The Oneida Lake Bulletin

Spring 2018

www.oneidalakeassociation.org

Sediment is affecting Oneida Lake

By Matt Kazmierski

There is a general consensus among the Board of Directors that sediment is negatively impacting portions of Oneida Lake, particularly the south and east portions of the lake. Hydrologic modifications, agriculture, and urban storm water runoff are potential factors that are likely contributors. Take a look at the mouth of Oneida, Canaseraga, Chittenango or Fish Creek after a heavy rain or spring runoff, and you will often see excessive plumes of sediment entering the lake in these locations. Many times these streams will remain turbid for weeks after the last rainfall. This sediment can impact fish spawning success, cause navigational hazards, fill in an already shallow shoreline, carry excess nutrients, aesthetically degrade the quality of the lake, and even ruin a hot walleye bite.

Oneida Lake Nine Element Watershed Management Plan

The Madison County Planning Department was recently awarded a grant by the New York State Department of State for the development of a Nine Element Watershed Management Plan (9E Plan) for Oneida Lake. The grant will evaluate trends in water quality within Oneida Lake and tributaries in the surrounding watershed using computer modeling to determine the effects of watershed land use practices. Central New York Regional Planning and Development (CNYRPD) will be responsible for administration of the grant. CNYRPD will also be involved in communications and outreach and plans to set up three public workshops.

What is a 9E Plan?

A 9E plan is type of clean water plan that identifies and quantifies sources of pollutants, determines water quality goal(s), defines the pollutant reductions needed, and describes the actions needed to achieve the reductions to improve water quality. The nine elements are intended to ensure that contributing sources of pollution are identified, that key stakeholders are involved in the planning process, and that restoration and protection strategies are identified that will address water quality concerns. The 9E plan for Oneida Lake is a way to bring the volumes of existing lake and watershed data together in a format that will allow it be used to determine where work is needed to improve water quality. Plans must include all elements to be approved by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). An approved plan increases opportunities for state and federal funding programs to complete water quality improvement projects.

What are the Nine Key Elements?

- Identify and quantify sources of polution in the watershed
- Identify water quality target or goal and pollutant reductions needed to achieve
- Identify the best management practices (BMPs) that will help achieve reductions needed to meet the water quality goal/target.
- Describe the financial and technical and technical assistance needed to implement the BMPs.



Steam Buffers are a Best Management Practice to protect water quality. Photo credit: www.srs.fs.usda.gov

- Describe the stakeholder outreach, explain how their input was incorporated, and included the role of stakeholders in implementing the plan.
- Estimate a schedule to implement the BMPs identified in the plan
- Describe the milestones and estimated timeframes for BMP implementation
- Identify the criteria that will be used to assess water quality improvement as the plan is implemented.
- Describe the monitoring plan to collect water quality data that will be used to measure water quality improvements.

The 9E plan for Oneida Lake will use a Soil and Water Assessment Tool (SWAT) model to predict pollutant loading occurring in the watershed. Using a model is a way to estimate pollutant loads in a watershed while significantly reducing the amount of sampling needed. Sampling can be very time consuming and costly. Typically, existing Landsat data sets are maintained by the United State Geological Survey. The data sets divide land use into 30 by 30 meter parcels.

(Continued on page 3)

President's Message

To the OLA Membership,

March 20! Spring has finally arrived, or at least it has according to the calendar? I'm looking forward to visiting the Oneida Lake Fish Cultural Station on Scriba Creek in Constantia to look at the fish that have been netted and placed into the holding tanks. DEC opens the Hatchery to the public on April 1, seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. You get a chance to see how they collect each year an average of 350 million walleye eggs, raising an average of 200 million walleye fry (newly hatched) and 300,000 walleye fingerlings (4-6" long) for stocking Oneida Lake and other public waters throughout New York. It's the time of year that I love seeing the many species of fish that Oneida Lake supports. See the photos posted of the Hatchery under the Fishing subcategory on the OLA Website: www.oneidalakeassociation.org.

This winter the OLA Board continued discussing how to establish controls for sedimentation and erosion (along tributaries); provide greater cormorant management; increase invasive species removal (i.e. water chestnuts); and especially to enlist greater volunteer support from members and partner agencies.

