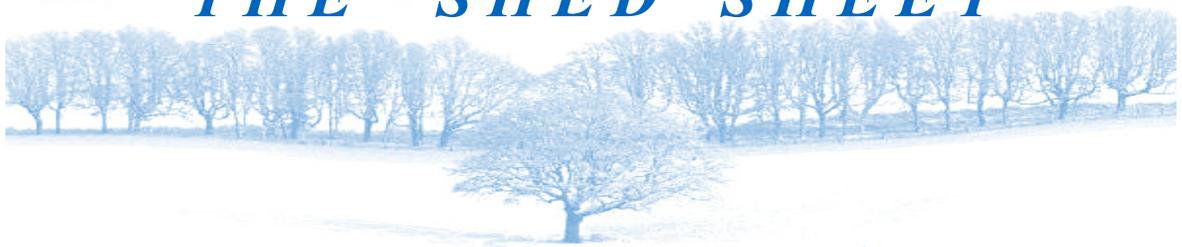




Winter 2010-11

THE 'SHED SHEET



Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy

DONORS START LITTLE ~ BIG INLET WETLAND PRESERVE

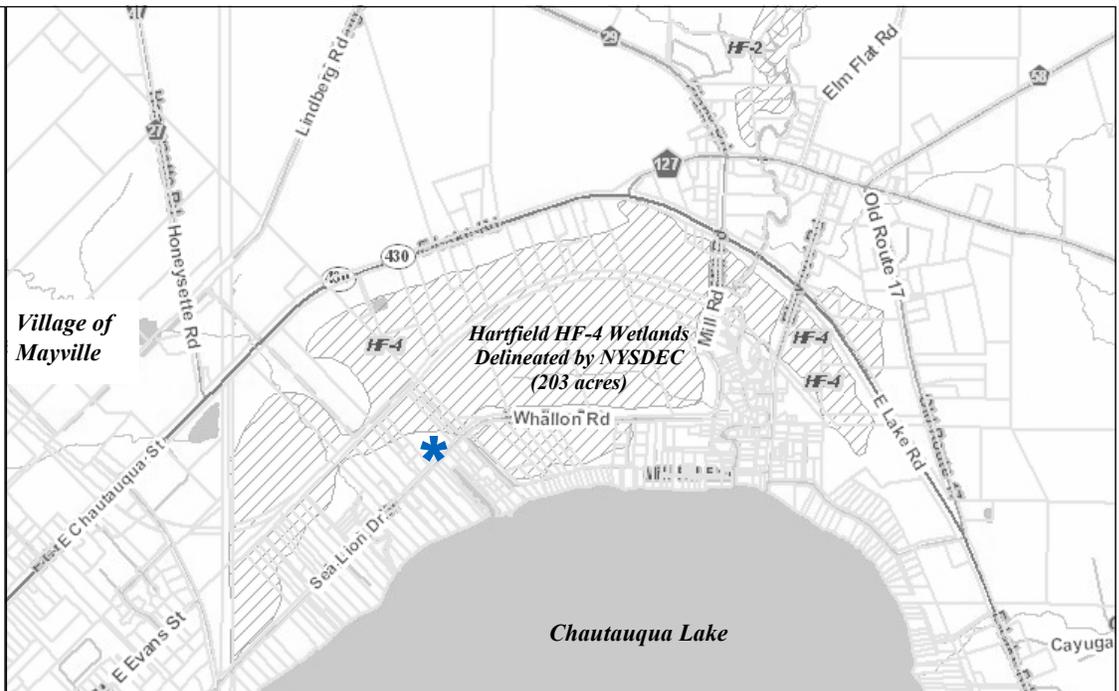


In August, CWC received a generous donation of 4.3 acres of land, including about 3 acres of the HF-4 state-regulated wetland along Sea Lion Drive in Mayville. We thank the landowners, who wish to remain anonymous, and the 32 generous contributors who funded the closing and initial costs of establishing this preserve. We give special thanks to Michael D. Masters, Land Surveyors for donating their services to mark the boundaries of this site and wetlands therein. CWC will undertake a baseline biological survey of this site and develop a management plan for it. Owners of adjacent wetland properties are encouraged to donate their wetlands to expand this wetland preserve to permanently conserve the water storage and flow regime of the watershed feeding the Mayville-Hartfield end of Chautauqua Lake. *

