



Lake Erie Watershed Protection Alliance

Cattaraugus, Chautauqua and Erie Counties

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LEWPA Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 1:00 pm

Webex

Voting Board Members present: Cattaraugus: Kelly Friel; Chautauqua: Cassandra Pinkoski (Secretary), Dave McCoy, Rebecca Wurster; Erie: Mark Gaston (Treasurer), Bonnie Lawrence, and Bill Smith.

Others in attendance: Joanna Panasiewicz (Coordinator), Carol Markham, Jeanne Beiter, Jim Lehen, Ryan Elliott, Aimee Clinkhammer, Tony Prestigiacomo, Joann Tomasulo, Karen Howard, Lisa Vanstrom from Senator Borrello's Office.

1. **Call to order** by Chair at 1:02 PM.
2. **Welcome and introductions** – Evans Supervisor, Mary Hosler, has taken a new position and her alternate is taking over as Erie County local representative. New Supervisor of Finger Lake Hub is Tony Prestigiacomo.
3. **Approval of the November 15, 2022 meeting minutes.** A motion to approve the minutes as sent via email was made by R. Wurster, was seconded by M. Gaston, and was carried.
4. **Financial report by Treasurer.** M. Gaston reported that the account had \$54,175.60 at the last meeting. Received \$187,500 advance for year 2.2 and gave out 75% advances to the counties totaling \$158,962.50. Interest earned was \$7.62, \$7.75, and \$7.02. Also paid for J. Panasiewicz to attend the Great Lakes Public Forum and IJC public forum in Niagara Falls, ON for \$73.21. This brings account balance to \$82,662.28 which includes \$50,000 from Erie County for the LEWPA Coordinator. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as read was made by B. Smith, was seconded by R. Wurster, and was carried.
5. **Outreach:**
 - a. 2022 Newsletter is under development to be sent to elected officials. Maps are created and can be sent out to the group with the minutes. A suggestion was made to edit the Congressional district map to show federal funding projects.
 - b. Cattaraugus Farmer Neighbor Dinner. J. Panasiewicz requested \$100 from outreach account for a half table at the April 12th event. Table cloths were ordered and shipped for a total of \$277.39. A motion to approve \$100 was made by M. Gaston, was seconded by B. Lawrence, and was carried.
 - c. 2023 Dunkirk press event discussion – discussion indicated this might need to be moved to 2024. FLOWPA planned a driving tour, but has been canceled twice so might be virtual now. LEWPA could follow what FLOWPA does this summer. DEC folks as audience and counties would invite folks as well.

6. NYSEPF funding:

- a. Year 2.1 – Erie County has 2 of 6 projects still underway. WNY Land Conservancy invasive species project should be completed in July and SWCD working on erosion at Mossy Point nearby.
Chautauqua County – Engineer may not complete projects so some projects need to be switched. There will be a work plan edit sent to DEC shortly. Invasive species removal at Chautauqua Creek at new preserve should be completed before July. Stabilization at bluff at Wright Park Beach with plantings and other projects on track for July completion.
Cattaraugus County – completed all projects.
- b. Year 2.2 – Erie County has 3 of 7 projects still underway to BN Waterkeeper, Nature Sanctuary of WNY, and WNY Land conservancy who all have contracts and advance funding in place.
Chautauqua County - will couple Cedar Beach project, with 2.1 engineering studies and will submit a work plan edit request to DEC shortly. Will fund additional help with invasive species removal on Chautauqua Creek during year 2.2 for Dunkirk and Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy properties.
Cattaraugus County – projects are complete.
- c. Year 2.3 – vote on projects for work plans to DEC
Chautauqua County – boat stewards, hydroseeding, Canadaway creek culvert project, Hanford and Sunset Bay shoreline analysis with properties on coast and ice and surf into homes and neighborhood and beach erosion and Barcelona harbor resiliency study due to high lake levels and gravel filling in safe harbor channel. Will look at where sediment is from and how its moving to design a partially nature-based project to avoid regular dredging.

