

SENECA LAKE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR SENECA LAKE MUNICIPALITIES

This Memorandum of Understanding is among the five counties (Chemung, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca and Yates) and municipal governments with jurisdictions that geographically fall within the Seneca Lake Watershed in the Finger Lakes Region of New York.

I. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND:

The Seneca Lake Watershed Management Plan was funded by a Local Waterfront Revitalization Grant (LWRP) through New York State Department of State. This plan was written by three partner organizations; Finger Lakes Institute at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council and Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board. The plan is an update of the 1999 report, "Setting a Course for Seneca Lake" in which an intermunicipal organization named Seneca Lake Area Partners of Five Counties (SLAP-5) was formed. The work of the Seneca Lake Watershed Management Plan was overseen by a Project Advisory Committee and coordinated with SLAP-5.

With the culmination of the Seneca Lake Watershed Management Plan, it is in the best interest of the water quality of Seneca Lake to form an intermunicipal organization of the five counties and municipal governments (see appendix) within the Seneca Lake Watershed to implement the recommendations of the Seneca Lake Watershed Management Plan. The intermunicipal group will work with SLAP-5 as outlined within this MOU.

II. RECITALS:

1. Each of the parties of this MOU is a local government or County having jurisdiction over a portion of the watershed of Seneca Lake.
2. The geographic boundaries of the Intermunicipal Organization shall be the entire Seneca Lake Watershed.
3. The parties desire to recognize that an intermunicipal organization can best facilitate partnership across political boundaries to promote the ecological vitality of the Seneca Lake Watershed.
4. It is to the parties' mutual advantage and benefit to develop and implement cooperative restoration and protection efforts throughout the watershed, and to promote a regional alliance among local governments and county programs.
5. The parties hereto plan to continue exploring joint local, state, federal and other funding opportunities; and to obtain public support for programs that implement the mission and goals of the Seneca Lake Watershed Management Plan.
6. The parties hereto recognize the value of using common resources effectively.
7. The parties hereto desire to be proactive in addressing watershed-based issues which affect areas beyond traditional political boundaries.
8. The parties hereto wish to communicate and coordinate on local, state and federal policies and programs that affect water quality in Seneca Lake.
9. The parties agree to share information and coordinate efforts to comply with regulatory requirements.
10. The parties hereto find that promoting stewardship of the Seneca Lake Watershed resources is in the public interest and for the common benefit of all within the Seneca Lake Watershed. The parties hereto desire to educate the communities in the Seneca Lake Watershed about the importance of watershed stewardship.

III. GENERAL PROVISIONS:

1. Definitions. As used in this MOU, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings set forth below unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.
 - a. "MOU" shall mean this memorandum of understanding reconfirming SLAP-5.
 - b. "Member" or "members" shall mean the representatives from the local governments and five counties encompassed in the Seneca Lake Watershed.
 - c. "Watershed" shall mean the entire Seneca Lake Watershed. A map depicting the boundaries of the watershed is appended hereto.
2. Purpose. This MOU is to affirm each member's commitment to the mission, goals and objectives of the Seneca Lake Watershed Management Plan.
3. Establishment of the Intermunicipal Organization. There is hereby established the Seneca Lake Intermunicipal Organization. The geographic boundaries of the organization will be the Seneca Lake Watershed.
4. Vision. Watershed stakeholders, municipalities and government agencies will work together through implementation of the Seneca Lake Watershed Management Plan to maintain the common goal of clean water and sustainable watershed management for the future of the Seneca Lake Watershed. Sustainable watershed management must include local involvement in planning and the management of natural resources and be the shared responsibility of all stakeholders and watershed residents.
5. Organization Membership.
 - a. Each of the five counties and municipal governments shall appoint one member to participate in regular meetings and report actions to their local government.
 - b. One representative from each of the regional planning boards (Genesee / Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council and Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board), one representative from each county Soil and Water Conservation District and one representative each from such water quality interest groups as Finger Lakes Institute and Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association (SLPWA) may be ex officio members of the organization.
 - c. Membership: The total membership of the organization shall be constituted by the members appointed by the parties to this agreement. If a party to this agreement fails to appoint a member, then the count of total membership shall not include such member.
6. Voting Each party to this MOU shall have one member and one vote.
7. Quorum. A majority of the members of the organization shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of transacting business.
- 8: Officers:
 - a. On an annual basis, the organization shall elect by popular vote a chairperson, vice chairperson, and Treasurer, and Secretary.
 - b. The Chairperson shall call and preside over meetings.
 - c. The Vice Chairperson shall serve in the absence of the Chairperson
 - d. The Treasurer shall maintain books tracking all organization funds, if any, and make reports on organization finances at each meeting.
 - e. The Secretary shall take and distribute minutes of meetings and be responsible for the organization's correspondence.
9. Meeting Organization: All meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, most current edition.
10. Staff: The organization may employ staff as needed and as funding is available. One administration staff, member, or SLAP-5 member may be retained to write a regular newsletter, set-up and provide regular trainings and to provide regular outreach to member communities.

10. An annual plan of work, based on projects and initiatives in accordance with the Seneca Lake Watershed Management Plan, shall be approved by a quorum vote of organization members.

IV. AGREEMENT:

Intermunicipal Organization members agree to:

- a. Work together to protect the water quality of Seneca Lake, which in turn protects the quality of life for residents and the economic viability of the region.
- b. Participate in regular Intermunicipal Organization meetings.
- c. Work to implement recommendations of the Seneca Lake Watershed Management Plan's goals and objectives.
- d. Participate in and provide watershed stakeholders with meaningful training opportunities.
- e. Seek funding opportunities to meet the goals and objectives of the Seneca Lake Watershed Management Plan.
- f. Strive to update the Seneca Lake Watershed Management Plan at least every 10 years.

V. EFFECTIVE DATE:

This MOU shall become effective on the date of signature below. This MOU is ongoing unless it is terminated by a member upon written notice to the remaining membership of this Intermunicipal Organization. This MOU may be amended at any time by mutual accord.

Signed: _____

Dates _____

Witness: _____