DCAP

Delaware County Action Plan

Delaware County Department of Watershed Affairs, Delhi, NY *October 2006*

The accomplishments of DCAP demonstrate capacities to successfully manage land uses and nonpoint sources of contamination. DCAP therefore demonstrates the critical role of local government in protecting water quality.

Comprehensive Management Program

DCAP is the only comprehensive management program for watershed protection under local auspices in the New York City watershed. It represents a novel attempt to protect water resources, based on land management, through scientifically and economically sound governance based on local democracy. DCAP operates within the framework of state and federal laws in full partnership with the agencies representing those governmental levels. The novelty of the program raises many technical questions regarding legal and administrative requirements, organization, communications, authority and responsibility, standing, finance, and accountability especially to local constituents. Cornell, through the NYS Water Resources Institute, is providing technical support for such challenges as DCAP matures in its operations.

Coordinating and Administering DCAP

The Department of Watershed Affairs provides overall coordination and administrative support for the activities in the County. The investment in DCAP is now substantial. About $5 million of County funds have so far supported DCAP. At least that much has also been obtained in external funds. For these funds the institutional and programmatic support of the NYSDEC, NYSDOH, NYSDAM and other partners in the watershed program must be acknowledged. The DEC in particular has long taken the position that the substantial federal and state investments in DCAP is further justified by the extension of experience and knowledge gained to other watersheds in New York State.

Three years ago, Delaware County orchestrated a watershed-wide meeting of the five Counties. This meeting eventually led to the reformation of a Watershed-wide, West-of-Hudson, Technical Advisory Group (TAG). In part through sharing the benefits of DCAP, TAG seeks to strengthen representation and capacities of all the Counties in watershed management.

Beyond the New York City Watershed, the Upper Susquehanna Coalition has adopted the multiple barrier approach from DCAP. Precision feed management is also being adopted in the Susquehanna Basin and elsewhere. International interest in DCAP was demonstrated through an invitation to present DCAP's program at a Rural Economy and Land Use (RELU) workshop in the UK in 2005. DCAP continues to share understanding with RELU principals from Imperial College, the University of East Anglia at Norwich, and the Westcountry Rivers Trust in the UK.

Local Government Role in Water Quality Protection

The accomplishments of DCAP demonstrate capacities to successfully manage land uses and nonpoint sources of contamination. DCAP therefore demonstrates the critical role of local government in protecting water quality. The federal framework of water law has traditionally not recognized local governments as partners in environmental management. This lack of specific recognition is reflected in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). Nevertheless, the MOA is intended in spirit and letter to incorporate a partnership of all levels of government in pursing its watershed objectives. Experience subsequent to the signing of the MOA has clarified and demonstrated the capacities and interests of the various federal, state, New York City and watershed levels of government. This experience is a basis for an integrated partnership, which more fittingly incorporates the responsibilities of watershed communities. Delaware County is now seeking this more explicit recognition, and hence standing, as an important institutional step to better secure protection of water quality.

Summary from the DCAP Progress Report, "Linking Economic Vitality, Water Quality and Sound Science."

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DCAP Accomplishments

This summary represents a snapshot in time of the ongoing DCAP program through its components:

- Economic Development;
- Planning;
- Precision Feeding Program;
- Pathogen Management;
- Stream Corridor Management;
- Monitoring and Modeling;
- On-Site Septic System Program;
- Highway Management; and
- Stormwater Management.

Continuing Goals

The future goals provided in this summary will insure the continuing success of DCAP. Further, the ever increasing capacities of local agencies will continue to work toward water quality protection measures at the grassroots level while building ownership of the issues and providing for economic prosperity. DCAP continues its role of coordinating its water quality programs within the context of FAD goals.

Key principles in effective watershed management, from the perspective of the US EPA, are partnerships, geographic focus and sound management techniques based on strong science and data. All DCAP components are based on these principles.

Future Goals

Legal and Administrative Framework

- **Goal 1:** The role and standing of watershed communities in general, and DCAP as a Local Initiatives Program in particular, be provided more formal recognition and standing as the local partners in the state and federal legal framework governing the New York City watershed. This recognition is especially important in the FAD determinations and in application of the Clean Water Act § 303.
- **Goal 2:** Seek explicit acknowledgment of the role of municipal comprehensive planning, as the first protector and manager for water resources at the local land use level, in the applicable state and federal laws.

Economic Vitality

- **Goal 1:** Find support for and undertake an economic study of the economic impacts of the MOA: Specifically the Watershed Rules and Regulations, the land acquisition and easement programs, and the economic environmental partnership programs
- **Goal 2:** Re-examine and re-affirm the Delaware County economic development strategy particularly emphasizing its traditional industries including especially tourism and farming and to thereby continue to encourage traditional economic and industrial development in the County outside the NYC Watershed.
- **Goal 3:** Pursue environmentally compatible initiatives in NYC Watershed communities and businesses

Planning Tools for Water Quality Management

- **Goal 1:** Update and maintain the Delaware County Comprehensive Plan by explicitly incorporating DCAP objectives and procedures, in cooperation with the municipalities in the County.
- **Goal 2:** Continue to provide technical and planning support to County municipalities through the Town Planning Advisory Service (TPAS).
- **Goal 3:** Build upon the wellhead protection program to assist the public water supplies in Delaware County in developing a water supply protection plan.
- **Goal 4:** Integrate County Emergency Management and Hazard Mitigation Plans with the City's plans to ensure more effective and coordinated response by all parties.

