

FLOWPA FUNDAMENTALS

FINGER LAKES - LAKE ONTARIO WATERSHED PROTECTION ALLIANCE
FROM STREAMS, TO LAKES, TO GREAT LAKES
PROTECTING OUR WATER RESOURCES BEGINNING AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

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MISSION

The mission of the Finger Lakes - Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance is to facilitate processes that encourage watershed partnerships and implementation of action plans to protect and enhance water quality based on:

- Local needs assessment
- Holistic approach
- Information exchange and public education
- Measurable goals and milestones

FLOWPA FEDERAL FUNDING

In Federal Fiscal Year 2015 (FFY2015), New York State was awarded \$797,535 from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) for the Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan Implementation Grant through the US Fish and Wildlife Service. FLOWPA is administering the grant, on behalf of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, as we've done since FFY 2010. FFY 2015 funds will be used by Onondaga, Oswego, Tompkins, and Wayne Counties; the Finger Lakes Institute and Paul Smith's College for projects that minimize the risk of introduction, establishment and impact of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). Water chestnut eradication efforts will include organized hand-pulling and herbicide applications in the Oneida River, Oswego River, Salmon River, Oneida Lake and Sodus Bay. Hydrilla infestations in the southern end of Cayuga Lake will also be targeted with these funds. Lastly, the Finger Lakes Institute and Paul Smith Colleges will utilize FFY 2015 funding to continue their watercraft inspector/steward programs in the Finger Lakes Region at public boat launches and private access points in the Finger Lakes Region and the Adirondack headwaters to Lake Ontario. All work will be completed by September 30, 2018.

On behalf of Cayuga, Onondaga and Wayne County Soil and Water Conservation Districts, FLOWPA applied for and was awarded a grant of \$199,878 by the Great Lakes Commission (Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Program) in 2015 for implementation of the Phosphorus Control in the Lake Ontario Basin Project. The grant funds will be used for shoreline stabilization at Moon Beach in Cayuga County and hydroseeding and road ditch maintenance throughout Onondaga County. Wayne County



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will use their grant funds to design and implement a Port Bay shoreline stabilization program, in addition to cost sharing for the planting of cover crops in the Port Bay watershed. These projects must be completed by September 30, 2018.



Wayne County shoreline stabilization project.
Photo credit: Wayne County SWCD



Onondaga County hydroseeding team.
Photo credit: Onondaga County SWCD

ONGOING CAYUGA LAKE HYDRILLA ERADICATION EFFORTS PROJECT

The highly invasive aquatic plant, *Hydrilla verticillata*, known commonly as hydrilla, was detected in the Cayuga Inlet in August 2011. Hydrilla is native to Asia and was first introduced to the United States in the 1950's when the contents of an aquarium were released into a waterway in Florida. Since that time, hydrilla has spread throughout much of the eastern United States and a number of western states. Hydrilla plants grow rapidly and create a thick mat of vegetation making navigation, swimming and fishing nearly impossible. The plant is a perennial and can set seed; however, the main form of reproduction and spread is via fragmentation and buds produced along the stems. Fragments of the plant are easily caught and transported by boats, boat trailers and other equipment. These fragments are also capable of being dispersed via water currents and waterfowl. They can sprout roots and establish new populations rather easily – increasing hydrilla's ability to rapidly infest an area.

Hydrilla was initially found only in the Cayuga Inlet of Cayuga Lake in 2011. Once the infestation was positively identified as the first known infestation of hydrilla in New York, follow-up surveys showed a much more extensive population than originally discovered. Rapid response actions were taken and the Hydrilla Task Force of the Cayuga Lake Watershed was formed to coordinate local

efforts. Herbicide control and hand harvesting were performed in 2011. Herbicide applications were also conducted in 2012 at which time the NYS Legislature appropriated \$800,000 towards the ongoing hydrilla eradication efforts in Tompkins County.

