

The Oneida Lake Bulletin

Fall 2024

www.oneidalakeassociation.org

DEC Researches Bass Tournaments

By OLA Vice President John Harmon

“We don’t think you want us to make decisions or regulations without data.” These were the reassuring words of Steve Hurst, Chief of the Bureau of Fisheries for the DEC. He gave us this reassurance during his address to the Oneida Lake Association Networking Meeting on September 9, the very same day that the DEC’s new Bass Tournament Permit Process went into effect.

After several months of study, the DEC launched this permitting process in order to gather data on the scope and number of bass tournaments held throughout New York State. Angler interest in black bass on Oneida Lake has grown dramatically for the past several years. And along with that interest came a huge increase in bass tournaments, both large and small. Anglers and researchers soon discovered that bass populations were impacted negatively. Was this coincidence, correlation, or causation? No one is really sure just yet.

During the meeting, Hurst was asked if smallmouth bass populations are declining. He responded “Yes, but not appreciably when you consider the variability in the data.” Hurst continued, “But if you ask how many bass tournaments we have in New York State . . . we don’t know.” Before jumping to any conclusions, DEC wanted to gather data to find out just how many tournaments occur in New York waters, as well as to collect data from tournaments.

Although there has been some grouching about the newly added permit, complete with a host of conspiracy theo-

ries, the primary objective is to gather and analyze data. Where are these tournaments being held? What type? How many anglers are involved? What is the catch rate? The answers to all of these questions and many more will help DEC and their research partners to come up with a plan for common sense management of the black bass fishery, so that generations of anglers to come will continue to enjoy this natural resource.

Hurst stated that the process is “long overdue.” In fact, New York is one of only two states in the Northeast that does not regulate tournaments. As part of the planning process, DEC met with several tournament organizers. “We got some good feedback,” he stated. “The organizations we spoke with at the national and state level were very receptive and supportive.”

What, exactly, is this permit process?

The official title is “Bass Fishing Tournament Permit and Reporting System.” After months of preparation, it was adopted on August 28, and went into effect at 12:01 am on September 9, 2024. Hurst quipped, “Guess when the very first permit application came in. At 1:20 am!” He admitted that this first



permit was denied due to a technical error. After some communication with the applicant, the issue was resolved. In total, 60 permit applications came in during the very first day! Only a few had to be called for clarifications.

According to the DEC, “This rule-making establishes a free permit and reporting system for fishing tournaments where black bass (largemouth bass and smallmouth bass) are the targeted species, and the tournament has 10 or more participants. The information derived from this system will help DEC respond to issues such as user conflicts, overuse of the resource, and concerns about black bass populations.”

One key element of the process is the drive to define a tournament. What’s the difference between a tournament and a derby? How many anglers constitute a tournament? Does a tournament mean there are prizes? For the purpose of this study, and its associated permit

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President's Message

Numbers Game, Lakes are not Wetlands, and Thank You!

79. 67. 54. 49. 2 ½. 414. 9/19. 1. 2,188. What's up with all these numbers? Has the Oneida Lake Association fallen under the spell of numerology? No! these numbers all have significance to our Association and our lake.

79: The number of "birthdays" your OLA has celebrated since 1945, when it was founded by a group of avid fishermen concerned with fishing and law enforcement.

67: The number of years that OLA has worked closely with the Cornell Biological Field Station at Shackelton Point. Shackelton is our longest-time partner in conservation and home to great fisheries scientists including the late, two-time OLA Conservationist of the Year, Dr. John Forney; Director Emeritus, OLA Past President, Conservationist of the Year and current OLA Director Dr. Ed Mills; and OLA Past Director and current Field Station supervisor Tony Van de Valk.

54: The number of years OLA has worked closely with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, which was created in 1970.

49: The number of years served on the OLA Board by our longest-tenured current director, Bob Cote; and 2 ½: The number of years served by our newest director, Amy Hetherington—both of whom are making major contributions to the Association's work today!

414: The combined years of volunteer service to OLA on the part of its current directors. This, along with our members' dedication to conservation, is what makes OLA the most important source of institutional memory and knowledge of what is right for our lake.

