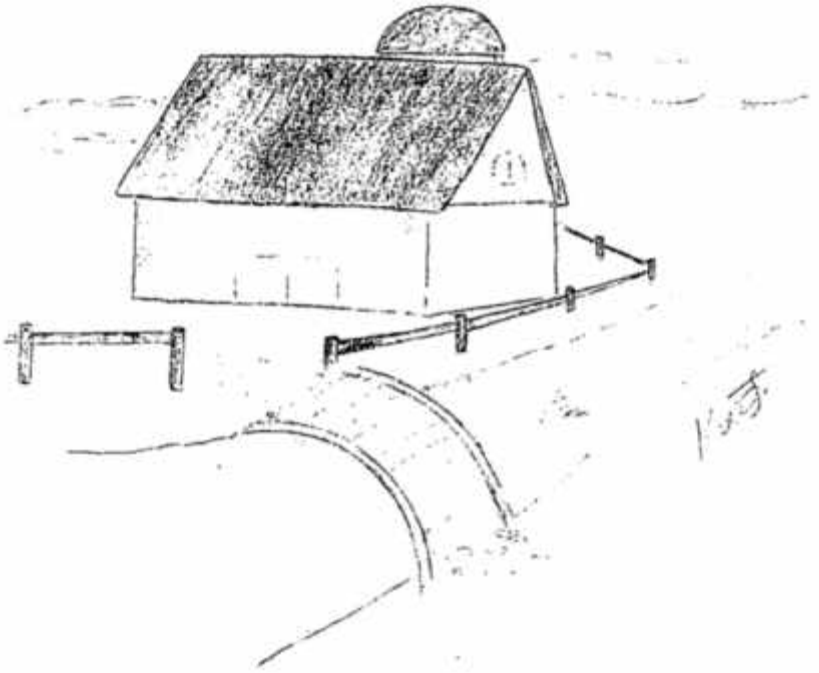


ONEIDA LAKE WATERSHED AGRICULTURAL PROJECT



Conservation & Community

ONEIDA LAKE WATERSHED AGRICULTURAL PROJECT

The 800,000-acre Oneida Lake Watershed includes portions of Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga and Oswego Counties. The watershed includes all of the streams that eventually drain to Oneida Lake.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Oneida Lake Watershed Agricultural Program's (OLWAP) immediate mission is to complete a multi-phased inventory and analysis of the impact of agriculture upon water quality in the Oneida Lake Watershed. This action will facilitate the future implementation of water quality improvement projects on priority farms in the Oneida Lake Watershed.

Phase I

April, 2002 through July, 2002

Identify & Communicate with Watershed Farmers

- a) Develop a complete mailing list of farmers within the watershed. Farmers on the mailing list will receive a biannual newsletter.

- b) Establish the Agricultural Advisory Committee – an eight member group of watershed farmers that will meet regularly to help guide the direction of the Oneida Lake Watershed Agricultural Program.



Agricultural Advisory Committee Members:

Lewis County: To be appointed

Madison County: Maurice Kelsey & Richard Carrier

Oneida County: William Boice & David Schiefferstine

Onondaga County: Peter Mapstone & Bud Nurse

Oswego County: Jeff Hopkinson &/or June Wood



Phase II

June, 2002 through February, 2003

Agricultural Issues Inventory and Prioritization

a) Complete Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Tiers I and II on Watershed Farms.

**AEM is New York State's official program
to address agricultural nonpoint source pollution.
It is a voluntary, confidential, incentive-driven, program
where the farmer is the decision maker.**

AEM's 5 Tiers:

Tier I: one page farm inventory (# of acres & animals)

Tier II: 18 worksheets used to identify environmental stewardship and environmental concerns on the farm.

Tier III: Development of a farm plan to address Tier II needs.

Tier IV: Implementation of Best Management Practices planned in Tier III.

Tier V: Evaluation of planning process.

b) Prioritize farms in the watershed based on resource concerns for funding of planning and Best Management Practice implementation. Farmers will be ranked in each of six categories:

Silage

Manure Management

Pasture Management

Soil Erosion

Milkhouse Waste

Barnyards

Phase III

November, 2002 through November, 2003

Complete AEM Tier III

a) Apply for funding from State and Federal Sources to complete farm planning on priority farms.

b) Develop AEM Tier III farm plans on priority farms.



Phase IV

November, 2003 through November, 2004

Complete AEM Tier IV

a) Apply for funding from State & Federal Sources to implement AEM Tier IV Best Management Practices on priority farms.

b) Complete AEM Tier IV – Implementation of Best Management Practices on priority farms

Project partners

This project is funded through a grant from the Central
New York Regional Planning and Development Board
(CNYRPDB).

CNYRPDB Contact: Anne Saltman 422-8276

Lewis County Soil & Water Conservation District
Contact: Jon Stewart 376-6122

Madison County Soil & Water Conservation District
Contact: Mike Johnston 684-9577

Oneida County Soil & Water Conservation District
Contact: Kevin Lewis 736-3334
Contact: Jo-Anne Faulkner

Onondaga County Soil & Water Conservation District
Contact: Walt Neuhauser 677-3851

Oswego County Soil & Water Conservation District
Contact: John DeHollander 592-9663

New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee
Contact: Jeff TenEyck (607) 838-3353

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Contact: Bruce Hopkins 736-3316

Oneida Lake Watershed with County Boundaries



Farmer Concerns

Is this process confidential? Yes, although the AEM process has never been tested in a court of law, the AEM planning documents are protected information not subject to the Freedom of Information Law.

What will this cost me? The field visit and the AEM Tier I and II completion will be free of charge. If you wish to apply for and receive cost share dollars for a project, you will be responsible for a certain percentage of the project costs.

How long does AEM take? The Tier I worksheet of AEM can be completed within a few minutes. It is a simple, one-page inventory of acres, animal units and general farm practices. The Tier II worksheets take longer and involve more detailed questions on nearly every aspect of your operation. These worksheets can take up to 2 hours to complete. Therefore, we will be seeking to set appointments with farmers at their convenience to complete the worksheets.

Who decides what constitutes a "priority farm"? Priority farms are identified through the Oneida Lake Watershed Farm Prioritization System. This system utilizes 6 areas (barnyards, silage, milkhouse, pasture, manure management and soil erosion) for the ranking process. Farm data from each farm participating in the program will be entered into the prioritization system. Each farm will be ranked based upon overall score and score in individual categories. The AAC will also have major input into the final prioritization of watershed farms.

Why should I participate? There are several reasons why farmers should participate in this voluntary program. 1) Farms that participate become eligible for funding for projects such as barnyards, manure management and milkhouse waste. 2) Your participation is voluntary and confidential. 3) The program is locally led by your farming neighbors on the Agricultural Advisory Committee. Bureaucrats don't make the decisions in this program, farmers do.