

Assessing Local Capacity

The Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council has worked with municipalities in the Cayuga, Canandaigua, and Conesus Lake watersheds to assess the current capacity of local ordinances and practices for water quality protection. The Council assessed existing local water quality controls in each of the 56 municipalities in these three watersheds. The assessments provided insight into the gaps between existing watershed plans and the current controls, e.g., laws, regulations, and practices that municipalities have to protect water quality.

Thirteen municipalities were then selected to incorporate elements of the watershed plans into their regulatory framework by developing new laws and revising existing laws. One result of this process was the development of the guidance manual *Protecting Water Resources Through Local Controls and Practices: A Manual for NY Communities*. The manual offers a methodology for identifying local controls and other practices to protect water quality and assess their effectiveness.

The manual walks the reader through the process of a municipal nonpoint assessment and gap analysis and provides, as samples, local laws that have been adopted in some NY communities, including an environmental protection overlay district, subdivision regulations, wetlands and watercourse protection, and onsite wastewater treatment system regulation.

More information on the Municipal Nonpoint Assessment is available through the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council (www.gflrpc.org).