9/19: The date of this writing, a special day because it is the day that the American Fisheries Society has presented OLA with the President's Conservation Award—the highest honor granted by the

most prestigious fisheries conservation organization in the nation.

1: The number of nonprofit associations recognized by AFS in 2024. In her presentation during AFS' annual meeting in Honolulu, AFS President April Croxton recognized OLA's decades of work to protect, restore, and preserve Oneida Lake, and called out OLA's strong relationships with fellow conservation organizations and local communities. Accepting the award on OLA's behalf was Cornell Senior Research Associate Zoe Almeida. Zoe going on stage to accept the award was a fitting tribute to the partnership between the Association and Cornell University's world-renowned researchers. [See Page 7 for more info].

2124: The number of OLA members, every one of whom deserves to share in the honor of this recognition from AFS. Thanks to our members the lake has a bright, sustainable future!

Speaking of bright and sustainable, that's how Oneida Lake's future looks under New York State's current regulations for navigable waters and wetlands. Since 1945, New York has regulated wetlands using reference maps and legal powers granted by Article 15 of the Environmental Conservation Law. The entire watershed is further protected by federal laws enforced by the Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other agencies. These regulations have proven to be compatible with conservation. Oneida Lake and its surrounding wetlands are healthy, productive ecosystems.

A recent DEC proposal to add more regulations strikes the OLA as unnecessary and hostile to the interests of property owners. Specifically, the DEC has proposed to impose Article 24 requirements for wetland activities and permitting on *all* waters that have aquatic vegetation—thereby redesignating Oneida Lake as a

wetland, even though it is not a wetland. It is a lake! By legally treating the lake the same as a swamp, DEC will impose onerous new permitting requirements on lakeside properties.

OLA is all for wetlands protection; it is in our DNA and we have been actively engaged in promoting healthy wetlands throughout our association's history. But this proposal by the State seems like a regulatory overreach. We have expressed our opposition to the regulation to state elected officials and the DEC Commissioner, and we have offered our support to Assembly and Senate legislation, including a bill co-sponsored by State Senator Joe Griffo (Senate Bill 9799), that will exempt larger waterbodies from this short-sighted regulation. [see our latest enews for more details].

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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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Bass Tournaments

(Continued from page 1)

process, the DEC settled on the following definition:

A fishing tournament is an organized competition among anglers or teams of anglers that is based on a measure of fishing success, such as the cumulative weight or length of targeted fish species; is operated on one day or a set of contiguous days; and has a minimum of 10 competitors.

The permit rules include the following:

- Permit applications must be received by the department no sooner than 365 days, and no later than 45 days, prior to the event.
- The department shall issue to the applicant a decision in the form of a permit with conditions or, if applicable, a statement that the permit applied for has been denied, with an explanation for the denial, within 30 calendar days after receipt of the completed application.
- Fishing tournament directors shall complete and submit an accurate report of tournament results on an online form provided by the department within 45 days of the conclusion of each permitted fishing tournament.

Why did DEC develop a permit requirement for bass tournaments?

“New York has become a national destination for black bass fishing tournaments and information suggests that the number of these events has increased significantly over the past decade. The increase in the number of these competitive events has the potential to place valuable black bass fisheries at risk and pose a social challenge regarding competing uses of this resource. A permit and reporting system for fishing tournaments is needed to understand the scope and scale of tournaments in New York. This will provide the information necessary to identify and respond to potential tournament-related issues and impacts such as user conflicts, overuse of the resource, and concerns

about fish populations, including health, displacement and reproductive success. A permit system will also provide anglers information about the locations and dates of tournaments and summary results of those tournaments.”

As always, DEC sought input before making such a high-profile decision. They called for public comment through the Environmental News and announcements on their website. The initial press release was pushed out on April 10, 2024. They then received a total of 166 comments.

DEC organized these comments into the following themes.

Black Bass tournaments negatively impact black bass populations/fisheries.

DEC Response: There are long-standing concerns regarding tournament-related impacts on black bass populations, but few studies have examined those impacts. Obtaining standardized tournament results will provide DEC additional data on black bass populations and be instrumental in determining what effects, if any, tournaments are having on those populations. The information derived from the proposed system will be critical for appropriately managing black bass fisheries.

Fishing tournament permits are not necessary.

