

Network

*It takes a
Network to protect
a watershed.*

News



CanYou Canoe Cayuga? 2014

by John Mawdsley, CLWN Board Of Directors

The forecast for the next day was good and so we were faced with the difficult decision of whether to postpone the event for a day. We decided to go ahead on the Saturday and we were rewarded with rain squalls but no thunder and lightning. Most of the registered paddlers were willing to give it a go too and they were rewarded by a lovely early morning on the lake and some more challenging weather to cope with later in the day. In all 98 paddlers in 70 boats took to the water and finished the event at Cass Park with a party. Thirteen boats, including an outrigger with 6 crew, set off at 7am to paddle the full 35 miles. The rest started at the other locations, with again a dragon boat starting at Sheldrake Winery. The dawn at Cayuga State Park was gorgeous and probably the best paddling of the day.

The main rain squalls hit part of the fleet in the stretch between Sheldrake Winery and Taughannock State Park. Waves were whipped up and caused even some experienced paddlers to turn over. Safety boats were on hand to help right them and all but the outrigger were able to continue. The outrigger crew tried to help an overturned paddler but their outrigger got damaged

The third annual CanYou Canoe Cayuga? event was held on Saturday September the 6th 2014 under a threat of thunderstorms and rain.

in the process resulting in a loss of stability and they overturned too. Unfortunately the outrigger couldn't be repaired and they had to abandon the boat on shore and get a ride to Taughannock in the Seneca County sheriff's boat. Hopefully the moral of this tale is not to leave others to flounder and push on!

The party was held at Cass Park with the usual great food from Kendra's Catering and despite the light rain most stayed to enjoy the food and chatting to other participants. Sadly the rain did prevent the band playing this year.

The decision to hold the event on the Saturday was difficult. Delaying one day, whilst gaining better weather probably, does stop some participating and some of our volunteers can not make the Sunday, causing some organizational headaches. By going ahead with the event on the Saturday we gave paddlers a real challenge but we could take heart that the safety boats were able to help in all cases and they functioned as we had planned. Thank you to those manning the safety boats and to all our volunteers, especially to the Cornell University Biology Service Leaders who again provided a dozen helpers and eight paddlers.

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Paddlers launch in the early morning hours, the lake still calm.



Annual/August Meeting & Picnic

Changes in leadership, bylaws

The Network's 2014 Annual and August Meetings and Cookout was held on August 20th at Lansing's beautiful lakeside Myers Park. About 25 members attended, and nearby Ludlowville resident Stephen Smith again wielded the spatula and tongs to great effect, turning out platters of hamburgers, hotdogs and black bean burgers for the crowd, who brought tasty dishes to share. The rainfall was intense, from time to time, but people came nonetheless!

Accompanying the varied feast was a display of nature and water photos by Frank Muller of Ithaca, who teaches photography and spends much of his waking days and nights capturing the beauty of our area, in images that range from frost-rimed maple leaves to stormy, sunny and moonlit wildland vistas. His work can be viewed and purchased online here: www.fineartamerica.com/profiles/frank-muller.html.

A lot of advance planning went into preparing for the Annual Meeting, thanks especially to hard work by outgoing chair Deb Grantham, and Board members John Abel and Mark Witmer. With input and review by the rest of the Board, these three overhauled the Network's bylaws. The bylaws were revised to meet the needs of today's Internet-based communications, changes over time in our organization, and to comply with a new NY State law governing nonprofit organizations.

The Network's members did their share as well, and we thank many of you who voted to approve the bylaws changes, signed your proxy vote in favor of the 2014 slate of Board officers—and quickly returned the postcard ballot/proxy via mail. The new Bylaws can be viewed at our website www.cayugalake.org/bylaws.html. For those of you with limited Internet access, we can mail you a copy. Please leave a message requesting this at our office

phone number, 607-319-0475.

