# ANNUAL REPORT ON ACTIVITIES: JANUARY 1, 2013 TO DECEMBER 31, 2013 AND THE EXPECTATIONS FOR 2014

## Oatka Creek Watershed Committee, Inc.

I. Meetings:

a. Eleven regularly scheduled monthly OCWC meetings were held in 2013. Number of attendees in parentheses: January 14 (10), February 25 (12), March 18 (10), April 15, May 20 (12), July 15 (11), August 19 (9), September 16 (11), October 21 (11), November 18 (7) and December 16 (8). On average, 8 folks attended our regular meetings this year.

Meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of the month, from 6:30 PM to 8:15 PM at the downstairs meeting room of the Woodward Memorial Public Library, located on Wolcott Street in the Village of LeRoy. If in some months the 3rd Monday falls on a holiday when the library is closed, then an alternative Monday during the month will be selected and Committee members are notified in advance of the change.

b. In 2013, as was the case in 2012, our regular April meeting was held at the Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) in the Village of Warsaw. This allowed several other folks from the upper watershed area to attend the meeting. In addition to running through our normal meeting agenda, the meeting included two presentations.

Charlie Knauf, the Coordinator for the Remedial Action Plan (RAP) for the Rochester Embayment, one of the identified Areas of Concern on the Great Lakes, discussed the connections between the beneficial use impairments (BUIs) affecting the delisting of the Rochester Embayment and the nutrient and sediment loadings being contributed from the upstream areas of the Genesee River Basin. Charlie also provided a summary and an update regarding the related Citizen Science project, administered by EPA/DEC/USGS, to monitor certain sections of Oatka and Honeoye Creeks, as well as sites on the Genesee River mainstem, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of remedial measures (BMPs) implemented under NRCS- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Greg McKurth, District Manager for the Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District presented information on the kinds of Best Management Practices that have been implemented in Wyoming County as part of the NRCS EQIP/WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program) and the NYS Ag Non-Point Source Program. This presentation expanded upon information Greg provided earlier in the year at the Committee's February meeting. Since dairy farms are very important to agriculture activities in Wyoming County, nutrient

management is also very important. Topics and related practices that were covered included: silage and manure store; collection systems for silage leachate; and management of nutrients after collection, including: field spreading for plant uptake, monitoring of phosphorus levels in fields and manure testing, manure injection, conservation tillage, and timing of fertilizer application. The presentation also included explanations and examples of techniques for soil improvement; erosion and sediment control; and for seasonal protection against runoff, such as cover cropping, deep tillage, livestock crossings, hydro-seeding, and no-till strips.

Additionally, Greg reported that Wyoming County SWCD is doing a log jam inventory and that the DEC/US Army Corps of Engineers plan to work on the Flood Control Project, which is located in the Village of Warsaw. The capacity to control flooding in the project area has been greatly reduced because of shoal development within the Oatka Creek channel caused by erosion. Project will include removal of shoals and repairing eroded areas.

II. Watershed Planning:

Following up on the 2012 completion of the Oatka Creek Watershed Characterization, in 2013 the staff of the Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council (G/FL RPC) proceeded to work on the next two documents, that together with the Watershed Characterization will be reviewed for recommendations that will lead to completing the next step, Task 17 - *Identify and Describe Management Strategies for Watershed Protection and Restorati*on, in the Watershed Planning process (see http://www.gflrpc.org/Publications/BlackOatka/ProjectOverview.pdf ). The two documents are the Regulatory and Programmatic Environment Report and the Subwatershed Report.

a. Regulatory and Programmatic Environmental Report

Late in 2012, Tom Kicior, Senior Planner with G/FLRPC, attended are December meeting to share with us his initial efforts at developing the Regulatory and Programmatic Environment Report. He had undertaken a review of the laws and practices of Counties, Towns and Villages located in the Oatka Creek watershed that have an impact on water quality. The draft document that was prepared was called "Local Regulations and Practices Assessment" and was to be sent to the counties and all municipalities within the watershed. Tom asked committee members to take a look at the document and associated spreadsheets in order to see if there are any gaps in information. Some members were able to provide Tom with comments by the January 2013 deadline.

