Caroga Lakes Management Committee Meeting Summary
October 6, 2026 Caroga Town Hall
In Attendance:
Scott Henze , Director Fulton County Planning Department
John Glenn, Supervisor Town of Caroga
Marcus Harazin, Caroga Lakes Management Committee Co-Chair
Rick Mendetta, East Caroga Lake Environmental Association
Brian Drain West Caroga Lake Association
Jed Potocor West Caroga Lake Association
Mary Jablonski Canada Lakes Conservation Association
John Byrnes Canada Lakes Conservation Association
Chris Collins, Caroga Lake Marine
Scott Horton, West Caroga
Anita Long, Canada Lake
Darlene and David Devendorf, Stoner Lakes Association (Stoner Lakes Fish and Game Club)
On Zoom:
Matt Cooper, Caroga Town Council
Archer Newell, Canada Lakes Conservation Association
John Olm, Boat Inspection Program Coordinator Town of Caroga
Phil Addeo, East Caroga Lake Environmental Association

Discussion Summary

1. Coliform and E Coli Testing Results, ALAP and CSLAP Results
Archer Newell from the Canada Lakes Conservation Association developed a trend comparison chart for the coliform and E Coli test results. This provides information for the testing results from East and West Caroga lake and Canada Lake.

Archer also updated the charts here to include 2025 data that was collected for West Caroga. Total Coliform was quite a bit higher last summer, driven mostly by the July results. E.coli looked similar to this year, and lower for the NS-1 site.

Members from the associations representing East Caroga Lake, West Caroga Lake, and Canada Lake collected monthly water samples from each of the 3 lakes over the summer and transferred the samples to Adirondack Environmental Laboratories in Albany, New York for analysis. The Town will reimburse the associations for 50% of the costs of the tests up to $1,000.

The reports coming back from the lab displayed specific enumerated counts of E. Coli and Total Coliform Bacteria.

Archer Newell from Canada Lake collated the results into a graphic display chart that showed the average results for each of the testing sites on each of the lakes over the course of the summer.

None of the lakes yielded averages in any of the testing sites for the summer of 2026 that were above the threshold for E coli that is set by the State of New York for safe swimming.

That being said, it was discussed that E coli does exist in all of the samples and the lake water in any of the 3 lakes is definitely not safe to drink.

It was also discussed that the threshold for safe swimming for Total Coliform Bacteria requires an averaging of a continuous 30-day testing, which was beyond the scope of the testing performed by the Lake associations. However, there were some single samples of Total Coliform counts that did exceed the threshold that is typically determined by a 30-day period of continuous monitoring. In light of this, and that there is E coli present in all samples, the group agreed that it makes sense to continue the bacterial testing and perhaps further test in certain areas as required in the future.

In addition to continuing the outside lab base testing next year, John Byrnes from Canada Lake has a incubator testing kit that can be used inexpensively to potentially test many more areas, to determine " hot spots" that would then require more in-depth, external lab based study in the future, if needed.

Rick Medetta noted that the decaying milfoil in East Caroga lake may be contributing to the high coliform test results in East Caroga Lake.
The group recommended that the lake associations and the Town repeat the testing in 2027 to see if there are any increases and identify any troublesome areas for future testing.

Jed Potocor noted that the Ausable Environmental Association is collecting data on algae, water temperature, and other key metrics via a special buoy. Data may be available to the town in the future to help us identify possible problems and monitor water quality.

Supervisor Glenn noted that he continues to talk with the Town of Johnstown and DEC about the possibility of tying into the trunk line of the Johnstown/Gloversville Joint Wastewater Treatment Program (Northville and Mayfield are doing this). The need for long-term wastewater treatment will be included in the new town Comprehensive Plan.

The ALAP and CSLAP test results for area results continued to show good water quality exists in area lakes.

2. Presentation on NYS Sewer Replacement Program

Mr. Scott Henze, Director Fulton County Planning Department provided a description of how the NYS Sewer Replacement Program will be implemented in Fulton County. The County is setting up the program. Once the eligibility process has been finalized,

residents may be potentially eligible for assistance with the cost of repairing or replacing a failing septic system up to 50% of the cost up to a maximum of $10,000.

See the Attached:

- slides from the presentation

- list of qualifying waterbodies in the County identified by DEC on the WIPWL list.

On July 25th the county was awarded $200,000 for the program this year through the DEC Round 5 funding. Unused funds can be rolled over into subsequent years.

The Lakes Management Committee offered to with the Planning Department to help get the word out to people who may be eligible for assistance once the application process has been finalized. The Committee also offered to help work with the County to ask DEC to update the list of eligible water bodies so that the Caroga Lakes and Canada Lake are included. Right Stoner Lake is the only lake with houses and camps on it in the Town on the list. Several lakes with no camps or houses are included.

3. Milfoil Removal for 2026

Luke Horst, Coordinator of the Weed Removal Program could not attend but provided an update for John Glenn. East and West Caroga had very little milfoil. Divers removed some isolated bays in East Caroga.

