

Oatka Creek Watershed Committee, Inc.

2014

ANNUAL REPORT ON ACTIVITIES: JANUARY 1, 2014 TO DECEMBER 31, 2014 **AND THE EXPECTATIONS FOR 2015**

CONTENTS	PAGES
I. Meetings	2
II. Watershed Management Plan Development & Implementation	3-5
a. 2014 Meetings	4-5
b. Next Steps – Municipal Outreach & Plan Implementation	5
III. Educational Outreach Activities	6-10
a. Watershed Information Displays at Events	6
b. School-based Outreach Development	7-10
IV. Volunteer Monitoring Opportunities & NYSDEC Monitoring	10-12
a. NYS DEC WAVE Program Sampling	10-11
b. NYSDEC RIBS Sampling – Screening Year	11-12
V. Selected Watershed Projects	13-16
a. SWCD Sediment & Erosion Control Grant Projects	13
b. Emerald Ash Borer Infestation & Trees for Tribs Project	13-15
c. New Canoe/Kayak Access in Village of LeRoy	15-16
VI. Corporate Activity	16-18
a. Search for Archival Documents	16
b. Insurance Review	16-18
c. Website Maintenance and Improvements	18
d. River Network Non-Profit Financial Management Training	18
VII. Other Activities	19-20
a. Oatka Park Clean-Up – Monroe Co. Pick-Up Parks Day	19
b. Other Meetings Attended	19-20
VIII. Attachments	
1. 2015 Meeting Schedule	
2. Executive Summary – Oatka Creek Watershed Management Plan	
3. Model Template for Memorandum of Understanding for Oatka Creek Municipalities.	

ANNUAL REPORT ON ACTIVITIES: JANUARY 1, 2014 TO DECEMBER 31, 2014
AND THE EXPECTATIONS FOR 2015

Oatka Creek Watershed Committee, Inc.

I. Meetings:

- a. Eleven regularly scheduled monthly Oatka Creek Watershed Committee meetings (OCWC) were held in 2014. The January 27, 2014 meeting was canceled because of snow event and cold weather.

Meeting dates with number of attendees in parentheses: February 24 – Corporation and Regular Meeting (9), March 17 (7), April 21 (9), May 19 (12), June 16 (7), July 21 (10), August 18 (10), September 15 (10), October 20 (10), November 17 (6) and December 15 (6). On average, 9 folks attended our regular meetings this year.

Meetings are usually 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. For the months of January and February, the 3rd Monday falls on a holiday, Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Presidents’ Day, respectively. The public library is closed on those holidays, so we schedule our meeting for the 4th Monday for those months.

A copy of the Schedule of 2015 Meeting Dates is appended to this report.

- b. In 2014, OCWC had two regular meetings at other locations in the watershed. One meeting was held in Scottsville on May 21, 2014 where the Oatka Creek Watershed Plan Project Advisory Committee (PAC) members joined with OCWC members to review and prioritize strategies and recommendations that had been identified in the draft Watershed Management Plan (see the following section on Watershed Plan Development and Implementation). The other meeting was held on April 21, 2014 in the Pavilion Fire Department Recreation Hall in Genesee County. Representatives from the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in Genesee, Monroe, and Wyoming Counties presented several examples of sediment reduction projects on farms within the Oatka Creek Watershed that have been funded by a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) grant. Additional information can be found in the Annual Activity Report section entitled Selected Watershed Projects. Our regular monthly committee meeting followed the public meeting.

II. Watershed Plan Development and Implementation:

By the end of 2014, all components of the Oatka Creek Watershed Management Plan (Plan) had been completed and submitted to the NYS Department of State for final approval. These component documents were prepared by the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council (G/FL RPC) with assistance and input from the Project Advisory Committee and the Oatka Creek Watershed Committee, as well as input from the general public.

The following description of the Plan's components is from the Plan's Executive Summary (appended to this Annual Report). Plan documents can be reviewed at (<http://www.gflrpc.org/Publications/BlackOatka/WMP/Oatka/index.htm>)

“The following documents are components of the Oatka Creek Watershed Management Plan, and were prepared to ultimately determine recommendations and priority projects in order to enable decision makers, stakeholders and residents to make decisions that will ultimately improve and protect the water quality of Oatka Creek and its tributaries:

- A community education and outreach program on water quality and quantity and watershed protection issues, completed in 2009;
- A characterization of the watershed and its constituent sub-watersheds, land use and land cover, demographics, natural resources, and infrastructure, completed in 2012;
- An evaluation of subwatersheds through existing water quality data, run-off characteristics, and pollutant loadings, completed in 2013;
- Establishment of a formal Inter-Municipal Organization;
- Evaluation of government and non-government organizations, local laws, plans, programs, and practices that have an impact on water quality in the watershed, completed in 2013; and
- An implementation strategy was completed in 2014. This strategy includes the identification of watershed-wide and site-specific projects and other actions necessary to protect and restore water quality.”