Discussion included: Some DEC local engineers are participating in coastal work may be coordinating regionally on sediment issues in harbors. Looking to create a sediment movement analysis. Evans also looking at sediment movement model and will look at alternatives at Sturgeon Point and can share information and scope of work.

Cattaraugus County has three projects. One is in Otto - Forty Road stabilization, Thatcher Brook and Grannis Creek have six areas for streambank stabilization. Point Peter Reservoir to seed unstable areas to reduce erosion and sediment on drinking water source.

Erie County would continue hydroseeding and riparian buffer planting. Outside projects include BN Waterkeeper Euglena algae gap analysis in Ellicott Creek, Daemen College salt research as part of Water Resource Institute statewide project, Town of Wales road stabilization, and County Parks Dresser Creek stabilization and buffer near the sugar mill.

A motion to approve the projects for inclusion in county work plans to DEC was made by M. Gaston, was seconded by C. Pinkoski and was carried.

7. USEPA project updates:

- a. Lake Erie Beach and Point Gratiot close-out – M. Gaston reported that the close-out is almost complete. His advice is to organize before and after pictures and take at the same vantage point if possible. DEC can assist with photos and tracking possibly.

- b. Dunkirk project – C. Pinkoski reported that one project at Wright Park well underway (culvert replaced and creating a floodplain bench) and Main Street Beach project to start this spring. LEWPA Coordinator audited all payments to them.
- c. Muddy Creek project – B. Smith reported that Muddy Creek Project for 1500 feet streambank stabilization and green infrastructure (3 rain gardens) work plan is being reviewed by USEPA. Mark will assist Evans with project admin tips.
- d. Other potential projects – EPA Project Officer Chris Dere is saying that LEWPA may continue to get funding through this program and is interested in a Cattaraugus Creek project with Arcade, county highway areas, and Otto project. Can create a phased approach to stabilization and buffers and habitat along the creek. M. Gaston will participate in IWAP stakeholder meeting to discuss projects. Projects are both upstream and downstream of the Springville dam.

Audit cost can be included in projects. Mark to look at costs for LEWPA to hire outside auditor for next meeting in case LEWPA received enough funding to require the more extensive outside audits.

- 8. **NYS Ag. & Markets funding** – M. Gaston reported that a work plan has been submitted. \$300,000 (\$100k to each county for watershed agriculture work). Lauren P. is project manager and contract may come after state black-out period.

- a. Cattaraugus Creek watershed funding is for \$200,000 for best management practices such as, cover crops, nutrient management planning, no till drill, etc.

- 9. **NYSP2I Septic Grant** – J. Panasiewicz reported that we are researching venue options for Chautauqua County and Northern Erie County workshops this April most likely.

10. Watershed Management Plan Update:

- a. SVAP Data Summaries – J. Panasiewicz reported that the 2021 field data has been summarized and Big Sister Creek and Murder Creek reports from 2022 sampling season have been completed. The Ellicott Creek Sub-watershed will be completed by the next GIS intern. Interviews for next GIS intern are underway now. May have some potential field intern folks for Mark.
- b. Stream Assessments – M. Gaston reported that 2 field workers are coming back. 5 resumes to interview. R. Elliott to share the field work opportunity when he speaks to folks in Fredonia.

11. Upcoming large-scale projects:

- a. Hemlock Woolly Adelgid – J. Panasiewicz reported that WNY Land Conservancy submitted project proposals to two different grants for wide-scale HWA tracking and treatment projects. Waiting to hear back on approval or not.

12. County Representative update reports:

- a. Cattaraugus County – K. Friel reported that still doesn't have a District Manager. Tree sale and Envirothon underway. Working on grant close-outs.
- b. Chautauqua County – C. Pinkoski reported focusing on shoreline. A Cornell University class will come up with potential projects along shoreline. Proof Projects (Healthy Port Futures) will be looking at shoreline projects as well. NOAA funding needed for engineering projects. R. Wurster

c. Erie County – M. Gaston reported that Envirothon and tree and shrub program are underway. Grants are being closed out and waiting for contracts for new grants.

