



Oneida Lake Association
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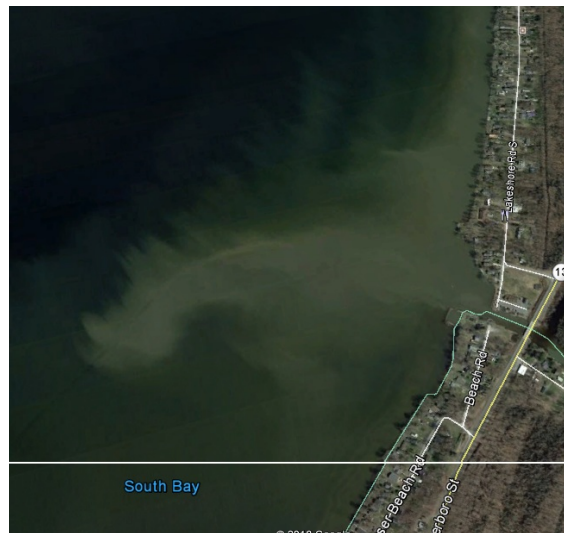
Greetings!

IT IS ALMOST SPRING!!! Finally!!!

WHAT'S UP?

The OLA 2019 **Annual Meeting** will be held at the North Syracuse Gillette Road Middle School on **May 1**.
Doors open at 6PM.

Recently, several members of the OLA Board and invited guests listened to a presentation by Mike Lovegreen of the Upper Susquehanna Coalition www.U-S-C.org as he discussed how its members address stream erosion, sedimentation, and flooding remediation. This is part of our attempt to define a path and mechanisms to induce local politicians, other organizations, and local governments to examine the **damaging effects of high runoff and sedimentation into Oneida Lake tributaries.**



While our concern is for the *sedimentation* and affects in the lake, the mechanism is actually *erosion* of the upstream tributaries. The root causes are interrelationships between precipitation patterns and the natural landscape. A significant problem is mankind's ongoing alteration of the landscape.

When we lay down an impervious surface, the immediate landscape loses the capacity to absorb all the raindrops or snowmelt. This, in turn, affects the down-slope neighbors' properties. As raindrops accumulate, small rivulets turn into ditches, and ditches turn into streams. More water generates more energy. This energy is released as erosive power. Think about the child's play of pointing the hose at the lawn from a few inches above the grass. It digs a hole. Soil from that hole moves downhill, but the grass traps that soil.

But in a culvert (large hose) with the ditch above the roadside bank-full, the energy of the culvert outlet is turbulent and erosive. Trout anglers will soon be dipping worms into the holes below culverts. But that soil, rock, and sand removed from the stream bed below the culvert outfall becomes part of the sediment load moving downstream.

Bed load consists of sediments that are moving along in a river bottom, or just above the bottom, essentially by either rolling or "saltation," where particles bounce along the bottom. ... **Suspended load** consists of generally finer, smaller particles than **bed load** (like silt and clay). **Dissolved load** is pretty obvious. Sediment continues moving until the stream widens or deepens or meanders. As the velocity decreases, larger and heavier particles fall to the bottom or accumulate on point or sandbars. Salts, fertilizers, oils, and other contaminants/pollutants continue a path to the ocean.

Please review these videos to learn a bit more about sediment transport.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=is-qcxcKKB1>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhbEvV5hqCo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0o2wc5lsuV8>

So this article touches on but one aspect of our issue. Hopefully future publications and workshops that the OLA-BOD may host will provide more education and understanding of the issue. With this knowledge, our members and friends can begin to speak more of alliances needing formation. Then, together we can remediate some of the current and future sources of excessive erosion within Oneida Lake's drainage basin.

WORKING FISHERIES

Writing in the March, 2019 *Smithsonian* Ben Crair (V49:10 p50) implies some natural selection processes at work on not only an interesting guild of fishes, but also the world's top predator. He professes that perch-like circhlid fishes in Africa's Lake Malawi formed in the Great Rift Valley have evolutionary speciation unlike any other fresh water system. [Speciation, as he describes it, reads more like racism rather than true scientific species differentiation, but that is another matter.] Allegedly, unique circumstances based largely on male fish attractiveness to females enable "creation of a new species in as few as 20 generations." What a male *looks* like (coloration and swim patterns) may have, over eons, exaggerated traits associated with vitality while also producing traits that attract predators. Some circhlids eat algae, others insects, others eat fellow fish, and some are mouth-brooders. Yet their populations and fishes are now tending smaller and smaller.

A large circhlid is maybe 12" but most species are mere inches long. Malawians like to fish for the larger fish, but they are having difficulty finding them. Kids helping to supplement the family diet are seining fry with mosquito nets. "The overfishing of Lake Malawi has doubled over the last 20 years, and demand for food has led to newer fishing practices that are emptying out the waters." [Sounds like sport fishing in Oneida Lake and other waters – tournaments, GPS, sonar, thin lines, better and

more tackle, in more boats, ATVs, snow machines to put more people on the waters, year-round.]