A summary of each component can be found in the Executive Summary along with the websites where the documents can be reviewed in their entirety. Note the draft MOU for Inter-Municipal Organization is also found as an Appendix to the Implementation Strategy document.

a. 2014 Meetings related to the development of the Watershed Management Plan

- April 17, 2014 PAC Meeting. Members discussed the initial draft of the Identification and Description of Management Practices developed from review of the three previous planning documents: Watershed Characterization, Regulatory and Programmatic Environmental Review, and the Subwatershed Report.

The matrix of Management Practices was presented in an Excel spreadsheet with management practices divided into the following sub-groupings: Coordination, Collaboration, and Partnership Recommendations; Agriculture; Stormwater Management & Erosion Control; Forestry & Silviculture Management; Wastewater Treatment Systems Management; Hazardous Waste Management; Roads and Highways; Wetlands: Regulatory Management; Reduce Nutrient Inputs to Surface Waters; Contaminants; and Natural Resource and Habitat Protection.

Initial draft comments were incorporated into a revised matrix to be shared at a meeting of the OCWC on May 21 in Scottsville.

- May 21, 2014 joint PAC and OCWC Meeting. The revised matrix was presented and all present were asked to participate in an exercise to rank management strategies to be included in the Plan. The results of the ranking exercise would be incorporated in the matrix and presented to the PAC at their next meeting.

- July 16, 2014 PAC Meeting- Members reviewed drafts of three recent documents prepared by G/FL RPC, including: the revised management strategies matrix, prioritized based on the May 21 ranking exercise; draft model municipal agreement; and the “bridge” document which provides an abridged version of all documents comprising the Plan and how they fit together. Comments on the documents were provided to David Zorn by July 25. Documents would be revised and the modified versions would be available for public review before a public meeting.

- August 28, 2014 – Public Meeting was held at the Pavilion Fire Department Recreation Hall. Approximately 30 persons attended the meeting. Included were Town Supervisors, Village and Town Board and Planning Board members, land owners, a NYSDEC representative, OCWC members, PAC members, and staff of G/FL RPC.

Overview of Plan was presented. Comments received were related to flooding concerns, stream bank erosion, debris forming channel obstructions, and chemical monitoring. There was also a discussion on DEC’s August 14, 2014 document, entitled Addressing Phosphorus and Sediment in the Genesee River Basin: A Synopsis of Existing Reports to meet EPA’s Nine Elements of a Watershed Plan. This document supports the position that Watershed Management Plans that are being developed in the Genesee River Basin are based on sufficient documentation to meet the nine element

watershed plans required by EPA for qualification to receive funding through EPA's grant programs. The support provided by DEC will likely be useful in any future funding applications submitted to address reducing nutrient and sediment loading in the Oatka Creek Watershed.

- September 25, 2014 Joint PAC Meeting for the Black Creek and Oatka Creek Watershed Management Plans. At this meeting both PACs approved the final documents for the final draft of their respective Watershed Management Plans. The documents were transmitted to NYS Department of State for review and final approval.

b. Next Steps – Municipal Outreach and Plan Implementation

As of this date, G/FL RPC has not received notification from the NYS Department of State that the Watershed Management Plans for Black and Oatka Creek have been approved. It is anticipated that the Plan should be approved, based on the fact that all draft versions of the components of the plan have previously been submitted to NYS Department of State and no substantive comments have been received.

Anticipating approval, OCWC in 2015 will begin to contact municipalities in the watershed and schedule times where we can make presentations to their boards regarding the Watershed Management Plan and how the Plan's watershed and protection strategies relate to the watershed's resources and the land use activities in their communities.

Page 16 of the Executive Summary for the Plan (appended to this Annual Report) includes a listing of key next steps involved in the advancement and implementation of the Plan. OCWC will undertake efforts to facilitate achieving these steps, including the eventual holding of an organizational meeting of the Inter-Municipal Organization. A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding for Oatka Creek Watershed Municipalities is also appended to the Annual Report.

OCWC has begun to discuss and work on what to include in presentations on the management plan and its implementation, as well as how to customize the outreach activities for individual municipalities. We will be more active in this outreach effort during 2015.

III. Outreach Activities

- a. Watershed Information Displays at Community Events and other venues.

During 2014 members of the committee participated at four events:

Table 1 – 2014 Community and Educational Outreach Events

Event	Dates	OCWC Volunteers	Service Hrs.
1. Genesee River Basin Summit – CEI	Feb 6	P. Lent	3
2. GCC Eco-Fest	April 12	L. Compton, M. Leupold, P. Lent, J. Seiler	29
3. GCV&M - homeschoolers	April 22	P. Lent	7
4. Oatka Festival Village of LeRoy	July 13 Setup 7/12	L. & J. Compton, M. Leupold, P. Lent, G. Squires, J. Seiler	34

For each event listed, a booth was set up using our display board with the updated graphic displays from 2013. 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. The live macroinvertebrate displays were used for events 2 – 4. The use of air stones and electric air pumps has helped a great deal in maintaining the live displays.

