

Public Workshop #1



Project Name Coastal Lakeshore Economy and Resiliency Initiative
Date: June 30, 2021
Meeting: Cayuga-Oswego Region – Public Workshop #1
Attachments Presentation

1. Introduction of Project Team

EDR (prime consultant): Jane Rice, Sam Gordon, Erica Tauzer
EcoLogic (subcontractor to EDR): Liz Moran, Sharon Anderson, Michelle McGinnis
Cameron Engineering (subcontractor to EDR): Michael Keane, Andrew Martini, David Tepper
NYS Department of State: Karen Catcher, Nancy Martel, Chris Bauer

Steering Committee members in attendance were recognized by adding “Steering Committee Member” to their Zoom name.

2. Introduction to CLEAR

The project team introduced the CLEAR initiative, goals, process, deliverables, timeline, and responsibilities of those involved in the plan. Presentation slides are attached. Participants were given a chance to ask questions.

3. Interactive Group Activity

The project team discussed resiliency and its relationship to risk, vulnerability, and exposure. The resiliency planning themes developed by working with Steering Committee members were introduced. Participants were asked to elaborate and contribute to this list using a Google Jamboard. Results of the activity are summarized below.

<p>Natural Systems & Dynamic Shorelines</p> <p>Q1: What are the most significant threats to the health of your community’s shoreline?</p> <p>Q2: What is specific to your shoreline that adds to r reduces your community’s vulnerability?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bluff erosion due to high waves, storms and runoff from precipitation, coastal wetland inundation and impacts extreme water. Shoreline hardening can also increase erosion and fill, and development can threaten wetlands.• Natural shorelines (bluffs, coastal wetlands) provide flood and erosion protection. (Examples are Deer Creek and Lakeview Wildlife Management Areas, Sterling Nature Center, and Fair Haven State Park).• Erosion• Climate instability and a lack of widespread understanding of the relationship between how we live and increasing instability.• Flooding across West Barrier Bar Park, eroding away the bar leading to potential flooding devastation in Little Sodus Bay. High water flows from tributaries into the bays and out into the lake cause high water along the shoreline. Flooding of wetland systems beyond their
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	<p>capacity. Erosion of lake shoreline over time has led to loss of land – 150 ft from 1963 to 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of shorelines, that doesn't allow enough room for variable conditions.• Coastal conservation lands help to protect communities.• Sediment starved area on shore of Fair Haven beach.• High water on the lake pushed large quantities of stone into the Nine Mile Creek outlet so now there is nearly stagnant water with algae and weed growth that also leads to flooding near the outlet on either side rather than letting higher flows reach the lake.• The Lake Ontario coastline (natural areas) are tremendous and need to be preserved.• How can we better balance human needs such as dredging for navigation with ecological issues and natural system needs• Threats: continued shoreline hardening that interrupts the movement of sand that maintains the shoreline.• Erosion of our barrier beaches is causing the channels in Sand Pond to fill. Many residential properties reside within the channel and North Pond – sand needs to be removed and placed back on the barrier beach.• Three big threats at Sandy Pond. 1) need a solution for dredging the channel that balances the needs of the piping plover and boating community. 2) Need a plan for long term protection of the dunes and short-term replenishment and 3) Need a better sewer system for area around the Pond.• Solutions for dredging, dune protection and sewer are huge economic and safety issues. The area is largely dependent on tourism and recreation. This creates the economy and the tax base. It will be destroyed if we don't find solutions.• There seems to be a built-in assumption that climate change is the primary driving element behind high water and not the regulatory structure and management obligations of Plan 2014. A Plan can be changed; much more difficult to change the dynamics of the shoreline. Climate Change plays a role - but is it really the primary driver? If there is no intention/will to address Plan 2014, then localities must address resiliency.• Need a regular source of funding to maintain the channel and to protect the barrier dunes that protect the pond.• Sand can be placed onto private property to help them with shoreline erosion.• Need a long-term management plan.• Yearly dredging of the Sandy Pond channel was recommended by USACE as the most environmentally beneficial approach.
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<p>Public Safety</p> <p>Q1: What are the most vulnerable infrastructure assets in your community during storms or high/low water levels?</p> <p>Q2: Please include any threats to public safety associated with infrastructure vulnerabilities (e.g., road closures, utility outages, etc.).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wastewater treatment systems at risk from high water and flooding (ex. Oswego). Water intakes are at risk from low water. • Roads along the shoreline and in low lying areas near major tributaries washed out from high water – some culverts and bridges are quite old and undersized. • Uncontrolled/untreated stormwater outlets into Little Sodus Bay – carrying capacity in high water events (heavy rains or mass snow melt). • Coastal roads • Public roadways have access to publicly funded assistance to address flood damage; private roadways that serve homes that are part of the community and contribute to tax revenues and the economy, face legal and regulatory barriers to that same access. • Lack of a "secure" / marked channel between the Pond and Lake is a safety issue for boaters and emergency responders. • Older septic systems are easily overwhelmed with high water events like 2017 and 2019. This results in a lot of environmental damage to the water quality. • Our fire and rescue can't get out to rescue any boating incident.
<p>Communication & Education</p> <p>Q1: Does your community have effective communication between full-time and seasonal residents or visitors? If not, what are the barriers to effective communication between residents and visitors?</p> <p>Q2: Does your community have effective coordination with neighboring communities, as well as with the County and State? If not, what are the barriers?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a shortage of dedicated public space on our coastline, and places where people gather and share conversation and engagement. • Southwick, Fair Haven, some strong community efforts to clean u debris. • Sandy Pond has a very active Facebook page that includes not just beautiful photos, but all kinds of information about conditions and events. • There is an area called Moon Beach in the T of Sterling with both seasonal and year-round residents. There doesn't seem to be a structured method of communication. It would be desirable to have a common area where people could get together to discuss their concerns about living on the lakeshore. • Our business can communicate with over 165 people but there are thousands on the pond. • The established mechanisms for declaring emergencies on different govt. levels need to be revised and simplified. The current protocols added unnecessary stress and activity to local officials needing to address the flooding.

