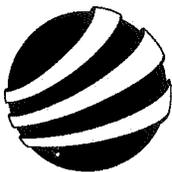


ORIGINAL

In the Matter Of:
PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

PUBLIC HEARING

June 22, 2017



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STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

In the Matter of
PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION
on the
ONONDAGA LAKE
NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT
and RESTORATION PLAN

PUBLIC HEARING in the above matter, conducted
at the Southwest Community Center, 401 South
Avenue, Syracuse, New York before JOHN F. DRURY,
CSR, Notary Public in and for the State of New
York, on June 22, 2017, 6:00 pm to 7:50 pm.

BEFORE: MOLLY T. McBRIDE,
Administrative Law Judge
625 Broadway, 1st Floor
Albany, New York 12233-1550
(518) 40-9003
molly.mcbride@dec.ny.gov

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INDEX TO SPEAKERS

SPEAKERS	PAGES
BARRY RAICHLIN	9
AGGIE LANE SUN	11
NEIL RINGLER	13
JAMES HECKATHORNE	14
VIRGINIA DOLIN	17
ANDREW BOWES	19
CAROLINE WEST SUN	21
DANIELLE KROL Metro Transportation	22
RICH PUCHALSKI SUN	25
JESSI LYONS Brady Faith Center	28
HANNA RING Citizens Environment	30
MATT LIPTAK	33
MARYANNE ADAMS Audubon Conservation	35
RENEE KITTLEMAN Audubon Conservation	36
RYAN RIEFLER Wastewater Operator	39
GEOFFREY CUMMINGS	43
ALMA LOWRY Counsel Oneida Nation	44
STEPHEN WOWELKO Sportsmen's Clubs	49
RACHEL MAY Sustainability Education	50
MARY CUNNINGHAM	52
MICHAEL EMERSON	54
LES MONASTORY Isaac Walton League	57

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2
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4
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12
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24
25

SPEAKERS	PAGES
CINDY SQUILLACE	59
FRED MILLER 9 Mile Creek Conservation	61
SHEILA SICILIA	64
PETER KING Bikes & Moving People	65
OLIVIA GREEN Atlantic States Legal	68
JESSICA ELLIOTT Board Member of SUN	71
ALFONSO DAVIS	74
TOM MERRILL	76
MAUREEN CURTIN CNY Solidarity Coalition	78
BILL LANSLEY	81
ALBERT DAHER Isaac Walton League	83
MARTY IVERY Trout Unlimited	86
DAVID SIMMONS Sportsmen's Clubs	87
MERCEDES JONES	89
ROBERT HALEY Focus Board Ond. Creek	92
YUSUF ABDUL-QADIR ACLU	96
LINDSAY SPEER	100
JEANNE SHENANDOAH Onondaga Nation	104
SHARON OWENS	107

1 ALJ McBride

2 ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you everyone for
3 coming out this evening. Good evening
4 everyone, my name is Molly McBride, I'm
5 the Administrative Law Judge with the
6 New York State Department of
7 Environmental Conservation. And I'm
8 going to be presiding over this
9 evening's public comment session.

10 We are here this evening to receive
11 comments from the members of the public
12 regarding the DEC and the US Fish &
13 Wildlife Service for post projects:
14 Restoring wildlife habitat and
15 recreation on Onondaga Lake.

16 The DEC and the US Fish & Wildlife
17 Service plan to restore and protect
18 wildlife habitat and water quality and
19 increase recreational opportunities at
20 Onondaga Lake as outlined in the Draft
21 Restoration Plan, and the Environmental
22 Assessment released for public comment.

23 The Draft Plan and additional
24 information on the Natural Resource
25 Damage Assessment Process may be found

1 ALJ McBride

2 online. And that address is available
3 at our sign-in table at the hallway.

4 As part of the Onondaga Lake Natural
5 Resource Damage Assessment and
6 Restoration Process, the DEC and the US
7 Fish & Wildlife Service assess
8 contaminant related injuries to natural
9 resources, such as waterfowl and turtles,
10 and quantify the lost use of natural
11 resources to the public, such as fishing.

12 The Agencies then solicited
13 restoration project ideas from
14 stakeholders who identified as type and
15 scale of restoration needed to
16 compensate those who were injured. The
17 ultimate goal of the process is to
18 replace, restore, rehabilitate or
19 acquire the equivalent of injured
20 natural resources and resource services
21 lost due to the release of hazardous
22 substances, at no cost to the taxpayer.

23 Comments on the Draft Plan may be
24 submitted through July 17, 2017 and may
25 be mailed to the US Fish & Wildlife

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ALJ McBride

Service to the attention of Anne Secord.
The mailing address as well as the
e-mail address are available at our sign
in table right outside the hearing room
here. If you did not get that
information when you checked in here
today, please take it with you when you
leave. We will keep that information at
the table until we finish our hearing
here this evening.

This Public Comment Session is to
provide an opportunity for all of you to
come and comment on this Proposed Plan.
This is not a question and answer
session, but an opportunity for you to
put your comments on the record. Anyone
who wishes to speak today must fill out
a speaker card. So far I have
approximately 35 speaker cards. If you
have not yet filled out a card they're
available at the table in the hallway.

Speakers will be called in the order
that we receive their cards. I will
call your name when it is your turn to

1 ALJ McBride
2 speak. If I mispronounce your name, I
3 apologize, please correct me when you
4 get to the microphone. Again, please
5 come forward and speak into the
6 microphone. Address your comments
7 forward here to me.

8 And remember that we do have a court
9 reporter, who will be taking down your
10 comments. Please begin with your name
11 and your address, and if you are
12 speaking on behalf of a group please
13 identify the group or person you are
14 representing here this evening.

15 This hearing is for purposes of
16 public commenting, and again, this is
17 not a question and answer session. If
18 you do have any questions for DEC staff
19 or US Fish & Wildlife staff, they are
20 available here this evening. And you
21 may also contact them after this
22 evening. And again their contact
23 information is available at our table.

24 Because we have approximately 35
25 speakers so far, and I anticipate we'll

1 ALJ McBride
2 probably get a couple more people, we're
3 going to limit each speaker to three
4 minutes. That way everyone will have
5 their opportunity to put their comment
6 on the record here this evening. We
7 have a timer here on the screen that you
8 can see. Please be aware how much time
9 you have left, and finish up your
10 comments in that three minute time
11 period. I would ask that everyone
12 please be respectful of that three
13 minutes, and conclude your remarks when
14 your three minutes are up.

15 When you make your statement, please
16 speak loudly, slowly and clearly so that
17 we do have an accurate record of
18 everything you're saying here this
19 evening. I also request that everyone
20 silence their cellphones before the
21 hearing begins.

22 And also I'm going to ask that you
23 please show respect and silence for all
24 speakers who are making their comments
25 here this evening. Please show each

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Raichlin

speaker the same courtesy and respect that you would want for yourself when speaking. I realize this is an emotional issue. And on behalf of the DEC and the US Fish & Wildlife Service, I thank you all for coming out here this evening.

If you do not wish to make a statement on the record here this evening or if I call your card and you changed your mind, please realize you may still submit written comments. We have forms in the hallway, you can submit your comment here this evening or again, you have the mailing address and e-mail address. Thank you all again for coming out. And we'll begin with our first speaker, Barry Raichlin.

BARRY RAICHLIN: What I would like to say is, I'm a fisherman, and I've lived in Camillus and Mattydale all my life. I've been all over the country as a truck driver. And what I don't like about this whole project is, you have

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Raichlin

Nine Mile Creek come down to the Lake.
There is no access for people like I am
right now, and Onondaga Creek has no
access. You have no fish ladders on
Onondaga Lake -- or Onondaga Creek. And
there is a lot of little streams like
Ley Creek, I know there is fish in
there.

But the big factory there by the
truck stop, they've completely fenced
off all that area where that Creek goes
through there and you don't have access
to it. And most of the area around the
Lake they made beautiful trails for
bikers, but I'm not a biker. I can't
even get close to that little dock area
they got on the Lake. I am looking at
it, how the hell do I get down there?
And that's what I'm trying to get, you
know, put forward here.

We've got to do something about
people like me. There are a lot of
people that are old, that can't walk all
that far, we're not bikers. So that was

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Lane

what I would like to get forward. Thank you, very much.

ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you, sir. Our next speaker is Aggie Lane.

AGGIE LANE: I'm Aggie Lane, and I'm a resident of the Southwest Side of Syracuse, actually a few blocks from here. I'm a member of Syracuse United Neighbors. And I've spent the last 17 years working on Onondaga Creek issues.

From 2000 to 2010 I worked with the grassroots group, the Partnership for Onondaga Creek, fighting to keep the County from building RTFs, or what I call rainy day sewage plants, for combined sewer overflows on Onondaga Creek. The Partnership advocated for underground storage of these combined sewer overflows. In particular, we pushed for solutions that didn't use chlorine disinfection, so that Onondaga Creek and Onondaga Lake's habitats wouldn't be further impaired.

In 2008 the County embraced our

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Lane
storage solution adding green
infrastructure to bolster the capture of
combined sewage. Now, almost 10 years
later, the water quality in the Lake and
our Creek is vastly improved.

My house is across the street from
Onondaga Creek. In years I haven't
smelt the stink of the Creek. A really
good thing. So now we need to embrace
our Creek for the asset it is. For
decades various people have been talking
about how we could reclaim the Creek.
In 2004, Onondaga Environmental
Institute got a four year grant from the
EPA to study how the Creek could be
reclaimed, naturalized, so it creates
habitat for birds and fish and provides
green space and recreation for the City
residents. OEI's final report cites a
number of projects. It's time we funded
them.

The NRD plan, which this hearing is
about, would be a perfect way to fund
Onondaga Creek projects for City

1 Ringler
2 residents, especially those living on
3 the Southwest and South Side of the
4 City. Currently, the Creek is off
5 limits to City residents because it is
6 fenced in, and its banks are overgrown.
7 Residents hardly know it's there, and
8 some of them have a very negative image
9 of it. It's time to change that. We
10 want to enjoy our Creek and in our
11 backyard. The NRD process is the
12 funding opportunity we need. Please
13 make it happen.

14 ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you. Neil
15 Ringler.

16 NEIL RINGLER: My name is Neil
17 Ringler, 19 Gettman Drive, Baldwinsville,
18 New York. I've lived a few miles from
19 the Lake for the last 42 years and
20 worked on it with a group of students
21 for about 30 years. Fished it on
22 Saturday, caught six fish, actually nice
23 fish, put them back. But hopefully
24 we'll be able to. But I'm here to
25 simply give overall general support.

