

Appendix K
Data & Information Clearinghouse

Data and Information Clearinghouse

Introduction

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Restoration & Protection Plan project, as well as many other organizations and programs throughout the watershed, have acquired and developed data and information for the purposes of characterizing, planning, and implementing in the Cayuga Lake Watershed. The data and information is in digital (computerized) and non-digital (hardcopy only) format and is presently not available or linked in one location. The data and information includes geographic information system (GIS) data used for spatial analysis and mapping purposes throughout the life of the project, monitoring data, program data, and reports.

Goal

To have a central and/or accessible location of all of the past, present, and future data and information or metadata characterizing the Cayuga Lake Watershed.

Recommendations

Have a point person and central location that collects and catalogs information and data or metadata (data about the data and link to the original data) for all information and data pertaining to the Cayuga Lake Watershed including, among other things, the data and information that has been acquired or developed as part of the RPP project. Information and data types include the following:

- Reports, publications and studies
- Spatial data (geographic information systems and remotely sensed data)
- Metadata (data describing data)
- Sampling and monitoring data
- Agricultural Data including effective Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques, and management of nutrients and wastes
- Periodicals (news releases, newspaper articles, newsletters)
- Educational materials
- Grant applications
- Bylaws
- Minutes and agendas

Tasks include inventorying, acquiring, database and cataloging, and maintaining/updating. Options include the following:

- Physical library and database (for hardcopy information, data, and metadata)
- Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization Internet Web Site
<<http://www.cayugawatershed.org>>
- Interactive CD-ROM (presently funded through the IO and the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network) (see *Web-Linked Interactive CD-ROM* section of this Appendix)

- The use of the New York State GIS Data Sharing Cooperative (for spatial digital data) (see *NYS Data Clearinghouse* section of this Appendix)
- Priority Waterbodies List (PWL) (see Appendix L)

New York State GIS Data Sharing Cooperative

The NYS GIS Data Sharing Cooperative is a group of governmental entities and not-for-profit organizations that have executed Data Sharing Agreements (see <http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/coop/locldata.htm>) for the purpose of improving access to GIS data among members. The Cooperative was established by Technology Policy 97-6 (GIS Data Sharing), which also directed all NYS agencies to join the Cooperative.

The Data Sharing Cooperative was primarily developed to encourage public agencies in New York to share in the creation, use, and maintenance of GIS data sets at the least possible cost. Two key features of the Data Sharing Cooperative are:

- Data creators (primary custodians) retain ownership of their GIS data sets, but agree to share it with other Cooperative members for free or, at most, for the cost of copying it; and
- Users of the GIS data (secondary custodians) pass updates, corrections, and revisions back to the creators of the data set, resulting in improved data quality.

NYS GIS Data Sharing Cooperative Web Site (<http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/index.html>)

Web-Linked Interactive CD-ROM

One of the most important aspects of watershed management is education and public participation. In order to provide useful educational material packaged in an understandable, useful, and motivating format and also to disseminate information and data developed and collected for the Cayuga Lake watershed, the Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization (IO) and the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network are committed to the development and production of the Cayuga Lake watershed educational program. The development of a Watershed Assessment web-linked Interactive CD-ROM is one of the main tools to accomplish these objectives.

The Watershed Assessment compact disk (CD), is a web-linked educational resource that is interactive and offers a comprehensive information-delivery capability. This capability includes on-line access to recent and real-time watershed information data, as well as on-line GIS-based maps. The main objective of this program is to help the general public, elected officials, students, and highway maintenance staff to make well-informed decisions, consistent with the watershed management plan.

The opening screen of the watershed assessment CD will begin with an introduction to the concepts of watershed-based natural resources management, watershed assessment, indicators and analyzes the impact of urbanization, agriculture, deforestation, and erosion. The case study of Cayuga Lake is presented here as an option for navigating the contents of the CD and associated web site links.

Because the contents of the CD will be compiled, the information, graphics, maps and models run in the host computer, without the need of any extra or special software.

Great effort will be placed on organizing eight workshops to present the contents of this CD and enhance the learning experience of the residents of the Cayuga Lake Watershed. The information to be accessed on-line, from the CD platform, as well as the recent and real-time monitoring data has been carefully matched to the presentation format of the CD. The web content will be mirrored at more than one server for faster access, and to minimize the potential risk of information losses or the inconvenience of a busy, or "crashed" server. The CD platform also offers a lively session even without access to the web, a faster navigation using a modem connection, than without a CD platform in the user's computer, and a very rewarding experience with cable connection to the web.

At the end of each workshop, participants will complete a brief survey designed to evaluating their knowledge of watershed management and decision making abilities. Workshop participants will receive a follow-up survey approximately six months later that will attempt to gauge changes in participant behavior as a result of their participation on the present program.

All project partners will convene to discuss the successes and areas of improvement for this educational collaboration. This discussion will also help to improve cooperation for future efforts and implementation of the Cayuga Lake Management Plan.