The Regulatory and Programmatic Environment Report will include a description of the roles of local, county regional, state, and federal governmental and non-governmental organizations that have an impact on water

quality in the watershed. The report will include an analysis of local laws, plans, programs, and practices to assess whether they incorporate and promote the use of water quality best management practices (BMPs). The report will make recommendations for priority additions or changes to local laws, plans, programs, and practices. The intent of the municipal law review is to provide recommendations on ways that local communities can implement and/or strengthen regulations and practices favorable to preserving the environmental quality of the watershed, including surface water and groundwater resources. Some of the draft recommendations will pertain to: local enforcement, education, storm water practices, set back buffers (development and usage), vegetative buffers, zoning (which could include environmental protection overlay districts), wetland and floodplain districts, controlling impervious surfaces, agricultural regulations, parking lot buffers, etc. It was acknowledged that agricultural best management practices are an important component of County Soil and Water Conservation District programs. Some of the current agricultural BMPs focus on runoff management, manure storage, barnyard locations and buffers. T. Kicior stated that the overarching goal of the municipal law review is to present the ideal (model) condition for communities to consider.

Tom Kicior returned to meet with us at our May meeting. He had incorporated feedback and comments he received into the final draft of the assessment of local laws. The evaluation of BMPs with regard to the local laws will show where there are gaps. A final draft will be available later in the year and it will be available for review and comment by members of the Project Advisory Committee.

b. Subwatershed Report

At the May meeting Tom Kicior reported that the Subwatershed Report was also being drafted. The Subwatershed Report will describe the Oatka Creek Watershed's constituent sub-watersheds in terms of including population density, hydrology, floodplains, impervious cover, land cover, riparian cover, and wetlands. The Report will also include an evaluation of existing water quality data, run-off characteristics and pollutant loadings, as well as identify pollution sources, sources of water quality impairment, and potential threats to water quality and watershed hydrology and ecology.

In May additional items were planned to be added to the draft, such as population shifts information and information from Dale Pettenski's these presentation. Peter Lent contacted David Zorn, Executive Director of G/FLRPC, after the May meeting and asked if he could help in merging the information from the Thesis into the Subwatershed Report. The offer of help was accepted.

Unfortunately, this became a more involved and demanding project than P. Lent had anticipated. Additional personal and family commitments also delayed the completion of the task. By October 23, 2013, P. Lent had delivered to G/FLRPC the sections for the Subwatershed Report that included discussions of Dale Pettenski's findings on the sources, concentrations and loadings of nutrients, suspended solids and bacteria, and best management scenarios as they related to the Oatka Creek Watershed as a whole, and also in terms, of impacts, contributions, and effective management practices on a subwatershed basis.

c. Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting

On October 25, 2013, PAC Members were notified that a PAC meeting would be held on November 6, 2013 at the Woodward Public Library in the Village of LeRoy. Links were available for PAC members to be able to review the draft Regulatory and Programmatic Environment and Subwatershed Reports on the G/FLRPC Website. At the PAC Meeting, Executive Director David Zorn, Senior Planner Tom Kicior, and Planner Claire J. (CJ) Randall reviewed the two draft documents. PAC members asked questions and provided comments at the meeting. Subsequent to the meeting both Lisa Compton and P. Lent submitted written comments. Most of the comments involved suggestions on rephrasing sections and correcting typographical errors.

However, it was noted that the Mud Creek Subwatershed had not been addressed as much as other subwatersheds and the Spring Creek information was not complete as much as it should be. P. Lent offered to make some changes to add some additional information. P. Lent's revisions were delayed and were finally submitted to David Zorn via 2 by e-mails on December 31, 2013 and January 2, 2014, with some corrections sent on January 6, 2014. The revisions submitted included a discussion of Mud Creek Subwatershed within an expanded discussion of the Oatka Creek Outlet Subwatershed, which included Spring Creek.

d. Next Steps

The Regulatory and Programmatic Environment Report is finalized. The Subwatershed Report will be finalized once the latest revisions have been incorporated. When the final versions are on G/FLRPC's website links will be provided for others to review the most recent versions. The Subwatershed Report will refer to some Figures and Tables found in Dale Pettenski's Masters Thesis. The Thesis can be reviewed here: http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1037&context=env_theses .

These reports, along with the previously completed Watershed Characterization Report, will be used to develop actions and recommendations to complete the

next two steps of the Watershed Planning process - Task 17: *Identify and Describe Management Strategies for Watershed Protection and Restoration* and Task 18: *Phasing of Management Strategies* . As noted earlier, a description of each of the planning tasks is found in the Program Overview available on the G/FLRPC website using the link provided in the first paragraph of this watershed Planning Summary.

