

**Town of Ulysses
Stormwater Committee
Summary of
Activities and Accomplishments**

Spring 2004 - 2007

Members: Dick Coogan,
Liz Thomas, Rebecca
Schneider, John Werdis



Mandate: To identify appropriate mechanisms to reduce stormwater runoff discharging from the Town of Ulysses into Cayuga Lake, with special attention to the MS4 area designated by EPA Phase II Stormwater Regulations.

Accomplishments:

- (1) Streamside buffer ordinance (attached)
 - Requires 50 ft vegetated buffer adjacent to all permanent streams and 25 ft setback on ephemeral creeks
 - Used successfully on two development applications.
- (2) Stormwater ordinance (copy attached)
 - modeled after NYS DEC template
- (3) Passed a fees and fines schedule for violations – stop work, 100\$ per day

Unfinished business:

- (1) Town and county roadside ditch management
 - Roadside ditches intercept and shunt runoff directly to streams. When scraped, they are a significant source of sediment and contaminants.
 - Talked with J. Meeker and also Soil and Water District staff – more needs to be done.



Town of Ulysses, Perry City Road 2007

- (2) Steep slopes protection
Many development projects fall outside the permitting process (1 acre, single house) which is the Town's only existing mechanism to intervene and control construction-related runoff. Additionally, vegetation clearing which leads to

erosion is relatively uncontrolled, with no way of monitoring or enforcing. Particularly critical in areas of steep slopes, tentatively defined as 8% grade or steeper.

Possible Recommendations:

- Develop an overlay or conservation district that encompasses the steep slope portions of the Town.
- Consider just the major, western shore region of Cayuga Lake (east of Dubois Rd) and/or include the stream border areas upslope (Willow Creek, Glenwood Creek, Taughannock Creek).
- Possible elements to include in this district to prevent runoff:
 - Lower housing density (one per 7 acres)
 - Minimum building footprint size
 - Maximum allowable land clearing (35% of total property)
 - More stringent stormwater runoff prevention requirements
 - Other?

Streamside Buffer Ordinance (excerpted from Town Zoning Law- amended July 2007)

17.6.2 Stream Protection Setback

Healthy stream sides that are vegetated with native woody trees and shrub plants provide flood reduction, erosion control, groundwater filtration, surface water quality improvement, and wildlife habitat. Therefore commercial parcels and properties and all properties in environmental overlay districts that are being considered for new development or building upgrades and that encompass or adjoin a stream or creek are required to maintain and protect the existing vegetated streamside habitat (i.e. setbacks) during and after construction, or restore the vegetation through plantings in those habitats where such vegetation has been removed. U.S. Geological Survey 1:24,000 topographical maps will be used to classify impermanent and permanent streams. Impermanent, also known as seasonal, streams require a minimum of twenty-five (25) feet of setback on each side of the stream, extending from the stream bank toward the uplands. Permanent streams are required to have a minimum fifty (50) feet of buffer on each side of the stream, extending from the stream bank toward the upland.

Vegetation in stream protection setbacks will consist of native tree and shrub species, tolerant of the conditions of flooding and soil saturation which are typical of such habitats, and generally designated as Obligative Wetland, Facultative, Facultative Wetland, or Facultative Upland Species in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's 1996 National List of Vascular Plant Species that Occur in Wetlands (www.nwi.fws.gov/bha/list96.html). This design includes approximately twenty (20) feet of undisturbed mature forest directly adjacent to the bank, a middle zone fifteen (15) feet wide of actively growing forest with periodic thinning, and a third zone approximately fifteen (15) feet wide planted in warm-season grasses. Larger setbacks with wider zones are encouraged to provide greater stream protection.