



Preparing the next generation for appreciation and stewardship of the watershed.

## Encouraging Effective Partnerships

Our watershed covers a large area, and it makes sense that there are a number of groups working from different perspectives on different aspects of watershed preservation. As the only community-based, watershed-wide organization, the Network builds connections among these organizations, fostering relationships that increase efficiency and involvement.

The Network's association with the Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization (IO), a consortium of the municipalities in the watershed, is an example of what can be achieved when groups work together. As the IO worked to create a watershed management plan, the Network helped to keep the public informed about the process and hosted public meetings and a public comment process to collect input on what the plan should contain.

The resulting Cayuga Lake Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan helps guide the efforts of the Network and the many other groups dedicated to protecting our water resources.

## The Network at Work

Network programs and projects are designed toward a goal of preserving, enriching, and protecting the wonderful resources that are part of our watershed community. To achieve this goal, the Network staff and volunteers:

- Leads workshops on how to restore creeks, control erosion, and reduce flooding
- Facilitates meetings between residents and decision makers on land-use planning and groundwater contamination
- Encourages participation by youth through classroom activities, junior sportsmen club presentations, and an annual essay contest

To learn more about program offerings and opportunities for involvement, check the Network's website at [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org).



Events like the annual Fall Creek clean up help to protect fish, wildlife, and drinking water.



Network-trained volunteers participate in lake and stream monitoring.

With the Network's assistance, monitors collect water quality data and share information with scientists, citizens, and environmental agencies.



# The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network

## Make a Difference

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network is funded through contributions from corporate and individual sources. Membership fees, financial gifts, and grants help pay for our program offerings and publications. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Network. Your contributions will help shape the future of your community, and you will join other committed citizens who as members:

- Share an ethic of conservation
- Seek understanding of watershed issues
- Support informed action
- Safeguard our watershed for future generations

To learn more about Network membership, visit the website at [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org).



Protecting a Vital Resource

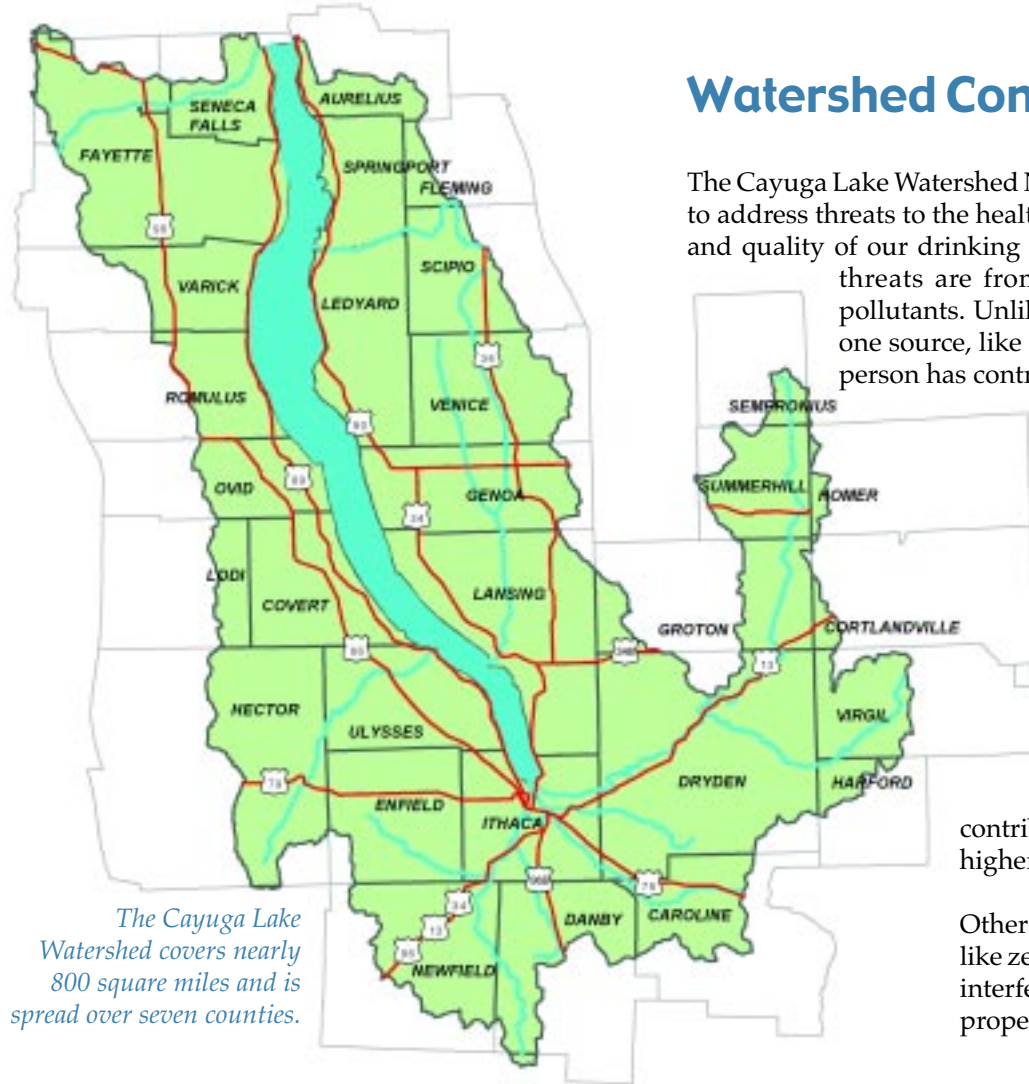
[www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org)