The results from Tasks 17 and 18 will be compiled into a Watershed Management Strategy Report which will be submitted to NYS Department of State for approval. PAC review will be involved in conjunction with the completion of each Task. A draft Watershed Management Plan will then be prepared, which compiles the work of the five smaller reports and this will be followed by a Public Information Meeting. The Watershed Management Plan will be finalized after the Public Meeting and applicable comments from public will be incorporated.

## III. Outreach Activities

a. Second Revision of Oatka Creek Map Guide

We were able to complete the revision of the Oatka Creek Map Guide and have 5000 copies printed and available for use by the time of our first 2013 Community Event (GCC EcoFest) in 2013. This effort was supported by funding from the Finger Lakes – Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FL-LOWPA). The more detailed map that includes more roads, Village details, fishing access, parks and points of interest was developed by Molly Stetz, who works with the Genesee County Soil and Water Conservation District. The Historical Narrative provided on the opposite side of the map was updated by the efforts of Committee volunteers Lisa and John Compton, Bob Kelley, and Jerome Smith.

b. Watershed Information Displays at Community Events and other venues.

During 2013 members of the committee participated at four events:

| **Event** | **Dates** | **OCWC Volunteers** | **Service Hrs.** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. GCC Eco-Fest | April 13 | L. Compton, M. Leupold, B. Gick, J. Seiler, P. Lent | 29 |
| 2. Earth Day - Scottsville | April 20 | J. Compton, P. Lent | 16 |
| 3. Oatka Festival Village of LeRoy | July 13-14 Setup 7/12 | L. & J. Compton, M. Leupold, B. Gick, J. Seiler, P. Lent, G. Squires | 67 |
| 4. Educator Agribusiness Workshop at GCC | July 31 | M. Leupold, P. Lent | 20 |

For each event listed, we set a booth was set up using our display board. In 2013 we have started to update the information on the display board. Through the

efforts of Lisa Compton and Maureen Leupold, we now have an impressive graphics display comparing characteristics of healthy and unhealthy streams, including the types of benthic macroinvertebrates (BMI, or 'macros" or "critters") that can inhabit each. This display works well in conjunction with our use of a live macroinvertebrate display of the critters collected from Oatka Creek and ponds adjacent to the creek. After the event, the critters were returned to their waterbodies. This year an air pump and air stones were added to improve survival for the collected macroinvertebrates. J. Compton put together an inverter and battery setup so we can use the air pump in situations where electricity is not available. Watershed literature and macro identification aids were also available for distribution. Photographs of the Creek were available for viewing.

Attendance at the events was estimated as 50 at the Earth Day event in Scottsville and 112 at the Oatka Festival in LeRoy. In 2014, we will continue to keep tallies of traffic to our display at these events. We will still look for a community event in the upper watershed, for example at Warsaw, where we can bring our display board and the live macroinvertebrates.

c. School-Based Outreach Development:

We started 2013 with great expectations for this initiative. The Committee volunteers working on this project include Maureen Leupold, Lisa Compton, Rick VenVertloh, George Squires, and P. Lent. On March 13, Committee Volunteers met with Melissa Marszalek, Manager of Group and Natural History Programs at the Genesee Country Village and Museum (GCV&M), to plan a Teacher Workshop for a tentative date of May 18, 2013 to be held at the GCV&M Nature Center. On April 1, 36 letters were sent out to middle school and high school science teachers, as well as principals in six of the School Districts located in the Oatka Creek Watershed. The School Districts included were, Wheatland-Chili, Caledonia-Mumford, Leroy, Pavilion, Wyoming, and Warsaw.

Our plans included acquiring three sets of sampling equipment and supplies to be loaned out to science teachers. We would also offer to assist teachers with class presentations and the logistics associated with stream visits. We received two grants, each for $500 dollars, from the Industrial Issues Committee of the Genesee Valley Chapter of the NY Water Environmental Association (NYWEA) and the Genesee/Finger Lakes Chapter of the Air and Waste Management Association (AWMA). The grants would allow us to purchase the first set of equipment.

For the workshop we planned to use equipment available at both GCC and at the GCV&M Nature Center, as well as equipment from the Finger Lakes Institute's (FLI) Stream Monitoring Program. Jordan Youngman, the Stream Monitoring Program's Coordinator agreed to attend and help facilitate the workshop. The

monitoring protocols we intend to use are based on those used by the FLI's Stream Monitoring Program.

