

2015-6

Is Lewis Point or other shoreline access open to the public?

Most of the shoreline property is privately owned. To cross it to access the lake, for instance, to wade for evening walleye fishing, constitutes trespass unless you have the owner's permission. Lakefront property is no different from any other private land.

There is public fishing beneath the Route 81 bridge from wheelchair –accessible walkways on the north and south shores created as a joint venture between NYSDOT, NYSDEC, and OLA. The Town of Sullivan provides another angler pier at Chapman Park, and another pier in Cleveland is scheduled to be rehabilitated. The Canal Corporation allows shore based angler access on its properties in Sylvan Beach and Brewerton. Wading anglers can fish out of Constantia's Taft Bay Park, Oneida Shores, and NYSDEC's Godfrey Point and South Shore boat launches.

Please respect the rights and wishes of stream and lakefront property owners. In most instances the waterfront properties owners have a vested interest in stewardship of the waters and shoreline, and pay high taxes for their interests. They often the volunteer for OLA functions, pick up litter and flotsam, as well as watch out for dangers and imperiled persons on the ice and waters. Respect the wishes of any private landowner granting you entry.

NYSDEC has a program "**ASK Permission – See Landowner**" and puts out a brochure and card (see http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/wildlife_pdf/ask.pdf) to document who has what rights to enter private land for recreational purposes.

Additionally, NYSDEC has acquired **Public Fishing Rights** on many streams (see <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/9924.html>). PFR's are permanent easements purchased by the NYSDEC from willing landowners, giving anglers the right to fish and walk along the bank (usually a 33' strip on one or both banks of the stream). This right is for the purpose of fishing only and no other purpose.

Recreational entry – with permission - embraces certain liabilities that are assumed by the NYS General Obligations Law 9-103 as long as no fee/compensation is involved.