<p>Community Infrastructure</p> <p>Q1: What important infrastructure systems (e.g., roadways, docks) are vulnerable to local hazards?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the V of Fair Haven, there is some low-lying wastewater infrastructure that will be a problem if water levels of Lake Ontario rise higher than 2019 levels by 5 inches. • Inundation of septic systems can impact public swimming beaches and boating. • Septic systems • Many of the marinas, private docks, and municipal docks were heavily impacted by high water in LSB – they were not all built to rise and fall with water levels. However, some have limited capacity to do so given the elevation of the shoreline in certain places along the Bay. There are no docks on Lake Ontario due to the steepness of the shoreline, except for 3 very badly damaged and heaving concrete fishing piers in the State Park. • Risks to public water resources due to drought possible (Fair Haven has groundwater wells from sterling Creek aquifer). • Fair Haven Beach State Park – damaging infrastructure, difficult access to inlet that comes into Sterling Pond. Erosion impacts to bluffs (Sterling, McIntyre, dunes at eastern Lake Ontario). Lots of debris washed up on the shore. Difficult access to eastern Lake Ontario during low water times. • Safe harbors should be maintained. Keeping Little Sodus Bay maintained is difficult, an important harbor for ships seeking refuge during storm events. • Turtle Cove dock is damaged. • How can we better assist homeowners and residents with getting permits for dredging near their residences, getting floating docks, or otherwise becoming more resilient? • Waste treatment is essential to preserve water quality, avoid harmful algal blooms, etc. How do we garner community support for this even if people are hesitant because of cost? • How can the long-term challenge for local property owners to manage changing conditions be assisted by the local/state/regional agencies? • 3 prongs - high water erodes the dunes. low-water - we need to be addressing dredging. Town of Sandy Creek - we need to improve sewer treatment - otherwise water quality is going to be affected which will impact local communities. • Properties around the pond have been affected and have challenges getting their boats in the water. There are 7 canals around Sandy Pond - the canals are low and have presented challenges. • Are there examples like this region where long term, continual dredging is a workable solution to the natural movement of sand and dynamic shorelines?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beach replenishment effort has been taking place over several years. However, there are significant benefits for low-water conditions - these can help to rebuild the barrier beaches.
<p>Built Environment</p> <p>Q1: What are the primary vulnerabilities to your community's build environment (e.g., flood-prone housing, stormwater issues, erosion, etc.)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damages to safe harbor area from storm events impact access from boats seeking refuge. • Housing and other development with septic systems within reach of storm surges. • Transitioning to low impact development is needed in coastal areas. • What are the real and practical solutions to address lakeshore homes that are in danger of being eroded away into the lake (or the road that accesses the home(s))? Is relocation really an option? • A huge number of homes line the water's edge at Sandy Pond. They are all vulnerable to high water events. I would imagine that most property owners undertook remediation measures after 2017 and 2019 floods. This is a very large cost.
<p>Economic Resources & Tourism</p> <p>Q1: How do high/low water events impact your local economy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have noticed impacts to local businesses in Fair Haven, Oswego, and Sandy Pond. Impacts from flooding and low water seen at restaurants and marinas. • Fair Haven and Sterling were heavily impacted by flooded shorelines, docks and marinas under water, and no wake mandates in LSB – no boat traffic means far fewer visitors to the community. That impact which lasted throughout 2019 backed by COVID in 2020, despite better water levels, has hurt tourism and the local businesses that rely on tourism related dollars to survive. • Trash debris during flood events deters people from beaches in its aftermath. • Unless we find some solutions to the various issues, I worry that the Town of Sandy Creek will devolve and eventually fail - it will become a ghost town. • The economy is totally dependent on water levels. • The barrier beaches are a significant draw for regional tourism.
<p>Other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T of Oswego getting started on an LWRP • V of Fair Haven and Sterling LWRP – first public meeting for LWRP in September

4. Next Steps

Our second public workshop will be September 3, 2021.

All attendees were encouraged to participate in the September workshop and spread the word.

5. Q&A/Comments

- Resource: Sediment budgets for Lake Ontario from Army Corps:
<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=34476ea8c07a4111841d28a5d960cb02>
- Conversation on dredging
 - Emergency response is the only time that money is available.
 - Are there examples of long-term dredging plans that work with both high and low water and is it a long-term solution?
- Sandy Pond resident: Is there another inlet that has the amount of sand that we have in Sandy Pond? We've been trying to identify a long-term solution but we're a small non-profit that doesn't have the resources. With the storms and wave action, I don't know how else we combat this aside from dredging. Would love to find a long-term solution for this. We've been dredging every summer just to have recreational access because we don't have the funding to find a long-term plan.
- Unique ecosystem, 17 miles of sand beaches. Dealing with sand systems is very unique, different from soil based and rocky shorelines and the remedies will be different.
- Need to be very careful in stewarding the dynamics of this shoreline.
- Sandy Pond resident: Was working with Tom Hart to replenish south side of Sandy Pond where sand has been lost. Was hoping to create a proposal to rebuild the dunes.