Reminder e-mails went out to teachers on April 29 and 30, with a response date of May 6. Long story short, we ended up with only two responses, one could attend (from Wheatland-Chili) and another (from Caledonia-Mumford) wanted to attend but had a conflict. Given this very limited response we had to cancel the Teacher Workshop.

We had received some feedback from teachers and had found out that the time for scheduling the late spring workshop was also a busy time for teachers, who were trying to get required material covered in their classes and to review course material with their students before the final tests in June. Also we found that it is becoming more important for teachers to only include learning activities that can be demonstrated to be directly related to course curriculum and that will help students and teachers meet the performance indicators for learning proficiency for the specific courses.

After recovering from the disappointment, we reviewed our options and decided to modify our approach. Although we had to cancel the workshop, we did end up with four teachers who had expressed interest in a school-based monitoring program. These teachers are from four separate school districts (Wheatland-Chili, Caledonia-Mumford, LeRoy, and Pavilion). Before planning for another workshop we wanted to sit down with each of these teachers individually. We wanted to use these meetings as an opportunity to describe our proposal in more detail than was available in the initial workshop invitation We also wanted to gather their input on what they thought about our ideas, what concerns and problems they may see in our being able to implement a school-based watershed science program, and what kinds of changes and improvements we can make to increase the usefulness of such a program for teachers.

Early in June, just before P. Lent took a three week western vacation trip, he sent an e-mail to the four teachers, updating them on the status of OCWC's School-based Watershed Science/Stream Monitoring educational outreach initiative. The e-mail included our desire to meet with them individually over the summer if possible. We asked them when they may have time over the summer and asked for e-mails or phone numbers where we could reach them in the summer. We received responses from two of the teachers, who were from Wheatland-Chili and Pavilion School Districts.

Unfortunately, we were not able to follow-up with the teachers during the summer and until recently committee members have not been able to devote time to this project. There are several reasons for this, other commitments, both directly (review and development of documents related to the Watershed Management Planning process) and indirectly (DEC WAVE Volunteer Program-see report

section on this) related to OCWC activities, as well as non-OCWC volunteer commitments and personal family responsibilities.

Given the status of the school-based educational outreach initiative at the end of 2013, we still are willing to work toward moving forward, but we are reducing are expectations as to what we may be able to accomplish in 2014. Here is a list of our action items:

- Using the $1000 from the 2013 grants we received, we will purchase enough equipment to one complete stream monitoring equipment kit.
- Using the Finger Lakes Institute's Protocols as a guide we will develop a set of protocols to assess stream habitat and water quality using physical-, chemical-, and biological-based measurements.
- We will attempt to complete the individual follow-up with the four teachers, who have showed interest in the school-based approach.
- In addition to the protocols, we will work with the teachers to develop a lesson plan approach that would address curriculum performance standards and include both classroom and field trip components.
- By the end of 2014, we will have used the equipment and the protocols in a minimum of 2 educational outreach field monitoring events. In addition to regular class studies, we will explore the opportunities to utilize the field work activities with school science clubs, Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troops, or other youth or community groups.

d. Production of Watershed Video

In 2013, a subcommittee, led by M. Leupold began working with Genesee Community College and a local firm, Penguin MultiMedia, to produce a short 5-minute educational video. The video will cover what is a watershed, what are some of the water quality concerns for watersheds and what all the folks living in the watershed can do to improve water quality. The video will feature footage from various locations within the Oatka Creek Watershed. Thanks to Jim Seiler for arranging the agricultural best management practice video shots and to R. VenVertloh for taking part in the fly fishing action shots. We hope to have this video available when we begin our educational outreach for 2014 with the EcoFest Event at GCC. This opportunity became possible through the support of the Business and Employee Skills Training Center (BEST) Center at GCC.

e. Genesee Community College (GCC) Ecology Class' Environmental Stream Field & Laboratory involved Biomonitoring & Stream assessment of Oatka Creek

Following the Tier II protocols established by the Finger Lakes Institute, twelve (12) GCC students in the Ecology Class participated in field and classroom

activities, September 25 and October 2, respectively. The sampling location was on Oatka Creek within the property of the Genesee Country Village & Museum in the Town of Wheatland, Monroe County. Stream data collecting activities included dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature, stream flow, and macroinvertebrate collection/identification. Analysis of the macroinvertebrate collections indicated that the biological community was slightly impacted. P. Lent assisted in both the field and laboratory activities.