14. Announcements and Open Discussion:

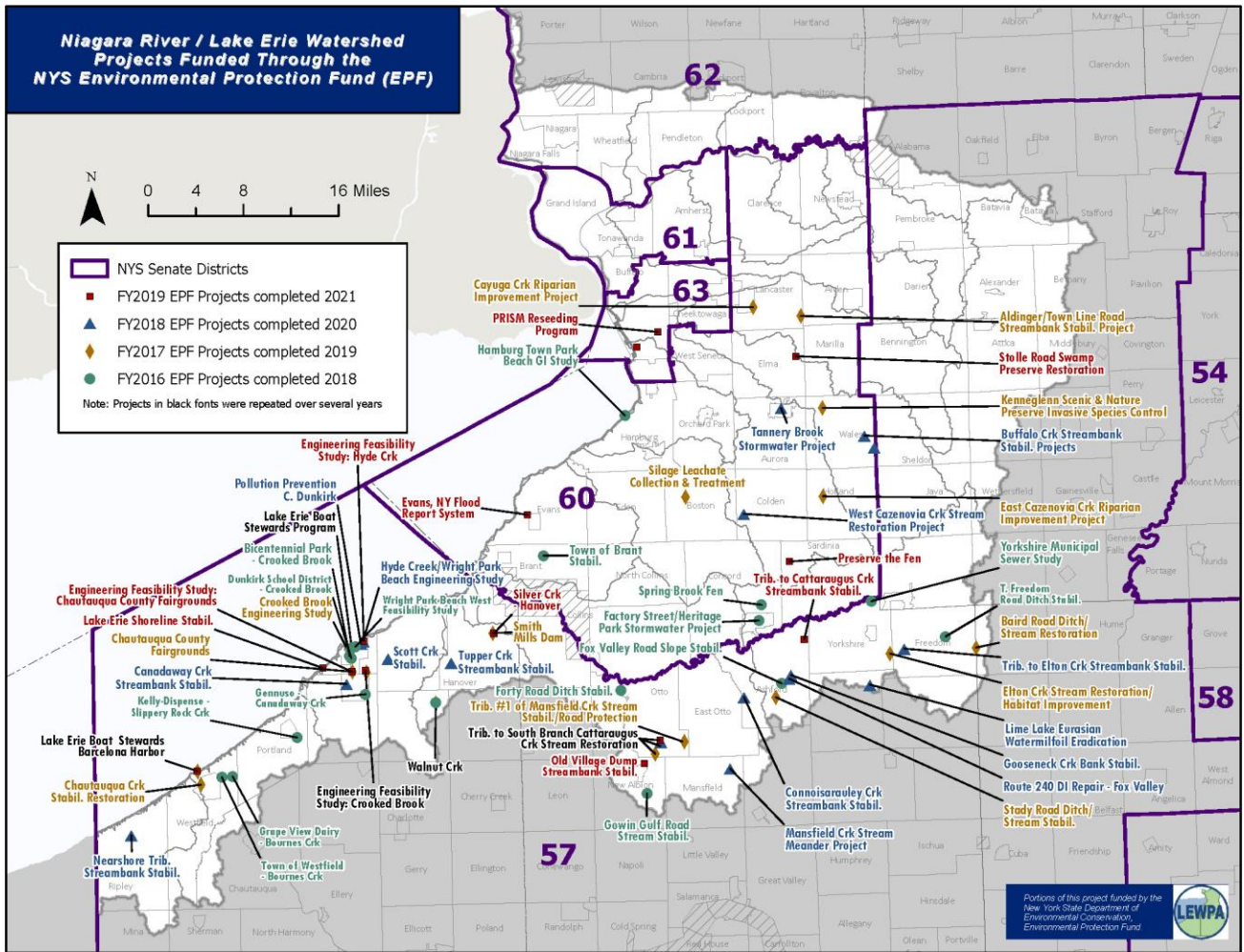
- 15. Adjourn** – A motion to adjourn was made at 2:53 PM by M. Gaston, was seconded by B. Lawrence, and was carried.

Minutes recorded by J. Panasiewicz and submitted by Secretary K. Friel.