Right: *The asterisk (*) denotes CWC's new 4.3-acre Little ~ Big Inlet Wetland Preserve located along Sea Lion Drive in Mayville (NY).*

This wetland/floodplain preserve provides and protects valuable bird and wildlife habitat as well as important flood water storage, which will help protect properties in this area and along the lakeshore from flood damage.

(wetland map courtesy of www.chautauquagis.com)



CWC ~ 1990 to 2011 ~ 21 YEARS OF CONSERVATION!



Chautauqua
Watershed
Conservancy

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Director of Operations
- Jill Bennett,
Administrative Assistant

The 'Shed Sheet newsletter is a publication of the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization founded in 1990 whose mission is to preserve and enhance the water quality, scenic beauty and ecological health of the lakes, streams and watersheds of the Chautauqua region by promoting best land management practices and conserving local, undeveloped shoreline and wetland areas. All donations are greatly appreciated and tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Message from the Leadership

Celebrating 20 Years of Conservation Success!

2010 was a monumental year for CWC. We celebrated 20 years of conservation success with a member appreciation reception on July 18, 2010 at the Rappole's lake home, a 20th Birthday Bash at Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center on July 24, 2010 and a 20th Anniversary Fundraiser and Annual Meeting Dinner Celebration at Camp Onyahsa on August 21, 2010. All of the Conservancy's past presidents and many past directors were able to attend the Annual Meeting Dinner Celebration! We would like to thank everyone who participated in these events and give a special thanks to those businesses, organizations and persons who donated time, funding or services that helped make each of them a success!

From John, a special thanks to President Mike Lyons, the board of directors, CWC staffers Jill Eklund and Jill Bennett, our annual meeting speaker Becky Nystrom, and volunteer Anne Schettine for her help with the auction at this event. All of your help made these events very memorable experiences for all!

Looking forward . . . in 2011



CWC started its new fiscal year on October 1, 2010. We would like to thank each of you who has given donations or grants to the Conservancy as part of our annual membership drive. It is your enthusiastic and generous membership support that provides the fuel to drive our watershed land conservation, our education and our pollution prevention programs and projects. We could not do it without your support!

For 2011, our highest priority is to conserve the Wells Bay Lakeshore Forest. Directors, staff and volunteers will be contacting as many people as possible over the next few months seeking contributions to reach the goal of conserving this endangered site. Our next highest priority is to provide stewardship information and technical assistance to you — the landowners, residents and visitors of the watersheds of Chautauqua County — so that you can put into practice the actions that conserve and enhance the water quality, scenic beauty and ecological health of the lakes, streams and watersheds of the Chautauqua region. With the completion of the Chautauqua Lake Watershed Management Plan, the CWC is also taking action to publicize the recommendations of this Plan and to facilitate the implementation of as many of these recommendations as possible with our Lake Commission partner agencies.

And, as always, CWC will have a number of events scheduled for our donors and friends in 2011. We hope you will be able to join us! 🌳

Yours in Stewardship,



Michael K. Lyons,
Board President



John Jablonski III,
Executive Director

SAVE RESOURCES!

Sign up to get The 'Shed Sheet electronically — email us at info@chautauquawatershed.org

***The Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy Celebrates
20 Years of Watershed Education and Land Conservation!***



(Above) Several CWC board directors (Bill Locke, David Andersen, Philip Brunskill, Linda Barber, Bob Lannon, Chris Yates, Becky Nystrom), Board President Mike Lyons, and Executive Director John Jablonski celebrate CWC's first 20 years of conservation success in Chautauqua County.



