



CHAMPLAIN WATERSHED  
IMPROVEMENT COALITION OF NEW YORK  
CLINTON | ESSEX | FRANKLIN | WARREN | WASHINGTON | COUNTIES

# 2014 Annual Report

*Providing a coordinated effort to improve water quality and other natural resources within the New York Lake Champlain counties through project implementation.*

South Lake, Ticonderoga, NY

# Subwatershed Assessment

In 2013, the members of CWICNY began working on the “Lake Champlain Non-Point Source Pollution Subwatershed Assessment and Management Plan,” which is being funded through the NYS Department of State’s Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. This plan is being developed to complete a comprehensive, watershed-wide assessment of non-point source pollution contributions to identify high-priority subwatersheds where remediation efforts will reduce phosphorus loading into the Lake, identify specific projects, and prioritize them for implementation. Many of the development tasks were completed in 2014, including five public outreach workshops and creation of a digital matrix to identify which areas within the watershed have the potential to contribute the most phosphorus loading.

Staff at the Lake Champlain - Lake George Regional Planning Board (LCLGRPB) conducted five public outreach charrettes throughout the watershed, collecting public opinion on the water quality issues facing the Lake Champlain Basin. Attendees were asked to answer a series of questions pertaining to their opinions of the threats to water quality within their communities. This information was utilized to facilitate a discussion to share concerns and identify what the common threats are. It was found that the majority of participants throughout the watershed identified phosphorus as the number one water quality impairment within the watershed.

Through a series of workshops, the Advisory Committee identified 16 parameters for use in a digital matrix that takes into consideration water quality, ecology, human uses, and land use and cover. This information was utilized to build a digital ranking matrix that will rank the 79 HUC-12 subwatersheds to identify which subwatersheds have the potential to provide the most phosphorus inputs. CWICNY members will then utilize that information to identify projects within the high priority subwatersheds in 2015.

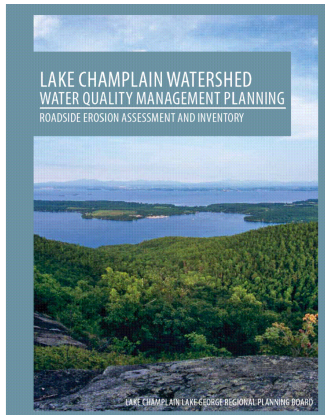


Posters displayed in Essex County



Attendees at the Warren Co. Charrette

## Water Quality Grants



In December 2014, the Clinton County SWCD was awarded \$292,034 for the *Lake Champlain Watershed Roadside Erosion Plan Implementation - Phase 1* project. Funding through this grant, which was authored by staff at the LCLGRPB, will be utilized by the County SWCDs to implement the high priority projects outlined within the *Lake Champlain Roadside Erosion Assessment and Inventory* report, which was completed in 2012 and identifies 319 roadside sites throughout the watershed with varying levels of erosion. Each site was ranked as high, medium or low priority for restoration, and this funding will address those that are high priority, which include roadside ditches that connect directly to surface waters. Practices to be implemented include hydroseeding, installation of rolled erosion products and sediment basins, installation of woody vegetation to encourage soil stabilization utilizing root masses, and encouraging the use of check dams that will slow water velocity within roadside ditches, causing sediment to fall out of suspension before it reaches the receiving waterbodies. Several banks will also be regarded to ensure that the practices will hold.

## County Efforts

### Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District

The Warren County SWCD has worked with the Glen Lake Association, the Town of Queensbury and Warren County to reduce Impacts on Glen Lake through a NYSDEC water quality improvement grant. The District closed out the grant last year after completing nineteen projects (i.e. drywells, rain gardens, porous pavement). In 2014 the District was a recipient of Lake Champlain Basin funds, one grant “Soil Savers” provided students and the public with soil nutrition education and the second provided funding for our continuing roadside erosion control/hydroseeding program.

The Lake George Association has been tackling stormwater runoff retrofit projects within the Lake George Watershed in the southeast portion of the Champlain watershed. One of the larger projects in 2014 was the result of a Town of Ticonderoga stormwater study and a pollution prevention grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program. The Mossy Point Stormwater Boat Launch Stormwater Mitigation Project is treating runoff from a 3.5 acres parking lot utilizing bio-retention areas with over 350 native plants and plugs and 2200 square feet of porous pavers. The bioretention areas are some of the largest that have been utilized in the basin. The two basins total over 1,800 square feet with the largest being just over 1,300 square feet.

## Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District

Several conservation projects were performed in Clinton County in 2014, including stabilizing a total of 215 feet of streambank on three sites within the Champlain watershed, as well as implementing patterned style tile drainage on a total of and 121 acres of crop ground. Additional projects include utilizing funding provided by the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission to reseed a total of 96 acres of crop and pastures located along the Great Chazy River to aid in easier management of the land, while improving the quality of the land by implementing no-till practices. Assistance with his work is offered through the District's No Till Drill Program, which provides producers within the County the availability of a District owned no-till drill. The District also partnered with NRCS to survey and design two roof water runoff systems that are slated to be installed during the 2015 construction season, and is also actively working with municipalities through providing technical assistance on a municipal park drainage project.

In conservation planning efforts, the District will be updating their five-year Agricultural Environmental Management strategic plan in 2015, which will include Lake Champlain as the primary focus area for water quality improvement.

## Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District

As part of CWICNY's expanding Rural Roads Active Management Program (RRAMP), Essex County SWCD hosted two stormwater workshops focusing on roadside erosion of rural back roads. The first workshop was presented with the International Erosion Control Association (IECA) in March in Westport and offered both a classroom training and outdoor demonstrations of various erosion control products and uses. The second workshop was presented with Cornell Local Roads Program (CLRP) at the JEMS theatre in Jay and included a classroom training with elaborate models identifying the issues to focus on when applying erosion control practices.

Attendees included local municipal highway staff, who gained knowledge on how to prioritize road issues based on environmental factors and recognize available products, as well as several local foresters, who can apply this information to improve logging roads and report deficiencies in town, county, or state maintained roads that are less travelled.

All attendees were also provided with CWICNY's two RRAMP publications, a Best Management Practices (BMPs) Manual and a Field Guide that outline examples of actions for maintaining roads while reducing erosion and improving water quality. Funding for the workshops was provided by the Lake Champlain Basin Program and the Essex County Water Quality Coordinating Committee.



Attendees at the Westport workshop

## Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District

The District submitted and received a Round 20 Agriculture Non-Point Source Grant funding for Mettawee River CAFO Compliance on six farms in the watershed. One of the chief goals of the grant is to help these farms improve water quality and soil health through continuation of cover cropping on selected fields along the Mettawee River. These farms did an initial cover crop seeding in late summer 2014 utilizing a helicopter that aerially applied the seed into standing corn. This was done with funding through the Lake Champlain Basin Program and NEIWPC. By having most of these same farms continue to add cover crops as a part of their farm management for next three years through the AgNPS grant, the District hopes to build the farmers confidence in the long term benefits of cover cropping. These benefits include erosion control through vegetative surface cover in the non-crop season, nitrogen uptake to prevent leaching, and increased organic matter content, which leads to healthier soils.



Cover Crop in Washington County

Additional work throughout the watershed includes construction of a manure transfer and waste storage system at Red Top Farm to better manage nutrients from the manure by applying it to fields during the year when the potential for runoff is low and ability to incorporate the nutrients into the soil is best. To apply for funding to cost share this type of system installation the farm has to have a current Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan. This plan outlines the best use of the nutrients in manure and what nutrients the manure is providing in what quantities, which will aid the farm in applying the

correct amounts of nutrients to the land for crop production, aiding in fertilizer cost saving and reduced runoff. Toolite Farm on the Mettawee River in Granville is currently working on this plan through the Agriculture Environmental Management planning process provided by Washington County SWCD Natural Resource Technician Ben Luskin.

# Stormwater Tradeshow

2014 marked the 10 year anniversary of the North County Stormwater Tradeshow and Conference. This year's event was held at The Queensbury Hotel and was well attended by area engineers, Code Enforcement Officers and municipal employees. Speakers and topics included "A new Shade of Green" presented by John Dunkle, which focused on the progression of the use of green infrastructure in stormwater management, "Low Impact Development Stormwater Management Plan for Fort Drum" presented by Dave Carr, RLA of the LA Group, "How's the Water in the Hudson River and its Tributaries" presented by Dan Shapley of the Hudson Riverkeeper, and "NYS DEC Stormwater Program Updates" presented by NYS DEC Central Office staff. A total of 3 Professional Development Hours and 2 Code Enforcement Credits were given for the day. In addition to the attendees, 15 vendors were present representing several stormwater management products.



CWICNY Inc. is a 501-C-(3) Not-for-Profit group originally formed in 2001 with the goal of "Providing a Coordinated Effort to Improve Water Quality and Other Natural Resources Within the Lake Champlain Counties Through Project Implementation." This coalition is a grass-roots approach that recognizes the importance of local participation and cooperation in addressing the many sources of pollutants into Lake Champlain.

CWICNY is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors that includes representatives from each of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts and each of the Water Quality Coordinating Committees from Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Warren and Washington Counties, and a representative from the Lake Champlain - Lake George Regional Planning Board. Advisors to the group include the New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and The Greater Adirondack Resource Conservation and Development Council.



Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition of New York

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