He continues, stating "Demands on Lake Malawi are expected to increase: the human population is expected to triple between 2010 and 2050." The fishing pressure will alter the ecosystem and perhaps the fish speciation process. [Noble "humanitarian aid" has enabled more people to grow healthy and make more babies, requiring more food and aid. Perhaps an abstract process not dissimilar to the induced speciation divide between Homo sapiens ('wise man' and the lost Neanderthals, Denisovans and other hominid ancestors.)

The point of this discussion is for you to consider the past and future of fishing in Oneida and other lakes. What changes would once again enable a kid in a boat to catch a bunch of perch and sunfish, keeping them interested in the sport? Should bag limits be reduced? Should seasons be changed? Should the increasingly popular hard water angling be limited to preserve spawning stock? Maybe half the perch taken annually are removed in just 2 months by ice fisherman. Should NYSDEC sponsor more winter creel surveys? Should enforcement practices and even sport fish sales be reviewed?

Use this link to provide your thoughts <https://goo.gl/forms/p6n945xjKjYXWbMk1>
Help the Oneida Lake Association Board of Directors focus on what matters to you.

The OLA Board recently pushed out a survey to members, asking them to tell us their thoughts. We received over 100 responses! We thank you for that. Although we have only just begun to analyze your responses, we thought you might want to see some early results. HERE ARE SOME OF THE COMMENTS RECEIVED IN FEBRUARY

- address restoration of the Sylvan Beach Pier
- curtail pressure on perch population/harvests
- listen more to lakefront property owners (*get more of them to join*)
- provide more communications and notifications (using various traditional and social media & email) about what OLA does, what volunteers are needed for what events, and more topics of discussion
- change the Annual Meeting date and time to an earlier (April?) weekend.
- hold seminars and workshops (take a kid fishing, safe boating)
- work with marinas and the like to get power boaters and non-anglers to join
- get more discussion of issues and actions on FaceBook
- raise the dues, or offer long-term memberships
- they did not know they could join,
- they lived on the lake or a tributary and did not know we existed,
- we did not communicate enough,
- they had never seen a request to attend the Annual Meeting
- they unrealistically wanted freebies, beer, refreshments, fish fries, and more "goodies" at meetings, and
- they wanted more ways to get involved.

Now, as the Board is digesting these responses - and awaiting more - we commit to addressing as many of your concerns as possible. We will continue this discussion at our Annual Meeting in May.

Bring your additional thoughts to the meeting on May 1.

If you have not responded to the survey, please do so ASAP.

Meanwhile, let some friends and neighbors know we exist. Ask them to join, and if they want communications, please provide us with a correct, functional email address! We cannot get them involved if we have bad or no information!

Ice out – In Alaska the Nenana Classic is a tripod set on the ice with a rope to a clock. Folks bet when river will breakup – signaling the arrival of spring – moves the ice beneath, breaking the connection. We have no such betting pool on Oneida Lake, and while we are a few weeks from ice-out, it is time to be careful. Pressure ridges are forming, so open leads and retraction of the sheet from shore will soon cause open water appear. As winds, sun, and melt water enters the lake, ice fishing will come to an end.

Ice fishing has – by all reports – been great this year. While no extensive creel survey has been taken for many years, Cornell scientists speculate that half the perch taken each year have been removed by ice anglers. This year it was not uncommon to see hundreds of anglers on the lake every day of the week, and more on nice weekends.

Some folks have commented that today's kids fishing in summer are frustrated (and quit the sport) because they cannot catch fish as did their parents when they were kids. Could it be that too many perch and panfish of breeding age classes are being removed? Some opine that the perch limit of 50 is too high. Others seek a prohibition on the sale or purchase of sport-caught panfish and perch.

One of the reasons we do not have enough data on winter harvests is the absence of regular winter surveys. In preliminary responses to last month's survey to OLA ENews readers and OLA-Facebook members, some ask for more law enforcement patrols. Apparently a few fish pirates still exist, and some unsafe, illegal, or unsavory actions have been witnessed on the ice and at the access points. The survey also had several people asking how to what OLA actions they could volunteer for.

If Cornell only has one snow machine to accommodate a researcher doing a creel census, perhaps a volunteer effort has been identified. One guy or gal on a machine running this 80-mile-square lake would have no help if the machine broke down. A partner – a volunteer – could be a life saver. The Buddy System worked at Scout camp, so why not think about how to better integrate aspects of logistics for say, a winter creel census every five years? Cornell could be supported by sledders, and DEC could get better data on which to address future angling regulations.

Do you know a former OLA Director?