This year we debuted the video “Oatka Creek Watershed and You” at the EcoFest by projecting the video through a large TV. The video is narrated by Rob Noble, a local dairy farmer. The video became possible through the support of the Accelerated College Enrollment (ACE) Program at Genesee Community College. The video can be seen on ‘youtube’ at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VoOdb_AJDfw

We are looking for community events in the upper watershed, for example at Warsaw, where we can bring our display board and the live macroinvertebrates.

b. School-Based Outreach Development:

In the Annual Activity Report for 2013, I provided the following list of action items for 2014

- Using the \$1000 from the 2013 grants we received, we will purchase enough equipment to complete one 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.

We have made progress on the first three action items this year but we haven't met with the teachers or planned any outdoor monitoring activities with students or other groups. The school-based outreach program has been discussed at each of our meetings in 2014.

Equipment Kits

As reported in 2013, we received two \$ 500 grants to help fund the purchase of the stream monitoring equipment for this educational outreach initiative. One grant was received from the Industrial Issues Committee of the Genesee Valley Chapter of the NY Water Environmental Association (NYWEA) and the other grant was received from the Genesee/Finger Lakes Chapter of the Air and Waste Management Association (AWMA).

Except for a couple of items, we have succeeded in acquiring all items needed to complete our first stream monitoring equipment kit. By April's meeting we had purchased HACH equipment for testing dissolved oxygen, chloride, orthophosphate, and nitrate, as well as a handheld Oakton multi-parameter meter for temperature, pH, conductivity and total dissolved solids. Our purchases also included a storage solution for the meter probe and standard solutions for calibration of pH readings on the meter. The total cost for these items was \$537.13.

Toward the end of the year, the Genesee County Soil and Water Conservation District helped us by purchasing \$620.44 worth of items for the Equipment Kit, as well as additional supplies to support the School-Based Program initiative. The items purchased included: 4 aquatic nets (\$357.07); a measuring tape (\$66.80); standard solutions for calibrating conductivity meter (\$37.31); additional chemical reagents required for calibration of the meter and HACH kits and deionized water to wash vials and other glassware used in the chemical test kits (\$196.57). We thank the Genesee County SWCD for their assistance and help.

Of the \$ 1157.57 spent this year for the School-based Program, \$990 was used to purchase items that will be the contents of our first equipment kit for use by schools for stream monitoring learning activities. The remainder of the funds expended was for items that will be used to calibrate and maintain the testing equipment.

As noted, there are some items still needed to complete the first kit. The items include - 4 hand magnifiers and a meter stick. We will also need to acquire some safety supplies, e.g. safety goggles, protective gloves, and container for waste chemicals. We have sufficient funds remaining from the 2013 grants to use for these items. It also appears that the cost of the actual contents of the kit will be close to the \$1000 dollars we previously set as our goal for each kit's cost. We have alerted the groups that provided us with the grants and have given them a status update of our future plans.

Collaboration with Finger Lakes Institute

We contacted Nadia Harvieux, Education Program Director at the Finger Lakes Institute, associated with Hobart and Smith Colleges in Geneva, and met with her on June 25, 2014 at the Genesee Country Village and Museum Nature Center. Maureen and Peter attended the meeting, as well as Melissa Marszalek, Director of Group Programs and a naturalist at the Genesee Country Village and Museum. At the meeting we discussed the collaboration between FLI and OCWC to introduce stream monitoring activities to schools within the Oatka Creek watershed.

At the meeting we discussed using the monitoring protocols and teacher and student curriculum materials that have been developed already for the Finger Lakes Institute's Stream Monitoring Program. We compared the contents of our equipment kits to those that are currently provided by FLI to the teachers involved in their monitoring program. We originally used FLI's equipment kits as a guide for what we would add to our kits, however there are some differences. For example, FLI now uses a meter to measure dissolved oxygen, where a test kit had been used previously. However, the equipment we plan to purchase for our school kits will test the same chemical and physical stream monitoring parameters

as FLI's program and we feel that they have sufficient accuracy and precision to be used for a school-based stream monitoring program.

We decided that we would try again to schedule a teacher workshop at the Genesee Country Village and Museum Nature Center and this time have in during the summer months on August 11, 2014. Nadia, along with Pete and Maureen, agreed to help with the teacher presentations and Nadia also offered to contact the four teachers in the Oatka Creek Watershed that had expressed an interest in the program last year. Kim Falbo with the Wyoming County SWCD, notified us that the Silver Lake Association would be interested in attending a workshop and Maureen Leupold indicated that some of the Genesee Community College teaching staff may be interested, as well.

As with last year, scheduling of the workshop was problematic. Only one of the teachers was available for August 11 and rescheduling the workshop for mid-October also did not work. In addition to the workshop scheduling problems, plans made by Maureen and Pete and Nadia and Pete to do trial runs on using the equipment did not occur due to weather conditions and scheduling conflicts.