The loss of soil from the Oneida Lake Watershed and excess sediment loading into the lake were identified as priority environmental concerns in the Oneida Lake Watershed Management Plan of 2003. The OLA mission is to protect, restore, and preserve the natural resources of Oneida Lake and its surrounding ecosystem. We were a major partner in the development of the Management Plan and continue to recognize soil loss and sedimentation as serious environmental factors negatively impacting Oneida Lake. The Board had presentations from each of the surrounding Soil and Water Conservation Districts to learn what they are doing regarding this issue. OLA has always supported watershed efforts to protect the Lake and, in cooperation with our partners, we will continue to strongly support corrective efforts in the watershed that will minimize sedimentation coming into Oneida Lake.

There has been considerable attention given in the media about Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) this past year. OLA acknowledges the annual occurrence of blue-green algae on Oneida Lake, and the likelihood of some toxin-producing algae species may be present. However, we don't believe that HABs should constitute a warning to avoid Oneida Lake. Generally, we feel that the HABs issue is overblown for the Lake. Oneida Lake is not used as a drinking water source and, therefore, has dropped off the list of impaired waters. If beach closings were due to HABs, it could be a cause for concern, but, as we understand it, the beaches have been closed by the Health Departments for reasons of E. coli (which may be coming from birds, cattle, humans, etc.) We have not confirmed that closures for HABs were for anything other than appearance, smell, and perceptions unappealing to some swimmers. So, HABs should NOT be considered an issue to be feared in Oneida Lake... or are we misguided?

HABS, sedimentation, and other issues will be discussed at the **2018 Annual Members** Meeting, Wednesday, May 2 at CNS Gillette Road Middle School. This year's theme will be INFORMATION – EDUCATION – ACTION! Consistent with understanding Oneida Lake's unique regional issues and importance, the speakers will summarize: the walleye egg take; the status of the fisheries; the cormorant management plans for the year, and our featured speaker will provide information relative to aspects of local cyanobacteria blooms. As always, there will be a variety of displays and door prizes! Doors open at 6 p.m. with the meeting starting at 7 pm. You don't want to miss this Membership Meeting! Bring the kids! Bring a friend!

Sincerely,

Warren Darby

Warren Darby www.OneidaLakeAssociation.org president@oneidalakeassociation.org

The Oneida Lake Association, Inc.

Founded in 1945

The Bulletin is published by the Oneida Lake Association, Inc., so that its members may be informed regarding the activities of the association. The Oneida Lake Association, Inc., was organized in 1945 to restore and preserve the natural resources of Oneida Lake and its environs.

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Sediment ·

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Landsat assigns a land use to each parcel, even differentiating the type of crop that is growing on a given area. Inputs such as geology, topography, land use (eg., forest, agricultural, urban), annual rainfall data, wastewater discharges, and water quality sampling results can be factored into the model.

What pollutants might be affecting Oneida Lake?

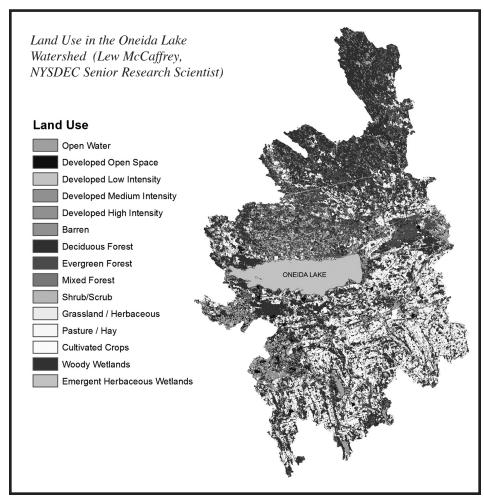
Oneida Lake has always been a highly productive fishery. The lake's productivity relies on proper nutrient levels. Nutrients may be imported from the surrounding watershed and may also be re-cycled from within the lake itself. Phosphorus is most often the limiting nutrient in a freshwater lake's productivity (D.L Corell, 1999). OLA supports maintaining lake phosphorus levels in sufficient amounts to support the lake's outstanding fishery. Watershed planning will need to carefully consider protecting water quality while maintaining a healthy vibrant fishery. As mentioned above, development of the 9E Plan will include a strong public participation component. You are encouraged to participate in this process through upcoming public forums or by contacting OLA and involved agencies such as NYSDEC and CNYRPD. Be sure to monitor our website and our newsletters for notifications of upcoming events regarding this very important process.

