

Meeting Summary Town of Caroga Lakes Management Committee Meeting

10/21/25

Present:

John Glenn Town Councilman Co-Chair
Marcus Harazin, Co-Chair
Karl Ziemann Caroga Marina
John Olm, Coordinator Caroga Inspection and Decon Program
Walter Hogan, Director Caroga Invasive Weed Remove Program
Archer Newell, CLCA
Jay Pierz, Pleasant Lake
Phil Addeo, Caroga Lake
Brian Drain, West Caroga Lake Association
Jed Potocar, West Caroga Lake Association
Rick Mendetta, East Caroga Lake Association
Kate Freeman, CLCA
Anita Long, Canada Lake
William Bryan, Gloversville
Rick Fink, CLCA
Nancy Zeiser, Caroga Lake
Darlene Devendorf, Stoner Lake

-Welcome -Dr. Glenn

-Presentation on Adirondack Lakes Assessment trend data for area lakes by Archer Newell, CLCA and ALAP volunteer

Archer Newell presented trend charts for Adirondack Lake Assessment Program (ALAP) data that James Long was able to obtain from the Adirondack Watershed Institute.

Archer placed the data into a user-friendly table that can be maintained and updated online and enable users to examine and compare results from the ALAP. This is tool that can be used by the Town and Lake Associations. Users can look at different water quality factors and examine change over time in comparison to other tested lakes.

The water bodies included are:

Canada Lakes, East Caroga, West Caroga, Green Lake, Pine Lake, and Irving Pond. There is at least some ALAP data available for each of these lakes.

ALAP water quality indicators include:

Alkalinity, Apparent Color, Calcium, CDOM, Chloride, Chlorophyll-a, Conductivity, Dissolved Organic Carbon, Total Nitrogen, TN:TP ratio, pH, Total Phosphorus, Secchi Disc readings, and Sodium.

An explanation of each indicator is provided on the charts to make the data easier to understand in terms of its relationship to water quality.

Line charts depict levels and the median level for ALAP lakes as well as the 75th percentile and 25th percentile.

HERE IS THE LINK TO THE DATE CHARTS CREATED BY ARCHER:

<https://d.docs.live.net/43cbcbba9261d03c/Documents/CLCA/Caroga%20Lakes%20Management%20Plan>

The data will be used to update the Town Lakes Management Plan.

The group discussed possible reasons for the changes in water clarity and suspended carbon that occurred in 2021 and also the conductivity levels in the area lakes. (note the browning of the lakes seems to correlate to the rainy weather of 2021 which washed more organic matter into lakes and streams.) The ALAP data is similar to the CSLAP data presented to the WCLA by Alene Onion.

It was noted that the Adirondacks experienced a very rainy year in 2021, especially during the summer and fall. The region was hit by the remnants of several tropical systems, leading to above-average rainfall and extensive flooding in some areas.

From Google - Key rainy periods in 2021

- **July:** Much of the region experienced a wet, gray July, with some areas seeing record-breaking rainfall for the month. For example, the southern Adirondacks and Capital Region saw higher precipitation levels. The National Weather Service documented heavy rain and flash flooding in July that washed out roads in counties like Saratoga and Washington.
- **August:** The remnants of Tropical Storm Fred moved through the region from August 17 to 20, producing locally heavy rainfall.
- **September:** Tropical Storm Ida delivered heavy rain to the area at the beginning of the month. A slow-moving cold front later in the month, from September 22 to 24, also caused heavy rainfall.
- **October:** The heavy rainfall continued into October, with Albany recording its 10th wettest October on record.

-Review of results of aquatic invasive weed removal efforts and plans for next season- Walter Hogan

Application of ProcellaCor was largely successful and the Town utilized divers to hand remove some persistent beds of milfoil especially in the channel of the lake leading to

the outlet. The amount of milfoil removed this season was markedly less than in prior years.

Next season the Town will use new software to map out weed beds on the lake and plans deploy divers on a per diem basis to remove identified milfoil infestations by hand.

Walter Hogan is retiring as Invasive Director, but he will stay involved as a consultant.

Dr. Glenn and the group thanked Walter for his dedicated work on reducing invasives and obtaining grant resources from DEC to reduce milfoil in East and West Caroga Lake.

There are no plans to use Procella Cor next season. The Town will monitor the weeds and may use it again if the milfoil rebounds. APIPP will also help the Town monitor the weed and water quality.

