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## Your Boat Counts!

**The 2022 general election will have consequences for Oneida Lake. Your Oneida Lake Association Board of Directors reminds you that it is critically important to exercise your right to vote!**



As a non-partisan non-profit, OLA does not traditionally publish candidate endorsements.

However, we have an obligation to educate our members about the track records of incumbents in key, competitive races for New York State Senate and Governor.

In the State Senate's newly drawn 48th district, candidate Julie Abbott is the leading challenger to incumbent Rachel May. In the 50th district, candidate Rebecca Shiroff is campaigning against incumbent John Mannion. Last year, incumbents May and Mannion co-sponsored SB 5266, a deeply misguided bill. SB 5266 would have legalized commercial walleye harvest and sale, and created a discriminatory exemption from fish and game laws for members of Native nations. By co-sponsoring that bill, May and Mannion demonstrated a lack of understanding of the importance of law enforcement for Oneida Lake.

In the race for Governor, incumbent Kathy Hochul is running against candidate Lee Zeldin. Hochul's track record on Oneida Lake issues is mixed, at best. While Hochul did veto SB 5266 last December, she also directed the Commissioner of the DEC to continue negotiating with Native leaders regarding exempting their members from fish and game laws. A Commissioner's Memo prohibiting DEC law enforcement from ticketing Native nation members remains in force. This action against effective law enforcement is ultimately the responsibility of the incumbent Governor. We believe that OLA members should be aware of Hochul's willingness to take this risk with Oneida Lake, as well as her administration's ongoing lack of

transparency on the status of negotiations.

No matter what levers you plan to pull in the election booth, we urge every OLA member to exercise your voting rights! If you need more information on your ballot, polling location, or early voting, go to <https://www.elections.ny.gov> today.

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## Fall Clean-Up!

George Reck is heading up another roadside clean-up sponsored by the OLA. We invite you to join George and other OLA members to help clean up our section of the Bartel Road on-ramp. This event will be conducted November 18, starting at 10am.

Please meet at the Bartel Road on-ramp. Dress for cool, damp weather. Bring gloves! Safety gear and a limited amount of “pickers “ will be provided. There will be a prize for the most unusual item retrieved! We hope to see you there! ~George Reck, Director Highway Clean-up Committee

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## DEC Announces Start of Construction for New Accessible Oneida Lake Boat Launch at Cove Road

The new boat launch will connect to Oneida Lake and provide additional access to the world-class fishing in Oneida Lake for all visitors, including people with disabilities.

New York State Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton said, "The state's Canal system is a tremendous recreational resource for boaters, paddlers, and anglers that are seeking to explore and enjoy the great outdoors of upstate New York, and DEC's new launch on Cove Road will provide safe access on the east end of Oneida Lake. Recreational boating increased on New York's Canals this past season and through infrastructure upgrades like this new launch, we expect more and more residents and visitors to discover our waterways in 2023."

John Harmon, President of the Oneida Lake Association said, "The Oneida Lake Association is thrilled to see construction of the Cove Road boat launch site underway! It represents a great achievement by the DEC and the broader Oneida Lake community. The Cove Road launch site is the result of several years of advocacy and collaboration on the part of many people and agencies in our community. This launch site fills an important need for our members who want to utilize the great resources and recreational opportunities of Oneida Lake."

As DEC continues to expand recreational opportunities for people of all abilities, the site will have several Americans with Disabilities Act- (ADA) compliant features. Plans include a two-lane, concrete launch ramp with floating docks, canoe/kayak launch, fishing pier, parking area with 24 car and 49 car/trailer parking spaces, including some accessible parking, and port-a-johns.

Once complete, anglers will have additional boating access to Oneida Lake, New York's most heavily fished inland water. The lake's waters support walleye, yellow perch, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, and panfish, among other fish and wildlife species. Lake sturgeon can be found in the lake and its tributaries; however, lake sturgeon are on New York's threatened species list and cannot be fished for or possessed.

The project is being funded with \$1.6 million from the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) and NY Works. Under the State's [Adventure NY initiative \(PDF, 10 MB\)](#), DEC is making strategic investments to expand access to healthy, active outdoor recreation, connect more New Yorkers and visitors to nature and the outdoors, protect natural resources, and boost local economies. The EPF is a critical resource for environmental programs such as land acquisition, farmland protection, invasive species prevention and eradication, recreation access, water quality improvement, and environmental justice projects.

Anglers are reminded that statewide fishing regulations apply in Oneida Lake and it is an angler's responsibility to know when the seasons are open in their area, size, daily and possession limits, and legal methods of taking fish. For current state fishing regulations, consult the [2022 Fishing Regulations Guide \(PDF\)](#) or go to the [freshwater fishing regulations](#)



We have have been thrilled with the response for our call for photos. As we develop our new website, our goal is to populate the photo library with the outstanding contributions from our OLA members.