## IV. Volunteer Monitoring Opportunities

### a. NYS DEC WAVE PROGRAM

The WAVE acronym stands for Water Assessment by Volunteer Evaluators. See additional information at http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/92237.html . This volunteer program was developed and piloted in 2012 in the Hudson River Basin. In 2013 the program was expanded into the Genesee and Delaware River Basins. The WAVE Program is a biological method for assessing water quality in rocky bottom streams using bottom-dwelling macroinvertebrates [aquatic insects and other kinds of aquatic invertebrates (i.e. worms, clams & snails, and crayfish and their relatives) that can be seen by the naked eye, without the aid of magnification].

The primary responsibility of WAVE volunteers is to collect macroinvertebrate samples from streams. Volunteers submit the locations they want to sample to the WAVE Coordinator in DEC's Albany office and the coordinator will approve the sampling sites or make suggestions for alternative locations. All participants must also attend a 4-hour training session which provides hand-on experience in: selecting the areas of best habitat; using methods of collecting samples in the faster current "riffle" areas of stream; identification of the macroinvertebrates using taxonomic keys; and "reading" a stream and its adjacent area so that the stream reach can be characterized accurately when completing habitat assessment and use perception forms at each sampling site.

Volunteers can sample from July through September. One or two examples of each kind of macroinvertebrate are preserved in a voucher sample vial, which includes a label with location coordinates, Stream Name, date, and volunteer name. A sample field data form is completed which indicates each type of macroinvertebrate found in the sample. The volunteer carries the voucher specimens and the completed field data, habitat assessment and use perception forms to a pickup point where the sampling materials are forwarded to the WAVE Coordinator in Albany.

The basis for the assessment of water quality is how many macroinvertebrate types are representative of the **MOST WANTED** types or the **LEAST WANTED** types. If a sample contains macroinvertebrates that are in neither of these categories they are tallied as **OTHER** types. The field data sheet includes these three groupings and lists the Scientific Names (usually Orders or Families) for the types in each group. If 6 or

more **MOST WANTED** types are found, the sampled stream segment has "**No Known Impact**". This is the highest quality category assigned to stream segments in the NYS Waterbody Inventory.

However, if 4 or more **LEAST WANTED** types are found, the sampled stream segment is categorized as "**Possibly Impaired**" and a follow up investigation at the professional level would be necessary to identify the level of impact, if any. While this assessment is indeterminate, it still represents a "red flag" that the site requires further investigation.

In a situation where a sample has both 6 or more **MOST WANTED** types and 4 or more of the **LEAST WANTED** types, the sampled stream segment would be considered to have "**No Known Impact**".

If a sample has less than 6 **MOST WANTED** and less than 4 **LEAST WANTED** types, then the assessment is "**No Conclusion**".

In 2013, three OCWC members took the training and they are: Kimberly Petherick, M. Leupold, and P. Lent. The training is good for 5 years. Seven WAVE samples were collected in the Oatka Creek Watershed during the 2013 sampling period. M. Leupold sampled Oatka Creek near her house, which is located approximately 1.3 miles upstream from the point where Spring Creek joins Oatka Creek at Mumford in the Town of Wheatland, Monroe County. P. Lent (PL) was approved to sample 6 locations and these locations, as well as M. Leupold's (ML) are listed in the following table. Lori Whittington (LW) assisted P. Lent in sampling Cotton Creek and Oatka Creek at Warsaw. The table summarizes the results, in terms of the total number of kinds of macroinvertebrates at each site and how the total was partitioned among Most Wanted, Least Wanted and Other groups. The table also provides NYS DEC's assessment based on their analysis of the voucher sample submitted for each of the sampling sites. Five sites (Cotton Creek Trib., Pearl Creek Trib. at Rt.19 and Oatka Creek sites at Warsaw, Above Spring Creek, and at Scottsville) all were assessed as No Known Impact. The two samples near the Hamlet of Pavilion had indeterminate results, with the upstream sample being No Conclusion and the downstream sample being Possibly Impaired. Further investigation would seem to be warranted in the Pavilion area. The Cotton Creek tributary contained the greatest number of different macroinvertebrate types (23) and had the highest number of Most Wanted types (13).