The treatment did result in a layer of dead organic matter on the lake bottom which may result in rebound growth of native or invasive weeds. This is something that we will have to keep an eye on,

-Review of results of boat inspection and decontamination program and plans for next season. John Olm/Marcus Harazin

Despite the rainy weather in the early summer, the levels of boats inspected and visitors educated was very similar to last season. Caroga continues to be one of the top 3 programs in the Adirondacks in terms of watercraft inspections.

Below is a summary of the Town of Caroga's watercraft inspection results compiled from the opening date of May 23rd through October 8th:

- Town of Caroga Boat Wash Station – a total of 319 watercraft were inspected, 258 of which were also decontaminated. Zebra mussels were found and removed from one boat reported previously in Cayuga Lake. Eurasian watermilfoil was found and removed from one boat reported previously in the Hudson River.

On October 11th, a Steward reported that a burst disc (safety device) failed on the hot water pressure washer. A replacement burst disc was installed on the unit to allow normal watercraft decontamination operations to continue until the October 13th closing date.

- NYSDEC East Caroga Lake Campground launch – a total of 401 watercraft were inspected, no aquatic invasive species were detected, however non-invasive vegetation was removed from 23 watercraft.

- West Lake Fishing Access Site launch – a total of 2,424 watercraft were inspected, no aquatic invasive species were detected, however non-invasive vegetation was removed from one watercraft.
- Caroga Marina – a total of 24 watercraft were inspected; no aquatic invasive species were detected. It took a long time to get the data collection system operational due to problems with the iPad and software. This was not resolved until the middle of August. It is anticipated the marina will inspect substantially more boats next season as they will be operational on Memorial Day weekend.

John extended many thanks to our Town Stewards, Hank Younglove and Neil Kasson, for their service during the Summer season. He thanked the Adirondack Watershed Institute and CLCA Stewards for their service to the Program during the Summer season. He also thanked Marcus Harazin, the Town Highway Department, and golf course staff for their assistance throughout the season.

Brian Drain noted that the Town should make sure the stewards at West Lake have access to a communication system. John noted that plans are to obtain a satellite phone if cell service is not available again. The CLCA will work with the Town to address this concern next season with satellite phones.

-Update on E.coli and blue/green algae (Cyanobacteria) monitoring efforts in West Caroga Lake.

Jed Potocar provided an update:

Blue Green Algae-

Prompted by multiple reports from residents of both lakes, West Caroga Lake Association (WCLA) members investigated substances that were both floating and also resident upon the rocks and the bottom sediment on East & West Caroga Lakes.

Samples & photos were taken and sent to the College of Environmental Science & Forestry in Syracuse more testing and analysis. The testing resulted in a report of two types of benthic blue-green algae, also known as cyanobacteria.

One sample came back as Tolyphorix and the other one as Oscillatoria . Neither one of them tested positive for any toxins, so there doesn't appear to be any imminent danger from their presence in the lakes.

One possible future issue could be if they become too crowded and prolific they could begin to deplete the oxygen supply in the lake, potentially harming aquatic species. There is no known way to get rid of or control these invasive species, but they do draw their nutrients from the sediment on the lake bottom. Keeping a check on nutrient flow into the lake is always a good idea for prevention of massive growth spurts.

Bacterial Sampling

WCLA members collected 10 lake water samples per month, for June, July and August, to study pathogenic bacteria present in West Caroga Lake. The water was sampled for fecal matter, e- coli, and total coliform bacteria.

Lab reports indicated there was evidence of these 3 items in each of the samples taken throughout the summer. However, the June and August samples contained bacteria and fecal matter all within the acceptable levels for swimming, as set by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

The July samples were within the acceptable range for e coli and fecal matter but were above the acceptable (swimming) range for total coliform bacteria. There is a good possibility that this elevated level was due to the fact that the water was very warm, very stagnant, and a multitude of avian species swimming and flying around the lake and likely dropping excrement into the lake.

One elevated sample doesn't necessarily indicate any substantial problem, as the state of New York would like to see a logarithmic mean of multiple samples over a 30-day period, or an extremely high single sample measure of e coli or fecal matter before taking any action to close down swimming beaches.

Both the invasive algae and bacterial pathogens will be monitored over the coming years to keep track of progression.