Our new Board officers for 2014-5 are as follows: Dale Baker (Lansing) is our new Chair; Mark Witmer (Caroline) continues as Secretary, and John Abel (Ithaca) is our new Treasurer. The Network's three Vice Presidents represent two out of the three major counties in the Cayuga Lake watershed: Penney Mapes Cook, Cayuga County; and Michael Duttweiler, Tompkins County. The Seneca County office is vacant at present.

We welcome two new Board members, Bill Ebert (Seneca Falls), and Eric Devin (Aurora). Thanks so much to outgoing Board members Scott Heinekamp (Aurora) and Michael Dineen (Ovid), who were very helpful as Board members and remain close friends and supporters of the Network. Continuing Board members are John Mawdsley (Freeville), Patricia (Haines) Foster Gooding (Ithaca), Phil Crimmin (Ithaca), Deb Grantham (Ithaca), and Dan Hill (Union Springs and Cayuga Nation). Bill Foster continues as the Floating Classroom representative. If you are interested in getting involved with the Network's governance, as a Board or committee member, please let us know via a phone call or email to steward@cayugalake.org.

Enormous thanks go to Deb Grantham, who has stepped down as Chair and Acting Treasurer. She has helped the Network grow and mature, steering us toward greater professionalism, improved management, and financial stability. Deb remains on the Board as an invaluable advisor and master networker. Since the Network's inception, Deb has been working with the Network and its sister organization, the Intermunicipal Organization of the Cayuga Lake Watershed. She is our organizational memory and conscience. Thank you, Deb Grantham. 🐾



Network members stayed dry in Lansing's Myers Park picnic pavilion.

Cayuga Lake Watershed Network

170 Main St., PO Box 348
Aurora, NY 13026
www.cayugalake.org
Office. 607-319-0475

OFFICE HOURS:
By appointment.
Please contact
steward@cayugalake.org
to arrange.

STAFF: Hilary Lambert, Steward
steward@cayugalake.org
Cody Primmer, Intern, Fall 2014
Newsletter Advisory Committee: Michael
Duttweiler, John Mawdsley, Niamh O'Leary

*The Cayuga Lake Watershed
Network thanks Leigh Dezelan
of Dezelan Design and Pioneer
Printing of Lodi for newsletter
production excellence.*

Hydrilla season ebbs— Hemlock Wooly Adelgid monitors needed for Jan/Feb!