Member Appreciation Reception at the Rappole's Chautauqua home on July 18, 2010. (Left) Bob and Bev Lannon enjoy conversation with Dr. Brian Meagher. (Below) Bob Mazza of Mazza Chautauqua Cellars discusses wine and spirits production with Dr. Bert Rappole and Tom Small.



(Above) Members and directors celebrate CWC's 20th Birthday Bash at the Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center on July 24, 2010.

(Right) Director Becky Nystrom, President Mike Lyons and Executive Director John Jablonski at CWC's 20th Anniversary Fundraiser and Annual Meeting Dinner Celebration at Camp Onyahsa on August 21, 2010.



What's Fueling the Problems of the Lake?

What are the major watershed sources of the nutrients and sediments that fuel the algae blooms, plant growth and loss of depth in Chautauqua Lake? According to estimates in the Chautauqua Lake Watershed Management Plan's Executive Summary (dated September 2010), the following factors play a role:



Watershed Phosphorus Load to the Lake = 9,900 kg/yr

- ◆ Agriculture: 51% (5,048 kg/yr)
 - ◆ Cropland: 31% (3,101 kg/yr)
 - ◆ Hay-Pasture: 20% (1,947 kg/yr)
- ◆ Wastewater Treatment Plants: 27% (2,710 kg/yr)
- ◆ Development: 18% (1,731 kg/yr)
 - ◆ Low Intensity: 12% (1,154 kg/yr)
 - ◆ High Intensity: 6% (577 kg/yr)
- ◆ Forest: 2% (216 kg/yr)
- ◆ Septic Systems: 1.5% (144 kg/yr)
- ◆ Other: <1% (51 kg/yr)

Watershed Sediment Load to the Lake = 1,1938,791 kg/yr

- ◆ Agriculture: 71% (1,376,541 kg/yr)
 - ◆ Cropland: 52% (1,008,171 kg/yr)
 - ◆ Hay-Pasture: 19% (368,370 kg/yr)
- ◆ Streambanks: 18% (348,982 kg/yr)
- ◆ Development: 5% (96,940 kg/yr)
 - ◆ Low Intensity: 4% (77,552 kg/yr)
 - ◆ High Intensity: 1% (19,388 kg/yr)
- ◆ Forest: 3% (58,164 kg/yr)
- ◆ Bare Lands: 3% (58,164 kg/yr)
- ◆ Other: <1% (51 kg/yr)

For more information on and/or to view the entire Chautauqua Lake Watershed Management Plan or its executive summary, visit http://www.planningchautauqua.com/watershed/chautlake_mgmt_plan.htm ❁

Progress Made on Wells Bay Project

With only 10% of Chautauqua Lake shore lands remaining in a natural condition, it is extremely important to save those sites which still provide essential habitat to sustain ecological communities of frogs, salamanders, turtles, snakes, birds and mammals that are so much a part of our lake environment. They also provide essential buffer zones to protect the shore from eroding and to allow the filtration of nutrients and pollution from waters flowing into the lake.

The Conservancy has the opportunity to save one of those natural habitats remaining on Chautauqua Lake for wildlife, and for humans as well, at the



Wells Bay Lakeshore Forest

in North Harmony. This project is part of our *Last Mile Campaign* and is our highest land conservation fundraising priority for 2011. CWC extends a big *THANK YOU* to the Lenna Foundation and those individuals who recently contributed to this important land campaign.

With these recent donations and an awarded New York State Environmental Protection Fund grant, **CWC only needs to raise \$112,000 more to close on this ecologically valuable property!** We ask for your help to finish this project! Please call the CWC or see a board director to participate in this important land campaign. ❁



Losing Your Stream Bank, Lake Shore, Yard or Farmland to Erosion?

Chautauqua County has established a grant program to assist property owners to undertake projects **to protect and enhance the waterways of Chautauqua County**. Private, municipal and organizational entities are eligible to apply. The funding is competitive and is based upon the reduction in pollution or other water quality benefits that a project will provide.