-Road Salt Updates

John Byrnes will still offer to test conductivity of well samples for Caroga residents. With Archer's help a chart has been developed to plot conductivity levels. This information will be useful for tracking problems related to road salt infiltration into water sources. The ALAP trend charts show conductivity and sodium levels for the area lakes with East Caroga being the highest and Pine Lake being the lowest. Both East and West Caroga Lakes were at levels above the 75th percentile of the ALAP lakes tested.

The EPA recommends that drinking water conductivity should be less than 1000 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ to ensure it is safe for consumption. Some wells in the area may exceed that level. Some camps and businesses in the region are having to put new wells in or treat water because of salt infiltration.

Next season we will try to have an expert speaker come to talk about road salt reduction efforts and recommendations. We will invite area lake associations. Perhaps arrange for this in July or August when the lakes population is high.

-Discussion of new grant Invasive Species Funding request for proposals from NYS DEC.

Marcus Harazin/John Glenn

On Oct. 1 DEC released a grant request for proposals for invasive species projects. Applications are due December 17.

Here is a link to the funding announcement from DEC that contains application requirements and instructions.

<https://dec.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2025-10/rfaisgground4.pdf>

If anyone has any suggestions regarding additional projects that the Town could submit applications for please contact Marcus and Dr. Glenn.

Bidders should only apply for funding that can begin to be utilized within the contract term April 2026-March 2029.

(NOTE: The Town currently has a DEC grant for the inspection and decontamination program that runs from 3/24-3/27).

There are 4 project areas including.

1. Aquatic Invasive Species Spread Prevention or Boat Decontamination

Delivery of Boat Steward Services at public boat ramps for education/outreach and voluntary inspection of boats to comply with Part 576 standards:

<https://dec.ny.gov/regulatory/regulations/chapter-v>

And/or

Delivery of services at Boat Decontamination Stations, including the purchase of decontamination equipment, to augment existing boat programs for education/outreach and voluntary boat inspections.

2. Terrestrial and Aquatic Invasive Species Rapid Response and Control

Projects which provide for the control and management of invasive species including biocontrol.

3. Terrestrial and Aquatic Invasive Species Research

Projects which investigate and deliver upon Invasive Species Research initiatives that lead to improved understanding and outcomes in the management of invasive species.

4. Restoration and Resiliency of Sites Impacted by Invasive Species

Projects which restore native species or habitat at sites significantly impacted by invasive species.

The state is not providing funding for lake management planning grants in this Round.

Walter Hogan will explore whether or not a project could be submitted for aquatic invasive species removal. A key issue is whether they will fund ongoing AIS removal or only fund removal of newly discovered areas of AIS growth.

Marcus Harazin will look to see if an application for Inspection and Decon can be submitted even though our current grant runs through 3/27.

-Boating Safety Updates/Discussion

The WCLA has members who are boating safety instructors. The WCLA has a safety course scheduled for July 18 at the Firehouse. Registration will be available online. The course is open to other boaters in the area on a space available basis.

-Other updates and discussion.

Karl Ziemann noted that studies have shown that mercury is in fish in the Adirondack Lakes. It is thought that air pollution/acid rain was responsible.

Marcus Harazin noted that NYS still provides fish consumption advisories. (Stoner Lakes are noted in the current advisory).

https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/health_advisories/regional/adirondack.htm

-Anita Long noted it would be advantageous to have a detailed plan for the town to respond to potential invasive species problems. She noted that Lake George developed such a plan related to blue green algae. See link below. (Caution if you go to print this its 97 pgs. long.)

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1/#search/anita+long/WhctKLbmqJXQWbDbZCvfsLkWHdLgJTggGVwtSVrZzMRNVCCFGdSjMJbwWmJnhRDCtPKLDDG?projector=1&messagePartId=0.0.1>

Perhaps we could get grant funding to develop detailed plans for lakes in the Town of Caroga.

The Lake George plan is excellent and the approaches outlined could be used by other lakes that experience blue green algae blooms.

NOTE: Adirondack Research also provides a free terrestrial invasive species treatment program for landowners and municipalities across the Adirondack Park. They provide free consultations, customized treatment plans, and follow up support. The program is funded through donations.

Here is a link to the program.

<https://adkres.org/ismi/>

The Adirondack Watershed Institute also has a rapid response team to help eradicate newly discovered Early Detection / Rapid Response (EDRR) is a key component of invasive species management, as EDRR allows us to eradicate new infestations before they become established infestations in lakes before they become established.

-Set next meeting (Tentatively set for May 19 at 5:30 at the Town Hall)