A misty morning scene at Cayuga Lake. The water is calm, reflecting the soft light of dawn. Several wooden docks and piers extend into the water, some with small structures on them. In the background, a line of trees and a distant city skyline are visible through the haze. The sky is a mix of soft pinks, oranges, and blues.

**Cayuga Lake is not forever.  
We need to protect it better.**

**September 26, 2016**  
**Sustainability Perspectives**  
**Wells College, Aurora NY**

**Hilary Lambert**  
***Cayuga Lake Watershed Network***



## **Mission Statement**

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network identifies key threats to Cayuga Lake and its watershed, and it advocates for solutions that support a healthy environment and vibrant communities.

**It takes a Network to protect a watershed.**

**What is a Network?**

**What is a watershed?**

**Network: everyone who cares about and wants to protect the lake and creeks and water quality.**

Who is “everyone”?

Well, you of course.

And community groups – church groups, Scouts, schools, environmental groups.

And government agencies and government itself.

And businesses.

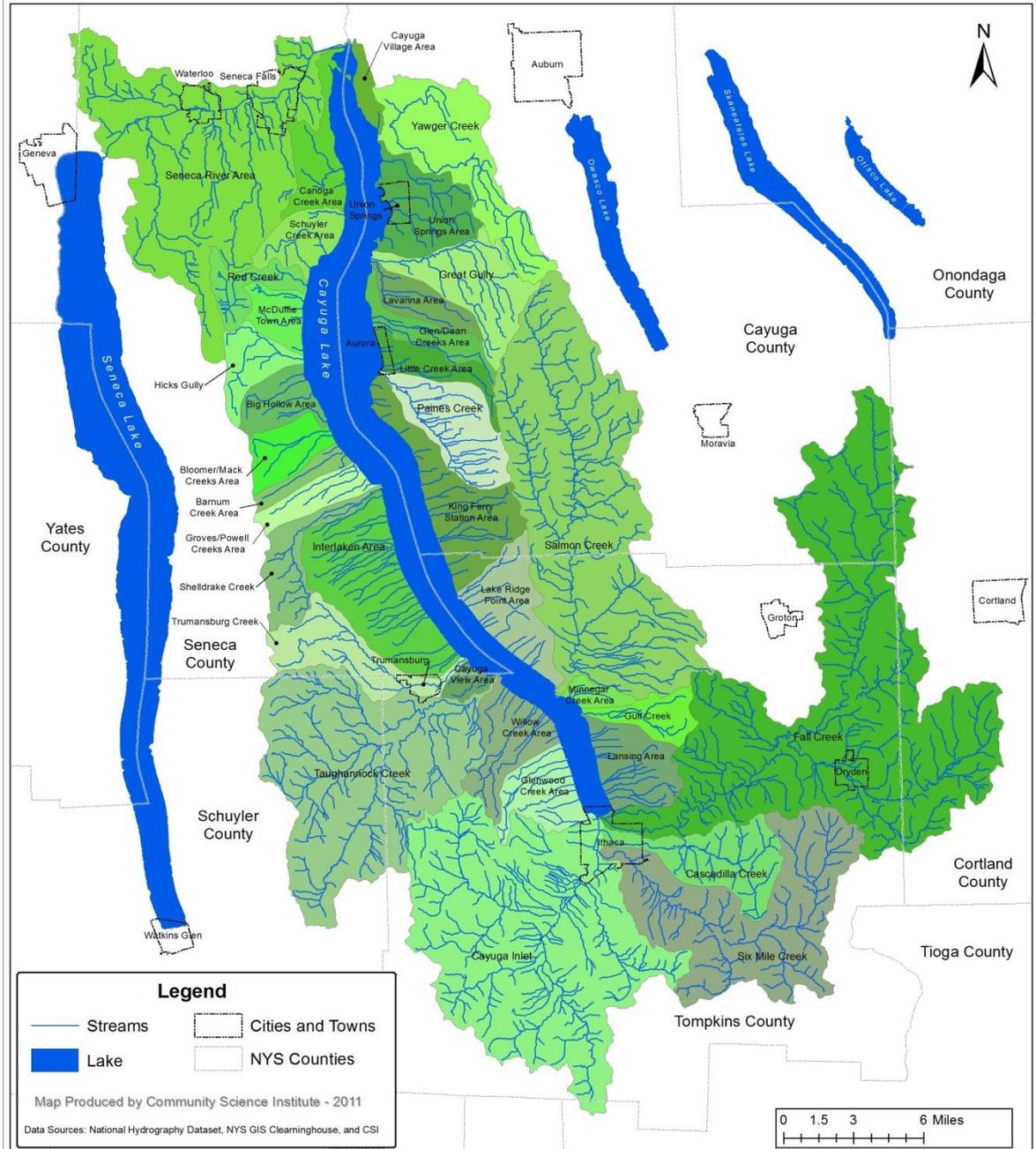
And farms.