1 Heckathorne

2 And I am extremely excited about the
3 projects that were suggested. Doesn't
4 mean there shouldn't or couldn't be
5 other projects, but from out standpoint
6 of working on the Lake for many many
7 years, for probably 40 or 50 graduate
8 students, many of those projects made a
9 tremendous amount of sense.

10 And I'm here really to listen to the
11 other ideas, such as the Onondaga Creek,
12 Nine Mile Creek and so on. But from my
13 standpoint, the process looks to be an
14 extremely positive one. Thank you.

15 ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you. James
16 Heckathorne.

17 JAMES HECKATHORNE: I'm James
18 Heckathorne from Baldwinsville. And I
19 read through the report, and I like what
20 I see in most of the proposals. And I
21 do a lot of work with the Trustees.
22 Tonight I'm here to represent a group of
23 people, who like me, are avid cyclists,
24 hikers, like to go down to the Lake.
25 And we're particularly excited about the

1 Heckathorne
2 two projects that involve the bike trail.
3 So what we did is we got together,
4 kind of grassroots effort, and
5 circulated a petition. And I would like
6 to read part of it into the record
7 tonight, if I could.

8 "Connecting the Erie Canalway Trail
9 has been debated for more than 20 years.
10 The proposal put forth by the Onondaga
11 Lake Trustees connects a major segment,
12 potentially connecting up to 280 miles
13 of existing Erie Canalway Trail,
14 creating one of the longest intrastate
15 multi-use use trails in the United
16 States."

17 "With these benefits in mind, this
18 petition supports the construction of
19 two proposed projects: Connecting the
20 Erie Canalway Trail from Camillus to the
21 Onondaga Loop, the Lake Trail, and an
22 extension of the Loop the Lake Trail
23 into the Inner Harbor of Syracuse. We
24 urge the Onondaga Lake Trustees to
25 implement these projects without delay

1 Heckathorne

2 to make a real, lasting benefit for the
3 people of New York State."

4 So we posted this petition. So far
5 when I left the house, we had 176
6 signatures. We'll continue to collect
7 them and we'll submit them as part of
8 the record. People who signed the
9 petition were also invited to submit
10 comments, and we'll submit those to the
11 record too. But just a few.

12 Penny from Syracuse says, "This is
13 so important to revitalizing this area
14 and bringing back the beauty and
15 usability of the area."

16 Scott from Syracuse says, "Please
17 extend and improve the trail."

18 Jack from Liverpool says, "This
19 trail is being used by so many people, I
20 can only imagine how the Erie Canal
21 Trail and Southwest Lakeshore Trail
22 Extension will be received once
23 completed. Keep the line, let's Loop
24 the Lake."

25 Dale from Syracuse simply, "Please

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Dolin

complete the trail."

I won't go through them all because we've got several, but Glen from Boston says, "Have been waiting a lifetime for it to happen." So we echo those comments, and we hope to see the bike trail included as part of the project.

ALJ McBRIDE: I don't think I said in the beginning, if anyone is reading their comments into the record, please leave your comments behind for the court reporter to enter into the record.

Thank you. Virginia Dolin.

VIRGINIA DOLIN: Credit where credit is due. I'm very glad that Bob Congel restored the Carousel that was put at Carousel Center for a long time, because that's restored from the original Long Branch Park. So we have something that was on Onondaga Lakeshore from a hundred years ago restored.

A hundred years ago, we had White City, we also had the Iron Pier. We had the beginnings of some actual

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Dolin

entertainment, amusements that were easy for people to get to from Syracuse. And they conflicted with the expanding Allied Chemical vats.

White City, that used to have 25,000 electric lights, must have looked just so the moon had landed. Was bought up and used as a chemical plant. Like tearing down paradise to put up a chemical plant. And the Iron Pier, which actually was made out of wood, and painted black to look like an Iron Pier that was in progress at the time that Allied was upping its amount of chemical waste on the Lake.

And by 1938, pretty much there was no entertainment industry on the Lake. In 1934, Three Rivers Inn had opened in Phoenix. People would rather drive past the Lake and go to Phoenix to see Nat King Cole, the whole group. It's not that there wasn't an entertainment industry, it's just that when you're the most polluted Lake in the United States,

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Bowes

people aren't going to go to your resort.

So I would like to see a little bit done on Onondaga Creek, which has these beautiful parks. I would like to see some entertainment for the public restored to Onondaga Creek. It's kind of a replacement for Onondaga Lake.

ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you. Andrew Bowes.

ANDREW BOWES: I'm from

Baldwinsville, New York. Are there any Creek Rats here? Raise your hand.

We've got one guy over here that cleaned Onondaga Creek as a volunteer effort.

Made it a navigable waterway that it is today. I have used it from behind the MOST, just two weeks ago, it is a fabulous resource. It's an emerald ribbon through the center of this City.

I think with proper care and thought that Kirk Park can be widened, the water can be slowed down, you can have a canoe/kayak access point there. There is enough room in Kirk Park for

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Bowes

entertainment that can be supported by local communities. It's a vital resource. It's going to continue to be polluted to some degree by the mud boils unless there is some science that changes that. So a fund should be created that lasts at least seven generations, just like the Haudenosaunee, and didn't get it right, quote though, do. We need to look forward on how to maintain this Creek. It's not so much a natural Creek, like Nine Mile, which looks great, it's been replanted, I've paddled there multiple times, that's a naturalized area.

This is an urban area, it's going to have to require more maintenance. Access points, there is about six of them. My one that I think is the big one for me is behind the MOST, because it's in the center of downtown. There is over \$300 million of investment in downtown that people are moving down in droves, if you listen to the developers.

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West

How many of those people would like to access to fish that Creek and have recreation along that Creek?

With that fund, an administrator can work with public and private benefits, relationships, you can have sponsors. Honeywell can put their sign on the gates. That way the things can be controlled and maintained.

I've been in a lot of different waters. This one has been neglected. It's time that Honeywell, the DEC, do what they did for Nine Mile Creek needs to be done on Onondaga Creek. The studies are there. The stuff is out there. There are a lot of people here know a lot more about it than I do. It's time to get going on it. Thank you.

ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you. Caroline West.

CAROLINE WEST: Thank you. I'm Caroline West, thank you for coming, Judge. I live in Syracuse, a block and-a-half from the Creek, in the

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Krol
Valley. I cross the Creek multiple
times a day. The restoration is great,
recreation is great. My main concern is
that we, who live near the Creek,
shouldn't be afraid of the floods. We
shouldn't be in a Flood Zone. If the
Creek can be fixed that should happen.
And this is the time to do it, when
there is funding available. We
shouldn't always have these nightmares
of writing these flood insurance
premiums. Thank you.

ALJ McBRIDE: Danielle Krol.

DANIELLE KROL: Hi, I'm Danielle
Krol, I'm a senior transportation
planner, and I'm here representing the
Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation
Council. I'm here to offer our support
to two specific proposed recreational/
restoration projects. The Erie Canal
Trail Extension and the Onondaga Lake
Recreation Trail.

As was already mentioned, that
connecting the Erie Canal Trail through

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Krol

New York State and through our community has been talked about for more than 25 years. And with member agency support, and we are an agency of multiple different agencies, City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York State, our agency, SMTC, conducted a study that examined how to close the current gap in the trail between Camillus and Dewitt. It's one of the more significant gaps across the state. It's about 12 to 14 miles was missing. It's also in an urbanized area, and so easy to do, would have been done by now.

So part of our process, for our study, included a survey asking the public what they wanted to see in Erie Canal Trail in that area. And folks said that they were interested in having off roads that has easy access to cultural sites, activities, food, services, and one that followed the historic route of the canal.

In the western part of the gap, in

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Krol

the Camillus area, SMTC looked at Honeywell property at a high level as a potential connector. And as part of that examination we also looked at Gerelock Road and Gerelock Place. That's a significant part of the history of the Erie Canal Trail. We received a lot of public comment and general feedback about how important it is to hold onto that asset and to preserve the Gerelock as part of the trail.

Another point I would like to make is connections to the existing trail in the community, the Erie Canal Trail and the Southwest Trail piece there, would help do that. Connect with the Lake trail and the Creek walk. And it would be important in creating an overall regional trail network.

I also wasn't to point out too, the SMTC created a long reach transportation plan, 25 year vision that guides transportation planning and investment in the county. And closing the gap in

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Krol

the Erie Canal Trail would help achieve several of those goals and pass a long range plan, providing more trails to connect destinations, increasing the percentage of commuter trips made by bike or walking, reducing miles of people traveling to the region. And it also came out of the regionally significant project having the trail in our community.

And the last point I would like to make is that recently the Governor announced 200 million to complete the Empire State Trail across New York State, which includes the Erie Canal Trail. For the central pieces on Honeywell property are extremely significant, they're a key piece to completing the trail. If these projects don't happen through this manner it will be really tough to have it happen.

ALJ McBRIDE: Rich Puchalski.

RICH PUCHALSKI: My name is Rich Puchalski, Executive Director of

1 Puchalski

2 Syracuse United Neighbors. We are here
3 today to protest the projects that are
4 in the 8 1/2 x 14 slick paper. It
5 includes stuff like Nine Mile Creek, but
6 it neglects to talk about anything along
7 Onondaga Creek, which is the largest
8 tributary to Onondaga Lake.

9 We think that the Council should
10 have a little bit more representatives
11 of people in the City, particularly
12 African-Americans, in order to take a
13 look at this whole issue of Onondaga
14 Creek.

15 Onondaga Creek is an area that's
16 chain-linked fenced off. Overgrown with
17 trees and brush. One can't even see the
18 water in the Creek, and as we cross the
19 streets that go through the neighborhoods.

20 Staff of Environmental Conservation
21 and US Wildlife should take a look at
22 Meadowbrook. It's a beautiful area next
23 to Barry Park, and it's got runners,
24 walkers, cyclists using the trails,
25 enjoying the lush green space. There is

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Puchalski

ducks and geese, something that we don't see in Onondaga Creek.

This year 270 properties came off of the FEMA flood zone on the East Side. We believe that the basins protects the homeowners, it's quite the opposite of Onondaga Creek. The FEMA hundred year flood zone made its ugly appearance in August of '16. 876 properties were targeted to pay flood insurance, which is up to about \$600 a year.

Mud boils. It's time for DEC to take a study about the Creek, particularly in the City, along South and Temple Streets. And this has pushed forward this whole idea of a hundred year flood zone. Our neighborhoods along the Creek are being harmed as a result of the mud boils.

SUN would like to see fishing piers, canoe/kayak launches along the Creek, retention basins and recreational amenities. We want a slice of the NRD money.