DEC response: Information suggests that the number of these events has steadily increased over the last several decades, but the overall scope and scale of tournament activity in New York State is unknown. This limits the ability of DEC fisheries biologists to appropriately understand and manage these important fisheries for the benefit of both tournament and recreational anglers.

Waterbodies in New York are overfished because of tournaments

DEC Response: Available information suggests that there is a significant amount of tournament activity on some New York State waterbodies, but that information is largely anecdotal and incomplete. This

proposal will provide that information and allow for more informed management decisions regarding black bass fisheries in the future.

DEC should limit the number of tournaments.

DEC Response: This proposal will provide that information and allow for more informed management decisions regarding black bass fisheries in the future.

Tournaments should not be allowed when black bass are spawning/nesting.

DEC Response: For most of New York State, there is a catch and release season for black bass during the time of year when spawning and nesting typically occurs (the full catch and release season runs from December 1 – June 14). Tournaments are allowed during this time if they adhere to the catch and release regulations. Currently, there is no evidence to suggest that catch and release angling during the black bass spawning/nesting season is having a detrimental impact on bass populations, but some waters where suspected impacts are a concern are closed to bass fishing during this time. The proposed permitting and reporting system will provide information on the extent of tournament activity during black bass spawning and nesting season, which will be critical to understanding the potential impacts of tournaments and determining appropriate management strategies.

The tournament permit should be required for other gamefish species or for all fish and wildlife tournaments in general.

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To submit questions or comments about *The Bulletin*, contact editor John Harmon at jpharmon1@gmail.com



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Bass Tournaments

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DEC Response: The proposed fishing tournament permit only includes black bass because they are, by far, the most popular tournament species, and thus most of the management concerns regarding tournaments centers around these species.

What information does the permit ask for?

The following information is required when applying for a black bass tournament permit:

- Organization name
- Tournament director contact information
- Information on the tournament, including:
 - Location (waterbody and anticipated access site)
 - Date(s) of the event
 - Size (maximum number of boats and participants)
 - Scoring procedure (access site scoring or catch/score/immediate release)
 - Scoring basis (weight, length, or count)

All tournaments must comply with current freshwater fishing regulations.

Hurst reported that the average time to complete the entire permit application is around two minutes.

Hurst also reminded us that an approved permit allows the organizers to hold a black bass tournament. It is not a reservation of a boat launch and does not guarantee access to a launch. He explained that a Temporary Revocable Permit is also required if the tournament includes the use of a DEC boat launch site. Going forward, DEC will establish conditions to ensure that no more than 50% of the parking spots at a given launch site are permitted for the tournament. DEC remains committed to ensuring equitable access for tourna-

ment and recreational anglers alike. However, he also explained that they have no jurisdiction over the use of other state, municipal, or private launch sites.

One terrific feature of the process is that DEC will generate a map (on their website) of New York showing where and when each tournament will be held. There will be a pin for each event location. Clicking on that pin will provide viewers with details about that tournament. A list of waterbodies where permits have been issued is available with the map. Clicking on a waterbody name will provide viewers with details about those tournaments. This information could attract visitors and applications, or it could alert folks that might want to avoid those waters during the increased boating and fishing pressure.

During the Networking Meeting, Chief Hurst fielded a number of questions and comments.

“How are you reaching out to organizations to let them know about this requirement?”

Hurst: “We don’t know who they are! We are trying to reach these folks through several outlets. For example, B.A.S.S. will have an article. We have also advertised it in *Fishing Line* [DEC’s online newsletter], and there have been several press releases. Outreach regarding the permitting system will be on-going and we need anglers such as yourselves to spread the word”

OLA Board member, and long-time tournament angler, Bill Alexander, stressed his opposition for pre-season tournaments. Alexander explained that with the influx of gobies, removing a fish from the spawning bed, even for a few minutes, allows gobies to swoop in and take the eggs. Also, the stress on spawning fish has had a detrimental effect on



the reproductive success of the bass.

Hurst: “Maybe, maybe. Year class strength has never been a good predictor of adult abundance down the road. I’m not discounting the concern, but we have to take an objective approach to the issue.”

OLA Board member Bill Girvan also spoke out against pre-season bass tournaments. Girvan concluded his remarks by saying that the newly enacted process was a “great start.”

