

## Cincinnatus Lake Watershed Protection District

- HISTORY: it appears Cincinnatus Lake and Long Pond were 1 body of water as indicated on an 1829 map of Chenango County. On this map also appears the symbol for a sawmill on the west side of this combined body of water, about in the middle. Property surrounding the body of water began to be purchased by Eli Tarbell in the 1830's and more property subsequently purchased by other members of the Tarbell family. The body of water eventually became 2 bodies of water, whether through natural or man-made efforts is unknown. Both lakes have been designated throughout history as "farm ponds" being attached to the Tarbell property or estate.
- [From the Town of Smithville Comprehensive Plan, 2012]: "On July 8, 1935, heavy rains caused a major flood in the area. The earthen dam on Cincinnatus Lake washed out. A wall of water flowed over Long Pond dam, (damaging part of it) and flowed down through the hamlet of Smithville Flats, down to the Chenango River, and on to Binghamton and the Susquehanna River. Several homes and businesses were washed away. In 1954, the Federal Government and the US Corp of Engineers had plans to build several large dams in the Southern Tier as a flood control measure. One was designated to be built on the Genegantslet Creek near Petonia Lake. It would have flooded back upstream for 4.8 miles, to the hamlet of Smithville Flats, inundating much good farm land. Area residents from the Towns of German, McDonough, Pharsalia, and others formed the Genegantslet Watershed. The Watershed group members believed that a series of small dams in the smaller creeks would offer more flood protection, than one big dam and would cause less damage to the area, especially in the case of flash flooding. After much correspondence opposing the dam, representatives of the Watershed group went to Washington, D.C., and met with John Taber, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, which originates legislation for the appropriation of federal funds. Mr. Taber was able to remove the appropriation from the 1955 federal budget and it was never again added. In 1976, the Corp of Engineers, again, wanted to build the dam, this time as a recreation area. The plan was eventually deauthorized."
- In 1961 Chenango County and other organizations began to take action on the establishment of a Protection District, the parent being the Genegantslet Creek Watershed District and a secondary District called the Cincinnatus Lake Watershed Protection District created shortly after. Documents available include the following:
  - Creation of the Genegantslet Creek Watershed Work Plan. March 1961 by Chenango County Board of Supervisors and the Chenango County Soil Conservation District. (57 pages)
  - Creation of the Genegantslet Creek Watershed Work Plan Agreement, authored by Chenango County Board of Supervisors and the Chenango County Soil Conservation District, by Resolution May 8, 1961.
  - Resolution # 28-63: Establishment of Cincinnatus Lake Small Watershed Protection District
  - Resolution # 29-63: Providing Public Hearing on Establishment of Cincinnatus Lake Small Watershed Protection District
  - Notice of Public Hearing for CLSWPD April 3, 1963
  - Resolution # 65-63: Establishing and Confirming Cincinnatus Lake Small Watershed Protection District (after the Public Hearing)
  - Chenango County Standing Committee Report on the CLSWPD, concerns and questions

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- Resolution #47-64: Ordering Establishment of the Cincinnatus Lake Small Watershed Protection District (CLSWPD)
- Resolution #48-64: Administration Board for the CLSWPD, appointments/terms
- Resolution # 49-64: Request for State Aid for CLSWPD
- Resolution #50-64: Establishing Acc't # 235 as an appropriation for administration
- County Budget Officer report 1966: recommended easements and rights of way of property; voluntary contributions from property owners totaling over \$15,000 had been collected for the dam project. Assessments were reduced 50% at the time the dam was destroyed. The matter was referred to the Planning, Development and Capital Projects Committee.
- Resolution #127-66: Appropriating \$2900. For the CLSWPD
- Resolution #94-67: Amending Resolutions #127-66 & #50-64 to allow use of money appropriated for dam construction and legal fees. Cortland County had not contributed anything to the project. Soil Conservation Service Officials in Syracuse will implement the project.
- Resolution #45-68: Supplemental appropriation for CLSWPD of \$4,400.
- Operations and Maintenance Agreement between the Soil Conservation Service (USDA) and the CLSWPD dated August 10, 1967 \*
- Warranty Deed Alice Wightman to M. Robert Beach 3.5 acres "Dam Site" March 22, 1963; Deed of Ethel Beach to Peter English Sr/Ann English of 3.5 acres "Dam site" May 21, 1976.
- In 2000 action was taken by Chenango County to transfer ownership of the title of the land underneath the lake to the CLSWPD
- April 16, 2008 letter from NRCS (USDA) indicating NYS would be adopting new dam safety regulations for all regulated dams in NYS. Any new regulations would become part of the O&M agreement signed in 1967. Dam owners required to keep paperwork on all reports, etc.; Hazard Class verifications would be conducted every 10 years; Dam owners should develop a written O&M plan; EAP's should be updated annually; inspections every 2 years for high hazard dams
- Minutes of the Smithville Town Board for April 20, 2009 and May 21, 2009 where discussion took place with Lauren Johnson of Chenango County Soil and Water, Town Board members, and the CLSWPD concerning their responsibilities.
- Sporadic watershed structure reports on the Cincinnatus Lake Dam from 1999-2014.