# What is a Watershed?

A watershed is an area of land where water from streams, springs, and wetlands flow to a common point, such as Cayuga Lake. Our watershed covers nearly 800 square miles and is spread over seven counties. While the watershed is formed by nature, it is shaped by the people who use its resources. As a natural part of this system we all have an important role to play.



*The Cayuga Lake Watershed covers nearly 800 square miles and is spread over seven counties.*

# The Cayuga Lake Watershed

Cayuga Lake is a cultural, historic and economic centerpiece for the communities that surround it. The lake and watershed provide drinking water for some 140,000 residents, a setting for recreation, and a land rich in natural resources. Agriculture and tourism are important parts of the local economy and depend on the health of this system.

## Watershed Concerns

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network is working to address threats to the health of our watershed and quality of our drinking water. The greatest threats are from nonpoint source pollutants. Unlike point source pollution (concentrated pollutants entering the water from one source, like a factory pipe), nonpoint source pollutants come from sources the common person has control over:

- Soil erosion from fields, construction sites, stream banks, and roadbanks
- Fertilizer and pesticide runoff from both rural and urban areas
- Animal wastes, including pets
- Paint, oil, antifreeze and other contaminants entering storm drains
- Failing septic systems

Nonpoint source pollution occurs when water runs over the land and through the ground, picking up pollutants and depositing them into streams and lakes or ground water. Paved surfaces, alterations to the landscape, and improper use and disposal of household chemicals contribute to the problems of high runoff volumes, soil erosion, increased sediment, higher phosphorous and heavy metal levels, and unsafe drinking water.

Other concerns facing Cayuga Lake are invasive exotic animal and plant species like zebra mussels, lamprey eels, watermilfoil, and water chestnut. Invasive species interfere with recreational activities like swimming and boating, reduce waterfront property values, and can alter the habitat of native fish and wildlife.



*The Network reaches out to area youth by providing classrooms with educational materials and offering hands-on learning opportunities like this willow planting activity.*

# The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network is a grassroots, not-for-profit organization formed in 1998 by citizens concerned for the future of Cayuga Lake and the surrounding watershed.

Community involvement is key to the success of the Network and its goal: effectively protecting the ecological health, economic vitality and overall beauty of the watershed upon which we depend.

Helping residents, municipalities, and institutions understand the role they all play in relationship to the watershed is an important part of the Network's mission. With the help of volunteers, the Network offers community members programs on topics like:

- Well water and septic system care
- Water quality monitoring
- Stream bank restoration

Participants learn how even a small change—like planting willows along a stream bank—can make a big difference to the health of the watershed.