For more information on the permit process, navigate to: <https://dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/freshwater-fishing/fisheries-management-research/black-bass-management-in-new-york/black-bass-fishing-tournament-permit>

Or search:

New York State DEC Bass Tournament permit

OLA Mission

The Mission of the Oneida Lake Association is to protect the fisheries, wildlife, and natural resources of Oneida Lake by promoting science-based conservation and management through education and outreach, in partnership with our members and local communities.

Money in the Bank

By OLA Vice President John Harmon

One of the key focus areas for the Oneida lake Association for the past ten years has been our on-going concern regarding sedimentation in the lake. Increasingly, weather events, such as the recent heavy rainfalls that we have experienced, have contributed to stream bank erosion and high sediment flow into our lake, especially from the south-east quarter of the watershed. Chittenango Creek, Cowaselon Creek, and, especially Oneida Creek, all contribute significant amounts of sediment load as they empty this increased rainfall into the lake's southeastern quadrant. The topography here consists of mainly flat stretches of highly organic soil—terrific for agriculture and cattle farms. Tons of this bountiful soil, however, ultimately end up getting washed into the streams, and then sent north to the awaiting Oneida shoreline.

This feature of nature, however, causes two significant problems. One issue is the rising load of sedimentation that enters our lake. The result is an ever-increasing deposit of sediment along the lake floor. Although this buildup is as slow as the ancient glaciers that retreated to the north, it is also just as powerful. Just as the glaciers changed the topography of Central New York, creating the Finger Lakes, as well as the moraines and other geographic features, sedimentation, too, is gradually changing our landscape, or in this case, our lake-scape. Unchecked sediment deposit will eventually cause the lake to take on a more-shallow character. We have written about this issue in previous editions of the *OLA Bulletin* (see the Fall 2018 issue and the Spring 2019 issue).

Although our initial concern is with the health of the lake, this sedimentation causes another problem. If the lake is gaining soil, that must mean that somewhere the topography is losing soil. Often this soil comes from the many farms that reside along the southern watershed of the

lake. This farmland—often known as the mucklands, provides a bounty of food for our state. Onions, potatoes, and a variety of other vegetables reach our grocery stores directly from these mucklands. The rich soil and abundant water also provide a terrific opportunity for dairy farms, as well.

Many of these farms along the creeks and drainage ditches trace their heritage to the early 1800s. However, as the force of erosion continues, these farms lose valuable pastureland as this natural resource gets washed downstream. Although a stream bank might be cut back less than a foot a year, simple math tells us that even after twenty years, the loss is significant. Farmers cannot afford to lose this valuable resource.

One possible solution to this two-part problem is to stabilize the stream bank. How? An undulating stream with plenty of twists and turns helps to slow down the water flow, thereby reducing the force of the water eating against the bank. We know that water flow is more forceful on the outside of a bend, so we target those areas. Planting hardy vegetation, such as small trees and shrubs, helps to keep the soil in place, despite the constant erosive forces. Such a project, however, is often well out of financial reach for most farmers. Most often, the only way such projects get funded is through a combination of funding from government agencies (such as The Soil and Water Conservation Districts or DEC), civic contributions (such as the OLA), and partial funding from the farmers themselves.

A little over a year ago, the OLA Board began discussing the possibility of getting involved in the funding of such a project. As a fiscally conservative organization,



Erosion on Oneida Creek at the Lyman Farm.

the Board examined this idea with plenty of questions and concerns. The more we discussed the issue, however, the more the Board was won over by the idea. After all, we were recently gifted over \$30,000 by Meyer's RV and Marine of Syracuse and the Fenech Foundation. We thought that spending some of that windfall on a worthy project would be a great way to put some of that money to work. We settled on investing \$5,000 of our OLA funds in a stream bank stabilization project. John Harmon, the OLA President at the time, dubbed it "Money in the Bank."