Sampling Efforts will continue in 2014. The high priority areas would include additional sites on Oatka Creek and its tributary streams in the Oatka Creek Headwater Subwatershed, which is an area that has not previously been assessed by NYS DEC biological sampling. Additional samples could be collected on the White Creek Tributary and within the Village of LeRoy subwatershed. There should be training available for those who want to volunteer for the WAVE program in 2014. For those interested, be prepared to spend more than half a day completing the habitat and use perception forms and in collecting and picking the macroinvertebrates from the sample,

and then identifying the types present and recording them on the field data sheet. However, any day you can get to a stream, is a good day.

| Stream Segment<br>*= DEC Historic Site | Subwatershed (12-Digit HUC) | Total Number | Most Wanted | Least Wanted | Other | NYSDEC Assessment (Based on Voucher) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cotton Creek Tributary (PL & LW) | Oatka Creek Headwaters | 23 | 13 | 3 | 7 | No Known Impact |
| * Oatka Creek at Warsaw (PL & LW) | Pearl Creek | 19 | 10 | 3 | 6 | No Known Impact |
| * Pearl Creek Tributary (PL) | Pearl Creek | 20 | 8 | 4 | 8 | No Known Impact |
| Oatka Creek Upstream of Pavilion (PL) | White Creek | 12 | 3 | 3 | 6 | No Conclusion |
| Oatka Creek Downstream of Pavilion (PL) | White Creek | 15 | 5 | 4 | 6 | Possibly Impaired |
| Oatka Creek before Spring Creek Tributary (ML) | Oatka Creek Outlet | 14 | 6 | 3 | 5 | No Known Impact |
| * Oatka Creek in Scottsville (PL) | Oatka Creek Outlet | 21 | 9 | 4 | 8 | No Known Impact |

b. Citizen Science – Volunteers to help with sampling Oatka Creek, Honeoye Creek and the Genesee River in associations with a Beneficial Use Impairment Delisting Study for the Rochester Embayment AOC.

On Page 1 of this report, the summary of Charlie Knauf's presentation at the April 15, 2013 meeting in Warsaw includes additional information on this topic. OCWC first became aware of this potential volunteer opportunity in June 2012.

The minutes from the December 16, 2013 Committee Meeting provide a good summary of the status of this item.

V. Corporate Activity:

a. "Retirement" of our Treasurer, Bob Keeley, has been mentioned on a regularly basis in our meeting agenda and minutes throughout this year. We wish to thank Jim Seiler for his willingness to follow in Bob's footsteps and allow us to place his name, as our new treasurer on the Officer Ballot for 2014.

Bob has been an active OCWC volunteer continuously since 2001. During this time Bob played key roles in the formation and development of the Committee, including: the process of incorporation as a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization; partnership with Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council; development of a State of the Basin Report; and Watershed Planning activities. He has assisted in our outreach activities throughout the years. Bob was instrumental in getting the first Watershed Map Guide published in 2004 and he helped with our 2013, 2nd edition Map Guide by supplementing our historical narrative in the Map Guide.

b. Also this year Bill Gick, representative from the Town of Bethany and a Town Councilman will also be stepping down from his Board Member position that he has held since January 2005. Bill has been a faithful Board Member since he joined the Board. The only time I can remember he missed a meeting was when there was a scheduling conflict with our meeting and a meeting of the Town of Bethany Town Board. Bill regularly helped out at our display booth at the GCC Ecofest and at the Oatka Festival in LeRoy. Bill, thank you for all your service and help.

   Bob and Bill you know, that just because you are not on the Board, does not mean that you can't attend our meetings in the future. We'll keep you both on the mailing list so you know what's happening.

c. We also want to thank Bill, for finding a new Board Member candidate, Ray Cipriano, to follow in his footsteps as the representative of the Town of Bethany. Ray is currently a member of the Town of Bethany Planning Board and also serves on the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) for the Black Creek Watershed Planning process. Ray started attending our meetings in the fall to get acquainted with our Committee. His name will be placed on the ballot as a new Board Member at the Annual Corporation Meeting on February 24, 2014.

d. In 2013, we realized that we do not have a copy of the completed application form (Form 1023) that was submitted to the Internal Revenue Service as part of the Committee's 2002 request for designation as a tax exempt 501(c) (3) organization. We do have the 12-30-2003 letter from IRS that indicates their determination that OCWC is exempt from federal income tax as a 501(c) (3) organization. Our responsibilities as a 501(c)(3) organization require that upon request of the public we make available both the IRS determination letter and the Form 1023 application. A letter along with a completed request for document form (Form 4506-A) was submitted by P. Lent to the IRS office in Cincinnati, Ohio on November 29, 2013. As of February 29, 2014, no response has been received. Given the IRS staffing problems, and the time of year, this probably is not surprising. A reminder letter referencing the prior request submittal will be sent to IRS in March 2014.

