

Oatka Creek Watershed Committee, Inc.
P.O. Box 181
Scottsville, New York 14546

NEWS FROM THE
OATKA CREEK
WATERSHED COMMITTEE
Autumn 2003



Message from the Chairman
Municipal Cooperation Agreement

The Oatka Creek Watershed Committee (OCWC) has been busy the last several months with a number of initiatives. With the help of our part time Steward, David Zorn, from the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, we have been able to substantially complete the scope of work under the pre-existing grant from the Finger Lakes/ Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FOLLOWPA). Some of this work included four (4) public meetings - Warsaw, Pavilion, LeRoy, Scottsville, in which discussions about the problems and concerns within the watershed were documented.

Model inter-municipal agreements have been produced and are currently under review at the County level. Also produced were a number of model ordinances regarding best management practices in such areas as: sediment & erosion control, vegetation retention, flood plain management, zoning, junk yards, subdivisions and drainage.



This Fall the Committee hopes to complete the Oatka Guide. The guide is intended to be an educational tool and will consist of an interpretive map on one side with supporting text on the other. The map will identify the watershed including basic planimetric features as well as historical and geological points of interest. The supporting text is intended to provide a historical perspective on the natural and human setting of the creek. Our first printing, probably in the winter, will enable a wide distribution to the interested public through communities and organizations within the basin.

Our 501(c)(3) process is nearly complete! Although we have been incorporated as a non-profit organization for some time, we have yet to achieve our tax-exempt status from the IRS. Within the next several months we hope to finally complete the process. The additional financial documentation we are about to send to the IRS should satisfy their strict requirements – we hope!

Good news from our partners at the Genesee and Wyoming Soil and Water Conservation districts. Each district will use annual grant funding from Finger Lakes/ Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance to enable the completion of a “Stressed

Stream Analysis". This project has long been a goal of the Committee. The purpose of this scientific study is to pinpoint pollution sources in the creek. Professor Joseph Makarewicz and his staff at the State University at Brockport will be conducting the study. The project will get under way this year.

In conclusion, we are always interested in recruiting new members and welcome anyone interested in environmental conservation. Or, if you aren't interested in membership but would like to learn more, just come to one of our meetings, which are typically the third Wednesday of every month in the Village offices in LeRoy. Feel free to call me at home (889-5293) anytime. Enjoy the Creek!

Sincerely,



Richard T. VenVertloh,
Chairman, Oatka Creek Watershed Committee

Genesee and Wyoming Counties Joint Flood Mitigation Plan for the Tonawanda and Oatka Creek Watersheds

The Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council has been working with Genesee and Wyoming Counties' Emergency Management Offices on a Flood Mitigation Plan for 24 municipalities in the Tonawanda and Oatka Creek Watersheds in the two counties. We are pleased to announce that this process, which began in December of 2002, is nearly complete.

There are 26 plans that have been completed. There is one plan for each county, and one for each of the 24 participating municipalities. The remaining task is having the town and village boards of each municipality, along with the Genesee County Legislature and the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors, adopt their respective plans. The recommendations in the plans can then start to be implemented and used to secure additional funding.

What is the importance of flood mitigation planning? It increases public awareness of risks associated with flooding and identifies critical facilities and structures. It creates opportunities for communities to participate in the Community Rating System and be eligible for reductions in National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) premiums. Flood mitigation plans help to access funding to mitigate future flooding problems. Finally, the plan establishes a watershed-wide analysis of the issues and encourages inter-municipal cooperation to solve problems.

An important part of flood mitigation planning is direct input from the people who live and work in the flood-prone areas. Over the course of the planning process, six public meetings were held throughout the two counties. In addition, the Joint Flood Technical Committee, made up of representatives from the municipalities and key county agencies, met monthly in Attica. Finally, in-depth interviews were conducted with officials from all the municipalities and county departments. The observations of all of these groups played a crucial role in the development of the plan and will hopefully ensure that it will remain an active and living document.

Annual International Coastal Clean-Up

Margit Brazda Poirier, Water Education Collaborative



Be a part of this international event on **Saturday, September 20th**. Choose from four locations along the Genesee River and Lake Ontario: Durand Eastman Beach, Genesee Valley Park, Seth Green fishing site, and Turning Point Park, and several Community Water Watch monitoring sites. **Clean up begins at 9 a.m.** at all locations (except Durand Beach where it begins at 10 a.m.) A free "trash bash" lunch at the Sunset Shelter at Durand Eastman Park will follow. **Walk-ins are welcome!** Dress for wet and muddy conditions.

For information call Noreen Mazurowski, Water Education Collaborative, 271-4552, ext. 324, or visit www.thewec.org. CWW volunteers: call Kimie Romeo at 703-4690 to arrange the acquisition of supplies.