Ready Scout conducted a study of West Caroga Lake for the Town. See the attached West Caroga survey from Ready Scout. They did not find any milfoil and recorded the non-invasive plants that they found.

It is estimated that the Town will not have to reapply Procell cor for a few more years. The Town is setting aside some funds each season to help assure we will be able to conduct weed treatment in the future. The town will continue to have the Caroga lakes surveyed to track the re-emergence of any milfoil.

4. Boat inspection and decontamination program for 2026.

John Olm Town Program Coordinator reported that the final results of the program will conclude on Columbus Day. Final program data will not be available from the Adirondack Watershed Institute, which tracks the data for DEC, until November. However, the results through the beginning of October show that the Town inspected and deconned approximately the same number of watercraft that they did during the 2025 season. This year Caroga Marine inspected three times as many boats launched than in 2025 because they were able to enter data earlier than last season.

Below is a summary of the Town of Caroga's watercraft inspection results compiled from the opening date of May 22nd through October 4th:

Town of Caroga Boat Wash Station – a total of 376 watercraft were inspected, 331of which were also decontaminated. Zebra mussels were found and removed from one boat reported previously in Delta Lake, Oneida County.

NYSDEC East Caroga Lake Campground launch – a total of 337 watercraft were inspected, no aquatic invasive species were detected, however non-invasive aquatic vegetation was removed from several watercraft.

West Lake Fishing Access Site launch – a total of 2,372 watercraft were inspected. Eurasian watermilfoil was found and removed from a launching boat that had previously been in Great Sacandaga Lake. A Zebra mussel was found and removed from a launching boat with an unknown previous waterbody. In addition, non-invasive vegetation was removed from several other watercraft.

Caroga Marina – a total of 63 watercraft were inspected, no aquatic invasive species were detected.

John thanked Town stewards Neil Kasson, Mike Clark, Richard Bacher, Kenny Kindlon and the many volunteers at the West Lake Fishing Access Site launch for their efforts this season. He also thanked Marcus Harazin for his assistance in obtaining a satellite phone for emergency use at the West Lake launch and the completion of activities and deliverables for the NYSDEC Invasive Species Grant Program, and to Sue O'Reilly from the Adirondack Watershed Institute for her monthly summaries of watercraft inspection results.

Many boaters visiting the Town originated from waterways infected with invasive species.

This year was the last year of a 3-year DEC grant to help fund the program. Support from stewards supplied through the Adirondack Watershed Institute and local match generated from volunteer stewards supplied by the Canada Lakes Conservation Association and other sources will help keep the cost of the program to Town taxpayer to a minimal level. Marcus Harazin with work with Joanne Young to submit the program report and final voucher to DEC in November or December.

The Town received an additional 2-year grant that will help fund the program in 2027 and 2028.

5. Terrestrial Invasive Species

The Canada Lakes Conservation Association held a presentation on terrestrial invasive species on July 9. Approximately 50 people attended.

Ari Giller-Leinwohl the Director of the Terrestrial Invasive Species Program for the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program was the speaker. He provided an overview of the different types of terrestrial invasive species in the Town and Adirondacks. He also loaned the Town a knotweed injector that can be used by homeowners to address knotweed or phragmites infestations. The injection system has been tested by two homeowners along with selective cutting and bagging. A second application will be done next season to help eradicate the plants at those sites.

Next season we need the lake associations and the town to continue efforts to educate local property owners as to how to identify, report (through iMaps. See: https://www.nyimapinvasives.org/) and remove terrestrial invasive species.

The Town will look to see if grant funding might be available to help obtain training and equipment for town staff (possibly the BTI field staff) to help the Town control infestations.

6. Salt reduction efforts

Tests of some area wells and results from ALAP and CSLAP show that salt is present in area lakes and wells. It will be important to continue to monitor these levels.

The Lake George Association is holding a Salt Summit but it is only an in-person event and will not be live streamed. However, video from the event will be available. It is hoped that next season we can hold a Fulton County salt summit to raise awareness, examine area testing data, and increase area efforts to reduce salt infiltration of local waterways and drinking water sources.

Here is a link to information from Salt Summits held prior to 2025.

https://lakegeorgeassociation.org/act-now/reduce-salt/lga-salt-summit-presentation-archive

7. Other

--Anita Long noted that she met a staff person from the USDA who was mapping Emerald Ash Borer infestations and said they could help owners of affected properties help with mitigation. Many trees around Canada Lake have been infected. Here is the link to the USDA web information on plant pests.

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant-pests-diseases/eab

Here is the email for the USDA staff person Anita spoke with if anyone would like more information or assistance.

EAB.Biocontrol.Program@usda.gov

--Marcus Harazin noted that Hemlock Woolly Adelgid infestations continue to grow in the Rockwood Forest and Sacandaga Lake areas.

--The Lakes Management Committee wishes to thank the West Caroga Lake Association for organizing a successful boater safety course held at the Pine Lake Pavillion and attended by approximate 50 residents.

******The next Lakes Management Committee is tentatively scheduled for May 18 at 5:30 pm at the Caroga Town Hall.**