Next steps for 2015:

We plan on continuing to collaborate with Nadia and FLI. We will center our efforts on working with individual teachers and school districts to try and schedule 2 or 3 activities this year that would utilize our stream monitoring kit. One of the ideas we would like to pursue is having Nadia and OCWC members meet with individual teachers to introduce and discuss the stream monitoring program and identify opportunities to work with them and others in their school district. These meetings would also be an opportunity to get feedback from the teachers on how a school-based monitoring program can better meet their needs.

While stream monitoring would seem to include learning activities that would meet the curriculum requirements of Regents-level courses like Living Environment, our discussions with teachers have indicated that it would be difficult to add this unit into their course schedules at this time, particularly when they do not have enough time to cover all the material required for the courses.

As was indicated in our 2013 Annual Activity Report, we would like to discuss with teachers the use of the stream monitoring program in Middle School Science, non-regents biology, and AP Biology courses, and others, where curriculum standards may be more flexible. Last year Kimie Romeo brought to our attention an interesting example that she heard about while she was undertaking educational outreach presentations on the Lake Ontario Lake-Wide Management Plan, through an EPA grant received by the Center for Environmental Initiatives. Teachers from Newfane High School in Niagara County organized a stream monitoring event which included three classes: a middle school Science class, a

high school AP Biology class and a high school Civics class. This innovated approach met the curriculum requirements for all classes and also provided an opportunity for the older science students to assist the middle school students. The learning experience also introduced to all students the importance of protecting the water and land resources in their communities. We will get more details from the teachers at Newfane CSD and share them with teachers in the Oatka Creek Watershed.

Some related activities for 2015 will include:

- Simplifying test kit instructions
- Developing safety protocol handouts for teachers to use
- Pete will continue collaboration with FLI by providing Macroinvertebrate Identification Training for teachers in FLI's Stream Monitoring Program at a workshop on Saturday March 21, 2015.
- Identify other opportunities to utilize stream monitoring equipment in other venues, such as Saturday activities with local youth groups or science clubs.
- Meeting with Village of LeRoy Education Director to see if there is a possibility of including stream monitoring activities in the Village's Summer Recreation Program.

IV. Volunteer Monitoring Opportunities and NYSDEC Monitoring in 2014

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> . 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]. Please see the 2013 WAVE Annual Report for additional background information on the WAVE Program. (http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/2013wavereport.pdf)

In 2014, two additional WAVE samples were collected from the Oatka Creek Watershed: Beulah Creek which flows into Oatka Creek from the north after crossing Oatka Trail in the Town of Wheatland was sampled by Maureen Leupold, and the Oatka Creek main stem in the Headwaters Subwatershed downstream from Evans Road crossing in the Town of Gainesville was sampled by Lori Whittington and Peter Lent. We have not seen the results from DEC's review of the voucher samples from these locations, but the preliminary WAVE Macro ID indicates that both samples would have been assessed as No Known Impact. We will be looking for a few new sites to include in sampling in 2015.

TABLE 2 – WAVE SAMPLING LOCATIONS STARTING IN 2013

Stream Segment *= DEC Historic Site **= Tentative evaluation	Subwatershed (12-Digit HUC)	Total Number	Most Wanted	Least Wanted	Other	NYSDEC Assessment (Based on Voucher)
Cotton Creek Tributary 2013 (PL & LW)	Oatka Creek Headwaters	23	13	3	7	No Known Impact
** Oatka Creek downstream Evans Rd. 2014 (LW & PL)	Oatka Creek Headwaters	21	14	1	6	No Known Impact
* Oatka Creek at Warsaw 2013 (PL & LW)	Pearl Creek	19	10	3	6	No Known Impact
* Pearl Creek Tributary 2013 (PL)	Pearl Creek	20	8	4	8	No Known Impact
Oatka Creek Upstream of Pavilion 2013 (PL)	White Creek	12	3	3	6	No Conclusion
Oatka Creek Downstream of Pavilion 2013 (PL)	White Creek	15	5	4	6	Possibly Impaired
** Beulah Creek Trib. 2014 – (ML)	Oatka Creek Outlet	9	5	1	3	No Conclusion (Tentative)
Oatka Creek before Spring Creek Tributary 2013 (ML)	Oatka Creek Outlet	14	6	3	5	No Known Impact
* Oatka Creek in Scottsville 2013 (PL)	Oatka Creek Outlet	21	9	4	8	No Known Impact

b. DEC Monitoring in Screening Year of RIBS Sampling

NYS DEC began its latest three year Rotating Integrated Biological Study (RIBS) of the Genesee River basin in 2014. The goal of the RIBS program is to re-visit each major river basin in New York State every five years. When a RIBS assessment is being undertaken it involves a 3 year study period. The first year is a screening in which they sample a large number of streams within the basin. Results from the 2014 samples will be analyzed and results will determine which sites are included in the intensive surface and groundwater sampling that will be conducted in 2015. In 2016 the information collected in 2015 will be analyzed and all information will be summarized for the Genesee River Basin and updated in the NYS Waterbody Inventory and the Clean Water Act Section 303d list of impaired waters.

