



Contact: George Thomas, Executive Director
Cell Phone: (585) 233-6086
Email: GThomas@ceinfo.org
Website: www.GeneseeRiverWatch.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Genesee RiverWatch Releases the First-Ever Genesee River Report Card

Genesee River Receives an Overall Grade of "C"

Rochester, NY, April 29, 2019 —

Genesee RiverWatch has released the first-ever "Report Card" grading the water quality and usability of the Genesee River and its major tributaries. The Report Card was developed to raise awareness of the environmental challenges facing the Genesee River Basin so that actions can be taken to improve the state of the watershed and preserve its beauty for generations to come.

"We have been developing this Report Card for a long time and are pleased to release it today. We hope the public will take the time to read the full report. We are happy to answer questions about its grades and their implications. We are even happier to answer questions about how individuals and organizations can help us continue to improve the river's water quality and its recreational opportunities," said George Thomas, Executive Director of Genesee RiverWatch.

The overall grade for the Genesee River Basin is a "C", based on the quality of the river's water at Rochester. This, in turn, reflects the cumulative effects on water quality of all the activities that take place along the Main Stem of the River and all its sub-watersheds stretching to northern Pennsylvania. Canaseraga Creek received the lowest grade – "D" – of all the sub-watersheds, indicating poor water quality and limits to human usage. Oatka Creek and Black Creek received grades of "B" - the highest grades of all the Genesee River sub-watersheds, indicating good water quality and better opportunities for human usage. The Upper Basin of the river (south of Letchworth Park), Honeoye Creek and Conesus Creek sub-watersheds received grades of "C." In summary, there are portions of the Genesee River Basin that are environmentally in good health. However, major portions of the watershed are degraded to varying degrees.

Data used in this first Report Card is taken from reports published by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and focus on Total Phosphorus and Total Suspended Solids as well as the



DEC's assessments of suitability for human use. Future report cards will also include the growing database of water quality measurements being collected by Genesee RiverWatch's volunteer water quality monitors.

"The Genesee River is a major asset and resource for our region. Rochester would not be the metropolitan area it is today if it wasn't for the river. Its environmental, recreational and economic impact is critical to the future success of our region. Genesee RiverWatch is dedicated to improving, preserving and celebrating the Genesee River and its tributaries and we hope you will join us in this effort," said Board President Mike Haugh.

Genesee River Facts

The Genesee River flows 157 miles from its sources near Gold, Pennsylvania to Lake Ontario at Rochester, New York. The Genesee Basin drains approximately 2,500 square miles in Monroe, Livingston, Genesee, Orleans, Wyoming, Ontario, Steuben, Allegany and Cattaraugus counties in New York and Potter County in Pennsylvania. 24 sub-watersheds of the Genesee contain 5,048 miles of streams. Current land use within the watershed is approximately 52% agricultural, 40% forest, 4% urban, 2% wetlands and 2% other developed lands. The Genesee River has been shaped by its glacial history. The last glacier receded around 12,000 years ago, leaving the spectacular Letchworth gorge and magnificent waterfalls, but also unconsolidated soils that erode easily and produce approximately 420,000 tons of river sediment each year.

Genesee RiverWatch

Genesee RiverWatch improves the water quality of the Genesee River and its tributaries to create environmental, recreational and economic assets for its communities. We also connect people to the river, encouraging them to explore, experience and celebrate the river.

For more information and to download a copy of Product:

<https://geneseeriverwatch.org/reportcard>

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