(Photo by CWC)



(Photo by Fred Kelley)

Now is the time to begin planning your project! The deadline to submit the next round of grant applications is June 1, 2011. The highest ranking projects will be funded for completion in 2012.

Application information can be found online at: <http://www.co.chautauqua.ny.us/departments/legislature/Pages/default.aspx> (click on Occupancy Tax under quick links). For more information on potential erosion control projects call Dave Wilson, Field Manager, Chautauqua County Soil & Conservation District at 664-2351 ext. 119. For general questions, contact the County Department of Planning and Economic Development at 661-8900. ❁

CWC Pursues Watersheds Conservation Stewardship Grants

CWC was recently awarded a two-year **\$50,000 grant from the Ralph C. Sheldon Foundation** (contingent upon raising additional funds) to fund the Chautauqua Watersheds Conservation Stewardship Program. CWC has applied for matching funds from the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation and the NYS Conservation Partnership Program administered by the Land Trust Alliance.

The Chautauqua Watersheds Conservation Program is designed to promote the recommendations of the Chautauqua Lake Watershed Management Plan to as many persons as possible, in cooperation with the Chautauqua Lake Management Commission, Chautauqua Lake Association, Chautauqua County Soil & Water Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service. It will also provide outreach to lakeshore, stream, wetland, farmland and forest owners to maintain or establish conservation practices on their watershed lands to help collect, store and deliver clean waters to our region's streams and lakes. Landowners participating with creating lakeshore buffers, installing erosion control practices or voluntarily committing to keep their lands in a beneficial natural condition will be recognized through a Landowner Conservation Registry Program that includes special signage for such properties.



CWC hopes to receive grant funding to market the recommendations of the Chautauqua Lake Management Plan and promote the conservation and stewardship of watershed lands.

Anyone interested in providing consulting stewardship services for this program is invited to e-mail a resume and cover letter to CWC (at info@chautauquawatershed.org) describing how and why their qualifications and experience in environmental science, science education and communications would make them a strong candidate to deliver these services. Decisions on grant awards are anticipated in mid-March. ❁

Buffer Strips Are Blossoming

By Jane E. Conroe, CWC Co-Vice President

The cold temperatures have sent the plants and trees to sleep, but the shores of Chautauqua Lake have many more plants than they did last summer. For several groups of Chautauqua County citizens recently, gardening in some new places became an adventure in watershed understanding.

The Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy has been advocating for buffer strips along stream bank and lakeshore regions for many years. CWC Co-Vice President, Tom Small, began talking to some of his neighbors about buffer strips and realized that talking about them needed to be changed into planting them. So with the approval of Chautauqua Institution, a small demonstration buffer garden was planted along South Lake Drive in the summer of 2009. It contains a variety of native species to allow this test plot to tell them what plants are best suited for that location. As every good gardener knows, the location's sun and wind exposure, moisture, and soil conditions are keys to a plant's happiness. This test garden will soon reveal what survivors should be planted in other buffer strips in that area.



*An attractive and functional buffer strip graces the shoreline along the Sunset Bay home of master gardener Sue Ruffin.
(Photo by Jane Conroe)*

At the same time, the leadership of the CWC was working on how to better answer the calls from people who wanted to plant buffers but needed some technical assistance to do so. Master gardeners Sue Ruffin and Lois Reid joined me in answering those calls. Through funding provided by a Chautauqua Region Community Foundation grant to CWC, Cornell University instructor Jamie Vanucchi created several landscape design templates. Guided by those plans, projects similar to Chautauqua's blossomed across the area.

The idea of buffer strips has been around for some time. We now know that water that runs over the land needs to stay on the land as long as possible. This allows it to soak in rather than run off into a nearby water body. During that soaking in period, nutrients and other contaminants can be filtered out by the soil or by plant roots. This natural purification process provides the good drinking water that comes from underground sources. It also pro-

duces better water quality in any nearby surface water body. Knowing that nutrients flowing off the land could fertilize growing, flowering buffer strips instead of green algae or blue-green algae (or cyanobacteria) in the lake, several area groups were ready to dig in to help.