Public hearing. Well, you know

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Lyons

initially there was not a public hearing. I think a few people showed up, a dozen of us from SUN on the 10th or 11th of May and protested that event, held up our signs. And demanded that the NRD people hold a public hearing. And that's why we have it today. Thank you. Catch you around the next time.

ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you. Jessi Lyons.

JESSI LYONS: I'm a resident that lives, my property backs up to Onondaga Creek in North Valley Neighborhood. And I also represent the Brady Faith Center that serves people in the Southwest community and the South Side, and we run an Urban Farm on the South Side that is adjacent to Onondaga Creek. It also has a tributary that is on the other side of the property and we're surrounded by woods.

So my personal experience is that the Onondaga Creek Corridor on the South Side through the Valley does have rich opportunity for natural resource

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Lyons

restoration and development, and recreational opportunities that come with that. And also the property values and overall well-being that would come to residents by increasing the recreational and ecological restoration in that area.

Our neighborhoods are long overdue for having these type of developments. And the day-to-day benefit that a resident gets from having these opportunities, including transportation, by biking and walking, canoeing, whatever it might be, but also having increased access to education and nature education in the City.

So I am advocating, as well as the others, to increase the ecological restoration, focusing on Kirk Park, focusing on the section south of Ballantyne Road that are already semi-naturalized that have very easy opportunities for development. There is lots of green space along Onondaga Creek

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Ring

that is public property that could be developed for these purposes. Thank you.

ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you. Hanna Ring.

HANNA RING: Hi, my name is Hanna Ring. I'm the Central New York Program Coordinator for Citizens Campaign for the Environment. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

CCE applauds the Trustees for conducting an assessment of the damages to Onondaga Lake and for providing the assessment. We also thank you for extending the public comment period and in holding the hearing today. We support many of the aspects of the restoration plan, however, there are a few points we want to make to improve the plan and better restore Onondaga Lake, it's habitat and its watershed.

We commend the Trustees for considering and proposing a variety of restoration projects, however the description and information provided about the specific projects are vague

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Ring
and lack crucial details. We're talking
of not providing enough information
about the project to adequately gauge
the environmental benefits and impacts.
CCE encourages the Trustees to produce
additional information about the
proposed projects and other projects
that have not been fully considered. As
well as include information about the
location, the size, and the cost and the
environmental impact of those projects.

The proposed projects listed in the
Assessment are a very good starting
point to addressing the restoration in
Onondaga Lake, but do not go far enough.
The ecological and restoration projects
that are in the Assessment are limited
and overlooked projects that would
benefit the watershed. The Assessment
should consider a project to restore
habitat and recreational opportunity to
Onondaga Creek and other tributaries.
Projects that restore native fish and
plant species, as well as additional

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Ring

projects to educate the public on the health of the Lake and what they can do to contribute to its restoration.

CCE urges the Trustees to seek out and assess additional restoration projects in order to address the overwhelming restorative needs of Onondaga Lake. As well as place a higher priority on the ecological restoration projects than they have in this Assessment.

Many of the proposed recreation projects are focussing on increasing fishing access. Fishing access onto the Lake, none of them include informing the public of the health risks of consuming fish from the Lake. Fish consumption advisory signs are crucial to have around Onondaga Lake due to legacy pollution.

The proposed recreational restoration projects do not mention educating the public of the dangers of consuming the fish. CCE urges the

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Liptak

Trustees to include the installation of fish consumption advisory signs at all fishing access points that accurately depict the danger of consuming fish.

Furthermore, CCE urges the Trustees to use the signs developed by the Onondaga Lake Watershed Partnership.

The OLWP developed fish advisory signs that would be universally understood, and clearly conveys and depicts that fish from Onondaga Lake should not be eaten.

ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you. Matt Liptak.

MATT LIPTAK: Hello, I'm Matt Liptak from Baldwinsville, New York, I'm a little tall.

ALJ McBRIDE: You can move that up.

MATT LIPTAK: Anyway, I would just like to say that it's important for you to consider the Haudenosaunee, the Iroquois people in your restoration of the Lake. There was promises to them a year or two ago through Onondaga legislation, that a portion, some acres

1 Liptak
2 of the land on the Lake would go back to
3 them. And I don't think we should break
4 another promise to the Native America.

5 Also there is some basic things real
6 quick, that I notice that seem to be
7 omitted. There were no information
8 about bathrooms along all the trails
9 that you're going to be making. I know
10 that I'm a regular user of Onondaga Lake
11 Park on the east side, and those
12 bathrooms come in very handy when I'm
13 drinking a lot of water on a hot day. I
14 was thinking maybe to construct a few on
15 the other side.

16 And I encourage the people to think
17 a little bigger about the development of
18 the west side of Onondaga Lake for the
19 restoration. Why not turn a visitor
20 center into a nature center. Why not
21 turn the northwest side opposite Willow
22 Bay into possibly a campground, if it
23 could be restored. And that's all I
24 have to say. Like to thank you for your
25 hard work and thank you for the chance

1 Adams/Kittleman

2 to speak.

3 ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you. Maryanne
4 Adams and Renee Kittleman. They're
5 going to share their remarks.

6 MARYANNE ADAMS: Hi, I'm Maryanne
7 Adams. I'm Conservation Chair for
8 Onondaga Audubon. I happen to live in
9 Cato, New York, but I represent Audubon
10 Chapter in many Counties around here,
11 including Onondaga County.

12 For the past few years this
13 organization has been closely tied to
14 Onondaga Lake's restoration process. As
15 an Audubon Chapter, we have strong
16 feelings about protecting the birds that
17 depend on the area as a migratory
18 stopover point and as a destination for
19 raising the next generation. The
20 construction of the Amphitheater
21 resulted in dramatic changes to some 70
22 acres of scrub habitat.

23 Now the restoration process has the
24 potential to greatly improve a variety
25 of habitats. However, as habitat

1 Adams/Kittleman

2 improves and more bird species move in,
3 we have the added responsibility of
4 educating the public who are enjoying
5 increased access about the wildlife that
6 shares the space. Along with this
7 fabulous opportunity comes increased
8 responsibility. Every proposed project
9 will have an impact on wildlife. Each
10 one needs to be thoroughly assessed with
11 regards to what it will mean for the
12 birds and other fauna that share the
13 habitat.

14 We will do that in our written
15 comments to follow later. I'd like to
16 introduce Renee Kittleman, the
17 Vice-President of Onondaga Audubon.

18 RENEK KITTLEMAN: We give our
19 support to the grassland restoration
20 work. And prior to the Amphitheater
21 being built, there were Bobolink and
22 Dickcissel breeding at the grassland,
23 and recreating that habitat for these
24 birds is a huge priority. We applaud
25 the proposal.

1 Adams/Kittleman

2 MARYANNE ADAMS: We'd also like to
3 see mudflat creation as shorebird
4 foraging habitat. Onondaga Lake used to
5 be a key migratory shorebird stopover
6 location in Central New York and hosted
7 some very rare species, such as Northern
8 Lapwing in the past. Creation of
9 foraging habitat is key to preserving
10 this trend.

11 In addition, we've been noticing
12 that lately a great deal of money has
13 been shunted toward improving parking
14 areas. So looks like a lot more paving
15 is going to be done. Pavement is not
16 really good for wildlife. For example,
17 if asphalt is wet, waterfowl will
18 mistake it for water. If a Loon lands
19 on a parking lot, thinking it's water,
20 it can't fly off again, and stuck there
21 and will probably die. We would like to
22 see more gravel used wherever possible,
23 you know, if it doesn't inconvenience
24 the public too much.

25 RENEE KITTLEMAN: Common Terns have

1 Adams/Kittleman
2 been showing up on the Lake again, and
3 creating of Tern nesting platforms could
4 be easy productive means of providing
5 the birds with nesting habitats that is
6 fairly safe from predators. This could
7 fit in nicely with the plan to install
8 structures for fish and amphibians.

9 MARYANNE ADAMS: We continue to be
10 concerned about the placement of the
11 final portion of the Loop-the-Lake
12 Trail. We applaud the completion of the
13 trail. We think it's a wonderful thing.
14 Some of our board members are bikers.
15 However, we think it's very important
16 that the Bald Eagle roost, that is in
17 the same area as the proposed, one of
18 the proposals for the trail be
19 considered, either have it closed during
20 the time when the Eagles are there or
21 else have a different loop to avoid them
22 if it's necessary.

23 RENEE KITTLEMAN: And we hope a
24 conservation based group or a coalition
25 of such groups are given priority for

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Riefler

the transfer of the Honeywell Visitor Center. We would like to see the Center used for a variety of environmental education programs.

MARYANNE ADAMS: In general, we commend all the efforts to restore habitat around Onondaga Lake, and the Onondaga Audubon looks forward to working with fish and wildlife, DEC, Onondaga County, to make the Lake a better place for birds and other wildlife in addition to what is being planned for the benefit of humans.

ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you. Ryan Riefler.

RYAN RIEFLER: Good evening. Ryan Riefler here from 2780 Schuyler Road in Marietta, New York. I am an operator at the Village of Marcellus Wastewater Treatment Plant. I've come this evening and I've heard some fantastic things about what might be able to be developed or restored for our communities and our youth of the future, maybe potentially move them away from technology and

1 Riefler

2 reacquaint them with the outdoors again,
3 which is great.

4 I don't have any concerns about what
5 necessarily you're proposing, other than
6 maybe the distribution of the resources
7 that do so. I've come to speak on what
8 I feel is inequity of the distribution
9 of the damages. As we gather here
10 tonight, a small bedroom community ten
11 miles to the west of here is suffocating
12 the financial weight of the unintended
13 mandate late for the Onondaga Lake
14 phosphorus TMDL.

15 And as much as the gentleman before
16 me has spoken about the public hearing
17 for the opportunity to express their
18 thoughts, we were never invited or even
19 acknowledged during the creation of that
20 TMDL. And once again, I feel something
21 similar is happening to many of these
22 residents and community members here.

23 During the Onondaga Lake clean up,
24 initially the clean up was kept, the
25 liability of the clean up was kept to

1 Riefler

2 the edges of the Lake. But with the
3 creation of the Onondaga Lake TMDL for
4 phosphorus, it was expanded to the
5 entire watershed. So we have 3,000
6 families that are looking to have to
7 financially pay for a 600 pound
8 reduction in phosphorus that our
9 wastewater treatment plant would have to
10 remove each year due to our permit.

11 We have a \$6 million project that
12 has been necessitated by this TMDL and
13 the phosphorus, towards the phosphorus,
14 and the DEC oversight to include us in
15 the creation that lead us to a point
16 that we feel we have no outlet for our
17 community to continue to thrive and
18 expand itself.

