

Community Science Institute's 2024 Report to the Town of Ithaca

Town of Ithaca Board Meeting
7/22/24, 4:30 PM

Grascen Shidemantle, Ph.D.
Executive Director




Community Science Institute

CSI is a 501(c)3 non-profit and NYSDOH-ELAP certified water testing lab

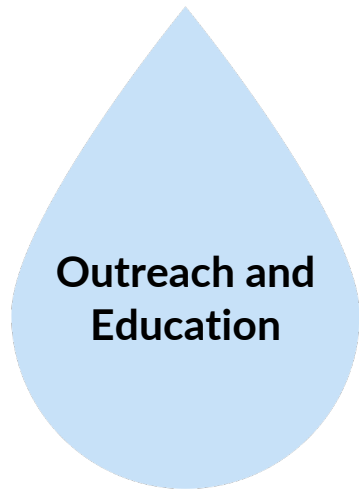
CSI offers three types of programming:



**Volunteer
Water
Monitoring
Partnerships**



**Fee-for-
Service Water
Testing**



**Outreach and
Education**



CSI's Mission

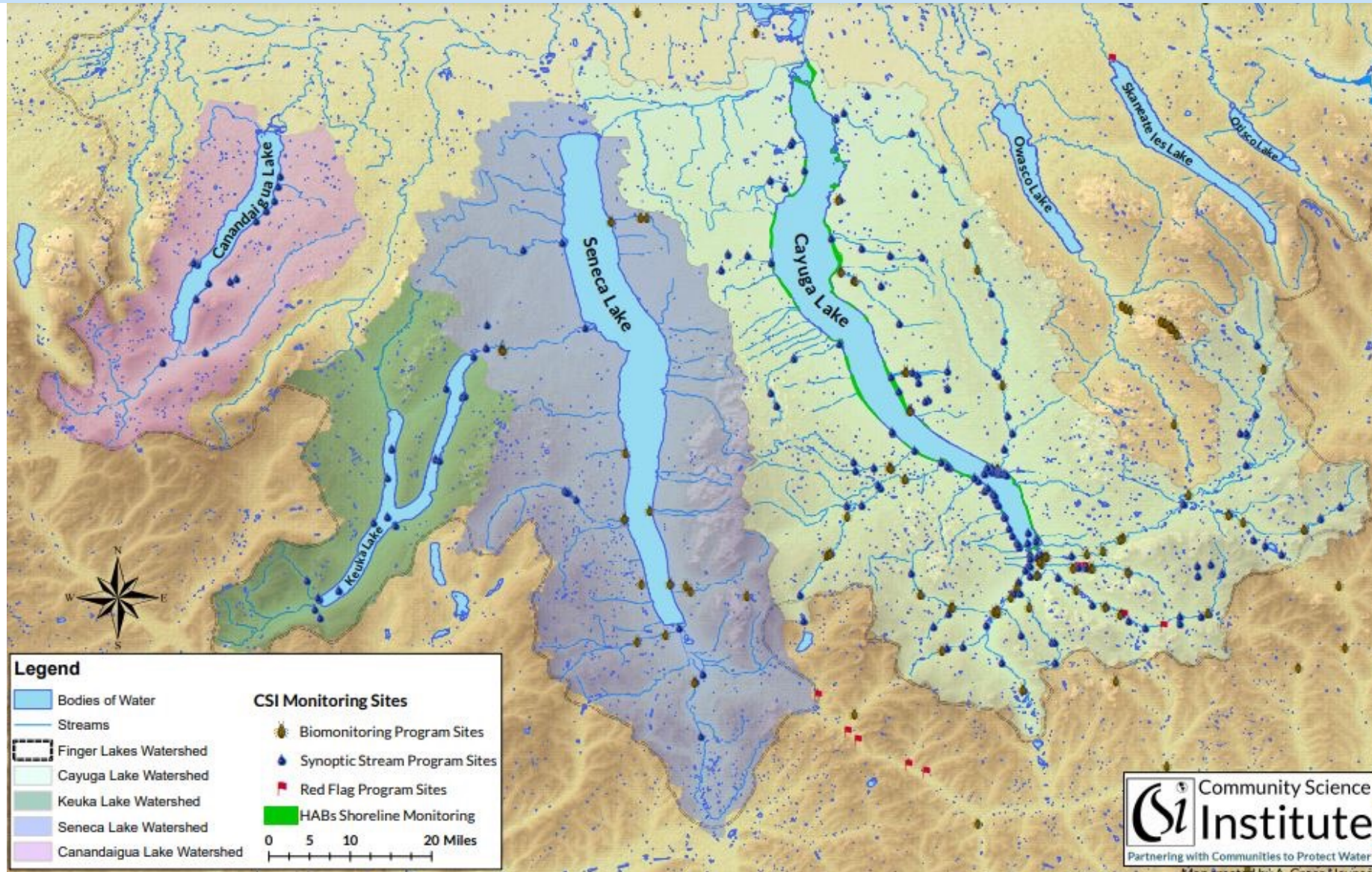
To foster and support environmental monitoring in partnership with community-based volunteer groups in order to better understand our shared natural resources and how to manage them for long-term sustainability and protection.

