



**Oneida Lake Association**  
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Greetings!

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## **Bass Tournaments**

What a terrific Fourth of July weekend on the lake!

With splendid weather and warmer waters, the lake provided an abundance of enjoyment--sailing, boating, tubing, swimming, paddling, and fishing. And the sunsets were spectacular! Of course, the month of July also puts us into the heart of the bass tournament season that occurs each summer on Oneida. Although the OLA Board of Directors welcomes this enjoyable activity, we want to remain well-informed about the overall status of the bass fishery. We have had several OLA members express concerns about increased fishing pressure from the many tournaments. To that end, we published a lengthy article on bass fishing in our Spring 2022 Bulletin. Click this link to read the article:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/eb077e39501/a7563737-fcec-43c7-9151-3ff67c46c8c3.pdf?rdr=true>

One result of our research was to pass a motion indicating our opposition to the practice of transporting bass to off-site locations for the tournament weigh-in process. Please read the motion below that the Board passed earlier in the spring

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### **Oneida Lake Association Board of Directors' Motion in Opposition to the Overland Transport of Tournament-Caught Fish**

It is well known that there is mortality associated with catch-and-release fishing activities. The magnitude of that mortality is variable, depending on many factors, including water temperature, injuries to the fish during harvest, water conditions, and length of time in holding tanks, just to name a few.

On Oneida Lake, many anglers employ the catch-and-release practice for smallmouth and largemouth bass. This activity is especially true—and often required—during competitive bass tournaments that occur frequently during the summer.

Typically, bass anglers immediately release their catch on site, or they put the bass into a live well for transport to a land location for official weigh-in. Although this weigh-in site could be on the shores of Oneida Lake, for some tournaments bass are transported over land as much as forty miles for a publicity weigh-in. If bass do not survive this transport process, the angler is penalized points; therefore, there is an incentive for the anglers to keep these fish alive through good handling and holding procedures. Even with this incentive, however, there is considerable fish mortality associated with these tournaments. Fifteen to twenty percent loss of fish during tournaments is common in normal situations; it can be higher under severe conditions. In addition, delayed mortality is very difficult to measure because it can occur days after the release of the fish.

The Board of Directors, therefore, opposes the overland transport of these harvested and stressed bass to a remote location (away from Oneida Lake) for any tournament purpose. The Oneida Lake Association Board of Directors, representing 2500 members, unanimously approved a motion to oppose this type of activity. Specifically, the **Oneida Lake Association is opposed to any over-land transportation of live bass harvested from Oneida Lake during tournaments to another location away from the shores of Oneida lake for any purpose, including live weigh-ins.**

**To be clear, the Oneida Lake Association is not opposed to bass tournaments.** We recognize that the superb quality of our bass fishery attracts both recreational and tournament anglers. With that in mind, we continue to support the tournament community and the role they play in enhancing the health of our fishery.



### Water Chestnut Weed Pull

On June 30, OLA Director Patricia Cerro-Reehil conducted a weed pull on the south shore of Oneida Lake. Specifically, she and her team eradicated hundreds of pounds of water chestnuts, an invasive species that can threaten the health of the lake. She reported that "We had a tremendously successful water chestnut weed pull. In all we had 23 people pulling weeds from Hobart and Williams Smith Colleges, The Nature Conservancy, Thousand Islands Land Trust, NYSDEC, and a local engineering firm, as well as former OLA Director Carl Ford."

Sydney VanWinkle, Invasive Species Project Coordinator from Hobart and William Smith, expressed her thanks "for all of the hard work and coordination that was put into the pull last Thursday. After a final tally, it looks like we pulled a total of 483.89 pounds of water chestnut from the Marina and Lewis Point, combined!"

Great Work!!



## 2nd Water Chestnut Pull is Planned

Closely following the successful weed pull on the south shore, OLA Director Cerro-Reehil is heading up another team of volunteers to pull weeds at Metzger's Pond, on the north shore of the lake. This pond drains into Oneida Lake at the Fish Hatchery, posing the threat of migrating chestnuts. Join us there, too! Saturday, July 9th @ 9 am. Meet at the corner of Kibbie Lake Road and Knapp Road in the Town of Constantia. For more information contact Patricia at:

[pcr@nywea.org](mailto:pcr@nywea.org)

### HOW WAS YOUR FREE FISHING WEEKEND?

Send us your photos of your free fishing weekend. Don't forget to download the certificate "My First Oneida Fish" on our website.

**Pay your dues, and HELP PROTECT ONEIDA LAKE!!!!**

**\$8 annually**

**Recruit your neighbors and friends TO JOIN US!**

[Donate](#)



Memorials and contributions to our program are most welcome.

OLA is a 501(c)4 organization serving and protecting the Oneida Lake environment.



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

OLA is a 501(c)(4) not-for-profit organization.

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/>.

Please remember to obey all laws, rules, regulations, and codes of ethics as they pertain to boating, fishing, hunting, and the management of Oneida Lake and its tributaries.

[Report environmental violations.](#)

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*Edited by John Harmon and Matt Snyder*

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