

THE 'SHED SHEET

SUMMER 2019



CWC Signs County Memorandum In Support Of Chautauqua Lake Consensus Strategy

In April, CWC's Board of Directors unanimously voted in favor of endorsing Chautauqua County's Memorandum of Agreement for a Chautauqua Lake Weed Management Consensus Strategy.

The MOA was put forth by Chautauqua County Executive George Borrello and was based on the Chautauqua Lake Weed Management Consensus Strategy drafted by the environmental consulting firm Ecology and Environment, Inc. The firm, which was hired by the County to lead the consensus process, drafted the strategy following research and interviews with local municipalities and lake-related organizations, including the CWC. The consensus strategy consists of 24 tenets surrounding weed and algae management in Chautauqua Lake and includes limited herbicide use, parameters for weed cutting and disposal and requirements for third-party scientific evaluation of all measures taken to control in-lake plants.

The CWC recognizes that the Memorandum of Agreement serves as a positive step in creating a comprehensive plan of action for the lake. CWC also commends the agreement as a way to bring about a collaborative, science-based approach to improving the health of the lake and to ensure that any herbicide treatments carried out within the lake are performed in a targeted manner that reduces the adverse impacts of herbicides on the lake's ecology. *(continued on page 3)*



CWC Board President Linda Barber (right) signs the Memorandum of Agreement for the Chautauqua Lake Weed Management Consensus Strategy while meeting with County Executive George Borrello. (photo courtesy of Chautauqua County Executive's Office)

CWC Partners Hold 1st Annual Lake Conference



Six Chautauqua County lake and watershed organizations collaborated to convene the first of what they hope will be an annual conference focusing on topics important to the future of Chautauqua Lake. The inaugural "Working Together for A Healthy Chautauqua Lake" was held at Chautauqua Institution on Saturday, June 15th, with about 200 people in attendance. The conference covered a variety of lake and watershed topics, including aquatic plant, fish and wildlife communities, algae as the base of the lake's food chain, the management of other lakes around New York State, land use and watershed management, Chautauqua Lake and watershed project prioritization and a timeline for aquatic "weed" management.

The planning group for the conference was chaired by CWC board member Ted First and was made up of representatives from the CWC, Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua Lake Association, Chautauqua Lake and Watershed Management Alliance, Chautauqua Lake Partnership and Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History. Several CWC directors and staff participated in the planning and execution of this conference. If you were unable to attend the event in person, you can view the conference presentations at <https://chautauqualakeconference.org>.



CHAUTAUQUA WATERSHED CONSERVANCY

413 North Main Street
Jamestown, NY 14701
716-664-2166

info@chautauquawatershed.org
www.chautauquawatershed.org

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Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a mission to preserve and enhance the water quality, scenic beauty and ecological health of the lakes, streams, wetlands and watersheds of the Chautauqua region through watershed education and land conservation.

Message From The Executive Director

The topic of extinction has been in the news a lot lately. A UN Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services report indicates that 25% of all species on Earth are threatened with extinction, one million species (or 12.5% of all species) are likely to become extinct over the next few decades and 75% of the terrestrial environments of Earth have been altered by humans. This news needs to be taken seriously and must result in major changes in human economic and social systems if we are to stem this rapid decline and save our own species.



John Jablonski III

To be successful in conserving species in our region, we need to conserve the connectivity between habitats by conserving habitats at the landscape scale and at all elevations across our watersheds. In the US, there are more than 1,300 local and national land trusts working to save the habitats supporting the life and food systems of our planet. Locally, we are fortunate to have the CWC working to save the most important habitats, both aquatic and terrestrial, not only in the Chautauqua Lake watershed but across the Chautauqua region. CWC has to date conserved over 1,000 acres, providing essential habitat for ecosystems to function and species to flourish.

We can't continue to cut down our forests, drain and fill our wetlands and pollute and poison our waters, soils and insects if we are to survive. That goes for the Amazonian rainforests as well as the forests, fields, wetlands and waterways right here in Chautauqua County.

But there is hope, and there are actions you can take if you care about your future and the future health and wellbeing of your children and grandchildren and generations beyond. People choose to vacation, live and recreate in our region because it is a sanctuary for natural beauty and outdoor experiences which soothes, restores and renews both their physical and mental health. It's a nature refuge for thousands of humans!