CSI Volunteer Monitoring Partnerships

Four Monitoring Partnerships

1. Synoptic Stream and Lake Monitoring
2. Biomonitoring
3. Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Monitoring
4. Red Flag Monitoring

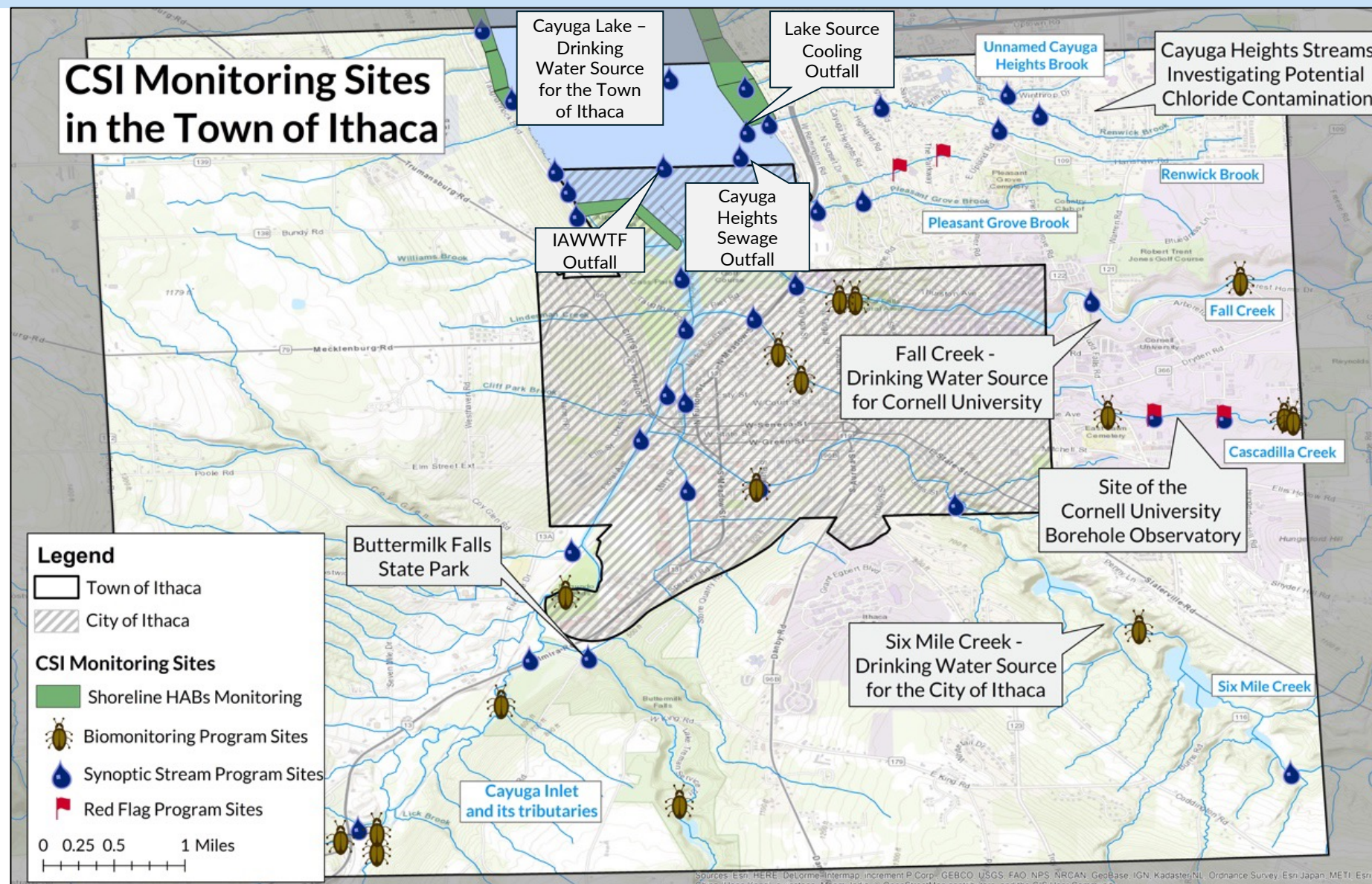
CSI recruits, trains, and coordinates over 250 volunteers