19 We see many leave New York State due
20 to taxes and the cost of living here and
21 the economic inabilities to find jobs.
22 We're trying to continue to keep our
23 youth here. And as rising costs are
24 associated with wastewater
25 infrastructure, and costs obviously not

1 Riefler
2 going into the funding of this that
3 should be equitable, we are concerned.
4 We've been very busy in Marcellus with
5 energy upgrades to the plant in 2006.
6 And the composting project, which has
7 reduced the total biosolid disposal
8 costs. All of these things are driven
9 by great savings for our community
10 members. But obviously there is an
11 investment cost to that.

12 We've also been awarded a hundred
13 thousand dollars for a clean energy
14 communities grant and \$20,000 for zero
15 emissions infrastructure.

16 So we are environmentally minded and
17 fiscally responsible. Yet we feel that
18 this unfunded mandate has been put upon
19 the Village, and this might be an
20 opportunity for damages and assets to be
21 steered toward the Village to right what
22 I feel is a wrong.

23 We've currently got about a \$2
24 million gap on that \$6 million project
25 and, any financial assistance in that

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Cummings

consideration would be appreciated.

Thank you.

ALJ McBRIDE: Sir, can we have your
remarks? Geoffrey Cummings.

GEOFFREY CUMMINGS: Good evening.
I'm from Eastwood, 219 Norwood Ave. in
the City of Syracuse. Generally I'm
pleased with the quality and the scope
of the projects that I'm seeing that are
being generated from the community
members. I would especially like to
reiterate support for really the
Onondaga Creek from Tully into the City
and the considerable problems they're
having, really all along them.

To me it gets down to hoping that
the DEC and the Wildlife Departments are
going to help us keep Honeywell to the
commitment that was made to this
community. We want to be key markers of
that, in that the fish in the Lake would
be edible. I don't appreciate all the
science, and a lot of it, I think all of
us it's hard to keep a handle on. But

1 Lowry
2 there is a cautionary tale, even
3 presently in the Hudson River, where 25
4 or 30 years ago G.E. was again brought
5 into a similar situation, and looked to
6 bring the Hudson back. And presently it
7 doesn't seem as though it really has
8 done that. And it becomes a matter of
9 holding them accountable.

10 I'm concerned that five years down
11 the road the fish will still not be
12 edible, and that that commitment will
13 have become gray or lost. And again, I
14 ask the Department of Conservation to
15 help us defend that and to help us
16 support that principle. Thank you.

17 ALJ McBRIDE: Alma Lowry.

18 ALMA LOWRY: Good evening, my name
19 is Alma Lowry, I'm an attorney, here
20 speaking on behalf of the Onondaga
21 Nation. The Nation participated as a
22 Trustee in this process for many years,
23 hoping that it would result in a cleaner
24 and restored Onondaga Lake. We are
25 pleased to see good ideas in the Draft

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Lowry

Plan, particularly the restoration of the habitat around the Lake and protection of undeveloped lands in the Tully Valley. But we also see some serious shortcomings.

The Nation has already provided written comments, and rather than repeating those at length tonight, I'm going to focus on three key issues.

1st, the need to expand the damages considered, to include broader cultural and recreational losses.

2nd, the need for projects directly in the damaged communities, particularly along Onondaga Creek.

And 3rd, the need to ensure that increased fishing access won't increase exposure to toxic fish.

So the Draft Plan focuses pretty much exclusively on damage to identifiable natural resources, like fish and birds and recreational fishing losses. This ignores entire categories of lost benefits that should have been

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Lowry

provided by an unpolluted Onondaga Lake.
Such as the psychological and emotional
benefit to people in the community of
the connection with nature, the cultural
value of the Lake to the Onondaga Nation
and the broader Syracuse community, and
the simple existence value of the Lake.
These losses are significant and it
should not be ignored. We are asking
the Trustees to expand their assessment
to include these losses and develop
projects to address them.

The Draft Plan should also
prioritize projects that are easily
accessible to City residents. As the
Onondaga Nation has committed itself to
try to restore the proper relationships
between the people and the natural
world. And the century-long pollution
of Onondaga Lake has really severed the
relationship between people in the
Syracuse community and the natural world
embodied in that Lake. That loss is
profound. And it can't be repaired with

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Lowry
just a handful of recreational fishing spots and hiking trails, particularly when those projects are distant from the affected communities.
Onondaga Creek, in particular, should be a focus of attention. Onondaga Creek flows through the Nation's territory, it flows directly through the City of Syracuse. It should provide easy access to nature for both the Nation and urban residents. Unfortunately it's severely damaged. And most of the South Side is fenced off from the communities and residents, as Rich mentioned, often can't even see the water. The Trustee Council can and should develop projects to make Onondaga Creek an accessible natural area for urban communities. To make up for this loss, this loss connection, the Nation and these communities have suffered because of ongoing pollution. And therefore projects that have been proposed, such widening and renaturalizing the Creek or

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Lowry

creating retention ponds with recreational access, these should be considered.

And last, we're concerned about the heavy focus on expanding recreational fishing acces in and around Onondaga Lake. We're worried that may lead to increased consumption of fish, despite Department of Health recommendations that children under 15 and women under child bearing age not eat any fish at all. We would like the Council to maximize the likelihood that the public will follow the recommendations by posting limited fish consumption by posting warning signs in multiple languages, with graphic warnings at all new or expanded recreational fishing locations.

I just want to thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. And really appreciate the hearing, and the opportunity to testify, as you see a lot of people here.

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Wowelko

ALJ McBRIDE: Stephen Wowelko.

STEPHEN WOWELKO: Good evening. My name is Stephen Wowelko of East Syracuse. I'm the Director of the Onondaga County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, and a Councilman to the New York State Conservation Council.

The Onondaga County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs represents over 5,000 members in over 30 sporting organizations throughout Central New York.

At a meeting of the delegates from its member organizations on June 19, 2017, the representatives unanimously passed a resolution in support of the proposed projects in the Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan Projects for Onondaga Lake. I will submit a copy of that resolution for the record.

Sportsmen feel that the projects go far and above what our expectations were in this remediation process to compensate the public and the environment for

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May
losses sustained while the Lake was
being cleaned up. We realize that time
is of the essence, and the longer that
these projects are delayed, the longer
it will be before we and future
generations will be able to enjoy their
benefits.

ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you. Rachel May.

RACHEL MAY: Good evening. I'm
Rachel May, Director of Sustainability
Education at Syracuse University. For
the last couple of years I've had a
grant from the Environmental Protection
Agency to develop curriculum for
students in middle schools and high
schools in the area, in the watershed.
So that they can learn about indigenous
environmental values and the historical
ecology of Onondaga Lake.

It's been a very successful program.
We've brought a lot of students out to
the Haundenosaunee Peace Center and the
Honeywell Visitor Center and elsewhere
on the Lake so they can learn about the

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May

history of the Lake and the ecosystems and nature around the Lake as it is now and as it once was.

So my comments are mostly that there are a number of ecological restoration projects that are proposed, and I would like to see more attention to how they might be used by school children, by school groups. So that there would be signage and information that could be used so that they can be part of field trips.

But, and I don't know if this even falls in the purview of the project, but what we have found is that a lot of these students don't have access to the Lake to begin with. And they only, they're seeing the Lake for the first time, because they're coming there on a field trip that we have paid for through our grant. So if all of the resources are going to improving recreation along the Lake, but there are a lot of people who can't get to the Lake to begin with,

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Cunningham

that's a problem. So I would like that to be taken into consideration in some way. If there is a way to create a fund for field trips to the Lake for our children in the watershed or other ways of enhancing access to the Lake from communities that don't have that access. That's what I would like to see.

ALJ McBRIDE: Mary Cunningham.

MARY CUNNINGHAM: I'm Mary

Cunningham, I'm been a 40 year resident of the City of Syracuse. I would like to just say a few words in support of some of the comments that have been made today.

1. There's been a lot of focus on the Lake itself. But the Creek also really needs research done to figure out why is the Creek flooding? What might be done about it? And how does that relate up the Creek into the Haudenosaunee land? And I think we need to recognize that it is all one. It's not a Lake and a creek, it's all one.

1 Cunningham

2 And it's the whole ecosystem.

3 2. I'm glad to hear that there will
4 be money spent on looking at the mud
5 boils and how that might relate to it.
6 So I think that's really important.

7 I spent a year looking with the
8 parks and rec department looking at Kirk
9 Park, Onondaga Park and Elmwood, which
10 had Onondaga Creek, common thing they
11 have going through them is Onondaga Creek.
12 When you look at Meadowbrook, which is
13 on the East Side, which has become
14 recreation, flood control and natural
15 habitat, I really think you have three
16 major beautiful jewels on that South and
17 Southwest Side in those three parks that
18 might be able to become a sludge
19 prevention mechanism that provides a
20 great deal to the culture of the
21 neighborhood as a whole. And I would
22 really like to see research done to
23 think about how do we turn any of those
24 areas, those green spaces into multiple
25 use, including flood control as well as

1 Emerson

2 the restoration. Thank you.

3 ALJ McBRIDE: Michael Emerson.

4 MICHAEL EMERSON: Mike Emerson,
5 Ontario, New York. My comments are
6 probably a little different from what I
7 heard so far. But I'm more concerned
8 with the Tully recreational area and
9 nature preserve project. I'm not quite
10 sure what that means.

11 But my history is that I grew up in
12 the Tully Valley area as a young man.
13 My grandfather, Earl Grassly ran the
14 Solvay Process farm going way back when.
15 So I virtually grew up in that whole
16 area.

17 To make a long story short, I know
18 that whole area like the back of my
19 hand, because again I grew up in it and
20 hunted and fished on that property,
21 which is now Honeywell, for close to 40
22 years, back when it was Solvay Process
23 and then it became Allied Signal
24 Corporation.

25 Well, when Honeywell bought it out,

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Emerson

they restricted access to everybody.

There was no access to anybody, the trout stream or the woods, entirely.

And I guess in speaking so much from a fisherman and a hunter, that that whole area is overpopulated with deer right now. Because there is no access to be able to hunt there.

I'm sure that if Honeywell got with the DEC to allow access again to hunting that property, the New York State Troopers and the insurance companies from 81, along 81, Lafayette and Tully would be sorely happy. Because the accidents are incredible. And I don't know if anybody has ever hit deer around here going 65 or 70 miles an hour going off 81, that's not pretty.