Additional information on watershed plans can be found at the following links: www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/23835. html, http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/103264.html, /www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/9efaq17.pdf, www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/tmdlfaq17.pdf.

D.L. Corell, *Poultry Science*, Volume 78, Issue5, 1 May 1999, pages 674-82, "Phosphorus: A Rate Limiting Nutrient in Surface Waters."



Sediment Plume from Oneida Creek. Photo by American Aerial Scenes.



OLA Devotion at Its Finest: Ted and Paul Cramer

By Jack Henke

Imagine a father and son, working for the Oneida Lake Association for a combined *eighty* years and dedicating their best efforts to enable the Association to become the influential conservation organization it is today. Ted Cramer and his son, Paul, set splendid examples of personal sacrifice and unflagging devotion to preserve and protect the lake they loved. Every OLA member today should be grateful for Ted and Paul's service. As Rod Hunter, *Post-Standard* outdoor sports reporter, said of the Cramers in 1969: "We need more like them."

Ted "Pappy" Cramer, a lifelong resident of Syracuse's North Side, was a purchasing agent for the Allied Chemical Company. He and his wife, Helen, raised two sons: Paul, a physician, and Arthur, an attorney. Paul graduated from Syracuse North High School, Syracuse University, and its College of Medicine. He practiced at St. Joseph's Hospital and served as president of its medical staff during the 1950s and 1960s. Paul married Vivian Cormier, a nurse, in 1935. They raised two daughters: Rita and Barbara.

Pappy Cramer served on the board of directors from the OLA's genesis in 1945 through the 1960s. Dr. Benjamin Sauer was the association's first president (1945-1949), and Cramer the second (1949-1952). In addition, Pappy's work boosted the causes of the Anglers Association of Onondaga, the Central New York Wildfowlers, and the New York State Conservation Council. An examination of OLA Bulletins during the early years reveals Cramer's important roles as president, vice-president, and treasurer. Pappy regularly chaired membership drives and children's fishing tournaments throughout his tenure. When the OLA named the eighty-seven year old Cramer "Conservationist of the Year" in 1965, President Wally Young praised him as "the hardest working man we have."

Affectionately nicknamed "Doc,"



Paul and Ted Cramer relax with their limit of bass, after a perfect day on Oneida Lake.

Paul Cramer's passion for conservation mirrored his father's. A charter OLA member, he was President of the Onondaga Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, President of the American Wildlife Research Foundation, a director of the Central New York Wildfowlers, a veteran moderator for Adirondack Deer Forums, and a hunter safety instructor for over forty years. Paul enjoyed several terms on the New York State Conservation Council and was characterized by the Albany Times-Union as an invaluable "council stalwart." For decades, he served as OLA president, vice-president, and chairman of numerous committees. In the 1960s, he spearheaded the association's campaign to construct wastewater treatment facilities throughout the lake's watershed. Whenever an OLA project needed a top-notch conservationist, Paul Cramer volunteered.

The Cramers were dedicated Oneida Lake bass anglers and, although they enjoyed catching walleyes and perch, "bronzeback pursuit" consumed most of their open water fishing time. The late Charles Engel, a distinguished attorney

and member of the OLA Board, interviewed Paul for an article in the Bulletin's 50th anniversary issue in 1995. As Engel reported: "Doc started fishing with his father in 1912, at age six. They took the South Bay Trolley from North Salina Street to its end at the bay. Pappy kept a dory-style boat, with a small inboard engine, behind the trolley dock's breakwater. Shackelton Shoals was their favorite spot, a one-hour trip in their vessel. They used worms, crabs, and grasshoppers, but their favorite bait was a cricket. Doc recalled that these insects were 'deluxe' bass bait. Several years later, someone discovered 'bass bugs,' and the Cramers fashioned long-handled sieves to rake the swampy shore of Onondaga Lake near the Ley Creek inlet. They always wore waders because raw sewage created a health hazard. The smallmouths, however, loved contaminated bass bugs!"