Monitoring and Modeling

- **Goal 1:** Strengthen the modeling capability to represent the Cannonsville Reservoir basin at different geographic scales as required by management decisions and evaluation by integration of appropriate

Main Street Revitalization

Good Cheap Food is a "whole-foods" store with a café and bookstore owned by Faiga Brussel Shaw. Located at 53 Main Street, in the Village of Delhi, the building sits in a very prominent location. Faiga Brussel Shaw was a recipient of a Main Street Revitalization Pilot Program grant, which was administered through the Delaware County Local Development Corporation in cooperation with Delaware National Bank. Mrs. Shaw's project consisted of repainting and repairing (rotten wood) the exterior of the building, as well as the restoration of the sign at the top of the building. The appearance of the newly painted building shows a renewed sense of confidence for all Main Street businesses.

models including coupling SWAT to the Cannonsville Reservoir model.

- **Goal 2:** Improve and sustain the capability of County staff to use appropriate models for County management and evaluation purposes.
- **Goal 3:** Develop and use best understanding of climatological patterns and extremes to assist in better specifying management practices influenced by weather and in assisting in planning for, and management of, droughts and floods.
- **Goal 4:** Create and strengthen legal, administrative and social methods which recognize and advance home rule principles and which recognize the rights and responsibilities of landowners, businesses and residents in the County in serving and uniting environmental and economic objectives.

Infrastructure

- **Goal 1:** Upgrade (80%?) of the on-site wastewater systems identified as in need of upgrading by 2010.
- **Goal 2:** Carry out a comprehensive highway stormwater program throughout the County: Inventory and assess procedures; hire a dedicated stormwater/highway engineer to provide technical assistance and leadership; identify and remedy critical drainage areas; complete and institute Highway Management Plans throughout the County.
- **Goal 3:** Establish the capacity in the Department of Public Works to assist in the development of stormwater pollution plans for the activities that require such plans.
- **Goal 4:** Establish a local stormwater position to assist project applications through the permitting and implementation process.
- **Goal 5:** Ensure that City owned WWTPs can accommodate the growing need to receive septage from residential or sewer district pump-outs.

Agricultural Environmental Management

- **Goal 1:** Further develop and refine the Precision Feed Management planning process and define the criteria for implementing and accounting PFM as a Best Management Process under the NYS AEM program.
- **Goal 2:** Implement PFM planning on 50 farms in Delaware County by 2010.
- **Goals 3:** Foster the use of Critical Control Point analyses on those 50 farms.
- **Goal 4:** Establish a sound epidemiological and scientific foundation for managing pathogens on farms in Delaware County, identify best management practices and promote their adoption.

Stream Corridor Management

Stewardship of the Delaware River and its Tributaries and Associated Riparian Corridors

- **Goal 1:** Integrate the Watershed Agricultural Program and the Stream Corridor Management Program
- **Goal 2:** Expand technical support to the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and enhance cropland CREP.
- **Goal 3:** Implement a variable width buffer pilot program.
- **Goal 4:** Participate with the Catskill Watershed Corporation to explore the enhancement of existing CWC programs and the development of new CWC funding.
- **Goal 5:** Seek funds to provide site specific plans for non-agricultural riparian landowner stewardship.
- **Goal 6:** Review stream gravel issues.
- **Goal 7:** Enhance existing permitting authority to the SWCD for implementation of approved stream management practices under its current General Permit.
- **Goal 8:** Assist municipalities with culvert sizing and design.
- **Goal 9:** Work closely with all DCAP participants to integrate the Stream Corridor Management Plan and its recommendations into all relevant components of DCAP.
- **Goal 10:** Expand public education and outreach efforts.
- **Goal 11:** Conduct geomorphic assessments at bridges and culverts.
- **Goal 12:** Establish a flood mitigation and recovery program throughout Delaware County.
- **Goal 13:** Continue geomorphic research and assessments
- **Goal 14:** Obtain sufficient funds to complete the Walton stream bank stabilization projects.
- **Goal 15:** Prioritize identified stream intervention projects
- **Goal 16:** Update the West Branch Delaware River Stream Corridor Management Plan.

Outreach

- Goal 1: Extend and apply the understanding largely developed for the Cannonsville Reservoir Basin throughout Delaware County.
- **Goal 2:** Through an inter-active informational program, promote the understanding, input and engagement of businesses and residents in the County in DCAP activities, and to thereby secure sustainable management of the County's water resources in local, regional, state and federal contexts.
- **Goal 3:** Develop an effective institutionally-supported outreach plan with state and local watershed partners, to thereby extend the benefits of DCAP elsewhere in New York State and beyond as interests and means arise.
- **Goal 4:** Establish demonstration and education pilot programs to illustrate the relationship of HMPs, stormwater management and stream corridor management.

Evaluation

- **Goal 1:** Institute an external review of DCAP (Expert Panel?)
- **Goal 2:** Prepare a report annually for DCAP, which critically assesses the water quality conditions; evaluates management measures undertaken, and critically evaluates the achievement of stated goals. The report will be distributed for review and input by DCAP partners and constituents.

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