And people who live along the lake.

**The Cayuga Lake Watershed is....  
.....all the land that drains to the lake.  
PLUS the streams, creeks and lake.**

**870 square miles  
of land, creeks  
and lake.**

## Cayuga Lake Watershed - Major Subwatersheds







# The Oswego River/Finger Lakes drainage basin.....

(Karl Musser, USGS)



**The big picture:  
The Finger Lakes  
& Lake Ontario**



**It's a challenge to  
unify a watershed  
that includes:**

- Three counties on the lakeshore - six total.
  - 45 municipalities.
- Numerous regional, state and federal agencies.



## **Lake and creek waters are used for:**

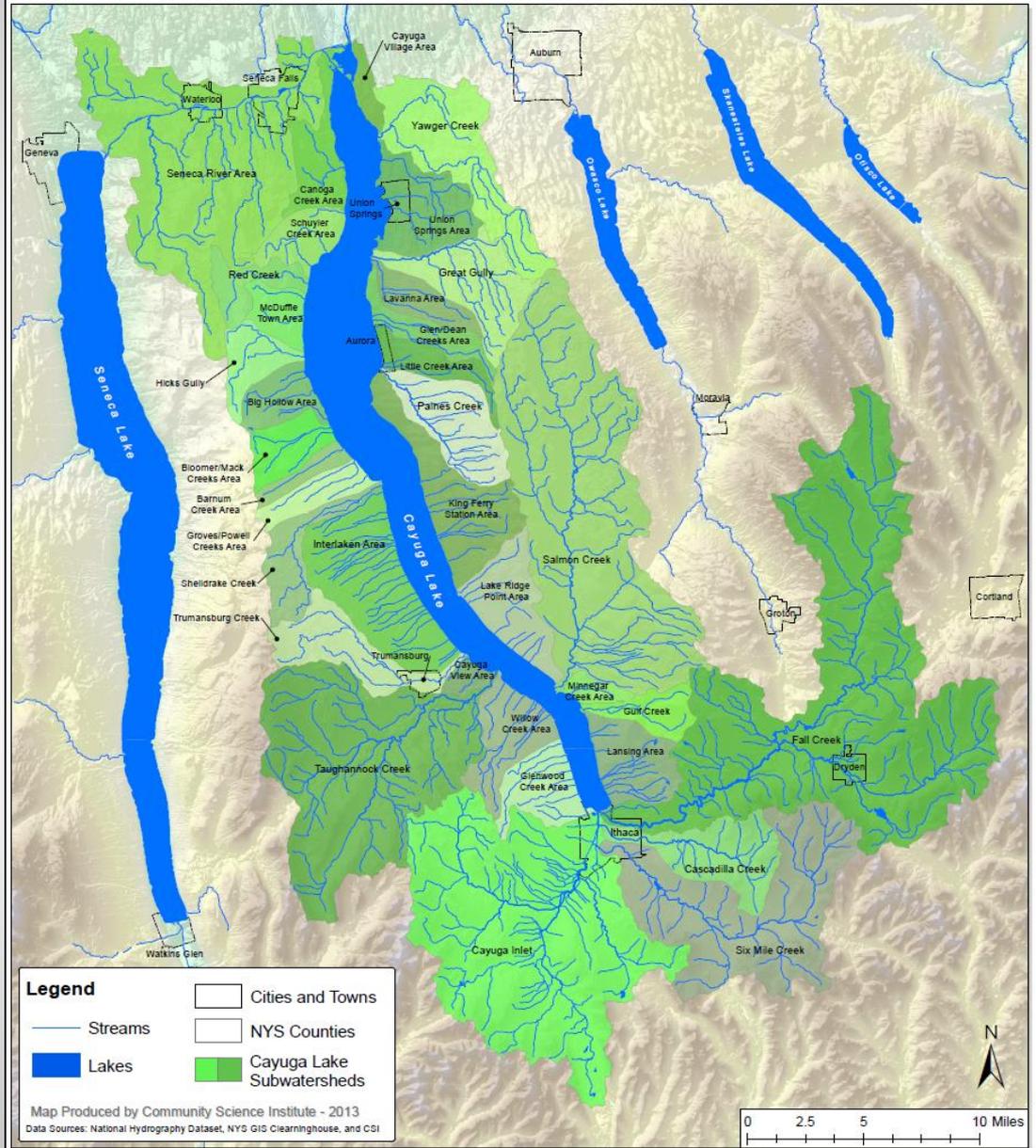
- Drinking water
- Farming, wine-making, cheeses, beers, liquors
  - Recreation
- Industrial and waste-water treatment
  - Home and business uses
- Natural habitat for critters and plants
  - More!