Our goal was to choose one of the many farmers who was struggling to minimize soil loss through erosion. We settled on the Lyman Farm. This organic dairy farm sits along the western bank of Oneida Creek between Munnsville and the City of Oneida. There is severe erosion along the creek banks in this location. (See the map on page 8.) The farm has agreed to participate in a stream bank stabilization project. Although this project has received some funding through the Climate Resistant Farming program, it could definitely use some funding from other sources. The OLA Board thought that we could make a great start toward reducing sediment inflow by partnering with this project. In addition to providing benefits associated with reducing

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Memorial Service for Dr. John Forney

By OLA Director Dr. Ed Mills

On August 10, friends and colleagues of Dr. John Forney gathered at the Field Station at Shackleton Point to celebrate the life and career of one of the most respected researchers to study Oneida Lake. Long-time colleague and friend, Dr. Ed Mills, delivered the following remarks to the assembled well-wishers. We are proud that one of our OLA Board members was chosen for this honor.

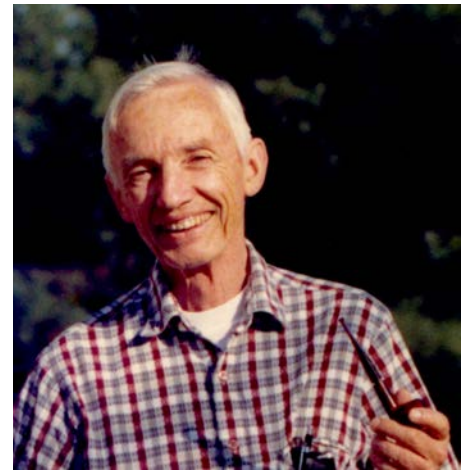
“Welcome friends, colleagues, members of the Oneida Lake community, and the Forney family to this the celebration of life of Dr. John Forney. It has been a challenging three days for sure with tropical storm Debby, heavy rain, flash flooding, and, yes, we had one or more cancellations due to covid. We are blessed that Debby has decided to move on and that the weather has improved for this event. What a difference a day makes!! I had the distinct pleasure to work along-side Dr. Forney my entire career of 34 years at Cornell, he was and always will be my hero as he gave me the opportunity of a lifetime to work with him nearly 50 years ago, and I was very fortunate to follow in his footsteps as Director of the Cornell Biological Field Station subsequent to his retirement in 1993. I am deeply honored and humbled that John’s family asked me to be a part of his memorial service and celebration of life. My sincere thanks to the entire Forney family.

Here we are today on the grounds of the Cornell Biological Field Station and the shore of Oneida Lake...venues that Dr. Forney cherished deeply and dedicated his entire life to understanding how fish, particularly walleye and yellow perch, were connected to everything else in Oneida Lake. He spent countless hours on the lake that he loved so dearly... Oneida Lake was his laboratory of choice for study and the Biological Field Station was his favorite spot to think and to digest his findings from the field. To celebrate Dr. Forney’s life, we must recognize his

devoted dedication and passion toward setting the foundation of a long-term research program on this awesome lake that would lead to local, state, national, and international distinction and recognition.

It is my distinct pleasure and honor to reflect on Dr. Forney’s accomplishments and legacy as a “Hall of Famer” in the fish world, a brilliant and respected scientist, a mentor to many students both graduate and undergraduate some of which are here today, a teacher of critical and creative thinking, and whose entire professional life was a hallmark of excellence. John did not seek the limelight; he was very generous with his time, and his quick wit and dry sense of humor was enjoyed by all. I would be remiss if I did not recognize John’s wife Janet. She was always welcoming to Field Station staff and guests, understanding of John’s long days and nights in the field and in the office, and one who was very devoted to John and his many accomplishments. Lois and I are forever grateful to John and Janet, all the good times that we had at Shackleton Point, and the support that they afforded us over the years.

Dr. Forney began his career as a skilled Cornell researcher in 1956 when biological events in Oneida Lake generated an impending ecological disaster, walleye populations were at critically low levels, and the public demanded action. These events led to Dr. Forney’s classic research on walleye and yellow perch that is now well known throughout the fisheries world. He is a legend in the world of freshwater fisheries and his contributions to the science of fish and fisheries will never be forgotten. John was well respected within the Oneida Lake community. He was always a popular speaker at the annual Oneida Lake Association spring meeting where he discussed the state of the fishery, particularly the status of walleye and yellow perch populations and what that meant for angler regulations and the need to sustain a healthy walleye



Dr. John Forney

population.

