In June 1972, tropical storm Agnes caused severe flooding in Onondaga and surrounding areas. The floods affected major streams and the highest points along the river valleys were reached. Maximum discharges were at least twice the discharge of a 100-year flood. In a few cases, peak discharge was several times the discharge of a 100-year flood. In many small communities, floods inundated depths of several feet, leaving all of the flood waters more than any previously recorded, and extensive flooding of landside properties followed.

The extent of flooding shown on the map is delineated by the U.S. Geological Survey from field surveys made immediately after the flood. The investigation was conducted in cooperation with the State of New York and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.