

### ***NY Rural Water & the Village of Wellsville complete Source Water Protection Plan***

NY Rural Water Association worked with the Village of Wellsville to develop a Source Water Protection Plan [SWPP] for the Village's intake located on the Genesee River. Additional assistance was provided by the Allegany County Soil & Water Conservation District and the Potter County Soil & Water District, the Potter County Planning Commission, Allegany County Health Department and the Genesee Headwaters Watershed Association. Unlike many SWPP's this one included a fairly large area of 216 square miles that took in parts of two states containing 12 Towns/Townships, 1 Borough, 1 Village and about 25 Hamlets. The challenge for one working on a Source Water Protection Plan of this scale is finding information that is compatible from all areas. The Village of Wellsville provided Geographic Information System services to the project as well as local knowledge. The NY Rural Water staff provided the ability to take large amounts of information and compile it into a useable document that the Village could utilize for future efforts on protecting the water supply.

The Village GIS provided most of the statistical information used in the project. It was found early that Pennsylvania has a wealth of data available on their GIS site: <http://www.pasda.psu.edu/> The major issue with their data is that it doesn't always have projection information imbedded with the downloads. The Village was in the process of shifting from ArcView 3.3 to ArcView 8.3 when this project started and so 2/3 of the work was done in 3.3 while the last 1/3 was done in 8.3. Running re-projections in 3.3 has always been a labor of love and took significant time getting all the various data that the Village possessed into the preferred UTM 1983 Zone 18 system. Data from many sources was utilized from the Village developed layers, county tax layers, digitizing from Pictometry photos and the PA data. The Soil & Water Districts provided information on farm operations and PA dirt road projects within the watershed. The one area that PA is not up to the same level as NY was with their parcel data. Potter County [where the upper watershed lies] is only now digitizing their parcels. This left NY Rural Water staff to spend significant effort combing through paper records and maps on property uses. By comparison, the NY data was able to be clipped precisely to the area of the watershed, queried in many ways, and produce a short list for NY Rural water to look at for a windshield survey in fairly short order. After the short list of probable contamination sources was developed, Village water staff and NY Rural Water staff did field investigations. The staff visited all the various sites and collected a GPS location for them. These were input into the GIS along with attribute data about each site. Additional data was included in the project such as Oil & Gas wells from NYSDEC, Hamlets and federal interest environmental sites from US EPA, Hydrography and Hydrologic Units from CUGIR and Land Cover Data from the National Land Cover data set. Additional stream sections were digitized based on USGS Raster images and DEM data.

Despite the extremely rural nature of the watershed: average about 38 People/Square mile, there were 107 distinct potential sources of pollution and an additional 2,584 oil well points within the basin. The plan provides methods to follow to work on diminishing the impacts of these sources and future sources that may be developed.

Maps were produced for a presentation to the National Rural Water conference in Colorado on this project. The final report was presented to the Village of Wellsville Board in December 2004. For more information, contact Joshua Bossard at NY Rural Water (518) 828-3155 Ext. 23 or Kier Dirlam at the Village of Wellsville 585-593-1850.