You can "think globally and act locally" by investing in habitat conservation and pollution prevention by supporting the conservation work of the CWC. Protecting our lands and waters make good economic sense as well as ecological sense! We have major land conservation and lake tributary conservation and enhancement projects, but we need you to help us land the funding at all giving levels to make them happen. Make the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy a focus of your family, corporate or organizational investment to better our communities in the Chautauqua region. Do it for yourself, your children, grandchildren and future generations and for the birds, mammals, frogs, turtles and wildflowers that depend on these habitats!

With warmer weather finally arriving in western New York, I also encourage you to get out and reconnect with nature. Study after study shows that spending time in the great outdoors makes us happier and healthier! CWC owns nearly 1,000 acres of land throughout Chautauqua County, most of which is accessible to the public. Visit chautauquawatershed.org for a list of and directions to our many nature preserves and plan to rediscover and reconnect with the natural world today!

Member of



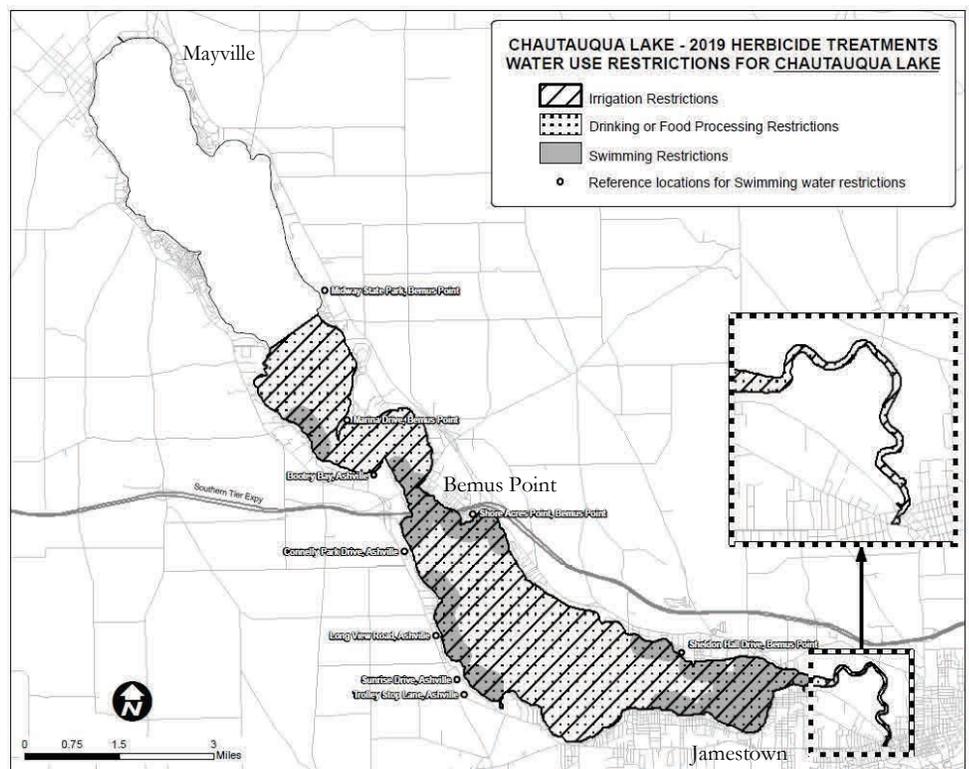
394 Acres of Chautauqua Lake Treated With Herbicides

In early May, the NYSDEC issued permits to the Towns of Ellery, North Harmony and Ellicott and the Villages of Lakewood and Celoron allowing the use of the herbicides 2,4-D (Navigate) and/or dipotassium salt of endothall (Aquathol K) on parts of Chautauqua Lake. On May 15th, 16th and 17th, a total of 394 acres of Chautauqua Lake adjacent to these municipalities was treated with the two herbicides.

CWC submitted written comments citing published research to the NYSDEC, Chautauqua County and other local municipalities during the permit application review process in efforts to benefit the public by protecting the ecology and fisheries of the Lake and its outlet, while at the same time allowing for targeted herbicide treatments in heavy use areas where milfoil is abundant as determined in the days prior to treatment.