Pete attended the kick-off meeting at DEC’s Region 8 Office on June 3, 2014. He reviewed the proposed list for sampling in the Oatka Creek Watershed and made suggestions for additional sampling locations so that samples from major tributaries of Oatka Creek could

be included in the screening. Sampling sites on Spring Creek, Mud Creek, and White Creek tributaries were added. DEC's list also includes a site downstream from Pavilion that was sampled in the WAVE Sampling in 2013 and was assessed as Possibly Impaired. With the inauguration of WAVE sampling program, DEC has integrated it into their RIBS plans. As was done in the Genesee River Basin, WAVE sampling will occur the year before actual RIBS sampling begins, this will allow DEC to use their screening year to check out any potentially impaired streams that were identified as a result of the WAVE sampling.

On July 1st and 2nd, Pete accompanied two of the 3 DEC teams that were sampling in the Genesee River Basin. In Table 3 below is the listed the 10 sampling locations DEC was scheduled to sample in the Oatka Creek Watershed. Because of concerns with time and ease of future access, the sample that was to provide more information regarding the possible impairment found in the 2013 WAVE Sampling Site located downstream from Pavilion, approximately 3,000 feet downstream from the SR 63 Bridge, was replaced with a sampling site located approximately 150 ft. upstream from SR 63 Bridge. The site sampled is probably the best riffle area in this section of Oatka Creek. It had more variety in stone sizes and more turbulent riffle areas than were found in downstream areas like at the 2013 WAVE sampling location. DEC's sampling site is approximately 1700 feet downstream of the outfall treated effluent pipe from the Hamlet of Pavilion's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and is downstream from the point where most of the stormwater runoff drainage from impervious areas in the Hamlet would have flowed into Oatka Creek.

In 2015, OCWC will contact NYSDEC and find out the preliminary results of the 2014 sampling and what additional sampling will be done in the Genesee River Basin, in particular if any will occur within the Oatka Creek Watershed.

Table 3 - Sites Sampled by NYSDEC in Oatka Creek Watershed July 1- 2 2014
Locations are listed in Downstream to Upstream

Stream	LAT & LOG Coordinates	Location Description
Oatka Creek	43.01923, -77.74744	Downstream SR 251 Scottsville
Unnamed Trib to Oatka Creek	43.01618, -77.76132	Upstream SR 383 V-Scottsville
(Big) Spring Creek	42.98740, -77.86190	Downstream Fish Hatchery
Mud Creek	42.97961, -77.9501	Upstream SR 5 Crossing
Unnamed Trib to Oatka Creek	43.01452, -77.97531	Near Parmelee Rd. T-LeRoy
Oatka Creek	43.0047, -77.9807	Downstream V-LeRoy WWTP
White Creek	42.94207, -78.05184	Upstream Roanoke Rd. Bridge
Oatka Creek	42.88052, -78.02930	Upstream SR 63 Br. Pavilion
Oatka Creek	42.76090, -78.14147	Old Buffalo Rd. Warsaw
Oatka Creek	42.68809, -78.12252	East of Dunham Rd

V. Selected Watershed Projects

a. **Sediment and Erosion Control Grant for Black and Oatka Creeks funded by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) in 2010 to the Genesee, Monroe, and Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation Districts.**

On April 21, 2014 a Public Information Meeting was held in the Pavilion Fire Department Recreation Hall in Genesee County. Representatives from the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in Genesee, Monroe, and Wyoming Counties presented several examples of projects on farms within the Oatka Creek Watershed that have been funded by this grant. These projects were undertaken during 2013. Management practices to reduce sediment have been applied both to farm fields and to stream banks within the watershed. A regular meeting of the Oatka Creek Watershed Committee was held immediately after the public meeting.

The grant was to be completed at the end of 2014. Recently, we found out that so far the projects that had been completed by the three SWCDs have resulted in reductions in soil loss equal to 2,861 tons per year, a quantity that exceeds the total soil loss reductions of 2,215 tons per year anticipated by the grant. Also these soil loss reductions have been accomplished by only spending about half of the \$536,000 funds in the grant. The SWCDs requested an extension to continue the program and have received a one year extension.

b. **Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Infestation and NYS DEC's Trees for Tribs Project in the Lower Segment of the Oatka Creek Watershed**

In June, Mark Gooding, a DEC Forester stationed in the DEC's Region 8 Office in Avon, notified Peter Lent of the potential for EAB infestation within the riparian corridor of Oatka Creek, between the Village of Scottsville and Circular Hill Road in the Town of LeRoy. Hot spots for EAB infestation of ash trees are known to be located nearby in the Town of Caledonia in Livingston County and in the Towns of Wheatland and Chili in Monroe County. Green Ash is a common tree species along the banks of the Oatka Creek. For ash trees attacked by EAB, the mortality rate is 99%, with infested trees dying within 2 to 5 years. Trees along the banks of the Lower Oatka Creek provide shade which in turn will keep the stream water temperature cool and favorable for the trout fishery in the Lower Segment of Oatka Creek. Loss of trees will reduce the canopy shading the creek and potentially result in increased stream temperatures.