***We all share and benefit from  
the lake and creeks.***

***We all need to share the responsibility of  
protecting this common resource.***

What are the main problems facing Cayuga Lake and its creeks?

## Cayuga Lake Watershed - Major Subwatersheds



## **Top threats 2016**

Based on 302 respondents to an online survey, which included Professor O'Leary's class last winter

***In your opinion, which are the pollutants that most affect Cayuga Lake? Please select up to four. (302 respondents)***

- 1 - Fertilizers, including phosphorus and nitrogen. *77% of all respondents.***
- 2 - Invasive species - pests, weeds, exotic species, such as hydrilla, zebra mussels. *71% of all respondents.***
- 3 - Pesticides, used in farms, homes and gardens, and on roadsides. *64%.***
- 4 - Sediment, including soil, sand and gravel. *44%.***
- 5 - Salts, such as the de-icer and brine used on roads in the winter; and from other sources. *39%.***

**6 - Pharmaceuticals and personal care products, such as drugs, caffeine, microbeads. 27%.**

**7 - Heavy metals, such as zinc and copper; metals from road runoff, coal storage and combustion waste, other sources. 27%.**

**8 - Organic compounds, such as petroleum products; from pavement runoff, other sources. 26%.**

**9 - Pathogens – disease-carrying microorganisms, such as coliform bacteria, fungi and viruses. 16%.**

**10 – Warm water. 9%.**

**What can be done to solve these  
problems?**

**TOP #1 ANSWER:  
WORK TOGETHER.  
ACROSS THOSE county and  
town boundaries.**

***Please choose the top five actions that could most effectively protect or restore the watershed. (302 respondents)***

**1 - Improving farming practices to reduce runoff and erosion. 75% of all 302 respondents.**

**2 - Improving protection of wetlands and riparian corridors/buffers (land along the lake, creeks and streams). 65%.**

**3 - Improving stormwater management and erosion control. 62%.**

**4 - Improving control of invasive species. 51%.**

**5 - Fostering stewardship through education and citizen engagement. 44%.**

**6 - Improving communications, collaboration and partnerships across municipal and agency boundaries. 42%.**

**7 - Improving private wastewater systems (septic systems). 39%.**

**8 - Improving public wastewater systems management. 38%.**

**9 - Providing lawn care education to reduce erosion and lawn chemicals runoff. 27%.**

**10 - Improving forestry management. 10%.**

Crossing all the boundaries is the  
**Cayuga Lake Watershed  
Restoration & Protection Plan.**

Being updated right now.