NYSDEC permitted Aquathol K in liquid form to be applied by sub-surface injection and Navigate 2,4-D to be applied in granular form. CWC recommended that Aquathol K not be used due to its anticipated killing of beneficial pondweeds along with the one short-lived “targeted” exotic pondweed species (curly-leafed pondweed). Based on published research, the use of the proposed herbicides at the permitted high concentrations will not be selective between targeted invasive plants and beneficial native plants. CWC remains concerned that the NYSDEC permits may not adequately protect non-target species from damage and may not protect extensive fishery habitat areas in the lake or outlet from damage from gravity and wind currents moving the chemicals at damaging concentrations into down current adjacent untreated areas.

CWC and partners have advocated for effective, scientifically valid third party monitoring to objectively measure the efficacy of the treatments, non-target species impacts, chemical drift and persistence and recovery of the native plant community post treatment. The Chautauqua Lake & Watershed Management Alliance, using County 2% occupancy tax funding, has contracted with Princeton Hydro to undertake limited third party monitoring of these treatments.



A map of Chautauqua Lake outlining the areas approved for herbicide treatments in May 2019 per NYSDEC permits.

Memorandum of Agreement Continued

CWC has long collaborated with other lake-related organizations and municipalities in pursuit of its mission to improve the water quality, scenic beauty and ecological health of the Chautauqua region and looks forward to continuing these collaborative efforts to improve the quality and usability of Chautauqua Lake. As the consensus strategy moves ahead, CWC hopes to see a more formal recognition of the important role the watershed plays in the health of the lake as well as the understanding that most aquatic plants are beneficial and should not necessarily be considered “weeds.”

The two-year Memorandum of Agreement became effective May 1, 2019. CWC was joined in signing the MOA by the Chautauqua Lake Association, Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua Lake Partnership and most local lake municipalities.

Starve the Algae! Save the Lake!

The right landscaping can benefit our waterways!

The state of your yard plays a role in the health of Chautauqua County's waterways, even if you do not live on or near a waterbody. Water either soaks into your lawn like a sponge, allowing the soil to filter nutrients and other pollutants, or it rolls quickly over the land, carrying those nutrients and pollutants directly into streams, rivers, ponds and lakes. By instituting the right lawn care practices, you can have both a positive impact on your lawn and help improve the health of Chautauqua's waterways at the same time! Here's some examples:



Cut Your Lawn to 3 Inches

Cutting your lawn to the optimal height, around 3 inches, will result in a healthier lawn without the need for added fertilizers and herbicides which can run off into and pollute our waterways. When you allow your grass to grow taller, you increase its drought resistance and decrease the chances that weeds will take hold.

Don't Mow – Let it Grow

Let portions of your lawn re-naturalize. While you may not want to let all of your yard grow wild, consider allowing portions of your yard that are farther away from your home, on steep slopes or along streams or ponds to naturalize. This allows grass to develop a deeper root system and require less water and herbicides to grow.

Aerate Your Lawn

With use over time, your lawn can become compacted, which reduces its ability to absorb water. Rolling your lawn will increase this compaction. Instead, consider core-aerating your lawn as part of your lawn care routine. This will help our waterways by allowing the soil to absorb and filter water as well as help water reach the roots of grass for healthier lawn growth.



Avoid Fertilizers, Herbicides & Pesticides

When you fertilize your lawn, a portion of those nutrients ends up in our lakes, where they also fertilize aquatic plants and algae blooms. Reducing fertilizer runoff to the lake helps reduce the lake's excessive plant growth and algae blooms and, in turn, helps maintain the quality and usability of the lake. Likewise, refrain from using herbicides and pesticides along your shoreline, streambank or ditch. Herbicides, such as glyphosate (Roundup®) kill plants which protect the soil surface from erosion and whose lattice-work of roots make the soil resistant to erosion. Pesticides kill beneficial insects, such as dragonflies, which are a primary predator of mosquitoes and an important part of the food web for lake and shore fish and wildlife.