Early in his career, Dr. Forney forged a strong relationship with the New York Department of Conservation now the New Department of Environmental Conservation. The continuous support and long-term funding through this working relationship has led to the recognition of Oneida Lake as one of the best understood lake ecosystems of its kind on the planet. Dr. Forney’s work on the early life history of walleye and his contributions to a walleye management plan for Oneida Lake and New York State were instrumental in supporting the current fish cultural station on Oneida Lake’s north shore at Constantia.

He received numerous distinguished awards during his career: 1) American Fisheries Society – Northeast Division Dwight Webster Memorial Award 2) American Fisheries Society Honorary Membership Award 3) American Fisheries Society’s Hall of Excellence Award for fisheries management 4) New York State Outdoorsman Hall of Fame Award and 5) the only person named “Conservationist of the Year” twice by the Oneida Lake Association.

Dr. Forney spent a lifetime of giving back through his dedication, commitment to both professionalism and excellence, his passion for Oneida Lake and its fishery, and his ability to influence policy and management. In fact, he recognized

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Forney Memorial

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throughout his career the importance of science, the critical link between science and policy, and the need to communicate with the public.

Dr. Forney's legacy and life's achievements will have a lasting impact on the science and the management of fisheries forever. John, your many contributions made a significant difference to the quality of life of New Yorkers, the Oneida Lake community, and has brought joy to an untold number of anglers and lake enthusiasts.

Thank you for all that you have done to make this world a better place. You will be greatly missed and may you rest in peace my friend and colleague."

Ice Fishing Access at Sylvan Beach

As the ice fishing season approaches (Let's see what Mother nature has to say!), we are reminded of the on-going issue of angler access. One area that received plenty of concern last year was Sylvan Beach access. Ongoing development at the Beach resulted in some misunderstandings from the posted signage. Late last spring, two representatives for the OLA met with administrators from Sylvan Beach to discuss the issue. OLA President John Harmon and Director Bill Girvan met with Mayor Richard Sullivan and the Village Administrator Michael Sayles to outline our concerns and to find some solutions. Administrator Sayles stated: "This is the 4th season we have segregated parking in the parking lot. We absolutely allow parking for fisherman and snowmobiles with trailers on the south side of the parking lot. Two-thirds of the lot is available to them. We don't allow parking trailers by the fire lane and the Lake House as we keep it clear for pedestrians, the Lake House customers, and Park Avenue residents.

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OLA Receives President's Conservation Award from America Fisheries Society

The Directors of the Oneida Lake Association are pleased to announce that our organization recently received the President's Conservation Award from the America Fisheries Society. The AFS presents this award to an organization that has made "long-term contributions that advance aquatic resource conservation at the regional or local level." This award is administered by the Past President's Advisory Council.

Because of our long-standing relationship with the researchers at Cornell University's Shackleton Point Field Station, the OLA Board of Directors chose Zoe Almeida to travel to the AFS convention and receive the award on our behalf. Almeida is a Faculty Fellow and Senior Research Associate at the Field Station, serving in the Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

During the ceremony, the President-Elect of the AFS, Miguel Garcia, described the influential role that the Oneida Lake Association has played in protecting and advocating for the fisheries of Oneida Lake.

Upon her return, Almeida stated that, "Although I am aware of OLA's value as a community partner for scientific research and a leader in conservation, it was exciting to hear Dr. Garcia inform the worldwide scientific fisheries community of the Oneida Lake Association's work. I am thankful that AFS recognized the contribution of the OLA with such an award and for the ongoing partnership between us at the field station and the OLA."



Zoe Almeida receiving the award from outgoing AFS President, Cecil Jennings.



President's Message

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If DEC chooses to disregard public sentiment opposing its new regulation, it will begin enforcement on Jan. 1, 2025. OLA will continue to work toward a more common-sense approach and keep our members posted on our progress.

In closing, I would like to thank the Board of Directors and the members of the Association for granting me the privilege and humbling responsibility of serving a second term as President. In OLA's tradition, our President follows the will of the Board and members more than she or he leads. Immediate Past President John Harmon set the bar very, very high, and I am lucky to be accountable to John and our great team of directors. I promise to you, reader, that I will continue to do my best for you and for Oneida Lake.

