

**ALBANY COUNTY WATER QUALITY STRATEGY**

**“Protecting the Good Quality of Albany County’s Water Resources”**

Prepared by:

The Albany County Water Quality Coordinating Committee (ACWQCC)

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**WATER QUALITY STRATEGY FOR ALBANY COUNTY**

## **Introduction**

The character of Albany County is derived by a unique combination of city and suburban landscaping generally in the eastern portion of the county, with villages dispersed through the agricultural and rural area in the western area. The major visible geologic feature is the Helderberg Escarpment, which forms a boundary between the limestone of the Helderbergs and the shale bedrock of the plain glacial deposits cover the bedrock. With the exception of the Switz kill and the Fox Creek, all the larger waterways flow to the Hudson River. The average annual precipitation is 37 inches.

Both surface and subsurface water supplies are used for drinking water in the county. The waterways also serve as a recreational resource for swimmers, boaters, and anglers. There are several public lands which offer recreational opportunities including, the Hudson River, Mohawk River, Thompson's Lake State Park, Washington Park, Warner's Lake, and the County-owned Lawson Lake property.

## **Committee Organization**

In February, 1991, representatives from the Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, USDA Farm Service Agency, and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County met to facilitate the formation of a county-wide committee to coordinate water quality management. The Albany County Water Quality Coordinating Committee (ACWQCC) which formed is made up of organizations and community members who have a particular interest in water quality. The Committee functions under an ad hoc status. Listed below are current members of the committee and a list of officers.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Albany County Water Quality Coordinating Committee is: "To support a county-wide water quality strategy that recommends best management practices to be used in areas of construction, agriculture, road maintenance, forestry, recreation and **residences to ensure good water quality**"

The primary functions are to:

- A. Educate local decision-makers, well owners, and the general public about source and nonpoint source pollution.
- B. Demonstrate best management practices and other strategies to reduce nonpoint source pollution.
- C. Prioritize and assess critical watersheds annually.
- D. Keep the public and local governments informed of the quality of Albany County's water resources.
- E. Gather and disseminate information. It is not the Committee's place to endorse local projects or policies which are outside the mission of the committee.

FUNCTION	DATE	Estimate Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Project Status
<b>A. Nonpoint source education</b>				
Programs for planning and zoning boards, elected and appointed officials, land use and water use decision-makers	Periodically	\$500.00	ACWQCC	
Conduct periodic issue-based meeting with water operators and suppliers for special target groups	Annual; winter			
Continue an environmental education program to address water quality	Annual; winter	\$500.00	CCE, ACWQCC	
Educate well owners on surface and groundwater protection using media and newsletters	Initiated 1989			ongoing
Coordinate water quality expertise in Albany County	Ongoing		FSA,SWCD, CCE	
Identify projects that could be implemented for small costs to increase public awareness and participation in water quality protection	Ongoing	<\$500.00	ACWQCC	
Buy and donate ground water models for use in local school and education programs		\$7,300.00	ACWQCC (319?)	complete
Develop display materials for booth at the Altamont Fair.	JULY 2005	@ \$200.00	Mini-grant for WQCC (sec. 319)	
Continue participation in Water Week events and educational programs	Annual	\$2,000	EPF, DEC, State committee	
Hold teacher training to familiarize teachers with ground water models	Annual	\$1,000	ACWQCC	
<b>B. Demonstrate best management practices and other strategies to reduce nonpoint source pollution</b>				
Conduct demonstration of best management practices	Ongoing: every 3 years		CCE,NRCS	

for agriculture in Albany County watersheds. Encourage integrated crop management countywide				
BMPs for silviculture and residential construction	Ongoing		USDA	
Plan for seeding roadsides. Encourage plan for roadside stabilization plans and BMPs	Ongoing	<\$500.00	NRCS, County DPW	
<b>C. Prioritize and assess critical watersheds and aquifers annually</b>				
Review condition and ranking of Albany County Watersheds and aquifers annually.	Annually			
Develop a rating system for evaluating watersheds and aquifers				
Pick 2 watersheds for possible implementation projects and begin collecting data				
Evaluate progress and effectiveness of ACWQCC	Annually			
Work with neighboring WQCCs	Ongoing	\$100.00	USDA,FSA, CCE	
<b>D. Keep the public and local governments informed of the quality of Albany County's water resources</b>				
Submit annual report on our water resources to the County Legislature and Town Governments and highlight accomplishments	Annually	\$75.00		
Prepare and distribute press releases on the Committee's objectives and progress	Annually	\$100.00	ACWQQ	
Identify gaps in water quality data				
Hold issue based meetings		\$300.00	ACWQCC	

In 1996 the Committee reviewed rankings given surface water bodies in Albany County from NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's Priority Water Body List. (They are ranked low, medium, or high priority for needing a targeted effort to improve water quality).

<b>Water body</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>
Ann Lee Pond		X	
Basic Creek Reservoir	X		
Buckingham Pond	X		
Coeymans Creek		X	
Fox Creek	X		
Glass Pond	X		
Hannacrois Creek	X		
Helderberg Lake	X		
Hudson River		X	
Kromma Kill			X
Krum kill		X	
Lisha kill			X
Lower Normans kill	X		
Mohawk River	X		
Normans kill	X		
Onderdonk Lake			X
Onesquethaw Creek	X		
Patroon Creek	X		
Rensselaer Lake	X		
Switz kill	X		
Thompson's Lake	X		
Warner's Lake		X	
Watervliet Reservoir	X		

In addition, the Committee drew attention to other high priority water bodies including:

Bozen kill	Lawson Lake	Catskill Creek
Alcove Reservoir	Tivoli Lake	Vly Creek
Ten Mile Creek	Shaker Creek	Black Creek

These water bodies are presently considered to have good water quality and the focus should be placed on maintaining their present condition. The Committee has determined that a rating system should be developed to refine these initial assessments and priorities.

# **ALBANY COUNTY WATER QUALITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE BYLAWS**

## **Article I – Name**

Section 1. This organization shall be known as the Albany County Water Quality Coordinating Committee (ACWQCC)

## **Article II – Objective**

Section 1. The objective of the committee shall be “to support a county-wide water quality strategy that recommends best management practices to be used in areas of construction, agriculture, road maintenance, forestry, recreation, and residences to ensure water quality. To support decision makers (local governments) with educational resources to better protect water resources within their localities.

## **Article III – Membership**

Section 1. All interested people are invited to attend the meetings. To be a voting member, however, a person or organization must have attended at least half of the meetings scheduled and held in the previous twelve months. Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the other voting members. Organizations shall be limited to one vote.

## **Article IV – Officers**

Section 1. Officers of the committee will be Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.

## **Article V – Rules of Order**

Section 1. Robert’s Rules of Order shall be used in absence of specific article or section listed here.

## **Article VI – Expenditures**

Section 1. Decisions on expenditures shall be by the voting members. The Chairman and the Treasurer shall approve cash expenditures under \$100.00. The voting members shall approve expenditures in excess of \$100.00.

## **Article VII – Meetings**

Section 1. Meeting dates will be established at each meeting or as called by officers’ action. An annual meeting will be held at the last meeting of the calendar year.

## **Article VIII - Elections**

Section 1. Election of officers will be held at the Annual Meeting using a written ballot by voting members present.

## **Article IX - Dissolution**

In the event of the dissolution of the ACWQCC the residual assets will be turned over to the originating source none of the assets shall be distributed to the benefit of any individual or organization.