Naturalize Your Lawn

Native plants play a significant role in the health of our waterways. Native plants develop deeper root systems and feed important pollinators and local wildlife. Consider replacing portions of your grass with native wildflowers, trees or shrubs. Native plants can also provide you with beautiful blooms all summer while improving our watersheds. In low-lying or naturally moist portions of your lawn, plant native species that thrive in and absorb water to create a beautiful and functional rain garden. Buffers of native plants are especially important along streambanks and shorelines, where they can catch and filter storm water and reduce erosion with their deeper roots.

The Starve the Algae! Save the Lake! program has been funded by a grant awarded by the Chautauqua Lake & Watershed Management Alliance.

Not sure which plants are native vs. non-native? Need more ideas on how to improve your yard with lake-friendly features? No worries! CWC can help!

We have several lists of native plants and trees for the Chautauqua region, replete with their preferred environmental qualities. The lists are free and available for you to view or download at chautauquawatershed.org.

Also, our staff includes two conservationists who can provide more information, advice or a personal on-site consultation on lake- and watershed-friendly lawn care practices. Just give them a call at 716-664-2166 or send them an email at info@chautauquawatershed.org.

Preserve Improvements Abound!

Bentley Preserve Gets A New Bridge!

A new 40-foot, 660-pound aluminum foot bridge has been installed at our Bentley Nature Preserve! Freeze/thaw conditions, associated frost heaving and seasonal flooding proved too much for the old bridge, causing it to collapse earlier this year. With the help of several volunteers, which included digging four 4-foot post holes and placing 6x6-foot support beams, the new bridge was installed in less than three hours!

100 Trees & Shrubs Planted at Goose Creek Preserve & Bentley Preserve!

In February, the CWC was awarded four “Buffer in a Bag” kits from the NYSDEC! The “Buffer in a Bag” initiative (a part of DEC’s “Trees for Tribs” program) gives land-owners a free bag of bare-root trees and shrubs to enhance the streamside area of their property. Each bag of seedlings is made up of a variety of native trees and shrubs chosen specifically to improve streamside areas in New York State by helping to stabilize banks, decrease erosion, protect water quality and improve wildlife habitat.

CWC was awarded the kits/plants for two of its nature preserves – the Goose Creek Valley Greenway Preserve and the Bentley Nature Preserve. Because these properties have substantial stretches of stream, the CWC was given two bags per property, for a total of 100 free trees and shrubs! Five plants from each of five species were awarded, including red oak (*Quercus rubra*), northern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), sand cherry (*Prunus pumila*), winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) and red osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*). In May, the trees and shrubs were installed with support from Cummins Jamestown Engine Plant volunteers, and protective fencing for the new plants was provided for by the Gateways to Nature grant.

Forest Inventory & Study at Galucki Preserve & Elm Flats Preserve!

Recently, the CWC partnered with educators at the Chautauqua Lake Central School District on a novel, technology-based program. Using funds from the Gateways to Nature grant from Cummins, CWC purchased a special camera that takes 360 degree images and videos. This camera is already in use at CWC’s Galucki Wetlands Preserve and Elm Flats Preserve. Students are using the camera to inventory trees and map their exact locations into a geographic information system. These records will be used for a long-term study of the forests at these sites, and any unique or interesting tree data will be imported into the online social network iNaturalist for observation and use by others.

New Kayak Launch For Goose Creek Preserve!

Chautauqua County was recently awarded funding from New York State to develop multiple kayak launch sites throughout Chautauqua Lake and Lake Erie shorelines, and CWC was one of the partnering agencies! Our kayak launch at the Loomis Goose Creek Preserve has been battered by floodwaters and is in need of repair and/or reconstruction. With matching funds from the Gateways to Nature grant from Cummins, CWC will be the recipient of a new, easily accessible kayak launch with installation planned for 2020.