Mark agreed to attend our July 21, 2014 Meeting and provided more information on the Emerald Ash Borer and introduced the DEC's Trees for Tribs program, which might provide a proactive approach to start growing trees that will replace any vegetative canopy losses along the banks of Oatka Creek due to the EAB. An application had to be completed and submitted to the State Coordinator for the Trees

for Tribes Program. The application provides definition of the project; description of the project location; and the estimate of number trees and shrubs to be planted. The signed application also indicates that in accepting the plants the recipient will follow the conditions listed on the application. Some of the conditions include recruiting and organizing an adequate number of volunteers and the responsibility for maintenance of the plants and materials. In order to qualify for Fall Planting Period the application needed to be submitted by August 1, 2014. If OCWC was interested, Mark thought that it would be good to start with the Genesee Country Village and Museum Property (GCV&M) because there already is a close relationship between OCWC and GCV&M.

The Committee approved a motion to have Pete contact the GCV&M to see if they are interested in participating in the Trees for Tribes Program and if volunteers are available through them to help, and if both conditions are favorable, he will apply to the program by August 1, 2014. Pete, Mark, and Gary Koplun, another DEC Forester, met with Samantha Nickerson, Chief Financial Officer for GCV&M on July 31. The project purpose was outlined to Ms. Nickerson and she indicated that GCV&M would be willing to participate and she thought that their volunteers and members would be available to help with the project. After the meeting, the DEC foresters and Pete walked the near stream area selecting potential planting sites and made preliminary decisions on which tree and shrub species would be best to plant in each, using a list of available plant species provided by the Trees for Tribes program. On August 1, 2014, Pete sent a completed and signed application to the State Coordinator for the Trees for Tribes program, indicating that GCV&M and OCWC were partnering on the project. Accompanying the application was a project site map and a list 200 plants requested for the project, including 7 species of trees (168 plants) and 5 species of shrubs (32 plants). The plants available were potted plants, more mature than bare root seedlings and tubes would be provided to protect plants from deer browsing. The first source of trees to be used would be those from the State Nursery in Saratoga and there would also be funds available to acquire some species from private nurseries. The plan was to plant the trees and shrubs along a 4,000 foot long section adjacent to Oatka Creek on the GCV&M property in October.

At the August meeting, Pete reported that many of the plants that were selected from the list provided by the State were not available from the State Nursery. We would have to use stock available at the State Nursery before going out to private nurseries. We found out that the list we were using included the plant species being used for the Hudson River Basin program and was not the list of species currently available from the State Nursery. The coordinator for the state program called Pete and apologized for the confusion and offered her help. Although we could have proceeded with a fall planting of a limited subset of the plants that we originally selected, it was decided,

after consultation with the state foresters, that we would postpone the fall planting and prepare for planting in April or May of 2015. On September 8, 2014, Pete provided GCV&M an update including the decision to postpone the planting until the spring.

Current Status and Next Steps for 2015

Mark Gooding has sent a revised plant list to the State Coordinator. The list includes 170 trees representing 11 species and 32 shrubs, including 5 species. The shrubs and 8 of the tree species will come from the State Nursery and three species requested would be acquired from private nurseries. There is a combination of bare root, plug and potted plants depending on species. We have received word that the State Coordinator has reserved the State Nursery plants for the project and she is in the process of getting those ordered from a private nursery.

Pete is scheduling a meeting with GCV&M for February to go over the project details. He will also check on whether a new application needs to be submitted. The application submitted indicates that OCWC would be taking responsibilities for plant maintenance and other conditions of the Trees for Tribes Program. The State Coordinator has requested that GCV&M, as the property owner, also provide in writing their commitment to meet the conditions and responsibilities of the program as well. This will be discussed with GCV&M at the meeting.

The DEC Foresters and Pete will plan a site visit to better define planting sites and identify the trees and shrubs that will be planted in them. Event logistics and planning will be done and volunteer groups signed up to help with the planting effort. Also, we have heard that soon there should be a Genesee River Basin Coordinator assigned for the Trees for Tribes Program and they will be located in the Basin.

We think that projects like Trees for Tribes will be helpful in increasing awareness of the Oatka Creek Watershed Committee's activities and the watershed management planning efforts. These events have the potential of increasing our numbers of active volunteers, as well as partnerships with stakeholders in the Oatka Creek Watershed. Stay tuned for more to come in 2015.

New Canoe/Kayak Access in the Village of LeRoy

An initial meeting to discuss the possibility of developing a canoe/kayak access facility on Oatka Creek at the Munson Street Bridge in the Village of LeRoy was held in the summer of 2013. George Squires, Lisa Compton, and Peter Lent attended the meeting with Genesee County Legislator, LeRoy Town Supervisor, and Mayor of the Village of LeRoy. OCWC supports the development of safe access points for the public to enjoy the Oatka Creek Watershed by floating on Oatka Creek. The location at Munson Street would provide access

to both upstream and downstream areas of Oatka Creek as it flows through the Town and Village of LeRoy. The project design and permitting took longer than anticipated but construction began in October 2014. This project is a great example of inter-municipal cooperation. Time, equipment, and employees were provided by the Genesee County Soil & Water Conservation District, Town of Batavia, Town of Stafford, Town of LeRoy and the Village of Leroy, and probably others. Two access pathways have been constructed on the south (upstream access) and north (downstream access) sides of Munson Street near the east side of the bridge. Final work will be completed this Spring and the new access points will be able to be used for boating activities in 2015.

