**Preliminary Information to Support Proposed Project Ideas for Addressing Water Quality and Habitat Protection and Restoration in the Cayuga Lake Watershed**

**PROPOSED PROJECT: Development of a Ulysses Drainage Local Law**

**Proposed Project Category**: **can address more than one issue**

1. Stormwater management and erosion control

2. Forestry and silviculture management

3. Wetland and riparian corridor management

4. Regulatory management

**Does project relate to/advance any existing local, regional, watershed, or statewide plans?** *(i.e. municipal comprehensive plan, watershed plan, regional sustainability plan, NYS comprehensive invasive species management plan, etc.) Identify plan if known.*

* NYS DEC Harmful Algal Bloom Action Plan for Cayuga Lake <https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/cayugahabplan.pdf>
* Cayuga Lake Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan 2017 <http://www.cayugawatershed.org/documents/clwrpp_2017.pdf>
* Tompkins County Water Quality Strategy 2019-2021 <https://tompkinscountyny.gov/files2/planning/water-resources/WQS%202019-2021%20Final%20_11-20-18.pdf>
* Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan <https://tompkinscountyny.gov/planning/comprehensive-plan>
* Town of Ulysses Comprehensive Plan <https://www.ulysses.ny.us/documents/documents-cp/>
* Tompkins County Conservation Strategy <https://tompkinscountyny.gov/files2/planning/Natural_Agriculture/Final%20DRAFT%20Conservation%20Strategy%2008-28-12.pdf>
* Cleaner Greener Southern Tier Sustainability Plan <https://tompkinscountyny.gov/files2/planning/Sustainability/FINAL%20CGST%20Regional%20Sustainability%20Plan%205-22-13.pdf>
* New York State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program: Cayuga Lake Waterfront Plan. <https://tompkinscountyny.gov/files2/planning/water-resources/LWRP%202004%20with%20maps.pdf>.

**Proposed Project Location**: *Please be as specific as possible.*

The boundaries of the Town of Ulysses outside the Village of Trumansburg

**Landowner** *Identify private or public property owner(s) and contacts if known*

This local law regarding drainage in the Town of Ulysses would pertain to lands within the boundaries of the Town of Ulysses but outside the Village of Trumansburg.

**Issue to be addressed**: Provide a description of the current site condition and issue(s) to be addressed by the proposed project i.e. streambank erosion, municipal stormwater runoff, riparian buffer needs, municipal ditching practices, etc.

Issues addressed by this project:

* Protection of wetlands which help reduce stormwater runoff and the associated nutrient-laden waters.
* Reduction of damage caused by flash flooding due to maintaining existing hydrology of the lands within the Town of Ulysses.
* Reduction of nutrients flowing into Cayuga Lake due to waters being managed within parcel boundaries and maintenance of existing hydrology on lands within the Town of Ulysses.

**Proposed Project or Action** Describe the proposed action and anticipated outcome

According to existing law, landowners are not allowed to increase the flow of water from their lands, and waters must not be of diminished quality, but landowners in many situations can change the topography of their land causing water to exit their parcel(s) at different locations. The Town of Ulysses has examples of landowners doing just so, impacting neighbors land. Yards become wetlands, septic systems are negatively impacted, basements with a history of being dry are suddenly wet. Changing the hydrology of the land can also increase erosion in certain areas, or switch waterways from draining from one ditching system to another without the proper capacity. Small wetlands can be altered by changes in the land use and drainage patterns around them.

Mapping of the current hydrology would likely be required.

The Town of Ulysses would propose hiring a consultant to assist in implementing a drainage law that would require hydrology on parcels to remain the same unless permitted. A permitted change (and outcome) would not allow any actions that would negatively impact water quality or negatively affect a neighboring parcel of land or a wetland. Also wetlands would be preserved even very small wetlands that can be helpful to wildlife and stormwater management.

**Is the proposed project or action based on standard practices typically employed for the issue at hand** *Yes/No. If no, what is the basis for recommending this project or action (ongoing research, successful pilot outside of watershed, etc.)*

Drainage laws have been adopted in other municipalities, but the consultant would advise the Town of Ulysses on the best regulations to protect waters and neighbors within the Town.

**Current Project Readiness** *With funding, could this project be undertaken immediately; has any preliminary site work been undertaken (studies completed, permits obtained, designs developed, etc.); does this project exist as a concept only at this time?*

This project could be undertaken at any time.

**Approximate Project Timeframe** *estimate if known*

Estimated time to complete project: 2 years.

**Approximate Cost** *estimate if known*

Costs estimates would be determined but roughly starting at $50,000 but could be quite a bit higher depending on the level of hydrology mapping required and availability of other local resources to assist with this aspect of the proposed project.

**Potential Local Match Source**

The Town’s Zoning Officer and Stormwater Officer would assist with the implementation of the local law and provide data to the consultant.

**Contact(s) for Additional Information** name, phone and e-mail of person recommending the project AND if different, the name, phone and e-mail for a project contact.

Needed