Engel continued: "In the early 1940s, Doc started bait casting. He told how a 'Little Wonder' rig (a fly baited with a crawler, tied to a spinner, leader, and 5/8 ounce sinker) was a deadly drifting

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Cramers ·

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combination for walleyes. Red and white 'River Runts,' and 'Phantom Minnows,' were also favorites. He began night fishing for walleyes in the 1940s, and his favorite spot was the Buoy 127-- Buoy 129 locale. In those days, Oneida Lake anglers had to be alert for oil barges. While night fishing in 1942, Doc became alarmed when the familiar shore lights, and the distant glow of Syracuse, suddenly disappeared around midnight. He and his partner had nothing but their lamp amidst total darkness and they barely missed being struck by a barge. Doc and his friend reached shore by using waves to determine direction. Upon arrival, friends informed them that a four-county wartime blackout caused their ordeal."

Ted and Paul Cramers' conservation achievements and outdoor sporting adventures were chronicled in the pages of the Post-Standard, Herald-Journal and the Bulletin. Their legacy, however, transcends the written word. It lives in every successful OLA effort that springs from the organization's foundation, which they helped build. Every OLA director or member's altruistic deed to insure that our lake remains an unequalled treasure replenishes their legacy. We can appreciate the Cramers' gifts whenever we enjoy Oneida's bounty and when we share that experience with others, especially children. The OLA today stands on the shoulders of members like Ted and Paul, and reaps the blessings of their toil. As Rod Hunter asserted, "We need more like them."

Additional notes: Art Cornelius, chief photographer of the Herald-American during the 1940s and 1950s, took the photos that accompany this article, and those in the corresponding section of the OLA's eNews. Cornelius was Ted and Paul's close friend and angling partner. Former OLA Director George Angeloro contributed the pictures, which were produced from Kodachrome slides. Our sincere thanks go to George for enabling this voyage into OLA history.

OLA Annual Meeting - May 2

On Wednesday, May 2, the OLA will host its 73rd annual meeting at the Gillette Road Middle School auditorium. Come and join us for an evening of informative presentations from members of NYSDEC Fish and Wildlife Division, NYS Fish Cultural Station on Oneida Lake, Cornell's Field Station at Shackleton Point, SUNY ESF, and Oneida Lake Association officers. Topics such as Cormorant Control, Walleye Egg Take for 2018, Walleye-Perch-Bass-Goby Population Estimates for 2018, Algal Blooms, and Sedimentation will be presented with an opportunity for questions and answers at the end of the speakers' agenda.

Doors will open at 6:00 pm. You are encouraged to come early and enjoy our exhibitors' displays in the school lobby. OLA membership renewals and recruitment will be available in the lobby as well. You do not need to be a member to attend, but we encourage you to join and welcome your support for all the programs the Association monitors.

The official meeting promptly begins at 7:00 pm with a salute to our country's flag and a brief business session. This year's theme is "INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND ACTION." The OLA needs your support. Come to the meeting and show how deeply you care. Our Lake's wellbeing is constantly being challenged.

At the meeting, the OLA will give its prestigious "Conservationist of the Year" award to an outstanding local environmentalist. The meeting will then close with the distribution of door prizes and the drawings for two GoPro cameras. One winner will be chosen from the attendees and the other from our membership at large.

This is a meeting you do not want to miss; replete with fun, facts, entertainment and love for the lake you hold so special in your life.

News from the Board of Directors

Several OLA Directors, including Dr. Ed Mills, George Reck, Rip Colesante, Lance Vella, and Ryan Asmus manned the OLA booth for the opening day of The Outdoor Show held on January 25th at the NYS Fairgrounds. They met visitors as young as eight years old as well as a few octogenarians. Some visitors came from as far away as St. Lawrence County and south of the NY/PA border. The youngsters were mostly attracted by our stuffed cormorant. It provided a good educational tool for many who are not familiar with this highly destructive bird. Many adults expressed their frustration regarding population control of both cormorants, as well as the Canada Goose. Some attendees stated that these issues should be the responsibility of NYS government. Several visitors also voiced their observations about the walleye population on Oneida Lake. Several fisherman thought the walleye population was lower, and they assessed 2017 as a poor fishing year. On a positive note, there were several membership

renewals, as well as some newly recruited members. These memberships were sold with no negative comments regarding the modest cost increase. Additionally, visitor comments show that the recent edition of the OLA E-news edition has been well received. Be sure to visit our booth next year!