VI. Corporate Activity:

a. Search for Archived Documents

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. In November 2014, we received letter from the IRS confirming the 501 (c) (3) non-profit tax exempt status of the Oatka Creek Watershed Committee, but there were no copies of historical document provided.

Subsequently, we did locate a box of old files which included more correspondence between us and the IRS. We now think we have the information we need to piece together the history. Our Secretary Lisa Compton has taken up the task of scanning the documents and we will distribute the archives so that we have electronic backups as well as the paper copies. A selection of the most important documents in terms of our non-profit tax exempt status will be placed on our website for review by the public. Lisa -Thank you.

b. Insurance Review

In 2014 the Committee began discussions to assess the need for insurance to cover current and anticipated activities. This discussion was prompted by information that our Treasurer Jim Seiler received when he attended a Non-Profit Financial Management Training session at Genesee Community College in May. Two types of liability

insurance were considered Directors and Officers Insurance (D&O) and General Liability Insurance (GL) for the Oatka Creek Watershed Committee.

Jim took the lead to contact local insurance agents. He received annual premium quotes from three agencies: Tompkins Insurance Agencies for D&O=\$656 and GL=\$694 policies from Philadelphia Insurance Companies; Mathis Kim Agency Inc. for only GL at \$500 from Nationwide Insurance; and Lawley Services, Inc. for only D&O at \$506 from The Hartford's Trumbull Insurance Co. Non-Profit organizations that have employees, manage many grants and receive significant donations usually carry both D&O Liability and General Liability policies. After reviewing the results of the initial premium quotes we received, the Committee decided that for now we should be pursuing only a general liability insurance policy to cover our community activities.

In past years, the types of regular annual activities that OCWC has been involved in include setting up a display booth at community festivals 3 or 4 times a year and, with the introduction of displaying live stream-dwelling macroinvertebrates at our booths, volunteers need to wade into shallow water to collect the macroinvertebrates before the festival opens and return them to the stream after the festival. Also once or twice a year, we have cleaned up Monroe County's Oatka Park in the Town of Wheatland, an activity that could also include wading in shallow areas of Oatka Creek. New activities are expected to include working with local school districts to do biological and chemical monitoring in wadeable streams and activities associated with the Trees for Tribes Program projects to plant trees and shrubs along streams on public and private property. As with our current activities, in some situations the new activities may be covered by partner organizations' liability insurance, but not always.

To answer the question as to whether we could find a lower cost based on a limited number of events, Jim re-contacted the initial three insurance agencies, as well as BeeHive, and provided more detailed information regarding our specific activities. Lawley Services did not respond, Nationwide did not change their original quote, BeeHive was similar to the other initial quotes we received, and Tompkins sent us an application form for special event insurance.

Jim completed and submitted the application to Tompkins, which was for the Trees for Tribes project we are planning to do in 2015. In follow-up discussions, Tompkins indicated that single event premiums could range from \$150 - \$200. At best the use of single event premiums would only be reasonable if we did three events each at \$150 for a total of \$450. However, the initial quote for General Liability Insurance from Tompkins assumed we had more than 12 events a year and we found out Tompkins could contact Philadelphia Insurance for a re-quote for less events in a year. Jim, Pete, and Lisa met with local agent for Tompkins in LeRoy on October 22. We discussed our plans for 2015 with the agent. We were thinking that planning on five activities might be close to what our actual plans could be for 2015. Jim was contacted by the Tompkins agent and the re-quote was for an annual premium cost of around \$500 (down from the

original quote of \$694). The agent had also provided a separate special event quote for the Trees for Trib project and this came back at a premium of \$300 for the one event.

Jim was finally able to get in touch with Aliant, one of the companies working with the River Network. Late in the year he received a quote from Aliant that came in at \$372 for the same coverage as the other companies. We did check to see if Philadelphia Insurance (through the Tompkins Insurance Agency) could better the Aliant quote, but they couldn't. In 2015, we have proceeded to purchase general liability insurance from Aliant to cover our 2015 activities.

We want to thank Jim Seiler for all the efforts he made in the process of reviewing our options for insurance.

c. Website Maintenance & Improvements

Our volunteer technical support team (a.k.a. John and Lisa Compton), has finished its work on adding a new content management system (WordPress) for our website. The change won't be obvious when folks go to the website. Previously there was a 'Waterblog' link on the website but it was not working, but with the upgrade the 'Waterblog' is now functional. Go to www.oatak.org and check it out. You can also leave comments for the Committee and receive responses. We also changed the hosting site for our website to 'DreamHost'. 'DreamHost' is free for 501c3 non-profit organizations and it also provides more dependable support than we had from our previous hosting site.

