

Wappinger Creek Nine-Element Watershed Management Plan

Watershed Overview

- Drains 134,871 acres in 11 towns and 2 villages
- Includes Wappinger Lake – a 303(d) Impaired Water body
- 25 wastewater treatment facilities and thousands of septic systems discharge into Wappinger Creek
- Environmental degradation/threats:
 - High fecal coliform bacteria counts
 - Sedimentation
 - Excessive weed growth
 - Algae blooms
 - Nitrates and phosphorus loading
 - Lost recreational capability and revenue

Project Overview

- \$287,500 LWRP grant from NYS Department of State awarded to Village of Wappingers Falls in 2015
- Sub-contractors:
 - Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County
 - K.C. Engineering & Land Surveying, P.C.
- Two components:
 - Nine Element Plan - Recommendations will be issued based on a completed Watershed Characterization Report and comprehensive public input
 - Implementation of Pilot Project - Following recommendations, \$100,000 will be used to implement a replicable water quality improvement project
- Watershed Characterization
 - Local GIS and water quality data
 - Local and regional planning documents
 - Streambank assessments
 - Water quality sampling and continued monitoring

Outreach Overview

The main outreach and education goal of this project will be to engage key stakeholders and the residents of the Wappinger Creek Watershed throughout the planning process. A decision-making process that is based on the perception and values of local citizens and stakeholders will produce policies and solutions that will not only improve overall water quality within the watershed but will be championed and supported by the public. This will involve building partnerships among relevant agencies, non-profits, municipal and public partners that can help identify and provide input on problems, solutions and appropriate evaluation throughout the watershed.

Components include: Project Steering Committee, 3 public hearings (outreach meetings), watershed group (Wappinger Creek Watershed Intermunicipal Council [WIC]) involvement, municipal presentations, public outreach, social and traditional media, etc.

Watershed Vision & Goals

Vision Statement:

The Wappinger Creek Watershed is a functioning, dynamic and healthy ecosystem providing natural, economic, recreational, and community benefits to current and future generations, while equally preserving the residential, commercial, and agricultural character of the watershed.

Goals:

1. Protecting human health by reducing sediment, nutrients, and fecal wastes migrating along the creek;
2. Improving aquatic habitat for fish and wildlife and maintaining beneficial ecosystem services and function;
3. Preserving the supply of drinking water from wells located in the creek's aquifer;
4. Addressing flooding concerns and regaining flood storage within Wappinger Lake;
5. Enhancing community character, including local businesses and agriculture;
6. Enhancing the creek for ecotourism and recreation including swimming, fishing, and canoeing;
7. Increasing the aesthetics of the stream for users in the adjacent parks and walking paths;
8. Sustaining the creek and Wappinger Lake as a source of hydropower;
9. Advancing efforts to resolve shared issues through creative intermunicipal partnerships;
10. Providing educational, science-based recommendations for responsible stewardship of the creek and watershed

Contact information:

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