Thank you.



Matt Snyder, President OLA
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Ice Fishing Access

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In addition, the people with trucks and trailers used to haphazardly park however they pleased and would end up jammed in the narrowest part of the lot causing traffic flow problems and fire lane violations; all of which have ended since we split the lot.

We also now plow the entire lot which we did not do in the past so there is actually significantly more parking available for all. Lastly, we eliminated a one-way street that was in the lot and so keeping the traffic and fire lanes clear is critical." He also clarified that the lot belongs to the village, not the Oneida Nation.

We thank Village Administrator Sayles for his updates.

Money in the Bank

(Continued from page 5)

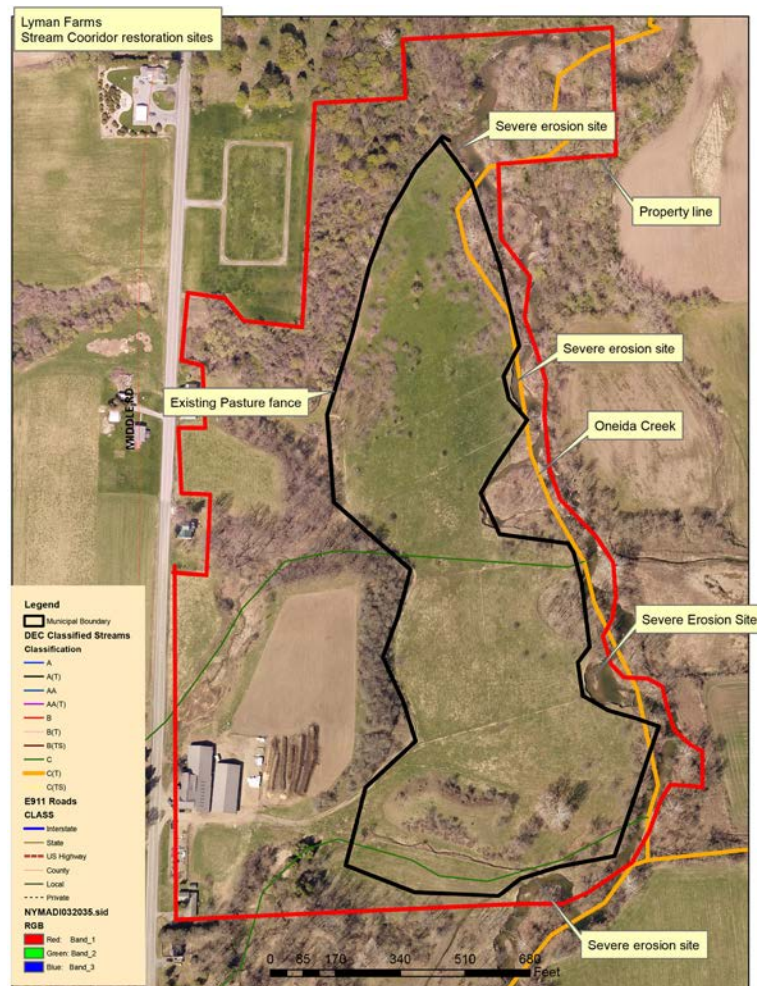
sediment loading to Oneida Lake, these bank improvements will also provide our local farmers with reducing a resource loss, as well enhancements to wildlife habitat. Win Win Win!

Steve Lorraine, director of the Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District wrote in a grant application: "The Lyman farm is an organic dairy farm milking fifty-five cows located just North of the Village of Munnsville in the Town of Stockbridge. Oneida Creek, a class C(T) trout stream, borders the farm's pastureland along the eastern edge of the farm. Oneida Creek is prone to flooding, and even with the cows being fenced out of the stream, there is significant stream bank erosion that is taking pastureland away from the farm every year. The farm has had to move the fence multiple times over the past ten years. As an organic

dairy, the farm needs every acre available for grazing the herd, and it cannot afford to continue losing pasture acres to the erosion taking place (see photo at beginning of article.) The proposal is to slope the now vertical banks back to a stable repose and through a combination of Hard Armour [rocky riprap] and vegetative plantings, stabilize the worst sections of the nearly 5,000 feet of stream that sits adjacent to the pastureland." The full scope of this project will cost around \$200,000!