CSI Volunteer Monitoring in the Town of Ithaca

In the Town of Ithaca, CSI volunteers are monitoring water quality at over 50 sites across 4 monitoring programs.

Thank you to the Town of Ithaca for helping to support this monitoring!



Si What we've been up to in 2024



Continuing with routine synoptic monitoring (captured stormwater events on Fall Creek and Six Mile Creek)



Biomonitoring Open Lab Nights (volunteers picked and sorted over 10,000 organisms!)
+
BMI sample collection (3 events thus far, more to come!)

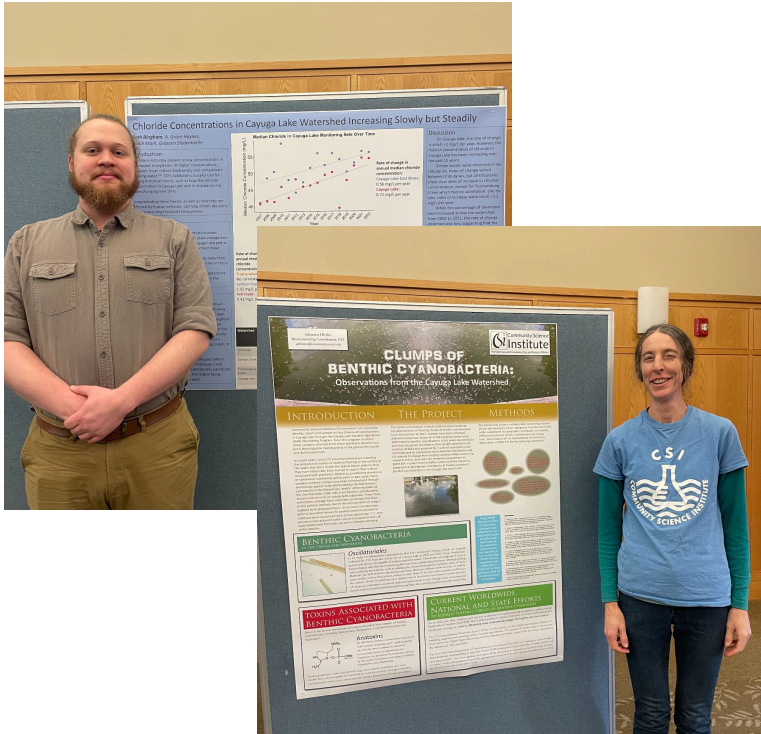


Kicked off HABs monitoring season nearly one month early

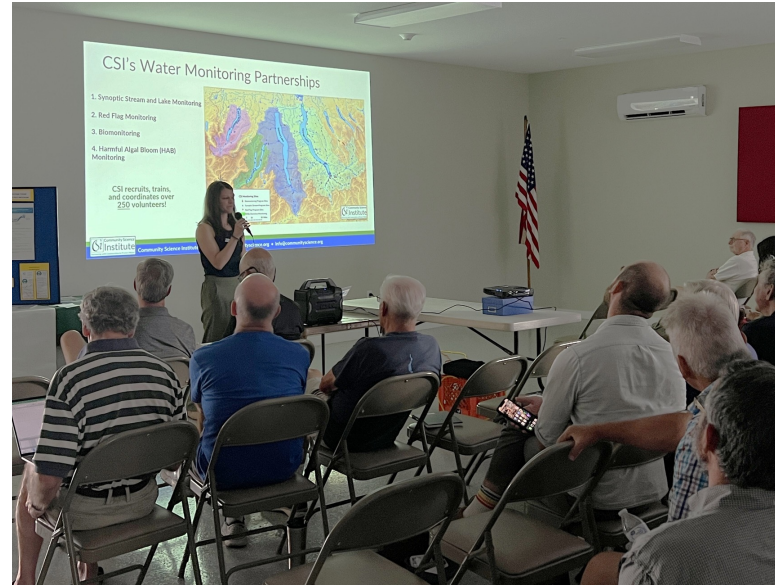


Recruited ~120 HABs volunteers for 2024 monitoring!

CSi What we've been up to in 2024



Presented research about chloride and cyanobacteria clumps at annual FLI Conference



HABs presentation at CLWN Community Conference





Journal of Environmental
Management

Volume 354, March 2024, 120128



Research article

Harmful algal blooms in Cayuga lake, NY: From microbiome analysis to eDNA monitoring

Nan Wang^a, Noah Mark^b, Nathaniel Launer^b, Adrianna Hirtler^b,
Claire Weston^b, Lisa Cleckner^c, Chloe Faehndrich^d, Lydia LaGorga^a,
Lingzi Xia^a, Daniel Pyrek^a, Stephen M. Penningroth^b,
Ruth E. Richardson^a  

Co-authored a paper about Cayuga Lake HABs

