful that municipalities in the watershed will embrace this project and work with us during the planning process. There are many benefits to be realized! (see the article below)

And, finally we are back on line again! Please find the time to visit our new website at [www.oatka.org](http://www.oatka.org). We are very excited to have a comprehensive and interactive website that will enable viewers to explore and learn more about our watershed. Our goal is to keep it up to date with news about our committee and other events taking place in the watershed. Many thanks to committee members John and Lisa Compton for all their hard work and CT Integration systems who helped make the site a reality. We welcome user feedback!

As always, we appreciate your support and look forward to working with you to preserve our creek. Thank you !

*Rick*

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#### **Environmental Protection Fund Grant**

David Zorn, Executive Director – Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council

The Black and Oatka Creek Watershed Elected Officials Breakfast was held on February 29, 2008 for the purpose of briefing the municipalities on the upcoming Black and Oatka Creek Watershed Management Plans initiative.

The Town of Wheatland is the sponsor for the NYS Environmental Protection Fund grant of \$150,000 to be used for the development of the watershed management plan. This grant however, requires a match

of \$150,000 that can be a combination of cash and in-kind services; the Rochester Area Community Foundation has already provided a \$10,000 grant toward that match.

The presentation at the breakfast meeting was an overview of background information on the Black and Oatka Creek Watersheds; the importance of a municipally supported watershed management planning process; prior accomplishments in the two watersheds; funds that have been awarded and the matching funds that are required; and a proposed process for the development of the two watershed management plans.

It was pointed out that watershed management planning is meant to guide land use decisions, protect property values, prioritize issues into an action plan and target implementation funding. Inter-municipal coordination and collaboration are key to a successful program.

Higher land values are tied to good water quality and water resource management, which is directly related to the protection and restoration of our natural resources. Having an approved watershed management plan facilitates the infusion of state and federal implementation funding. It was therefore pointed out that watershed management planning involves oversight and involvement from stakeholders (including municipalities), education and outreach, public participation, and fact finding; an understanding of the existing state, the desired state and an agreement on the strategies and actions necessary to get from the existing state to the desired state; and a balancing of the quality of sometimes conflicting uses such as fishing, boating, drinking water, irrigation, aesthetics, agriculture, industrial, bathing, hiking and biking.

As noted earlier there have been many successes in the two watersheds and therefore it is believed that the upcoming watershed management planning process is greatly assisted by the existence of the Black Creek Watershed Coalition and the Oatka Creek Watershed Committee; the development and publication of the *Black Creek Watershed State of the Basin Report* and the *Oatka Creek Watershed State of the Basin Report*; the completion and partial implementation of the Controlling Sediment in the Black and Oatka Creek Watershed project; the Oatka Creek Watershed Guide; sampling and monitoring projects that have been completed in both streams; the development of Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plans for Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Orleans, and Wyoming Counties; and the development of the *Oatka Creek Flood Mitigation Plan*.



## **Oatka Creek Stabilization Project**

Jack Bradbury, OCWC Member

The Village of LeRoy was awarded a \$700,000 grant by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for use in the Oatka Creek Stabilization Project. The five year plan is to provide half of the funds (\$350,000.) in non-matching grants, direct funding and “in-kind” services.

Trowbridge & Wolf Landscape Architects and Planners from Ithaca, New York and John Steinmetz Planning Group have developed a conceptual design for the project. A drawing of the project is on display at the LeRoy Village Hall, 3 West Main Street LeRoy. The plan is designed to complete erosion control of the Oatka Creek from the Clay Street bridge (Rte 19) at the south end and the Main Street Bridge (US Rte 5) at the north end. It includes a waterfront promenade for the entire length along the public owned property bordering the creek bank.. A wooden board walk is planned on top of the stone revetment material to create the promenade. The rest of the area will be green space. There will be a primary access point across from the Woodward Memorial Library on Wolcott Street. Also, an “L” shaped pier is planned across from the entrance to allow visitors a view of the creek. At the Main Street end, a boat launch for hand powered craft is proposed. Other amenities include benches, trash receptacles and decorative lighting along the boardwalk.

Approximately \$110,000 has been earmarked for the project leaving approximately \$240,000 to be raised. To assist in this process, the Village Board appointed an Ad Hoc committee for matching funds for the Oatka Creek Bank Stabilization Project. Members of the Committee include Ray Yacuzzo, Russ Lathan, Tim Hens, Andy Olenick, Peter Loftus, Jack Bradbury, and Brian Duddy. The work of the Committee is to be completed by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2009.



**Town of Warsaw – Salt Storage Shed**

Robert Heubusch, Warsaw Town Councilman and OCWC member

The Town of Warsaw with help from the Village of Warsaw is ready to put the Salt Storage shed out to bid in June of this year. The finances for the project (grants) are now in place to allow the community to move forward. The expectation is to have it built this summer and fall so it can be used this winter. This project will help safeguard run off that could make its way to the Oatka Creek.

This has been a very long slow process to get to this point but the Town is determined to have it up and running for this winter season. A lot of the work for the foundation base and the paving will be done by the highway crew.