

## Town of West Monroe, Oswego County

The Town of West Monroe is located in Oswego County, along the northwestern shoreline of Oneida Lake. The town encompasses 38.5 square miles of land area, 96% of which lies within the Oneida Lake watershed. The Town has approximately 4.4 miles of shoreline on Oneida Lake. According to the Census, 4,428 people lived in West Monroe in 2000. The town experienced a .8% population increase between 1990 and 2000. The estimated population in 2005 was 4,497. The median age in 2000 was 35 years and the average household size was 2.8 persons. Median household income was \$42,043. There were 1,629 housing units in the town, 8% of which had been built between 1990 and 2000.

People are attracted to West Monroe because of the rural character, and the convenient access (Route 81) and proximity to Syracuse. Agriculture and woodland are the predominant land uses in Oswego County. Oswego also contains one of the largest acreages of wetlands in the state, most of which contain muck soils. Big Bay and Three Mile Bay State Wildlife Management Areas found along Oneida Lake contribute to the county's wetland acreage. In addition to wetlands, Oswego County's land area specifically within the Oneida Lake watershed is also largely forested.

### Assessment Results

Town of West Monroe Oswego County	Full or Partial Implementation	Not Applicable
1. Development - total		
1a. Existing	35 of 42 (83%)	0
1b. New and substantial redevelopment	16 of 20 (80%)	0
	19 of 22 (86%)	0
2. Forestry / Agriculture - total		
2a. Forestry	11 of 12 (92%)	0
2b. Agriculture	10 of 10 (100%)	0
	1 of 2 (50%)	0
3. Waterways / Wetlands - total		
3a. Modified waterways	14 of 16 (88%)	0
3b. Wetlands and Riparian Area Mgmt/Restoration	9 of 10 (90%)	0
	5 of 6 (83%)	0
4. Marinas - total		
4a. Existing Marinas	4 of 48 (8%)	0
4b. New Marinas	0 of 20 (0%)	0
4c. Existing and New Marinas	3 of 18 (17%)	0
	1 of 10 (10%)	0
5. Roads and Bridges - total		
5a. New Roads and Bridges	23 of 26 (88%)	0
5b. Existing Roads and Bridges	4 of 6 (67%)	0
5c. New & Existing Roads & Bridges	13 of 13 (100%)	0
	6 of 7 (86%)	0
6. OWTS	7 of 7(100%)	0

The Onondaga County Water Authority supplies public drinking water to water supply districts in the Village of Central Square and the Towns of Hastings and West Monroe. The water comes from Lake Ontario through the facilities of the Metropolitan Water Board. However, the majority of the residents of the Towns of Hastings and West Monroe are outside the water supply districts and rely on water from on-site wells.

West Monroe passed a new land development law in 2005 in order to protect unique characteristics and to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the Town. The law ensures that the land development and use is in keeping with the character of the area and applies to commercial uses (other than construction of single and two-family dwellings, forestry or agricultural uses), subdivisions, telecommunication facilities, mobile homes, mobile home parks, recreational vehicles, parks and junkyards. Decisions regarding new development are based on soils, slope, wetlands, and aquifer recharge areas. There are no major tributaries flowing through the town and erosion is not perceived to be a major issue.

## **Summary and Recommendations**

Based on the local law assessment process, the CNY RPDB recommends that the Town of West Monroe continue to work with the Tug Hill Commission on updates to their zoning laws and comprehensive plan. The Tug Hill Commission also provides additional assistance with GIS mapping of outfalls, manholes and other points of reference. Ideas for the comprehensive plan are being compiled through input from the planning board, town board, zoning commission, and residents. Additional information about the comprehensive planning process is available in Appendix G and in the Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council resource titled, "Protecting Water Resources Through Local Controls and Practices: An Assessment Manual for New York Municipalities."

Management practices to protect Oneida Lake and its watershed are being addressed by the town but local control for these measures are not included in current zoning laws. Zoning is the most common and extensively used technique for regulating land use and development and is often used as an effective way to implement the goals that are defined in a comprehensive plan. Like a comprehensive plan, zoning is an important component for water resource protection at the local level. A good example of a model zoning law can be found in Appendix G and in the Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council resource titled, "Protecting Water Resources Through Local Controls and Practices: An Assessment Manual for New York Municipalities."

Municipalities have authority and primary responsibility for local roadway, bridge, and drainage maintenance. The CNY RPDB recommends that municipalities continue to implement stormwater controls and provide educational opportunities to update highway and public works department staff on current road, bridge, and drainage BMPs. Additional recommendations are found in a section titled "Road, Drainage Way, and Bridge Recommendations" (IV B) of the introductory narrative.

## **Municipal Contacts**

- Randy Shaw, DPW
- Gail Swistak, Code Enforcement Officer
- Paul Baxter, North Shore Council of Governments
- Elwin Fisher, Highway Superintendent
- Ernest Manchin, Supervisor

## **Local Laws Reviewed**

- Town of West Monroe Land Development Law (2005)
- Town of West Monroe Site Plan Review (2002)
- Subdivision Regulations (1988)
- Town Land Use Plan (1988)