So I guess that's my point in a way, that I would like to see Honeywell work with the DEC to get, allow access to those properties. It's a gorgeous area. The trout streams on that upper end of Onondaga Creek, beautiful trout fishing,

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Emerson

it has a ton of small streams that used to lead down in there are loaded with brook trout.

Fellows Falls is probably the best kept secret in New York State. That should be a State Park. It is absolutely fabulous. I see on your picture, you've got a picture of the center falls, it's actually three falls. The one in the beginning, and the one in the center, which is the most beautiful, and then there is one up higher.

So that whole area should be somehow made into some kind of preserve and allowed access to the public. It's gorgeous, off Tully Farms Road near the base of the old Solvay farms that my grandfather ran for his whole life. So I'm just a little perturbed because again, I know that whole area like the back of my hand. Every stream, every rock pretty much. But now the Honeywell owns it, boom. I mean for the last seven to nine years you can't get access

1 Monastory

2 anywhere near it.

3 And personally, pushing 62, pushing
4 63, excuse me, I can't wait another
5 seven to nine years. And if it's an
6 issue, I would say to the DEC if it's an
7 issue of firearms, which I'm not
8 against, open it up to archery only,
9 start out there for liabilities issues.

10 ALJ McBRIDE: Les Montgomery.

11 LES MONASTORY: My name is Les
12 Monastory, I'm a fisherman, an aquatic
13 biologist, and also represent Isaac
14 Walton League, which is a National
15 Conservation Organization.

16 About 35, 40 years ago, I got
17 involved in Onondaga Lake. I worked for
18 the County of Onondaga as an
19 Environmental Planner, with the
20 Environmental Management Council. And
21 we developed the original Environmental
22 Plan for Onondaga County in 1975, which
23 included plans for restoration of
24 Onondaga Lake.

25 As a member of the Isaac Walton

1 Monastory

2 Chapter, myself and Bob Ripburger, who
3 is a pretty well known conservationist,
4 outdoorsman, we basically convinced the
5 then DEC Commissioner Williams, to
6 reopen Onondaga Lake to fishing in 1985,
7 1986. With the help of Al Digler, and a
8 bunch of other fishermen volunteers, we
9 have had a youth fishing program for the
10 past 31 years at Onondaga Lake. And
11 we're having another program coming
12 again on August 20th. We have tried to
13 get as many youth as possible involved
14 with these programs.

15 Also our Isaac Walton Chapter has
16 been monitoring streams in the Central
17 New York region for the past two
18 and-a-half decades including Pompey.
19 And we have worked with school groups,
20 we have worked with adult teams, and I
21 actually have six adult teams. I go out
22 weekly monitoring streams here in
23 Onondaga County. And have seen
24 tremendous improvements in water quality
25 both in the streams and of course in

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Squillace
Onondaga Lake.
I'll be happy to, the Isaac Walton
League, we have a statement of interest
and concerns. And we now have a chance
to turn what was once the most polluted
Lake in America into a national treasure.
I would like to see Onondaga Creek
opened again to public access, including
fishing, recreation, education. And we
also support the recommendations of the
Fish & Wildlife Services and the DEC for
use of these Habitat Restoration Funds.
But we also would like to see the mud
boils improved and continue the
restoration of the Lake and its
tributaries.

ALJ McBRIDE: Cindy Squillace.

CINDY SQUILLACE: Hi, I'm Cindy
Squillace. I'm here as a resident of
Syracuse and also a member of Neighbors
of the Onondaga Nation. The Neighbors
of the Onondaga Nation has already
submitted a full statement with comments
and recommendations. So I'm not going

1 Squillace

2 to go over them right now, but I do want
3 to highlight just a couple of things.

4 One that we feel very strongly that
5 the Nation's vision for Onondaga Lake
6 should be taken much more seriously.
7 And there should be found ways to have
8 their meaningful input into what
9 happened with the Lake.

10 Also our comments are about Onondaga
11 Creek. As many people have said,
12 feeling that that was another source of
13 food, recreation, of spiritual well-
14 being of not just the Onondaga people
15 but all of us along the Creek. So the
16 statement does go into detail about that.

17 As a resident of Syracuse I would
18 like to mention I work in the Syracuse
19 City schools. And I work with the
20 refugee populations in the Syracuse
21 schools. And as I got to know them
22 more, and talk with them about their
23 family and their culture, what I found
24 out is that many of the families are
25 eating fish from the Lake often. The

1 Squillace
2 children don't know where it comes from.
3 They went back and asked their parents,
4 where the fish came from. And they
5 talked about big fish that they got,
6 which of course are the fish that are
7 most contaminated. They're calling in
8 neighbors, they're having parties and
9 sharing the fish.

10 So I, as well as many people here,
11 have big concerns about that. And the
12 signs are great, I'm glad the signs were
13 changed. But the real way to help them
14 is to clean the Lake enough that they
15 could actually fish and eat the fish out
16 of the Lake. That would be the real
17 benefit and what I hope to see in my
18 lifetime. Thank you.

19 ALJ McBRIDE: Frank Miller.

20 FRANK MILLER: My name is Frank
21 Miller, I'm the President and Founder of
22 Nine Mile Creek Conservation Council,
23 it's a non-profit corporation,
24 apolitical, all volunteers, no paid staff.

25 Our focus has been specifically time

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Miller

on task to the Nine Mile Creek and the watershed. The group was first formulated when I began researching it in 1990, and we became really solid in 1993. We've instituted the Nine Creek Water Trail by funding by ourselves and empowering a water trail that could be mapped with docks for canoes and kayaks from the Camillus Village to the Lake.

We do a lot of water trout stocking, and there are a variety of other projects that we've been involved with, including the first, to our knowledge, of the Nine Mile Creek River Watershed Preservation Plan, funded by our group through SUNY ESF.

I'm not trying to tout our organization to the degree of self promotion. The idea is when we spend money, any money, public or private money, NRDA funds, and there are three projects that are specific to Nine Mile Creek Watershed. There should be an organization at the grassroots level

1 Miller

2 which we are, which networks the town
3 governments and beyond, and finds the
4 best personal resources to solve
5 problems and initiate meaningful
6 projects. That you should, when these
7 NRDA projects are put out there, there
8 should be a responsibility on the
9 community to follow through. And in our
10 case, the Nine Mile Creek Conservation
11 Council has a record of success. And we
12 will be there today and tomorrow to
13 provide support at the grassroots level
14 for any of the projects that are
15 initiated at the Nine Mile Creek
16 corridor.

17 The restoration of all habitats
18 along Nine Mile Creek, and even the west
19 shore of Onondaga Lake are extremely
20 important. Fragmented habitats that
21 have been pretty much proven to be
22 unsuccessful. So by creating a model
23 which we started out with envisioning in
24 1990, based on other models in the
25 country, is to develop a wildlife

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Miller

corridor, a habitat corridor, preparing a buffer corridor, and with an eye on watershed.

In order to achieve the goal that had been touted by all the partners involved with the Lake cleanup, certainly habitat preservation for the future is a long term goal that should be met. The three projects at Nine Mile Creek, you're well aware of, are very specific for the long term goals of habitat preservation and the trout fishery preservation, and also our leaders and politicians and independent grassroots group and environmental groups from all walks of life have touted for the past 40 years. Thank you very much for your time.

ALJ McBRIDE: Sheila Sicilia.

SHEILA SICILIA: Hello. I'm concerned that we have increasing fishing access to the Lake even though the fish aren't safe to eat. It just feels wrong. And I think that this

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Sicilia

whole plan is sort of distracting from the fact that the Lake hasn't been cleaned up and it isn't going to be cleaned up at this point. The caps that were ill advised, haven't been working, and even if they did work it wouldn't improve cleaning the Lake.

I would like you to listen to the Onondaga people as the rightful owners and stewards of the Lake. I would like them to be partners in this process rather than reduced to commenting like the rest of us.

Actually these plans are workable, but I think our first priority needs to be get the Lake truly clean. To build all these things around a polluted lake kind of feels like putting lipstick on a pig. Thank you.

ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you. Peter King.

PETER KING: Good afternoon DEC and Fish and Wildlife. I'm not going to try and repeat a lot of what's been said. But basically I'm here as a member of

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King

Bikes CNY, and Moving People Transport Coalition, but also a more Partnership for Onondaga Creek whom I've attended for a few years.

So I'm not opposed to any of the projects proposed so far as I know and understand. Bike lanes are fine, bike routes, as long as they're connected. And we have major problems in Syracuse with unconnected routes. However, not at the expense of certain other questions.

And I think you need to take, we need to take a larger turn perspective as the Lake cleanup does over the last century, realizes that Syracuse is not unique. Syracuse has what many other cities that are disinvested by, and this is coming out more and more, as people realize it, federal policies and so forth over the past century, starting with red lining in the '30s, the Federal Highway Act.

Basically we have disinvested our

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King

cities and the wealth has moved out.
And a specific example of sort of
disinvestment was what happened with
Onondaga Lake, which was used as a
subsidy for the industry. And I think
that the question of Onondaga Creek
should be much more central because of
the mud boils.

Now I understand you are not FEMA,
Federal Emergency Management, you are
two other departments. But nevertheless
there is an essential balance between
the mud boils, which were caused by
Solvay Process Company, although maybe
that causation is not solid, I think
it's pretty clear. And on the other
hand higher insurance premiums for the
local residents who are already in
poverty from the multitude of other
issues.

So I think that priorities of, on
some form of restoration project, which
would provide education for the City
residents and for anybody who wants to

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King

learn more about urban streams, is an essential and increasingly important topic. But moreover finding ways to work with natural systems that don't fight nature but work with nature. You will get much farther on that dime than with concrete projects, re infrastructure.

I think that project in the Onondaga Creek Watershed, which was an attempt to alleviate flood control would be an excellent project. And moreover, bearing those extra values from the spin off of that. And moreover, I think that urban jobs could be created, urban skills could be created from those projects, which would in turn influence further development. I think we need to think about climate change. Thank you.

ALJ McBRIDE: Thank you. Elmore Davis. Is Elmore Davis here? Olivia Green.

OLIVIA GREEN: Hi, I'm Olivia Green, here representing Atlantic States Legal

1 Green

2 Foundation; been working to clean up the
3 Lake for decades. As has been stated
4 several times already, Onondaga Lake was
5 once the most polluted Lake in the
6 nation. Precedent setting. We suffered
7 and our Lake suffered a precedent
8 setting loss, and it deserves a precedent
9 setting restoration and natural resource
10 damages fund and settlement.