Check out this striking image from Darcie Jerry, Hobie Cat Fleet 204. Keep those photos coming!



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## Phishing

We continue to receive inquiries about disturbing fake news that our members encounter while on social media. In order to further educate our members, we are re-publishing an article that recently appeared in our **Fall Bulletin**. Please take a look.



Even the most inexperienced angler knows the basic concept: You choose some bait, dangle it in front of a fish, and hope the hook does its work. The fish, of course, have a different point of view. Their job is to remain wary, and not get suckered into taking the bait. And for the most part, they do a very good job of this! And when it comes to *phishing*, so should you.

Over the past few months, I have received several emails from alarmed OLA members who send me a link to a disturbing article that they have read on Facebook or Instagram. Most of these articles contain the headline “10 Most Polluted Lakes in the US,” and sure enough Oneida Lake is on that list. “Articles” such as these are also known as “click bait.” And since you see the word “bait” in there, you should take a lesson from our finny friends. Don’t bite!

Here's how it works. Someone writes an “article” with little or no basis in fact and then attaches a highly provocative, eye-catching headline. (You remember *The National Enquirer*, right?). Their goal is to get you to click

on the article. Why? Because they get paid for every click. Again, why? Because you will notice that you can't get more than a paragraph into the article without encountering an advertisement. So the more time you spend on an article, the more they can monetize your attention. And if you should click on an ad, either by choice or by accident . . . jackpot! It might be only a few pennies per click, but with thousands of fish in the sea, it adds up to spendable money for these "authors."

So, how can you tell if it's click bait? First, like anything you read, take a look at the author. Every single time someone sends me this same story, it's by different "author!" Same content, different author. Of course, they are not the author at all. They are merely copying a story and putting their name on it. I research the author of every one of these articles that is sent to me. They range from influencer wannabes to college kids just trying to get some pocket change. For example, one "author" describes himself as a "professional writer and editor for books, blogs, and websites, with a particular focus on animals and finance. When I'm not working, I enjoy playing video games with friends." By "working," I suppose he means posting items on social media, looking for clicks. Another "author" (of the same article) gushes that "I am living a dream, being a multi-media personality and DJ!" We all know that a great DJ is key to a successful wedding reception, but let's not rely on them for our environmental reports. Instead, take a look at the writings from the researchers at the Cornell Field Station on Oneida Lake. They publish a variety of articles, including a brief report in this Bulletin! And you won't see any ads for dog food or energy bars. That's another clue: Look for an abundance of ads interrupting your reading. That's another sign of click bait.

And while you're researching the author, try to find some actual references or citations in these articles. Can you fact-check any of the information they are presenting? Or as the fish say, "Is this a real worm?"

Finally let's take a look at the article itself. There are a few variations of the article out there, but when you get to Oneida Lake section, it often begins with a few geographic features of the lake (which can easily be found with a simple Google search). It then reports some concerning information taken 25 years ago regarding algal blooms and agricultural run-off. If you read to the end of the report, it states that DEC has "delisted Oneida Lake" because of the implementation of "best management practices," so the article itself admits that it's not actually on any polluted list at all!

In conclusion, don't let the DJs put you on their *playlist*! Instead, let's get outside and spend some time fishing, kayaking, sailing, or taking photos of those magnificent sunsets!

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## Free Fishing Day!

As a way to honor our veterans, the DEC has announced that November 11 will be a Free Fishing Day. No license is required. Anglers must still follow all of the other rules and regulations in force.

## Remembering OLA Member Bud Hafermalz

We are always grateful to the families who decide to think of the OLA in their time of sorrow, after a loved one passes. Many families have included the OLA as a recipient of the gifts that folks give in honor of the deceased. We truly appreciate the support and notes of kindness, often from a family who enjoys time on the water.

Walter "Bud" Hafermalz, a member of OLA for more than 60 years, passed away September 14. Multiple generations of the Hafermalz family were consummate outdoors people on Oneida Lake, and from his earliest childhood, Bud embraced that tradition as an angler and hunter on the lake. Bud's horizons expanded as he moved to North Carolina and pursued fish and game around the world, but he remained dedicated to this lake for his entire life as both a conservationist and sportsman. OLA thanks all the family and friends who made donations to OLA in Bud's memory.

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.](#)

[1-844-DEC-ECOS \(1-844-332-3267\)](tel:1-844-DEC-ECOS)

*Edited by John Harmon and Matt Snyder*

*Send us your notes and articles for use in future ENews!*

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