Mission Meadows now has a wider un-mowed margin growing at their lakefront. The camp staff simply mowed much less of the hillside and allowed the natural vegetation to grow taller. The camp is also planning to install two rain gardens in 2011. The Chautauqua Shores Property Association has expressed interest in the possibility of planting their lakefront areas. Members of that association have investigated the costs and requirements of plantings and are hoping to move ahead with plantings this coming spring. In order to help her neighbors at the Villas at Point Chautauqua envision their buffer strip, Jane Serrienne sketched what a new, flowered waterfront would look like. Since then, they have allowed a lakefront area to grow naturally along with additional plantings higher on their hillside. Gill Dechario, representing the Lighthouse Point property owners, applied for a bed tax grant to install rocks at their erosion-threatened shoreline. They have also applied for a 2011 bed tax grant to plant that same area and are waiting to hear on its approval. The Maple Springs Citizens' Association also benefited from bed tax dollars. After a rock installation project in both 2009 and 2010, over 300 perennial flowers were planted in several areas along the lake's shoreline. The Driftwood Association has planted a section of its lakefront along with previously leaving an area un-mowed. Sunset Bay and Crosswinds are two other property associations who have either heard our buffer strip presentation or have members who have contacted us about future plans. Midway State Park managers have also contacted us about future rain garden work but have also already let some lakefront areas grow back naturally. This list does not include the countless private homeowners who, on their own, have allowed areas to grow, have enhanced their view with colorful wildflowers and have enjoyed



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, March 12th:
10:00 am

Snowshoe Hike with Evergreen Outfitters — Meet at Evergreen Outfitters (4845 Route 474 in Ashville) for a snowshoe hike of the East Side Overland Trail. The cost is \$10 per person if you have your own snowshoes or \$20 per person if you need to rent them. To reserve your place on the hike, please call EG at 763-2266.

Sunday, March 20th:
Time TBD

Chautauqua County Hiking Club's First Day of Spring Tour — Location to be determined. Contact Dick Rose at 763-6892 for more information.

Saturday, April 2nd:
8:00 am

Chautauqua Lake Outlet Greenway Birding Tour — Join retired Smithsonian Institution ornithologist John Rappole, Ph.D. for a tour of CWC's Greenway Outlet Preserve. (Specific location to be determined.)

Friday, May 6th and/or
Saturday, May 7th:
Time TBD

Garlic Mustard & Invasive Species Pull — Help CWC with "spring cleaning" of garlic mustard and other invasive species from its proposed Loomis Goose Creek Wetland Preserve and Outlet Greenway Preserve.

Saturday, May 14th:
2:00 pm

Annual Wildflower & Other Wonders Walk — Join JCC Biology Professor and CWC Director Becky Nystrom for a tour and exploration of the flora and fauna of CWC's proposed Wells Bay preserve and proposed Loomis Goose Creek Wetland Preserve. The tour will be followed by a gathering at Southern Tier Brewing Company.

Saturday, June 4th:
9:00 am — Noon

Environmental Landscaping to Protect Lake Ecology Workshop — A lakeshore landscaping and hands-on planting workshop to be held at the lakeshore pavilion at Midway Park in Maple Springs as part of the *Chautauqua in June Learning Festival*. Jamie Vanucchi of the Department of Landscape Architecture at Cornell University will lead the workshop. A \$10 donation for the workshop is suggested.



For more information or to register for an event, email info@chautauquawatershed.org or call 664-2166.



Annual Membership Listing of Conservancy Members & Donors

Due to cost and conservation considerations, the CWC will not be publishing its annual list of donors and members in the paper version of *The 'Shed Sheet*. This list will, however, be included in the electronic version of this newsletter, which can be found on CWC's website at www.chautauquawatershed.org