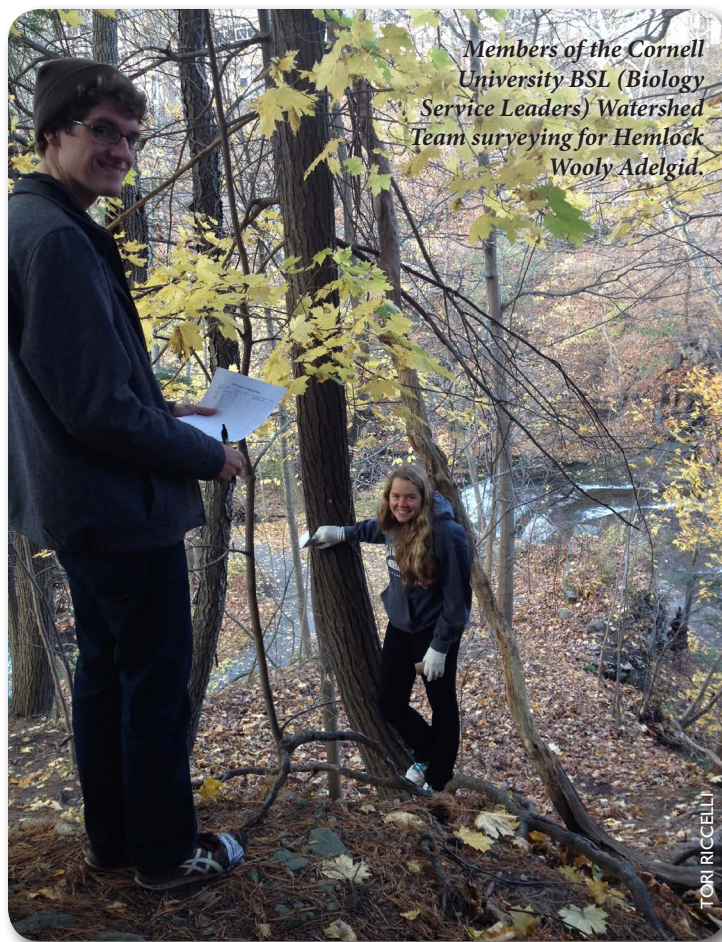
HYDRILLA UPDATE

At the south end of Cayuga Lake, the hydrilla eradication season ended in early October, for both Cayuga Inlet and the mouth of Fall Creek in Stewart Park, once herbicide concentrations dropped to non-detectable levels. Project manager James Balyszak and City of Ithaca intern Eve Rosekrans have removed the hundreds of small yellow signs from along the 14-15 miles of affected waterways. Monitoring expert Bob Johnson and crew (of Racine-Johnson Aquatic Ecologists) are continuing late-season monitoring and sampling in a grid pattern across the south end of the lake, mapping all plant species, while looking for hydrilla. Reports will be available early in 2015 at www.StopHydrilla.org.

Overall, according to Balyszak and Johnson, eradication is looking good along Cayuga Inlet, with little or no growing hydrilla this year and ever-fewer tubers showing up in the creek-bottom sediments. However, the newer infestation around the mouth of Fall Creek, along the Neuman Golf course and in Stewart Park bays and coves, is more stubborn. Much greater water flow here than in Cayuga Inlet makes it difficult to keep chemicals at high enough levels long enough to kill hydrilla.

Herbicides, hand-removal, and benthic mats all in use

The management team decided to try a different removal method for this area, and in late August, James, Eve, folks from NYS State



Parks, Bob and crew floated in small boats over the thickest Fall Creek hydrilla patches along the Stewart Park shoreline of Fall Creek. They reached down in to remove the plants, in water 2-3' deep. This method minimized disturbance. They used bags/nets

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HEMLOCK WOOLY ADELGID: is it killing your hemlocks?



Last winter, the Network cooperated with the Town of Ithaca, Cornell expert Mark C.

Whitmore and others to field volunteers to map Hemlock Wooly Adelgid, an invasive pest that has decimated ancient hemlock groves across the southern US, advancing north with warming winters.

In 2008 HWA was first reported in the Finger Lakes. HWA is now showing up along the west shore of Cayuga Lake and in Treman State Park. Last winter it was discovered and mapped along Ithaca's Six Mile Creek, and this past summer was found on the shores of Skaneateles Lake. A team of dedicated Cornell students are

surveying campus areas; Ithaca College and Wells College students are also trained and looking for this pest.

Why should we care, and can anything be done to prevent the spread of HWA?

Hemlock trees are beautiful; their shade keeps creek waters cool for healthy habitat; and their roots hold steep banks in place. If hemlocks die—a tree takes several years to die, once infested by HWA—creeks warm up, water conditions alter, and erosion of sediments into streams and lakes increases steeply.

Chemical treatments are effective, though costly; and must be done carefully to avoid water pollution. A bio-control method is being researched. Both Six Mile Creek and Skaneateles Lake are important water supplies,

to the cities of Ithaca and Syracuse respectively. Their hemlocks and watersheds need protection!

The Network is planning two to three wintertime expeditions to look for and map HWA in the coming winter months. That's when the insects' white waxy egg-coverings are easily spotted. We are especially interested in looking at creeks and lakefront areas in Seneca and Cayuga counties.

Do you have hemlocks you are concerned about on your property, and need someone to take a look? Are you willing to come out for a two-hour wintertime walk, recording HWA findings on a simple chart? Please contact Hilary Lambert via steward@cayugalake.org or our office phone 607-319-0475.

Local Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla joins other volunteer agencies to fight invasive species

by Gene W. Little, Vice Flotilla Commander, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flotilla 2-2

Most residents in the Cayuga Lake watershed are unaware of the environmental education and monitoring efforts that USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 2-2 and the Ithaca Sail and Power Squadron (USPS) are undertaking to support the Hydrilla Task Force. The USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 2-2 is located at 508 Taughannock Boulevard, Ithaca, NY.