11 So I'm here in addition to the
12 comments we've already submitted on the
13 record, to encourage the Trustees to go
14 big. Go big on how you define the
15 natural resource damages in your
16 assessment and go big on the restoration
17 plan. Please expand the scope of the
18 damage assessment beyond the harmful
19 wildlife and the loss of recreational
20 use of the Lake. Include claims, every
21 imaginable claim you can think of.
22 Include claims related to the air that's
23 often too foul to breathe, the land that
24 is now wastebeds and the water that will
25 never be pure.

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Green

Also include claims related to existence and non-use values. If that's ever been appropriate in an NRD claim, it's most certainly appropriate here.

Include claims for the loss of the cultural resources of our Lake. After all, we're a Lakeside community that lost its Lake. Imagine Ithaca without its Lake or Skaneateles or Cazenovia without its Lake. We once had a huge valuable cultural asset in our Lake. People flocked to the resort, and even exported our fish.

But because of the industrial pollution of our Lake it lost all its desirability for people to come to it. And it only attracted other polluters, like our wastewater treatment plants and Roth Steel.

There has been a huge cultural loss to the people around our Lake. And it's not just the Onondaga Nation, but all of us. People here live in the shadow of the nation's dirtiest Lake and lived

1 Elliott
2 that way for all their lives and for
3 generations. It's a psychological
4 stigma that's been borne by generations
5 and will continue to harm the people of
6 this region, regardless of the cleanup.
7 We deserve for that loss to be
8 acknowledged, and for there to be some
9 attempts to make that right and to
10 restore what was once a cultural asset.

11 Please do something. Whether it's
12 education, outreach, increased
13 restoration, to restore our Lakeside
14 culture and our sense of the Lake as an
15 asset. And I thank you for this
16 opportunity to speak on the record.

17 ALJ McBRIDE: Jessica Elliott.

18 JESSICA ELLIOTT: Good evening. My
19 name is Jessica Elliott. I am a life
20 long resident of the City of Syracuse.
21 And for all my life I could throw a rock
22 into Onondaga Creek from my bedroom
23 window if I could see it. What the DEC
24 has to understand is that this whole
25 community is left out of all restoration

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Elliott

projects. This community is tired of being ignored completely. As we look at those beautiful platforms that you have set up out there, there is no mention of us anywhere in those plans. We talk about restoring Onondaga Lake, but we refuse to recognize the fact that Onondaga Creek flows directly into Onondaga Lake.

If we take the time to naturalize and revitalize the Lake, just like they did with Meadowbrook up on the East Side, this community could be so much greater. I have two young sons who have never seen Onondaga Creek, because they're not tall enough. We don't do anything to stop the flow of water or to slow down the flow of water. It's not a natural thing to have water going that fast through a community.

How do you expect for people in this community to appreciate nature when they can't see nature? Please include us in your plans. Stop ignoring this part of

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Elliott

the community. Nine Mile, Tully, all of those places, yes, revitalize those places too, but put us in there too. Put the South Side of Syracuse in there too.

The lady that was before me, she spoke about us being a Lakeside community. We are that. The South Side of Syracuse is that. Whether you fail to realize it or not, I don't know what to tell you. But this side of the Lake, Onondaga Creek, that runs straight through the South Side, we need naturalization and we need revitalization. Our children want to see the Creek, just as anybody else wants to see any other bed of water. I appreciate you, I hope that you take all that was said into consideration and understand that this is a heartfelt cry, maybe not cry, but it's heartfelt. I'm done crying. It's very heartfelt that you include us in your funding project here and moving forward. Thank you.

ALJ McBRIDE: Alfonso Davis.

1 Alfonso Davis

2 ALFONSO DAVIS: Hello. My name is
3 Alfonso Davis. I'm an activist in this
4 community, and I've been such for over
5 30 years. To the young lady's point,
6 and I'm going a different angle. This
7 community has been economically
8 depressed for several years. And now
9 we're being environmentally depressed
10 and ignored and denied real access.

11 You know, when they talk about
12 revitalization, this is beautiful right
13 here. It really is. I love it. But to
14 her point, when I go out here and I look
15 at Kirk Park or you stop shy of
16 downtown, you got fence, you got tall
17 weeds, everything stops. You go down to
18 Clary, everything stops. So we know the
19 real issue. And the real issue is
20 embodiment of the racism. That's the
21 real issue. But no one will say it.
22 I'm just that bold in my speaking
23 consistently that I will call it like I
24 see it.

25 So when you talk about the young

1 Alfonso Davis

2 woman who was up here saying that, you
3 know, you do all these beautiful things
4 and it's like putting lipstick on a pig.
5 Well, we'll say it's like putting
6 lipstick on a corpse, when you talk
7 about this quadrant right here. Because
8 no one is really bringing real resources
9 to this quadrant.

10 Now in 1980, or was it '81, monies
11 was beginning to be set aside for this
12 particular issue. That's 37 years ago.
13 Think about it. 37 years ago. And to
14 date no financial services to change
15 this Creek Walk in Onondaga Creek? 37
16 years. And no money to date. What do
17 you call that? I call it environmental
18 racism. I don't know what you call it.
19 I call it avoiding and neglecting people
20 in a particular community based on what?

21 Something I said Monday, if the
22 complexity of this community changed,
23 within the next five years it would be a
24 major issue. And they would change,
25 they would do what they did, because I

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Merrill

now live in Brookford Road in that area.
And to this point, they did a very good
job changing that to make sure it's not
flooding.

Now you've got the flood insurance.
I'm in the insurance business, so you've
got insurance companies now preying on
people in this community with these
premiums. And then you've got insurance
companies giving the policies that they
are cancelling them and taking their
money, not refunding it, which I think
they should file a class action lawsuit,
but that's a different story.

Environmental racism is real. What are
you going to do about it? Thank you.

ALJ McBRIDE: Tom Merrill.

TOM MERRILL: Hello. My name is Tom
Merrill, I live in Baldwinsville. And
when I first moved to this area 30 years
ago I remember thinking how sad it was
that this beautiful Lake was considered
one of the most polluted or the most
polluted in the country. It was a toxic

1 Merrill

2 Lake. And I'm sure many people in this
3 room know the history more than I do.

4 Since then there's been a lot of
5 money, time and effort spent to clean up
6 the Lake. And we do, we have restored
7 the Lake back to a point where it can be
8 enjoyed by the public. And I think the
9 projects in this plan go a ways to
10 restoring, protecting wildlife habitat
11 and increasing our access to Onondaga
12 Lake and surrounding areas. In many
13 cases this is access that we currently
14 do not have and might never have but for
15 these projects. And I think these
16 proposals will benefit anyone who seeks
17 to enjoy the Lake.

18 I would encourage as the gentleman
19 who left, would encourage the US Fish
20 and Wildlife Service and the New York
21 State DEC to look for ways to provide
22 for more hunting opportunities on the
23 lands that are suitable for those
24 activities. And he brought up the Tully
25 area as a perfect example of that. And

1 Curtin
2 so as a resident of this county, a
3 hunter, a fisherman, and one who enjoys
4 the outdoors, I do support these
5 projects. And as the gentleman here
6 said, if there is anything we can do to
7 make them more handicapped accessible, I
8 think that's great because this is one
9 Lake that is going to have access all
10 around it. And make it so people that
11 are less able to get around, can enjoy
12 it. I think that's the way we should go.

13 ALJ McBRIDE: Maureen Curtin.

14 MAUREEN CURTIN: Hello, my name is
15 Maureen Curtin. I live at 4859 McDonald
16 Road in the Town of Onondaga, just
17 around the corner from Corcoran High
18 School. I live a little over a mile
19 away from the Creek's western edge, so
20 I'm going to let people's stories stand
21 that live closer to the Creek.

22 But I want to speak to a less
23 visible kind of damage, damage to social
24 connections. This isn't going to show
25 up in the metrics used to assess

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Curtin

Honeywell's damage to the watershed in the community, but it should.

For eight years I've traveled across Brighton Avenue and down to Webster Pond several times a week. It has rarely occurred to me as I make these trips, I'm crossing over or following alongside Onondaga Creek, because of course it's fenced in, invisible. As the recent mandate to buy floodplain insurance tells us, of course, fences don't mend anything. Fences have just made the Creek easier to ignore.

White majority institutions have done a lot of work to build fences between neighborhoods and between people in the City. Redlining policies, I-81, and stories that paint the South and Southwest Sides as a war zone -- hello District Attorney -- all make the residents in this community easier to ignore. These fences made residents here less safe, and they made it harder for us to connect.

1 Curtin

2 Recently, some of us in the CNY
3 Solidarity Coalition have joined the
4 effort to connect. Back in April we
5 began talking with people here on the
6 South and Southwest Side to begin taking
7 down fences. In a meeting of four dozen
8 people in the Dunbar Center, passionate
9 concern about the floodplain bubbled up.
10 This is Jessica Elliott. Near the end
11 of the meeting the distinguished poet
12 Jackie Warren-Moore, who was sitting
13 among us, declared, it's about time you
14 all showed up. We all laughed together,
15 but Ms. Warren-Moore was not kidding
16 around. We are a segregated community.

17 Just like the City never developed
18 good transport systems for getting
19 people to Onondaga Lake -- no access,
20 right? Central New Yorkers never
21 developed strong practices for fostering
22 interracial solidarity. We have a long
23 way to go, but we know one thing for
24 sure, an injustice here in Onondaga
25 Creek is an injustice everywhere in this

1 Lansley
2 watershed. There is no meaningful
3 restoration of Onondaga Lake without
4 meaningful restoration of Onondaga Creek.

5 So 20 projects in the suburbs aren't
6 enough. Whatever challenges Onondaga
7 Creek poses, aren't so much technological
8 as political. Let's take down the
9 fences around this Creek and this
10 community. Thank you.

11 ALJ McBRIDE: Bill Lansley. Is Bill
12 Lansley here?

13 BILL LANSLEY: Bill Lansley. I
14 appreciate all the comments that are
15 here tonight. I come here as a resident
16 of Onondaga County, Syracuse address, up
17 on Skyline. I had the opportunity to
18 work on Onondaga Lake, and it's a
19 treasure that I've seen transform over
20 the last nine years. I've been
21 personally involved with the Loop The
22 Lake project. I worked with a lot of
23 people in the room. It's been a
24 treasure to be part of the restoration
25 and increasing opportunities for people

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Lansley

to use Onondaga Lake and the surrounding recreational areas.

We've expanded the recreational trails, worked with Chuckie Holstein, who did a project that identified 80 years of comments, public comments that were looking for the continuation of trails around Onondaga Lake. And the Loop The Lake Trails is one of the top things that has been on the minds of people for decades. I have a great interest in continuing to Loop The Lake. When you Loop The Lake you loop the community.