Niagara River / Lake Erie Watershed Projects Funded Through the NYS Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)



- NYS Senate Districts
 - FY2019 EPF Projects completed 2021
 - ▲ FY2018 EPF Projects completed 2020
 - ◆ FY2017 EPF Projects completed 2019
 - FY2016 EPF Projects completed 2018
- Note: Projects in black fonts were repeated over several years



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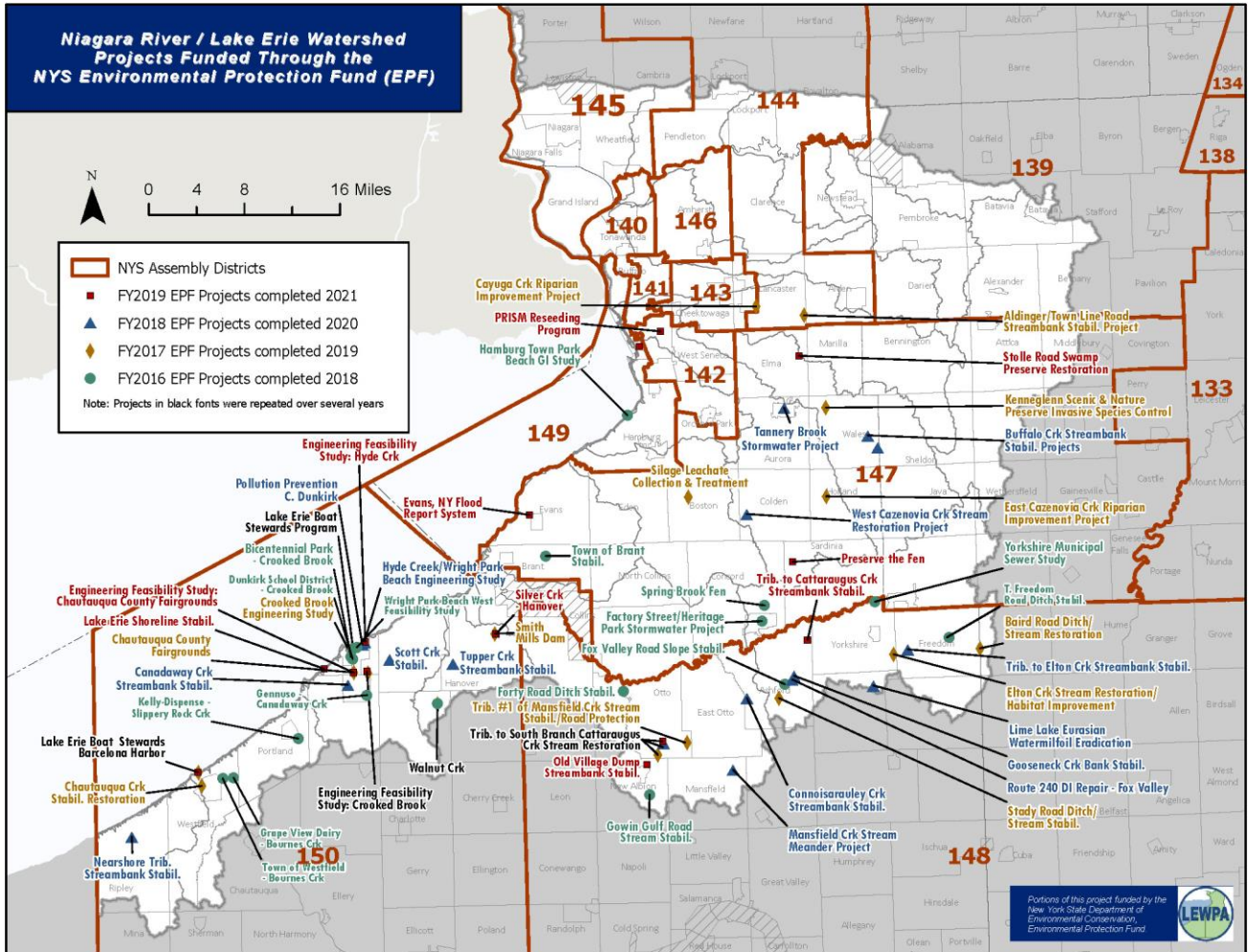
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