The incentive for Flotilla 2-2 to become more environmentally involved was presented on 8/18/2011 when hydrilla was first identified in Cayuga Inlet just north of the Flotilla 2-2 base and dock. Research ensued after the discovery was made public. We soon learned that if left unchecked this invasive aquatic plant would choke the Inlet with vegetation, potentially stopping all boating, swimming, and water activities. The quick growth characteristics of hydrilla, coupled with spring runoff and boating activity, represented an opportunity for it to spread up Cayuga Lake to the Erie Canal, Lake Ontario and the Seaway system.

In November 2012, at the invitation of Maxine and Paul Flagg (Ithaca Sail and Power Squadron), Flotilla 2-2 joined their monthly meeting for an update from Dave White (Sea Grant) on the status and upcoming remediation plans for 2013. At the close of this meeting, the first discussion of potential action took place and Gene Little (CG Auxiliary) targeted a March 2013 date for all interested parties to define what actions we could take to combat the spread of hydrilla.

Our activities during 2013

On Saturday, March 9 of 2013, our mustered resources were the Coast Guard Auxiliary, US Power Squadron, Boy Scout Leaders from both the Baden Powell and Longhouse Councils, Syracuse's Salt City Bass Master, and a representative from the Haudenosaunee Confederacy's Environmental Task Force, who was serving on the governor's advisory board for clean waters in NYS. Dave White was again our guest speaker and guide as to what productive actions could be taken.

We set June 2013 as a follow-up date to document an action plan, get upper level leadership buy-in and determine

seeking Boating Safety certification.

- Addition of the "Clean Boat" initiative ("Clean, Drain & Dry") to the vessel safety checks that both the Auxiliary and Power Squadron offer.
- Scouts to hand out Clean Boat Flyers at some marinas and boat launches, and, in some cases, to clean off trailers as fishermen come in from Bass Master Fishing tournaments.

In July 2013, Flotilla 2-2 Staff and our Coxswains met with James Balyszak and Bob Johnson of the Hydrilla Task Force, offering to run monitoring surveys for hydrilla outside the Inlet. The process is rather simple and we are able to



From left to right: Bob Johnson (HTF) and Don Campbell (AUX).



Vice Flotilla Commander Gene Little with a full rake toss of aquatic plants.

actual productive activities that we could act on immediately. With Jesse Lyons (Cornell Cooperative Extension) and Dave White (Sea Grant) as our technical guides, our target became to educate the public via these steps:

- Discussion of local Invasive species, when the Auxiliary presented "About Boating Safely" or the Power Squadron presented "America's Boating Course" for the recreational boating public

incorporate it into our typical patrol activities.

Also during July 2013, the inlet was treated with the herbicide endothall, with both the Tompkins County Sheriff and Flotilla 2-2 preventing boaters and especially swimmers from conducting any water activity on the Inlet, to allow the herbicide to work. Later that summer through October, the herbicide fluridone was also slowly released to treat hydrilla in the Inlet.

Concurrently, the Coast Guard



Back row, left to right: Jeff Freeman (USPS), Tim Herne (BSA Longhouse Council), Jim Graney (BSA Baden Powell Council), Rick Kunz and Mike Kennedy (both CG Auxiliary).

Front row, left to right: Gene Little (CGAUX), Dave White (Sea Grant), Curtis Waterman (Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force, HETF), Barb Elliott (Salt City Bass Masters).