In 2013 FLOWPA entered into an agreement with New York State to administer the hydrilla funding and promptly hired a project manager to provide technical assistance, coordination, communication, and other services to facilitate effective treatment and collaboration between partners. FLOWPA also sub-contracted with Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District to oversee herbicide treatments, water quality monitoring, flow measurements, permit administration, and provide office space for the project manager; and with other consulting firms to provide diver services to support hydrilla control using benthic mats and hydrilla monitoring and other services deemed necessary and appropriate.

Since 2011, hydrilla has been found in Fall Creek and Cayuga Lake within Tompkins County. Ongoing control efforts have been implemented to reduce the infestation and prevent further spread of the invasive plant. Both contact and systemic herbicides have been applied on an annual basis to provide longer-term control through

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reduction in biomass and prevention of tuber and turion production. Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting (DASH) proved ineffective when attempted in the fall of 2011. Small-scale physical removal efforts by hand, along with benthic barriers, in the southeast corner of Cayuga Lake (2013 and 2014) and Fall Creek (2014) proved effective in reducing hydrilla biomass and preventing fragment spread.

The funds provided by New York State have been paired with federal funds from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, on an annual basis, to ensure a comprehensive and effective treatment protocol can be implemented. Extensive plant community monitoring and sampling is planned for the 2017 field season along with implementation of eradication and management efforts for hydrilla. State funds will be exhausted in early 2017 at which time the Hydrilla Task Force and representatives from Tompkins County will develop a treatment strategy that can be implemented with the balance of federal funds available; while pursuing other sources of funding to combat the hydrilla infestation in Cayuga Lake.



Photo credit: Tompkins County SWCD



Photo credit: Chris Evans, bugwood.org

FLOWPA 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

FLOWPA held its 20th anniversary celebration on July 22, 2016 at Onondaga Lake Park. Approximately 40 people attended the celebration, including FLOWPA representatives, lake association members and various stakeholders. Assemblyman William Magnarelli and Assemblywoman Pamela Hunter were in attendance, along with John McBride from Senator DeFrancisco's office. Several representatives from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) also attended the celebration.

Assemblyman Magnarelli and Assemblywoman Hunter presented FLOWPA with a proclamation from the New York State Assembly honoring the organization in recognition of 20 years of service protecting and enhancing water quality throughout the Central New York region. On behalf of Senator DeFrancisco, Mr. McBride also congratulated FLOWPA. Ms. Susan Van Patten of the NYS DEC read a letter from Commissioner Seggos which congratulated FLOWPA on its "numerous achievements towards watershed protection in the Lake Ontario basin." Commissioner Seggos described FLOWPA as a "model of watershed management through partnerships and coordination of research, planning and implementation of water quality protection and remedial measures."

The formal presentations concluded with remarks from NYS DEC Great Lakes Coordinator, Don Zelazany, FLOWPA Program Coordinator Kristy LaManche and FLOWPA Executive Committee Chair Scott Ingmire. Attendees had an opportunity to view a slide show highlighting 20 years of FLOWPA's work, as well as, enjoy light refreshments and reminisce about their involvement in FLOWPA. We'd like to thank Mark Burger (Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District) and staff from the Onondaga County Parks and Recreation Department for helping to make this event a success.



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FLOWPA membership includes the following New York State counties wholly or partially in the Lake Ontario Drainage basin:

Allegany, Cayuga, Chemung, Cortland, Genesee, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Livingston, Madison, Monroe, Niagara, Oneida, Onondaga, Ontario, Orleans, Oswego, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tompkins, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates

FLOWPA POLO SHIRTS ARE STILL AVAILABLE

Shirts are \$32.00 each, plus shipping, and are available in pistachio green or metro blue. The logo is fully embroidered. Contact the WRB at (315) 592-9663 to place your order.



Please visit our website at www.flowpa.org or Facebook page for more information about Finger Lakes - Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance

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