Director Rip Colesante updates a visitor to our OLA Booth

OLA Supports the Renovation of the Historic Cleveland Pier

By: Richard Colesante and Tom Pierce, OLA directors

The Cleveland Pier is located in the village of Cleveland on the north shore of Oneida Lake. A favorite fishing spot for walleye anglers, especially on windy nights, the pier also serves as an access point for a variety of family activities. It was historically the only deep water dock on the north shore of the lake, serving in the transport of glass and other local products from the Cleveland area to other locations in the state.

The land for the dock was purchased by the State in 1916, with the last major renovation to the structure in the 1930s. As a result, the dock/pier has undergone serious deterioration over the years, and could be in danger of collapse if improvements are not done.

The property is currently owned by the Canal Corporation of New York State, and the NYSDEC has an agreement to provide fishing access at the site. The renovation project needed for the dock currently has secured \$900,000 in funding from the NYSDEC, the Department

of State, and the NYS Office of Parks and Recreation. Different funding sources address specific aspects of the dock's restoration, but there is still a need for an additional \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 dollars to complete the project. The TuG Hill Commission has submitted a grant application to "Reimagine the Canal" and hopes to receive monies to bridge the funding gap that currently exists.

The initial phase of the project is expected to be completed by the end of 2018, and will involve stabilization of the dock/pier. The second and final phase will begin as funding is available and grants are obtained. For over thirty years, the Village of Cleveland has worked with the Town of Constantia, Oswego County, Dept of State, NYSDEC, NYS Parks and Recreation, the Tug Hill Commission, the Oneida Lake Association, and other groups to return the Cleveland dock to an integral and useful part of the Erie Canal and Oneida Lake. It looks like these efforts are about to pay off.

Membership Dues Increase to \$8

As the time goes by, nothing is getting cheaper in the world. The cost of doing business continues to increase at a steady pace. Printing, mailing, and postage costs continue to go up. So after much discussion, OLA Board of Directors has decided to increase the dues from \$5 to \$8. The last dues increase was nearly 15 years ago.

This increase will help support our financial stability, as well as allow us to work towards more public outreach in the form of education materials, workshops (i.e. Goose Workshop), and signage etc.

As always, we thank you for your continued support of OLA.



Join Fleet 204 for the Madcatter Regatta - May 19-20

By John Harmon

So ... just how fast is a cat in the water? That depends on the wind speed. Hobie Cats, one of the fastest boats of the catamaran racing class, are capable of speeds well over twenty knots. Anyone who has ever been on the water knows that that's moving!

Oneida Lake boasts one of the most competitive and active Hobie Cat fleets in the United States. Hobie Cat Fleet 204 has its "headquarters" at Therre's Marina on Lower South Bay. Here fleet members meet every Thursday throughout the summer to hold a series of fleet races designed to hone their skills and push each other in friendly, but fierce, competition. This fine tuning pays off as many of the Fleet 204 sailors are recognized throughout the world as top tier racers. The fleet also hosts its own race, The Madcatter Regatta, each May, when the lake has only recently given up its ice. This race attracts sailors from all over the country, as well as a regular contingent from Puerto Rico. The Madcatter is known for its first-class competition, as well as its unrivaled party spirit. The regatta is held at Oneida Shores County Park. Visitors are always welcomed to observe this spectacular sight, with 70 or more colorful boats lined along the beach, awaiting the signal to hit the water for three days of racing. Fleet 204 has sponsored this race for over 40 years.

While many other sailing organizations have slowly dwindled in participation and activity, Fleet 204 remains strong and robust. According to Pat Caster, one of the founding members of the Fleet, one of the secrets to the Fleet's longevity is that "We're always open to the Newbies and the youth of the organization." In fact, the fleet sponsors a variety of activities to attract new sailors, such as their Newbie Tuesday Program and their Come Sail with Us events. Pat states that "We have an Open Door policy, as well as an Open Cooler policy (as long as you're legal)!"





Top photo: Experienced racers give an instructional seminar on the beach Bottom photo: Hobie 16s fighting for upwind speed

This attitude, the so-called Hobie Way of Life, pervades all of Fleet 204's activities. Boat Works, a marine merchandise store in East Syracuse, demonstrates its value of the Fleet by sponsoring many of the events, both on and off the water.