VI. Other Activities:

a. Oatka Park Clean-up

As in past years, Vice-Chair M. Leupold organized the fall Coastal Clean-up initiative to pick up trash and debris from Oatka Park a Monroe County Park, which borders Oatka Creek in the Town of Wheatland. This year's cleanup was held on Saturday, September 21, 2013. We had 11 folks help us this year. The weather, however, did not cooperate and as soon as we started the rain started and for most of the time it was coming down very hard.

The crew included folks from the Committee, GCC and 4 Girl Scouts and their leader from Troop 42027 in LeRoy. The Girl Scouts did a great job considering the conditions and cleaned up the entire North Side of the creek. They were the last group to finish up. We covered the entire park, as well as the banks of Oatka Creek. The heavy rain made the task of combing through the park and creek more difficult, but we filled 4 bags of trash removed a tire, alerted park personnel of the location of a TV in the creek and weighed in at 63 pounds of trash. Many thanks go out to our wonderful Monroe County Parks Department. The Park Personal are fabulous – delivery of supplies and pick up afterwards- so helpful and timely!

Next year, on April 26, 2014, we will be joining the Pick up the Parks event, where most Monroe County Parks are picked up by volunteer groups on the same day. But we will also plan on still doing the fall clean up (Coastal Clean-Up) as well.

b. Finger Lakes Sustainability Plan

P. Lent and G. Squires participated in the process to develop a Finger Lakes Sustainability Plan for the 9 counties in the Genesee/Finger Lakes planning region. The Final Plan can be accessed through the "Document and Links" link on the homepage for the FL Sustainability Plan website http://sustainable-fingerlakes.org/# . The Finger Lakes Regional Sustainability Plan ("the Plan") outlines actions for improving the long-term sustainability of our communities and natural resources, in the following areas: greenhouse gas emissions reduction and improvements in the deployment of renewable energy sources; and the establishment of long-term and short-term sustainability goals for energy supply, transportation, water management, waste management, land use, open space, agriculture, housing and economic development. The Plan provides the guidance for evaluating project proposals to be funded by grants administered by the NYS Energy Research and Development Agency (NYSERDA). G. Squires was a member of the Agriculture & Forestry Stakeholder Group and P. Lent was a member of the Water Management Group. Our involvement in the process ran from an initial meeting in October 2012 to the preparation of the draft Report in April 2013. The Final Report was published in May 2013.

In addition to reviewing draft documents, we attended three Stakeholder Group Meetings and two Public Meetings.

c. Proposed Canoe/Kayak Access in the Village of LeRoy

G. Squires, L. Compton, and P. Lent attended a meeting with Genesee County Legislature, LeRoy Town Supervisor and Village of LeRoy Mayor to discuss a potential location for additional canoe and kayak access to Oatka Creek in the Village of LeRoy. The proposed location is at Munson Street Bridge. An impoundment area is formed upstream of the bridge by a dam and downstream from the bridge is another impoundment area formed from the dam immediately upstream from the Main Street Bridge (Rt 5) in the Village. The location of canoe/kayak access at Munson Street Bridge would make travel both upstream and downstream possible. It seemed that there was a good partnership between the Village and the Town, as well as help and assistance from Genesee County to move the project along. When plans are prepared, G. Squires will be helping to put permit applications together for the project to submit to NYSDEC and Corps of Engineers. Once any permits required for the project are obtained, construction can proceed. At the time the last report was made to the Committee the tentative schedule looked like it might have been possible to get all approvals in time to start project in September and have it completed before end of the construction season. The exact status is unknown at the time this report is being drafted.

d. Additional resource documents have been added to the OCWC website (oatka.org) by L. Compton. J. Compton is continuing his work to change our website over to use WordPress, a free and open source blogging tool and a content management system. Thank You!

Submitted By: _____

Peter Lent, Chairperson,
Oatka Creek Watershed Committee
February 24, 2014