Above, 50 new trees and shrubs were planted and a new foot bridge was installed at the Bentley Nature Preserve in May. (photo by Jonathan Townsend)



Forest at Galucki Wetlands Preserve (photo by Jonathan Townsend)

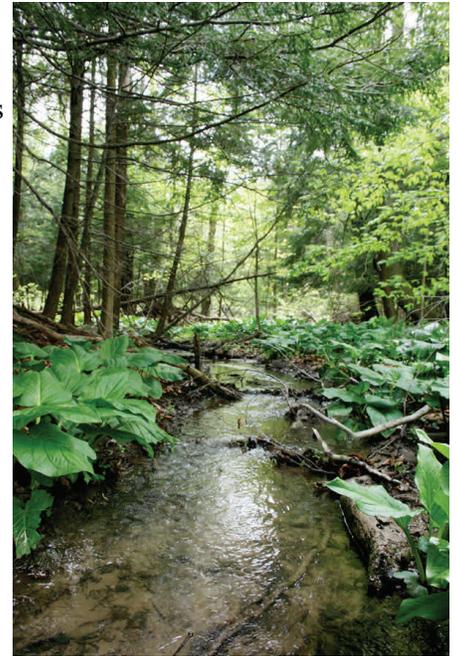
Source Water Buffer Program

In an effort to reduce agricultural runoff, protect sensitive stream corridors and wetlands and maintain or enhance water quality in Chautauqua Lake, the NYS Division of Agriculture and Markets initiated a new program – the Source Water Buffer Program – which would purchase the development rights of stream corridors from farms in the Chautauqua Lake watershed. Using conservation easements, the program would collaborate with the Chautauqua County Soil & Water Conservation District and land trusts (like CWC) to place legal protections around tributary streams and wetlands.

The easements would restrict land use and preserve or establish vegetative buffers for surface or ground waters which serve as or are tributaries to public drinking water supplies. In exchange, the landowner would get paid for the value of the restricted land, and many landowners would qualify for tax relief as well. The program also provides funding for plantings, rockwork and stewardship endowments for long-term management. This project is a win-win! Vital habitats are protected in perpetuity, and farmers and producers, many of whom are struggling financially, are given much-needed funding. Moreover, the landowner still owns the land, so they can still use it for many purposes such as hunting, maple syrup production, timber harvests and/or recreation.

To be able to partner on this program, CWC applied for funding through the Chautauqua Lake and Watershed Management Alliance to support staff salary and associated costs. CWC was awarded \$26,400 in funding, which will provide 50% support for our Conservation Lands Manager position and allow us to coordinate with NYSDAM and SWCD on this project.

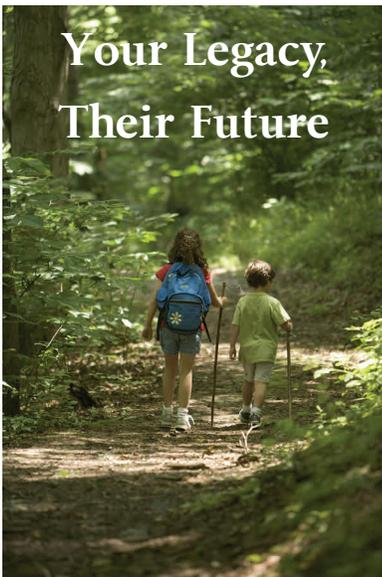
Work has already begun toward developing several conservation easement projects. To date, five landowners have been contacted, four of which have expressed interest. These four easement projects have the potential to protect thousands of feet of stream and potentially hundreds of acres of wetland in the Mud, Prendergast and Dewittville Creek watersheds.



The State Source Water Buffer Program will place easements on sensitive stream corridor lands which serve as or are tributaries to public drinking water supplies.



Chautauqua Lake has 11 major tributaries: Ball Creek, Bemus Creek, Big Inlet, Dewittville Creek, Dutch Hollow Creek, Goose Creek, Lighthouse Creek, Little Inlet, Maple Springs Creek, Mud Creek and Prendergast Creek.



**Your Legacy,
Their Future**

People who leave a legacy gift to the CWC come from all walks of life, but they share the same commitment and vision for Chautauqua's natural places. They want to make an impact as lasting and enduring as the land we love and protect!

You too can have a lasting impact and help to protect the woods, wetlands and waterways of the Chautauqua region for today, for tomorrow and for generations to come with a planned gift to the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy!

There are many planned gift options, and your financial advisor or the CWC can help you decide which one is right for you. Already included CWC in your planned giving?

Let us know – we want to thank you!