Fleet 204 also supports the Oneida Lake Association's core mission. The sailors, whether racing or relaxing, enjoy

the lake without the slightest hint of pollution. They respect our waters and never leave behind the slightest trace of litter, both on the water and on the shore.

Come join the Fleet for this year's Madcatter Regatta, which celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Hobie Cat class (May 19-20, 2018).

Thank you to all of the Fire Departments that serve Oneida Lake!

Featuring: The South Bay Fire Department

The South Bay Fire Department purchased *Water Rescue* 58 in 2000. This craft was built by Pacific Boats in Marysville, Washington and purchased from Black Lab Marine in Yarmouth, Maine.

The vessel is a 26 foot aluminum hull with an enclosed cabin that can seat five adults. Starting with the 2018 boating season the boat will be powered by a new Yamaha 300hp 4 stroke motor which was partially funded by Onondaga County Emergency Management. The vessel will also be equipped with a new GPS unit with SONAR capabilities.

The boat has a three-foot dive door which allows for the easy loading of backboards. *Water Rescue 58* carries a Basic Life Support EMS bag, trauma kit, "frac-pac" for arm and leg injuries, and a floating backboard. This equipment allows us to treat injured boaters while at the scene and en route back to shore.

Another design feature of this vessel is that it has an intake for portable pumps to assist with firefighting capabilities. The pump can also be used to assist in dewatering other vessels. The boat is equipped with a tow bar and 100 feet of tow rope to assist with disabled boats.

Thanks to the generosity of the Lakeshore Yacht and County Club we are able to dock our boat at their facility. The department would also like to thank Aero Marina and Bersani Sport & Marine for their continuous support throughout the years.



South Bay's Water Rescue 58

The teeth on the front of the boat symbolize our professional, but assertive nature, getting us to troubled boaters as soon as possible in all lake conditions. And you Oneida Lake boaters know that can be brutal!

Water Rescue 58 is always prepared to respond with our brothers and sisters from Brewerton, Bridgeport, Cleveland, Constantia, Sylvan Beach, and West Monroe Fire Departments.

Water Rescue Fire Departments That Serve Oneida Lake

We are fortunate to have seven Water Rescue Fire Departments that serve Oneida Lake. They are:

Brewerton Fire Department
Bridgeport Fire Department
Cleveland Fire Department
Constantia Fire Department

South Bay Fire Department
Sylvan Beach Fire Department
West Monroe Fire Department

Volunteers Needed! Spring Highway Cleanup

The Highway Clean up at the Bartel Road onramp to Rt. 81 will commence at 9am, Friday, April 20. Also included for clean up, will be the Park and Ride lot and path to the fishing access area on the south side of the Rt. 81 overpass. Safety gear, pickers, and refuse bags will be provided.

For more information, interested volunteers may contact OLA Director George Reck at (315)454-4521 and leave a voice message.

More Data on Sedimentation

Renowned diver, Tim Caza, has located and mapped dozens of submerged vessels on the bottom of Oneida Lake, including the remains of the only known Durham Boat. Caza estimates that this boat went down about 200 years ago. He also notes that it was covered with 42 inches of sediment. That calculates to about an inch every five years. This data further helps us to understand the sedimentation issue of our lake.



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The Oneida Lake Association **Moves Into the 21st Century**

As you many have noticed, on your membership application, you have the option to get the Bulletins electronically instead of being mailed. This saves the organization in printing, postage and mailing costs! To communicate more routinely we started an e-newsletter that is emailed out periodically. We have noticed however, that many of you don't "open" the file to read the newsletter sent from Constant Contact – Please be sure this email doesn't land in your Spam folder! We want to communicate with you, our members, easily and efficiently – email is a great way to do that!

~ Thank you!

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Department of Environmental Conservation

Sturgeon in Oneida Lake and nearby waters may be tagged. Biologists at Cornell University and NYSDEC need your help to track these fish. Yellow tags may be attached at the base of the dorsal fin. If you catch a tagged sturgeon, please write down the number on the tag and length of fish, release the fish immediately, and call Cornell University at (315) 633-9243 or contact NYSDEC at (315) 785-2262 as soon as possible.



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