This project is still in the planning stages, with a target to begin work next spring. The project also requires some permitting from the DEC, which is currently in progress.

The OLA will follow the progress closely. We will report more as the project develops. Stay tuned!



The Oneida Lake Business Profile

Brewerton Ace Hardware

By OLA President Matt Snyder

*The Oneida Lake Business Profile is a regular feature in the Oneida Lake Bulletin to showcase businesses that serve Oneida Lake Association members. For this issue, the Bulletin features **Brewerton Ace Hardware**.*

Regular readers of the *Bulletin* know that good local hardware stores are a life-line across our Oneida Lake communities. From Bucks & Bolts in Blossvale, to Blanding's in Bridgeport, to Buckingham in Constantia, to Hiawatha Fastener in Cicero, just to name a few, a well-stocked local store helps homeowners keep their property and toys in tip-top shape. These stores all carry dedicated stock of tools and fasteners needed for maintenance and repair activities around the water.

Brewerton Ace Hardware, this edition's subject for the Business Profile, is the newest addition to the list and no exception to the rule that a lakeside hardware store can succeed by tailoring its offering to the needs of waterfront communities. Opened in 2021, the Brewerton store is one of more than 5,000 locally owned Ace locations, and its owners are longtime locals who are proud to deliver product lines and services appropriate for the community: Outdoor power equipment tools, parts, and service; a wide selection of indoor and outdoor paints and stains; a fastener department replete with the stainless and galvanized fasteners used to keep docks and hoists in tip-top shape, and outdoor living accessories for the dockside or deckside lifestyle, among others.

The store's seasonal department also matches the needs of lakeside customers. In the spring and summer customers can find substantial lawn and garden offerings, along with a marine section with fishing and boating gear; in the fall and winter customers will find plenty of tools and supplies for managing leaves, snow, and ice.

"We are proudly local and we are proud to own a retail hardware store

dedicated to serving Brewerton and the surrounding areas," says Jeff Parzych, majority owner of the Ace store. "We offer useful services like screen repair, key cutting, propane exchange, and paint matching, to name just a few.

Asked about the business' history, the owner mentions that the store's 2021 founding filled a gap in Brewerton's retail landscape. "We are new to the Brewerton community as a store, but together with my nephew and co-owner Austin Parzych, we are from here."

Jeff Parzych concludes with his assessment of the lake's importance to the store, and vice versa:

"Our proximity to Oneida Lake serves us in many capacities. We do everything we can to cater to the customers that reside on the lake, both seasonal residents and also full-time residents," says Parzych, referencing the store's inventory of tools and supplies of interest to residents with roots in the community. He adds, "We also see a big benefit in the tourism the lake provides to this area," and the store's inventory selection reflects these customers' needs too, ranging from



Brewerton Ace Hardware

Address: U.S. Route 11,
Brewerton, NY 13029
Phone: (315) 676-0021
Email: Brewerton.Ace@Outlook.com
Online: <https://www.acehardware.com/store-details/17799>
Opened: 2021
Employees: 18
Owners: Jeff and Austin Parzych

snacks and drinks to bait and Yeti coolers. With its prime location and its owners' dedication to the lakeside community, Brewerton Ace joins the long-established ranks of hardware stores supporting our local community.

OLA extends its thanks to Brewerton Ace Hardware for participating in the Oneida Lake Business Profile. Do you have an idea for a business to feature? Let us know by e-mailing snyder.matthew.r@gmail.com.

My First Fish!

As the next round of ice fishing approaches, we look forward to hearing about how you introduce the youth of our lake to this healthy, enjoyable pastime. Be sure to go to our website and download the full-sized **My First Oneida Fish Award**. Send us a photo of the angler holding the award, and we'll get it in our newsletter!

Also, keep in mind that our Youth Fishing Contest is still active!

Send entries to president@oneidalakeassociation.org. Be sure to include name, age, and length of the fish verified by a photo.





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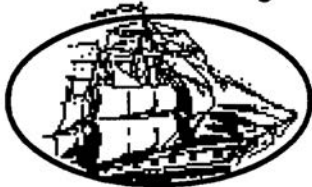
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