CSI What we've been up to in 2024



Distributed rain gauges to over 60 volunteers to participate in CoCoRaHS monitoring



Introduced a new program about wetlands to our Journey of Water series



Testing thousands of drinking water samples and swimming beach samples.



5th grade students participating in Trout in the Classroom used CSI data on Sheldrake Creek to determine if the creek was safe for trout release.

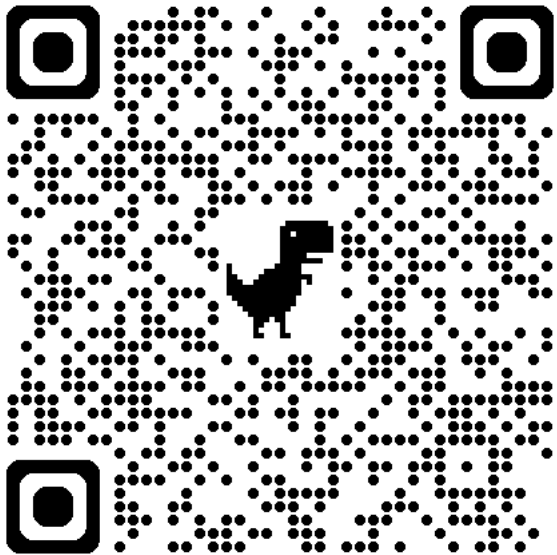
What we are looking forward to in 2025

Implementing our strategic plan... Here are just a few of our action items:

- Create a “Water Testing Assistance Fund” to provide drinking water testing to those who otherwise could not afford the cost of water testing
- Invest in upgrades to our water quality database to enhance data visualization and end-user experience
- Build out infrastructure, equipment, and systems to accommodate increased activity and complexity
- Revise mission and establish vision to better reflect the work that CSI does for our community
- Expand outreach and education about drinking water testing
- Hold more events and trainings on how to use CSI’s water quality databases
- Explore new certification for in-house metals testing
- Share more stories about the impact of CSI’s work in our community

And more!

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