

1. INTRODUCTION

Human activities in the Honeoye Lake Watershed have the potential to degrade the water quality within the lake and watershed. Point-source pollutants in surface water and groundwater are usually found in waters produced by various types of business, industry, agricultural, and urban sources. Nonpoint-source pollution occurs as water moves across the land or through the ground and picks up natural and human-made pollutants which are then deposited into waterbodies. Predominately, the creation of impervious services has led to increased surface runoff. Pollutant-laden runoff surface flows into tributaries and wetlands where it discharges into the larger waterbody. The runoff carries automotive oils, lawn fertilizers and pesticides, animal wastes, sediments, and garbage.

The polluted runoff and heavy flows discourage native vegetation in the creeks, increase algae growth, suffocate wildlife species, reduce aesthetics, and erode the shorelines. The pollutants are carried into the waterbody where the negative effects continue on a larger scale.

The waterfront plays a vital role in the Honeoye Lake Watershed communities. The topography and lake views are a fantastic backdrop for residents, anglers and boaters enjoy the local waters, and naturalists peacefully observe the wildlife. Reducing the pollutant loads in the Honeoye Lake Watershed through the enactment of the recommendations outlined in this plan will improve the water quality for many stakeholders.

Users of the lake have consistently expressed their concern regarding the negative effects of excessive aquatic macrophytes and algae blooms on recreational opportunities. Consistent with this observation Honeoye Lake is listed on the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (NYSDEC) Priority Waterbody List as impaired due to water supply concerns relating to nutrients.

Watershed management plans guide the long-term management of a community's land and water resources with the ultimate goal of protecting and improving both water quality and living resources. The Honeoye Lake Watershed Management Plan (HLWMP) is consistent with the objectives of the Honeoye Lake Watershed Task Force (HLWTF) formed in 1998 to prevent further degradation of Honeoye Lake and to improve water quality. The HLWTF provides a forum for all stakeholders to participate, with the ultimate goal to develop a strategic plan for the protection of water quality throughout the Honeoye Lake Watershed while enhancing and preserving its natural resources. The HLWMP addresses point and nonpoint source pollution reduction, habitat protection and restoration, and education, outreach and stewardship.

Through its eight years of efforts, the HLWTF has gained a greater understanding of the complexities of the watershed and the effects of human activity on water quality. Using a process of public and municipal education, data collection, and implementation of best management practices and model regulations, the foundation for a watershed management plan for Honeoye Lake gradually evolved. The first version of the Honeoye Lake Watershed Management Plan was adopted by the HLWTF on November 21, 2005.

This document has been prepared by the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council (G/FLRPC) under the direction of the HLWTF for the New York State Department of State (NYSDOS) with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund Act. Adopted by the HLWTF on October

Honeoye Lake Watershed Management Plan

Final Report – October 2007

16, 2007, this document functions as a comprehensive plan or “road map” to protect Honeoye Lake and lists the necessary steps to save this beautiful watershed for future generations.

1.1 Goals and Objectives

The Honeoye Lake Watershed Management Plan (HLWMP) is a document that identifies major action items needed to protect and improve the water quality of Honeoye Lake. The overall goal of this watershed management plan is the protection, restoration, and enhancement of water quality and living resources in the Honeoye Lake Watershed. The specific objectives of this plan are:

- To improve the water quality of Honeoye Lake;
- To improve the quality of water resources in the Honeoye Lake Watershed;
- To protect the Honeoye Lake Watershed’s natural resources;
- To identify challenges and barriers to water quality protection and to suggest means to overcome them;
- To protect the high quality of life enjoyed by residents of the Honeoye Lake Watershed
- To improve water-dependent recreational opportunities;
- To retain and attract business and improve local economic development opportunities; and,
- To consider economic, social, and other incentives for water quality protection.

1.2 Sponsors / Partners

Important sponsors and partners in the HLWMP include:

Honeoye Valley Association (HVA)

Founded in 1986, the HVA is a membership based organization whose goals are to advocate for responsible use and enjoyment of the lands and resources of the Honeoye Lake area.

Honeoye Lake Watershed Task Force (HLWTF)

Formed in 1998, the HLWTF is an association of the watershed municipalities, agencies providing technical support, and the HVA. The task force is structured with one voting member from each town in the watershed and one from the HVA. It is supported by permanent non-voting professionals from Ontario County Planning Department, Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Finger Lakes Community College Conservation Department. In addition, other professional support is solicited from New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Ontario County Water Resources Council, and Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE).

Municipalities of the Watershed

Six municipalities fall within the Honeoye Lake Watershed. The Towns of Bristol, Candice, Naples, Richmond, and South Bristol are partially in the watershed in Ontario County, as is the Town of Springwater in Livingston County. The Honeoye Lake shoreline lies entirely within the Towns of Canadice and Richmond.

Honeoye Lake Watershed Management Plan

Final Report – October 2007

Ontario County

Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District, Ontario County Planning Department, Ontario County Water Resources Council, and Cornell Cooperative Extension have provided technical assistance in creating this plan.

Finger Lakes Community College (FLCC)

FLCC is an important partner in efforts to protect water resources in the Honeoye Lake Watershed. The recent establishment of the FLCC Muller Conservation Field Station just south of Honeoye Lake was an important step in engaging a multi-disciplinary faculty, staff, and student body to conduct research of Honeoye Lake and its watershed.

New York State Department of State (NYSDOS)

As part of the Coastal Zone Reauthorization Amendments of 1990, Congress enacted a new Section 6217 entitled “Protecting Coastal Waters.” This provision requires states with coastal management programs to develop and implement Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Programs. This document was prepared for the New York State Department of State with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund Act.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)

The NYSDEC represents the State’s concerns and interests in water quality. Biologists, engineers, and permit administrators from the NYSDEC have significant roles in research, technical assistance, and regulatory efforts to protect the water resources of Honeoye Lake and its watershed.

Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council (G/FLRPC)

G/FLRPC is a public organization created to foster coordination among neighboring counties and to provide a regional approach to those concerns crossing local boundaries. It serves a grouping of counties whose residents are joined as a unit economically, socially and geographically. The local governments representing these counties have joined together voluntarily to address common economic and social concerns through the efforts of Regional Councils.