The current BOD is planning the 2020 Annual meeting - the 75th of this organization - to commemorate its history, accomplishments, and folks who have contributed to us reaching this milestone. We are collecting names and contact information for any living Directors and Officers. We hope to invite those who could reasonably be expected to attend our meeting, and be recognized. So if you know a name from the last century, send information(name, address, email, etc) to info@oneidalakeassociation.org

ALSO OF INTEREST

We learned that there is some language floating around NYSDEC circles that could regulate sporting tournaments or derbies involving monetary exchanges or other prize-related activities wherein animals are harmed.

At this time it appears that the proposal deals with just wildlife; a term that in NYS regulation does NOT include fish.

Members of the OLA-BOD met with NYSDEC managers to discuss cormorant management. NYSDEC is in its third and last year of a special scientific permit to collect 220 birds for stomach content analyses. It hopes have this permit renewed, for the data from last year is somewhat bewildering.

Members who attended the 2016 Annual Meeting learned that we could expect a series of exponential growth in the round goby population, followed by reductions,

cycling for years until some stability is established. The goby in our lake have not followed the predicted pattern. One concern is that the birds are not eating goby as an alternative to preying on other species, including sportfish. So the continuation of the cormorant diet study is critical to the integrity of the Oneida Lake predator-prey relationship studied by Cornell and NYSDEC since 1957.

In other NYSDEC news, the final mute swan management plan has been posted. It can be read at this link:

https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/wildlife_pdf/muswmgmtplan19.pdf

OLA is concerned that the NYSDEC budget for the Constantia hatchery could affect staffing and resilience of the site's operation. The budget for this critical facility has not substantially changed - while much else has - in 25 years.

FISHING TIPS

ICE FISHING SHANTIES must be removed from the lake by March 15.

When searching for fish, locate a drop off, or change in the bed of 3-6 feet within a short distance. This should be easy for those of you with good mapping depth finders and GPS. Work this bottom where it flattens out. If they aren't on the bottom, work the slope.

The Graduate - revisited

We wrote in ENews #32 about the volume of plastic contaminating, nay *polluting*, our aquatic systems, and moving up the food chain. Now scientist examining the Marianas Trench and other very deep parts of the ocean have confirmed that the guts of benthic and pelagic creatures inhabiting extreme and isolated habitats are full of plastic. Interestingly, they have identified the source of the microplastic pollutants as coming from fabric fibers. Our laundry and carpeting remnants are working the way up the food chain within critters that eat critters that eat critters *that we eat!*

Please, as a consumer, and one with some demonstrated interest in the environment, be aware of the volume of plastic you buy and discard. Look at the kids toys, your devices and appliances, carpeting, etc and try to help manufacturers and shippers address excessive plastic packaging that must be discarded. Recycle if you can.

Please explore the OLA's website. Within it you will find not only back issues of ENews, but also our Bulletins, lists of launch sites and marinas, some fishing and navigation aids, and a variety of information for visitors and lake users.

Pay your \$8 dues, and HELP PROTECT ONEIDA LAKE!!!!

ARE YOU INTERESTED TO BECOME A DIRECTOR?

The OLA- BOD currently has one vacancy. Consider submitting your 'avocational resume' to us for consideration. It is anticipated that at least one additional vacancy will occur in the next 12 months, so we would like to have a pool of interested and qualified volunteers to consider for 2-year terms as they open.

We are especially interested in candidates with backgrounds and abilities that lend

themselves to serving our our Fisheries, Government Relations, and Natural Resources Committees. Education and Outreach are a major function of OLA, so we also seek teachers and writers who can, for instance, help produce future ENews!

Should you have an inclination, now or in the future, drop a note to info@oneidalakeassociation.org or contact a Director (see website).

**Pay your dues, recruit your non-member neighbors and friends, and
HELP PROTECT ONEIDA LAKE!!!!**



Donate

Help OLA function. Memorials and contributions to our program are most welcome.

OLA is a 501(c)4 organization serving protection of the Oneida Lake environment.



[Website](#) [Who We Are](#) [What We Do](#) [How to Help](#)

OLA is a 401(c)(4) not-for-profit organization. Implicit in the preceding text is OLA's status – and its reliance on government agencies to effect some desired change when lobbied to act. Issues affecting the lake, users, the environment, and regulations of all the aforementioned often obligate the BOD to call on one or more government representatives to fund or correct something perceived by the BOD as detrimental to our mission for Oneida Lake protection. It is one of the nation's most studied lakes, in several scientific areas. The knowledge base acquired by Cornell University, other CNY colleges, and NYSDEC is not always seen by decision makers.

The Oneida Lake Association is a member of the New York State Conservation Council <http://www.nyscc.com/> and the New York State Federation of Lake Associations <http://www.nysfola.org/>.

Report environmental violations. Please remember to obey all laws, rules, regulations, and codes of ethics as they pertain to boating, fishing, hunting, and management of Oneida Lake and its drainage basin. Be civil. **1-844-DEC-ECOS (1-844-332-3267) or 1-800-TIPP DEC (1-800-847-7332)**

*Edited by Scott Shupe and John Harmon.
Send us your notes and articles for use in future ENews!*