Auxiliary worked closely with Sea Grant to educate the boating public at numerous public events including the February 2013 CNY Boat Show; Empire Farm Days in Seneca Falls, early August 2013; and the NYS State Fair in Syracuse, from late August to September 1. Our typical layout was a display of Invasive

—this also a joint effort of Auxiliary and Power Squadron;

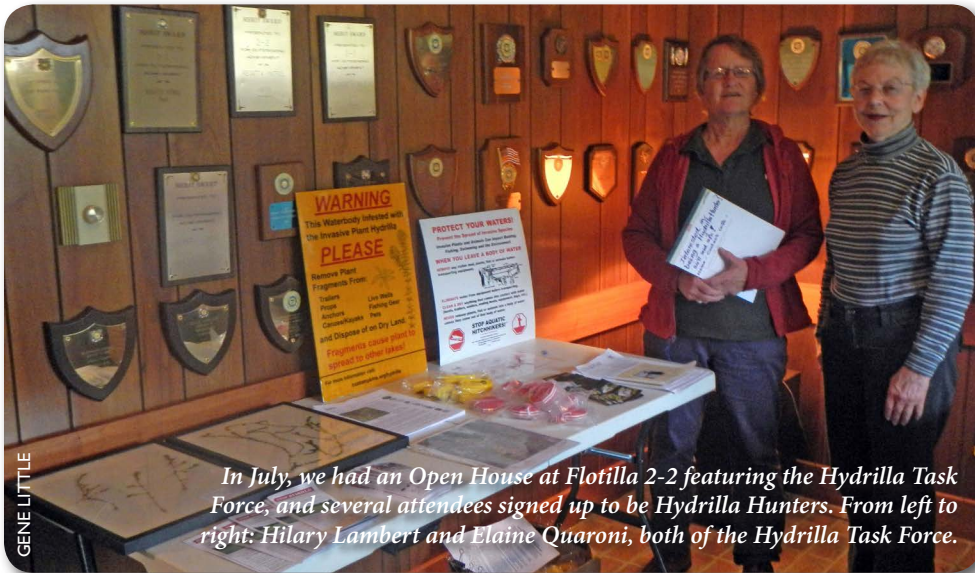
- Participate in the February CNY Boat Show;
- Discuss holding a Boating Industry/ Invasive Species joint session;
- Cover the NYS State Fair and Empire Farm Days;

(Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management) is led by Hilary Mosher out of the Finger Lakes Institute, located at Geneva's Hobart and William Smith Colleges, online: http://nyis.info/?action=prism&prism_id=6

Working together

Hopefully, this chronologic progression shows via action and objectives that:

- Public education and service to the public to protect our aquatic environment and resources are shared goals of the Ithaca CG Auxiliary (2-2), Power Squadron, Boy Scouts, and local universities and colleges.
- CG Auxiliary 2-2 and now CG Auxiliary Division 2 (Oswego to Ithaca), as well as US Power Squadron District #6, are dedicated to educating the recreational boating public and supporting groups that are engaged in protecting our environment.
- We are now and will further leverage the synergy that comes from the banding together of the Power Squadron, CG Auxiliary, Boy Scouts, and local colleges (Sea Grant, Finger Lakes Institute, Cornell Cooperative Extension, etc.). The sum of the combined efforts will eclipse the uncoordinated, individual efforts that each would be limited to, if we do NOT band together! 🐾



In July, we had an Open House at Flotilla 2-2 featuring the Hydrilla Task Force, and several attendees signed up to be Hydrilla Hunters. From left to right: Hilary Lambert and Elaine Quaroni, both of the Hydrilla Task Force.

Species specimens, literature, and a boat that we used for demonstrations of Clean Boat and Boating Safety techniques.

Flotilla 2-2 goals during 2014

Interact with and educate the public:

- Continue the discussion on invasive species when the Auxiliary and Power Squadrons do boating safety courses;
- Continue adding "Clean Boat" to vessel safety checks;
- Add Invasive Species literature to our Recreational Boating Visitor Program

- Scouts to continue flyer distribution and assisting at local Bass Master Tournaments.

Hydrilla Hunting:

- Add the Power Squadron resources to the Hunt;
- Update the Task Force hydrilla data base with any findings.

Support FL-PRISM: As members of the FL-PRISM's Aquatic Working Group. The newly-established Finger Lakes PRISM

to catch fragments. That area is now mostly clear of growing hydrilla. This method had no effect on tubers in the creek-bottom sediments, but guaranteed that hydrilla would not break off, escape and root in the shallow south end of the lake.