Right now we're serving Liverpool and Lysander and Geddes, and when you continue to Loop The Lake you involve the City, you involve the North Side, you involve Galeville, and you loop all of those communities together.

The Erie Canal Trail Project would bring people from Buffalo and Albany and all the way through the central part of Onondaga County right around the Lake.

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Daher

I appreciate the comments here tonight from everyone. I do appreciate the work done by the DEC and the US Fish and Wildlife. I support the projects that are put here today. And I thank you for the opportunity to come and speak on behalf of them.

ALJ McBRIDE: Albert Daher.

ALBERT DAHER: Hello, my name is Al Daher. Some of you may know me from Mickey's Bait and Tackle, I've been there 35 years. I have a deep understanding regarding those issues.

Fishing. Psychological, spiritual, physical benefits associated with fishing. I belong to the Isaac Walton League. This will be our 31st Annual Family Fun Fishing Day, August 20th. We bring children to the shores of Onondaga Lake. We teach them the importance of nature and it's benevolence to our health and the community's health. It's a great lesson for these kids to understand.

1 Daher

2 Fishing helps them reconnect to a
3 resource that has been disheveled and
4 degraded within our lifetimes. It's an
5 important vehicle and must be protected
6 and fostered. And the proposals that
7 are put forth by today's Committee, and
8 DEC, Department of Forestry, are
9 certainly beneficial, with the
10 improvement of the jetty at the outlet,
11 making it more safer for people to
12 access. The Nine Mile Creek improvements.
13 Yes, Onondaga Creek is important. Years
14 ago we recognized that, we should be
15 more involved with Trout Unlimited and
16 being able to restore Onondaga Creek.

17 And I would encourage the residents
18 of the City to get involved with Trout
19 Unlimited to make that happen. Also get
20 involved with Isaac Walton League.
21 They're a very great localized
22 conservation organization, who got their
23 hands dirty over the years in helping to
24 foster these projects, make people aware.

25 My heart belongs to the unduly

1 Daher
2 wronged Native Americans over the years,
3 that we've destroyed that Lake. But my
4 mind belongs to the future. We weren't
5 even talking about the cleanup 30 years
6 ago. We just would drive by that Lake
7 and ignore it completely. So I feel
8 fishing is a great vehicle, it's a first
9 start. It's just one cog in the wheel
10 that help people reconnect to that
11 resource.

12 And I commend all the projects that
13 are certainly put forth. I developed
14 three films on Onondaga Lake in the last
15 10 years or so with the help of the EPA.
16 You can see them at OnondagaLake
17 fishing.com. We helped the County with
18 their fishing access site. Make fishing
19 well known to the residents of Central
20 New York. Certainly that helps.
21 Consideration with regards to the
22 consumption of fish is a major issue and
23 should be addressed. It's bad when
24 minorities can overconsume fish that
25 come from that Lake. Certainly we have

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Ivery

to do everything we possibly can. I know there was a recent study by the Health Department. And anyway let's go forward instead of looking backwards. Thank you.

ALJ McBRIDE: Marty Ivery.

MARTY IVERY: Hi everybody. Marty Ivery, I'm a Board Member of Trout Unlimited and a delegate to the Onondaga County Federations Sportsmen's Clubs. Our club supports the DEC, the Fish and Wildlife, Honeywell on this project. We do believe that it probably could be some work on Onondaga Creek, and we are for it. We believe that to proceed with these projects would be great for the community.

Our Club has done work on Onondaga Creek with other clubs. We've done cleanups, we've done fish, putting in fish. And like I said, I think we should proceed with this project that you have proposed, and it would be great for the community. I thank my good

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Simmons

friend Al for commenting about Trout Unlimited, because like I said, we one hundred percent would like to work on any project that the DEC or the County comes up with. But we do believe that these projects that you have here would be great and we should proceed with them. Thank you very much.

ALJ McBRIDE: David Simmons.

DAVID SIMMONS: Good evening. My name is David Simmons. I'm the President of the Onondaga County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs. Several of our Federation and Club Members have been up here already and explained the mission of the Federation pretty well so I won't go over that. I'm also not as eloquent as some of the people that have already spoken. So as everybody knows me, I'm kind of a nuts and bolts guy. So I'm going to get right down to it.

The Onondaga County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs supports the proposed projects. While we recognize that

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Simmons

Onondaga Creek, within the City of Syracuse, experiences flooding and other problems, we also realize that these problems within the City of Syracuse are not part of Honeywell's responsibility.

And we do in fact fully support other processes that are available to fix what's wrong with Onondaga Creek through the City of Syracuse. There have already been enough delays that the project which could have been finished will not be finished this year. And further delays will prevent being able to start still other projects in 2017.

As I already mentioned, we believe there are other processes of funding to address Onondaga Creek problems within the City of Syracuse. And again, the Federation will fully support any and all efforts by the people in the neighborhoods that are affected, and the City of Syracuse itself to help sort out these problems. But this NRDA process should not be held hostage to just

1 Jones
2 unrelated problems. This NRDA process
3 should move forward without further
4 delay, and continue the ongoing
5 restoration efforts in the Onondaga Lake
6 watershed. Thank you.

7 ALJ McBRIDE: Mercedes Jones.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: What number are
9 we on?

10 MERCEDES JONES: I'm number 40. Hi,
11 my name is Mercedes Jones. I'm going to
12 speak as a resident. I belong to the
13 National Action Network as well as
14 Syracuse United Neighbors. I'm a
15 community activist. I am also a fishing
16 person. I love to fish. I've got two
17 boats. But I'm affected in both areas.

18 I live right here at 469 Midland
19 Avenue. You cannot even plant trees in
20 my backyard because they will not come
21 to fruition. If we plant any vegetables
22 or anything along the Creek line, they
23 come infected. The only way that you
24 can raise fruits and vegetables in my
25 backyard is to put them in an upgrade

1 Jones

2 bed so they don't consume the toxins
3 from the dirt.

4 So they talk about, you know, you
5 talk about restoration of Onondaga Lake,
6 which is a good idea, but it's kind of
7 like, you know, fixing a dog's leg and
8 only fixing one, and the other three are
9 broken. So you understand you've got to
10 fix the whole thing. You've got to
11 restore, you know, in combination.

12 I don't agree that you can only
13 focus on one problem. It's a big
14 problem. It's environmental injustice,
15 because the South Side of Syracuse is
16 always left out. I believe they think
17 that we are the personal dumping ground
18 for all the crime, the drugs, the
19 toxins, whatever you don't want, it
20 comes to the South and the Southwest Side.

21 Nobody ever wants to hear that word.
22 They don't want to hear injustice. They
23 don't want to hear racial impact. They
24 don't want to hear racial discrimination.
25 Don't want to hear red-lines. They

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Jones

don't want to hear anything negative to their environment.

I can tell you that as a fisherman, here we go, so I can't go to Onondaga Lake and go fishing. So I have to go to another Lake not even near my home. And you should see the dirty looks when you try to put your boat in the water, because you're not part of their community. It's not your Lake.

People don't even want you in Ontario, Skaneateles, Cayuga, Owasco, I've been to Port Jefferson. All different types of places. But because they know that they kept their Lake clean and was responsible, we are the ones that are being affected by the irresponsibility of people who weren't being held accountable. So you should keep whoever is running politically? Right. And you have a voice, and if they're not working on anything from the Southwest Side, I encourage you to vote wisely.

1 Haley

2 ALJ McBRIDE: Jonah Minkoff-Zern.

3 Is Jonah Minkoff-Zern here? Robert
4 Haley.

5 ROBERT HALEY: Thank you. My name
6 is Robert Haley. I've lived in the
7 University area for 47 years now. I'm
8 also on the Board of Focus Greater
9 Syracuse, and we did the Lake, Onondaga
10 Lake study. So that's about two years
11 of work. And then the Onondaga Creek
12 Revitalization Project, which I'm very
13 proud to have been part of the four
14 years on that.

15 But listening to you all tonight is
16 encouraging, because there is so many
17 different points of view of what the
18 water means to our culture. I'm going
19 to go through my notes as you helped me
20 create them tonight, because I did not
21 come with a prepared plan.

22 First of all, one of our primary
23 goals was full walkable access around
24 the Lake, Loop The Lake. That's not
25 happening. We first envisioned an

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Haley

aquifer zone, an environmental zone between the Lake and all private land or public lands. So that you could have healthy water, healthy vegetation, healthy microbes, as well as have people walk that Lake.

From tonight we found that we should be able to possibly extend that to the full Creek Walk. The Creek Walk Plan has so many walkable neighborhoods. I'm impressed by some of the issues that came up tonight about selective resource misuse by decision makers in the past. Whether it's racism or cultural or environmental neglect or business.

What's happening is, such resources like Onondaga Creek and Onondaga Lake are not being cared for to their fullest extent, fullest environmental extent and human extent for future generations. The Onondaga people have talked about the fact that the Lake is not clean -- I'm getting off script already, I apologize.

1 Haley

2 But the fact that the resource in
3 the South Side, Onondaga Creek, that
4 whole zone should be made the most
5 beautiful resource of the center of the
6 South Side, let alone Onondaga Lake.

7 That would raise the value of all the
8 land and the quality of the places for
9 the South Side. That should be done.

10 So that's the full requisite.

11 So we should have -- there should be
12 no broken links in the Lake, which is
13 hard to do, because we can't let private
14 things, such as -- off script again --
15 the Arena. Which closes its access to
16 the Lake, the Arena perimeter, that's a
17 preferred preference, that should not be
18 done.

19 Let's go back to the origin here,
20 and the fact that the Onondaga people,
21 the land and the water belongs to all of
22 us. Certainly to the first people,
23 first to mother earth as Oren would say
24 tonight, if he were here. Next to the
25 first people in terms of first

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Haley

responsibility. Now we are the current visitors to that Lake. So the decisions that should be made should be perfectly environmental, not short-capped.

The fact that we are storing, capsulized negative, an environmental negative project in the Lake. In other words, environmental systems with steel barriers and containers that is not permanent is a big mistake. That will blow up in the future with every solution. I will write the rest of my comments.

The Erie Canal project should gone ahead. The mud lot restoration project will continue the concept of immigration into Central New York, the Erie Canal, through the Canal system that's connected from Montreal.

There is a number of projects developed. Neighborhood Urban Farms, in the sense that the Creek could, with the environmental Creek Walk Study, show how that water could be taken out and help

1 Abdul-Qadir
2 this woman grow proper plants in proper
3 soils next to the water, using the
4 floodplains that are now turned into
5 this area as a resource space, not
6 negative space. I'll write the rest of
7 my comments and I thank you for your
8 consideration.