Jim Dorr Leaves \$275,000 Bequest to CWC

By John Jablonski III, CWC Executive Director

Those of us who knew Jim Dorr felt privileged to call him a friend and were very saddened by his passing in November 2017. Jim and his beloved wife Lucille (also deceased) were my neighbors at Chedwel. Affectionately known as “The Mayor of Chedwel,” Jim had a special love for the natural world and all things in it.

Jim was a wonderful artist, serving as the Buffalo Museum of Science taxidermist from 1961 to 1990. He mounted hundreds of birds and mammals and painted and crafted multiple dioramas for the display of these animals during his tenure there. Of special note to fishermen, Jim’s stories included that of him mounting the front half of the 69-pound world record muskellunge caught by Arthur Lawton in the St. Lawrence River in 1957. Jim contended that this fish’s weight was likely authentic, despite this world record coming into question by some record-keeping bodies. Jim and Lucille moved to Chedwel in 1996. Jim was an avid walleye fisherman and deer hunter. His “Top of the Hill” VFW buddies, friends and neighbors were lucky to be treated his homemade berry wines, perch fries and his delectable musky pate. He was known as one of the most successful walleye fishermen on Chautauqua Lake. A friend to everyone, he often invited ice fishermen and the game warden into his home for warmth and drink. Jim loved the fish and wildlife of our region and the habitats that enable them to flourish.



Jim Dorr

Jim was also a generous and long-time CWC supporter, and in 2018, CWC directors and staff were both grateful and humbled upon learning that Jim had left a legacy gift of \$275,000 from his estate to the CWC to help continue its mission of preserving and protecting the Chautauqua lands, waters and animals that Jim and Lucille loved so much. His generous gift will certainly benefit our work for decades to come!

CWC Receives Alliance Grants

The CWC was recently awarded the following grants from the Chautauqua Lake and Watershed Management Alliance:

- ◆ [A \\$10,000 grant for Chautauqua Lake tributary water quality monitoring](#). CWC will be collecting samples from Big Inlet, Dewittville Creek, Goose Creek and Prendergast Creek on three separate occasions, during both base flow and rainfall events. The samples will be analyzed for various parameters, including the nutrients phosphorus and nitrogen. Stream flow will also be measured during each sampling events.
- ◆ [A \\$64,000 grant for CWC’s “Starve the Algae! Save the Lake!” education and outreach program](#). The focus of this program is to educate the public on the importance of watershed-friendly land use and yard care. The overall goal is to significantly reduce nutrient and sediment loading to Chautauqua Lake from non-point sources in the watershed. The program consists of three components: 1) outreach to lakeshore and watershed landowners and technical assistance for best management practices, 2) an outreach program to new Chautauqua Lake property owners to introduce them to lake-friendly yard care and best management practices, and 3) a survey of the effectiveness of previous education and outreach efforts to identify areas for improvement and adjust future efforts.
- ◆ [A \\$26,000 grant for a Chautauqua Lake tributary conservation and enhancement project](#) – conducted jointly with the Chautauqua County Soil & Water Conservation District. This project focuses on implementation of stream or lakeshore buffer conservation and restoration and erosion control projects, including permanent ownership interests in buffer zone land primarily through conservation and maintenance easements or fee simple acquisition where necessary. Through this program, the CWC will also undertake GIS land cover inventories by major tributary watersheds to measure forestland cover and other indicators of water quality as a baseline for watershed quality monitoring.





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This newsletter contains
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When you're done reading it, *Pass It On!*

UPCOMING EVENTS

JOIN US!

- ◆ **Saturday / July 20th / 4:30 PM / CWC Annual Meeting / Featured Speaker: Rebecca Schneider, Ph.D. on the Impacts of Climate Change on Water Resources** (free, with RSVPs required)
- ◆ **Saturday / July 20th / 7:00PM / Presentation by CWC Conservation Technician Jane Conroe / "The Frame For The View: A Look At The Features Of A Natural Watershed That Improves Our Lives"** (free)
- ◆ **Saturday / September 14th / Dusk / Moonlight Paddles Across The Lakes!** (free and a joint event with the Cassadaga Lakes Association)

~ See our website & Facebook page for more event details ~

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