In the southeast corner of the lake, a stubborn patch has emerged offshore of the Tompkins County Visitors Center and the southernmost homes in that area. Here, a third control method is in use. Six benthic mats in sections 12x20' were placed over top of the hydrilla patches found there this summer, to keep out sunlight and smother the plants. No hydrilla has re-grown from the matted areas that were covered in 2013.

James Balyszak's informal summary is that the eradication season was "very good" for Cayuga Inlet, and "partially effective" for Fall Creek/Stewart Park.



Members of the Hydrilla Task Force hand-remove hydrilla from Fall Creek along the Stewart Park shoreline, late September 2014.

JOSH TEETER

Hydrilla Hunters cover the waterfront—please join us for 2015

On the Hydrilla Hunter front, about thirty new hunters were recruited around the north end of the lake, in Seneca and Cayuga counties. The Network and the Floating Classroom recruited new folks via cruises and public displays who are willing to watch out for and report any possible hydrilla to www.StopHydrilla.org. Over 100 Hydrilla I.D. Kits have been mailed out, and information shared with towns and villages around the lake.

Dave Heck, Lansing resident and top Hydrilla Hunter, developed the kit and with wife Joyce took it on the road along the east shore of the lake, visiting town boards, offices and marinas.

If you would like a kit for yourself, and more for neighbors, let Hilary Lambert know at steward@cayugalake.org or via our office phone number, 607-319-0475. 🐾

CanYou Canoe Cayuga? 2014 *continued from cover*

Also thanks to our sponsors for their invaluable help—Tompkins Tourism Program, Tompkins Trust Company, Cayuga Medical Center, Sheldrake Winery, Puddledockers, Paddle-N-More, and Wegmans for a gift of food for the rest stops. Watch for next year's CYCC! 🐾

Pre-dawn preparation for CanYou Canoe Cayuga 2014, aboard the Seneca County Sheriff's boat.



SHARON MIER



SHARON MIER

Thank you John Mawdsley for a great event! John is seen here talking to the boat safety crews.

The Cayuga Outrigger heads out! Photo by Sharon Mier.



Cayuga Lake Study Discussed in Cayuga County

Niamh O'Leary, Professor and Chair of Environmental Studies
Herbert E. Ives Professor of Science, Wells College

The southern basin of Cayuga Lake has been on a state list of impaired water bodies since 2002. Efforts to address its condition are underway, and may eventually involve more than just the southern portion of the lake. A fascinating and detailed description of the issues involved and paths toward their resolution was presented at the Network's community conference held April 5th at Wells College in Aurora.

The conference began with a warm welcome to the 30 or so attendees from Hilary Lambert, our Watershed Steward and Executive Director of the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network. In order to give participants the right language to understand what sometimes sounds like an "alphabet soup" of terms related to the lake and its study, Eileen O'Connor, Chair of the Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency and Director of Environmental Health Services in the Cayuga County Health and Human Services Department, explained some necessary vocabulary and acronyms.

The southern end of Cayuga Lake appears on the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) NYS 303(d) list of impaired water bodies. The impairment, reflected in a reduced ability to meet the designated uses of the water body, is due in part to elevated phosphorus levels in the southern basin of the lake. The DEC must, over time, develop a strategy to reduce the impairment. This will involve figuring out where the phosphorus is coming from, and then determining how phosphorus sources can be reduced so that the total amount of phosphorus entering the southern basin from the watershed does not exceed an amount that impairs the lake. This approach is called the development of a total maximum daily load (TMDL) for phosphorus. Once the TMDL is developed, an implementation plan will follow.

As this work gets underway, DEC is cooperating with Cornell University to determine the TMDL as part of the re-permitting process for Cornell's Lake Source Cooling (LSC) facility. LSC takes water from deep in Cayuga Lake, and returns it to a shallower portion of the lake after it has cooled water that circulates on the Cornell campus. Although no water or phosphorus is added to the lake in this process, the deeper waters of the lake are richer in phosphorus than the shallow waters, and so the LSC outfall is permitted as a point source of phosphorus in the southern basin. This SPDES (State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit sets limits on phosphorus emissions and must be renewed every five years.