# 2016 Update

## Cayuga Lake Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Preface

Introduction

Approach

The Watershed

Statement of Watershed Restoration Plan Vision & Goals

Statement of Intermunicipal Organization Purpose and Charge

Priority Recommendations for Action

Public Priority Recommendations for Action

Expert Priority Recommendations for Action

Municipal Priority Recommendations for Action

Water Quality Status, Water Quality Issues, Geographic Areas of Concern

Water Quality Status

Water Quality Issues

Geographic Areas of Concern

# **Action Categories for Watershed Protection**

with Strategies, Recommendations, and Management Options.

Public participation

Watershed coordination, collaboration and partnerships

Public watershed and water quality education

Agricultural practices and prospects

Stormwater management and erosion control

Wastewater systems management

Hazardous waste management

Monitoring and assessment

Wetland and riparian corridor management

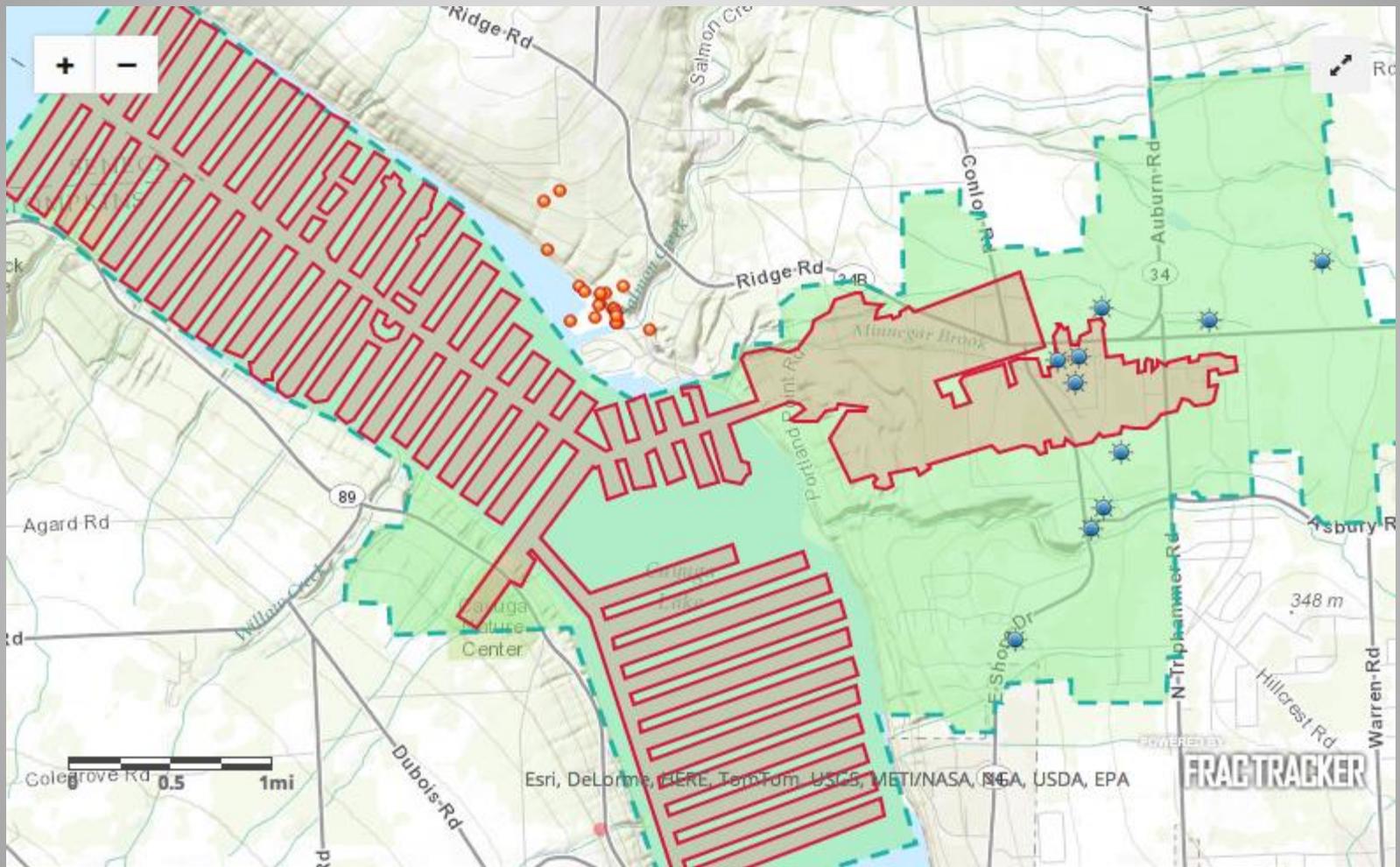
Forestry and silviculture management

Regulatory management

Appendices













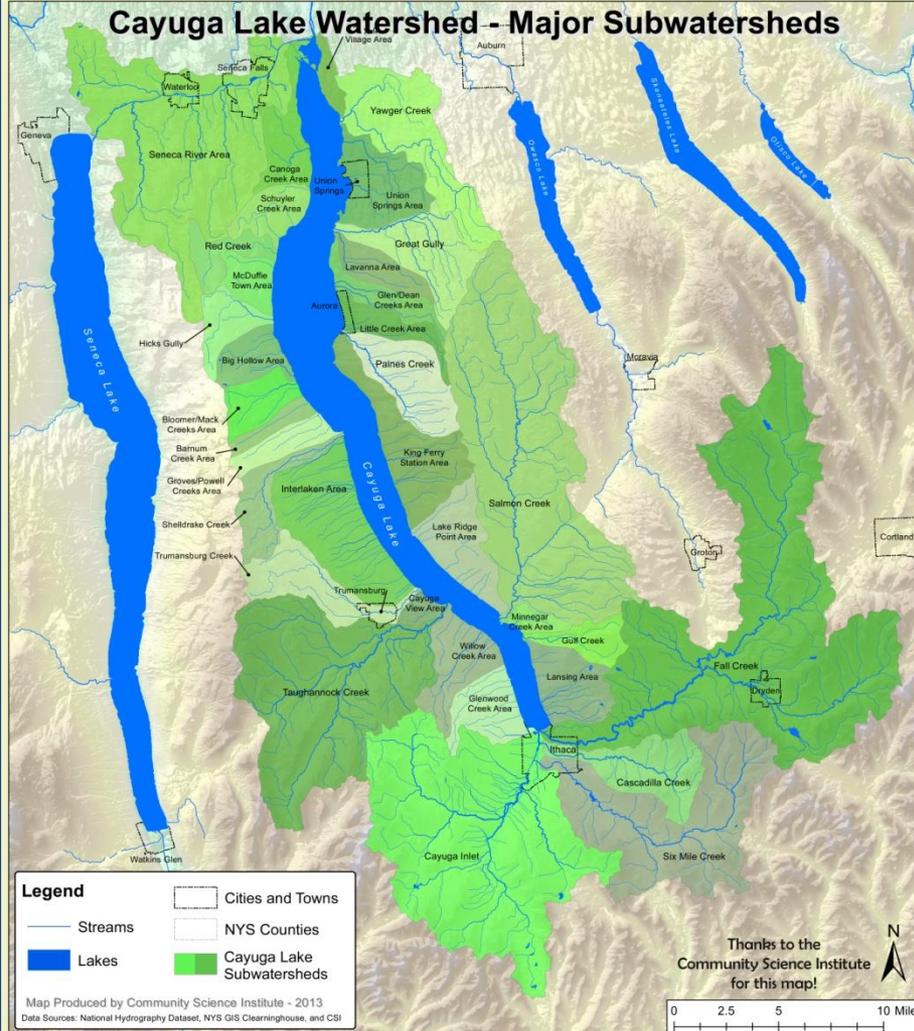


# Embrace the Lake

Creek and Waterfront Cleanups around Cayuga Lake

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_



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