9 ALJ McBRIDE: Yusef Abdul-Qadir.

10 YUSEF ABDUL-QADIR: I'm number 43
11 coming up. Before I begin, I want to
12 mention I'm the Director of the Civil
13 Liberties Union, Central New York
14 Chapter. I speak on behalf of my own
15 personal self. And before I do so, I
16 want to say with big respect and honor
17 to the people of the Haudenosaunee, on
18 whose ancestral land, on whose current
19 land we live on.

20 I think it is utterly deplorable and
21 offensive, both from a professional
22 perspective and a personal perspective
23 as a resident of the Southwest community
24 for anyone to come from wherever they
25 want to come from, to tell people here

1 Abdul-Qadir

2 that a major tributary to Onondaga Lake,
3 Onondaga Creek is not as important, and
4 there are other processes that should
5 mitigate that issue. It always seems
6 when it comes to the community of color,
7 when it comes to communities of the
8 South Side, when it comes to the Native
9 American community, and African-American
10 community, there are always other
11 processes. We should sit in the
12 proverbial back of the bus and wait, so
13 to speak. But we're not waiting
14 anymore.

15 But not for the fact that members of
16 SUN and Southwest solidarity communities
17 of color raised their voices to tell and
18 implore the DEC that you will reconsider
19 this, otherwise this issue wouldn't have
20 been brought up. I love the idea of
21 Loop The Lake, that sounds nice. I love
22 the idea of all these lovely trails and
23 the Erie Canalway. That sounds nice and
24 beautiful. That's a tourist attraction,
25 which we do need.

1 Abdul-Qadir

2 But what we're talking about today
3 are public health issues. You know,
4 when you consider the fact that there
5 are toxins that are currently being
6 emitted out of that Lake. And as a
7 person who worked on the mitigation of
8 the Akin, and the island of the Akin,
9 there was a former municipal dump site
10 on one of the Virgin Islands in Puerto
11 Rico, and helped to work to remediate
12 that area so that it can become a public
13 good, and interaction you could actually
14 have wildlife restored and come back.

15 It's a gem. To tell people that their
16 issues aren't as important, so you can
17 go fishing? So that you can have fun?

18 When this is about people's lives.
19 This is the fact that people consume,
20 breathe the air that comes out of there.
21 Children can't even fish in those areas
22 or the fish might have three eyes or six
23 legs. You see them evolve into people
24 in a few years.

25 The reality is, it is not just about

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Abdul-Qadir

an environmental racism issue, it's a human rights issue. These people don't matter. Just say that. Just say you people don't matter. Because that's exactly what you're telling them. You do not matter to my ability of my privilege to be able to throw a line out there and reel in some fish.

I appreciate the Federation or whatever they're called, the Sportsmen, but this is not what we're here for today. This is an environmental justice issue. This isn't about fishing and your ability to be able to have access to it. You want to talk about fishing? The only people who should have access to fishing and right to fish is the Nation who started on those shores. The indigenous people whose land we inherit today. But not for the fact that people settled and other people were settled here and became settlers because they were brought on ships to cultivate lands of other people to settle here and take

1 Abdul-Qadir
2 advantage of those communities, you
3 wouldn't be able to talk about the lack
4 of utmost respect for the people who
5 lived there.

6 To suggest it's a major tributary to
7 the most polluted Lake in the country is
8 not that significant. You can go
9 somewhere else. We don't have time for
10 that. We should be talking about
11 holding Honeywell accountable. Because
12 as a company that bought another
13 company, that was a part of their
14 liability worksheet. It is a liability
15 of which they are now morally and should
16 be legally held responsible. The state
17 should do it's job. Stand up for the
18 people who live there. And actually
19 ensure that they can continue living
20 again. Thank you.

21 ALJ McBRIDE: Lindsay Speer.

22 LINDSAY SPEER: Hi, I'm Lindsay
23 Speer. I'm representing, consulting as
24 a member of the Onondaga Nation I'm
25 speaking on behalf of tonight. And I

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Speer

want to start off by just noting a couple of things. First I want to echo, save the Onondaga Nation for being on their land we stand on today and acknowledge that the debt we have to them, which is not often acknowledged enough.

I am the fifth generation of my family lived here in Syracuse. And as I saw them work around Onondaga Lake stories have come up. I heard from my uncle, stories of my great grandparents, how they used to go out to the Lake and actually get to go there for pleasure. That's something that this community has not known. They have not known that for a long time. We're beginning to get it back, but then our access is limited.

We have to be careful how we interact with that Lake still. Those fish are not safe to eat, and they may never be safe to eat. We are being left with 9.5 million cubic yards of toxic waste in the bottom of that Lake. That

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Speer

is not clean. That is for our future generation to have a legacy. Sadly it has been a stigma on our community for a very long time because of the way it was treated. And that is being accounted for in the injury assessment.

And immigrants and people of color are not the only ones thinking about fishing. I don't fish because I can't eat the fish, a woman of child bearing age. There's no point of it for me. I should be able to eat fish.

The Loop The Lake Trail is too close to the Lake in many places. There needs to be a buffer zone to protect the Lake to allow the Lake to heal. There needs to be proper signs at any point where you're fishing in the Lake that clearly states that the fish advisory for the Lake and in ways that are universally understood with signage. Very clear symbolism.

And further, this community, South Side, Onondaga Creek needs to be

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Speer

addressed in these plans. I'm going to echo whatever everyone else said here, that this is environmental racism and injustice. And in part I had the pleasure of working on the Onondaga Creek. It has been frustrating to no end basically to end up on a shelf. That information, the input from the community should be taken into account and it should become and used to develop a plan to restore the entirety of Onondaga Creek, which so badly needs it.

My family grew up on Borden Avenue, my parents family. They remember killer Creek. They remember watching the Creek, I know the sewage is not the issue at the moment, it's the toxins at Onondaga Lake. But the point is that this Creek can also benefit the community. And we finally have an opportunity to funding to deal with it.

And the DEC and Fish and Wildlife Service needs to do everything they can to make that a reality. That means a

1 Shenandoah
2 priority. Onondaga Creek is the first
3 and foremost tributary to Onondaga Lake,
4 it's a major source of water to Onondaga
5 Lake. If we don't clean up Onondaga
6 Creek, and if we don't take care of it
7 and give it the habitat and ecological
8 area that it needs and provide people
9 with access and take away the chains
10 around it, then we have done nothing.
11 Thank you.

12 ALJ McBRIDE: Jeanne Shenandoah.

13 JEANNE SHENANDOAH: Hello, my name
14 is Jeanne Shenandoah. I live at the
15 Onondaga Nation, the home of my people
16 forever back through history. The
17 waters that we're discussing, Onondaga
18 Creek and Onondaga Lake are very sacred
19 places to my people.

20 As a matter of fact yesterday was
21 Worldwide Day of Prayer for Sacred
22 Places. Many people here know the
23 stories of all the sacred things that
24 happened to our people along that
25 waterway.

1 Shenandoah

2 At this present time I'm living in a
3 community that is deprived of the use of
4 our waterway, because of all the damage
5 that has been done through the mud boils,
6 the heavy sediment load that comes
7 through. The water has changed, it's
8 slowed down, no longer a clear water
9 fishery, so native fish are hard to be
10 found. Unable to use it. I have many
11 stories through my family history and
12 also my own experience in seeing clean
13 water flowing through there.

14 At this point in time I don't think
15 you can see a foot down into the water
16 it's so dark. And then it flows to the
17 Lake which has extreme historical
18 precious significance to my people. The
19 place where the great word of Peace came
20 to be. The great word of Peace which
21 has spread all over the world. There
22 are people paying attention to what
23 happened on that site of that precious
24 water.

25 All water is precious. All the

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Shenandoah

water everywhere. There needs to be more to be done, there needs to be more clean up done, because what has been done is only superficial. It's not safe. I constantly worry about the people that consume the fish from that. We can't say we've done anything when we go there and do sport fishing, because that's not our way, just to catch these little fishies and throw them back in. We do fishing for substance.

There's been a long history of my people to eat fish for our major protein and now we are deprived of it. I don't dare even talk about the fish, I have to warn the children, my grandchildren, my great grandchildren, the future have to know about how dangerous it is, how dangerous Onondaga Lake is to everybody. Not just my people, all of us, every one of us here. All the people that live near the Lake, the people that go there and fish and eat, because they also come from fish-eating communities ways of

1 Shenandoah
2 life. Everything about that, the
3 actions there are scary and dangerous
4 for the future.

5 There has not been sufficient
6 warning, not been sufficient work. They
7 just have not paid attention to the
8 words of us. People that have great
9 concern with what's happening there. I
10 think the major concern too is all the
11 work that has been done has been the
12 budget. And when they did that that was
13 the end of it. They did not want to
14 hear the word from Onondaga Nation.

15 ALJ McBRIDE: That was the last
16 speaker card I had. Is there anyone
17 that has not yet had a chance to put a
18 comment on the record that would like
19 to? State your name for us, please.

20 SHARON OWENS: My name is Sharon
21 Owens, CEO of Syracuse Community
22 Connections, we operate the building
23 we're in right now. Sorry for being
24 late, I'll be quick, because I'm the
25 last person. But I was at a great

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Owens

graduation. I just don't want the South Side and the Southwest Side to be, you know, the after-thought in the development.

What is precious about our portion of the plan is that it runs through neighborhoods. It can be enhanced by the people in the community. The people in the community love it, and it's part of the life blood of this side of town. The improvements that are being proposed are great. We want to continue to emphasize that what usually happens for this side of town is not part of this. It's written in a plan, but it's left to the third, fourth, fifth and sixth session of the overall plan.

Let it be an equal part of the viability of this entire plan. Particularly because people who live in this neighborhood and people who visit this neighborhood know the Creek, the Creek Walk and its presence as a viable part of who we are. And it only

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Owens

enhances this City. So let's not think about it as an add on or a last minute thought to this, but an integral part. It's equally important as any other focus. Sometimes when you are caught in the middle you're forgotten. So I'm asking that we not be forgotten.

ALJ McBRIDE: Is there anyone else that would like to make a comment on the record? (No response). On behalf of the DEC I want to thank you all for coming out this evening. Have a safe trip home.

[Conclusion of Public Hearing 7:50 pm.]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that I am a
Certified Shorthand Reporter and Notary
Public in and for the State of New York,
that I attended and reported the above
entitled proceedings, that I have
compared the foregoing with my original
minutes taken therein and that it is a
true and correct transcript thereof and
all of the proceedings had therein.



John F. Drury, CSR

Dated: June 26, 2017