Thank you John and Lisa.

d. Non-Profit Financial Management Training – Series of 5 Webinars

The series is presented by the River Network for its partner organizations for a cost of \$399 with the option to have three board members attend. With Maureen Leupold's assistance we have been able to meet at GCC and can use the video equipment to take part in the webinar as a group that potentially can be more than three people. Formally signed up are three of our officers Treasurer Jim Seiler, Vice-Chair Maureen Leupold, and Chair Peter Lent. Lisa Compton our Secretary has also sat in on one of the meetings. We have completed three of the five Webinars in 2014 and have 2 more in 2015. We needed to provide an Overview of the activities and finances of the Oatka Creek Watershed Committee. For each session we have some homework and we also complete and submit an evaluation.

Most groups participating in the seminar are much larger and have different needs, larger budgets and many maintain a paid staff. However, in each session we have found some take-away information, practices, or procedures that we think are worth trying for our organization. Examples to be discussed at future meetings include: identifying

annual goals and developing an annual budget that reflects those goals; how to handle donations; and instituting controls and policies to protect against fraud.

VII. Other Activities:

a. Oatka Park Clean-up – April 26, 2014 – Monroe County’s Pick up the Parks Day.

This year we decided to do a spring clean-up of Monroe County’s Oatka Park, which borders Oatka Creek in the Town of Wheatland. This clean-up effort coincided with Monroe County’s 5th Annual Pick-Up the Parks event, which has the goal of cleaning up all 21 county parks on the same day. Vice-Chair M. Leupold organized the event. We had six volunteers helping at this event - three OCWC members and three community volunteers.

We had some rain during the event and the park was pretty soggy, but compared to the intense rainfall we had in September 2013, the conditions were not too unpleasant. The park was pretty clean; only 3 ½ bags of garbage and 3 bags of recyclables were collected.

Next year, on April 25, 2015, we are planning to again join in the 6th Annual Pick up the Parks event. Because of other priorities we were unable to do our traditional Fall Clean-up of the Oatka Park in September in conjunction with the American Littoral Society’s NY State Beach Cleanup. We will discuss this year’s Stream Cleanup efforts and whether we have sufficient volunteers and partners to branch out into other areas of the Watershed, as part of our Outreach Activities.

b. Other Meetings Attended

1. April 16, 2014 – Pete attended Genesee County Water Quality Coordinating Committee.
2. May 29, 2014 – Jim attended training in, “The Basics of Non-Profit Financial Management” at Genesee Community College.
3. September 14, 2014 – Pete attended -Trout Unlimited – Seth Green Chapter – Regional Workshop Scottsville – Conservation Projects and Partnerships – See September 15, 2014- OCWC Minutes
4. October 14, 2014 – Pete attended - Oak Orchard Yacht Club – Workshop for Oak Orchard Creek Watershed – Topics: LAMP Program Overview [Jen Reeher (Great Lakes Specialist-NYSDEC) Watershed Restoration: Monitoring and Modeling (George Thomas [Center for Environmental Initiatives (CEI)]; Farm Management to Retain Soils, Nutrient, and Profits

(David DeGolyer-Western NY Crop Management Association); and Soil Health (Dennis Kirby-Orleans County SWCD).

5. October 15, 2014 – Pete attended - Genesee County Water Quality Coordinating Meeting
6. October 27, 2014 – Green Genesee Smart Genesee – Watershed Group Meeting – attend by Genesee County Agencies and Watershed Groups (Tonawanda Creek, Black Creek, Oatka Creek, and Buffalo-Niagara Riverkeeper). Provided input for watershed aspects for Genesee County initiative to include green infrastructure and smart community planning activities. OCWC will also attend Leadership Meetings.
7. November 13, 2014 – Pete, George, and Jim attended - CAFO Roadshow Workshop – Noblehurst Farm Field House – Topics: Winter 2013-2014-NYSDEC/Cornell PRO-DAIRY; What DEC does when there is a well contamination concern – NYSDEC/PRO-DAIRY; Following the Plan, Revising the Plan, Who is Responsible? – NYS Department of Ag & Markets; Where do we go from here? Considerations for the next CAFO Permit – NYSDEC; Manure Storage /transfer/treatment, NRCS standards, storage closure etc.–NRCS; Medium CAFOs: Implementation deadline 6-31-2014, are you there yet? - NYSDEC; 200-299 cow farms, never permitted, and seeking termination: DEC experience with no discharge determination – NYSDEC; and New Funding Opportunity; Dairy Acceleration Program as a compliment to NRCS and SWCD programs.
8. November 14, 2014 – Esther, George, Jerome, and Pete attended Fall 2014 Regional Local Government Workshop in Batavia. See details in November 17, 2014 meeting minutes.

Submitted By:



Peter Lent, Chair
Oatka Creek Watershed Committee
March 16, 2015