Development of the TMDL will benefit from a better understanding of several issues related to phosphorus in the southern end of Cayuga Lake. To this end Cornell and DEC are also engaged in a Cayuga Lake Modeling Project (CLMP) that will develop a computer-based model. A primary purpose of this model is to help provide a better understanding of where the

phosphorus is coming from and how it is moving in the lake.

Jeff Myers, Director of the Bureau of Water Assessment Management at the DEC, described the various point sources and non-point sources of phosphorus in the southern basin of Cayuga Lake. Point sources include the LSC facility, as well as local waste water treatment plants. Non-point sources include various tributaries. The story is complicated by factors such

as in-lake recycling of phosphorus and its relationship to algal growth, which in turn can be affected by invasive species, climate change and other factors. Another variable is how phosphorus content is measured and reported.

Mr. Myers explained that much data has already been collected on the system, and that more data collection will be ongoing. The data paint a complex picture, but ultimately should point to measures that can be taken to reduce phosphorus levels and algal growth. Some of these measures might affect point sources, and some might affect non-point sources and could reach north into the Cayuga Watershed. Some measures could be regulatory, and some could be voluntary. Considerations when deciding where to reduce phosphorus include fairness, efficiency and likelihood of effectiveness. It will likely take several more years to fully devise the

model, develop the TMDL, and enter the implementation phase.

Roxy Johnston, Watersheds Coordinator for the City of Ithaca, joined the speakers in an informal panel after the presentations, and a lively and informative discussion/question and answer session followed. Ms. Johnston provided a brief history of water quality improvements over time, and members of the audience contributed questions, comments and observations. Before and after the meeting there was an opportunity for attendees to view various displays of local interest to watershed lovers, including information on invasive species from the Cayuga County of Planning and Development. Ashley Gingeleski, a freshman at Wells College, attended the conference and described it as a great opportunity to gain a better understanding of the lake, including information about runoff and its impact as well as invasive species.

For more information on the above topics, visit DEC's Cayuga Lake Watershed page at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/88250.html> and Cornell University's Cayuga Lake Modeling Project page at <http://energyandsustainability.fs.cornell.edu/util/clmp/> 🐦



From left, Jeff Myers (DEC), Eileen O'Connor (Cayuga County), and Roxy Johnston (City of Ithaca) field questions from the audience at Wells College.

The mission...

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network identifies key threats to Cayuga Lake and its watershed, and it advocates for solutions that support a healthy environment and vibrant communities.



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Join or renew your Network membership, for 2015! If you're "not a joiner," just donate!

Please join/renew for 2015 at \$10 for seniors/students/limited budgets; \$25 for individuals, \$35 for a family; and \$50 for a business, organization, or municipality.

Larger membership gifts/donations are also welcome! You can join/renew/give online, via paypal or credit card, at our website: www.cayugalake.org or send a check, made out to CLWN, to CLWN, POB 348 Aurora NY 13026. Fully tax deductible!

Membership in the Network makes a difference:

FOR US: With a larger membership, we are better able to represent your concerns about the lake and creeks at meetings, hearings, and public events.

FOR YOU:

Membership gives you a stake and a voice in lake and watershed

protection. Members let us know how to improve our efforts and effectiveness. We are responsive and responsible to our active members.

During 2015, the Network and other groups are hoping to embark on an update of the lake's watershed plan, formally named the Cayuga Lake Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan (RPP). We'll need your help to make the RPP useful and effective.

Membership is a first step for anyone interested in becoming involved with our governance. We have a Board of Directors, committees, newsletter and website helpers, and numerous volunteer events each year—all benefit from member involvement. Contact me for more information!

Thank you. Have a healthy, positive, clean-water-loving holiday and New Year season.

Hilary Lambert, Steward/Executive Director steward@cayugalake.org • 607-319-0475

