



Oneida Lake Association  
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Greetings!

### WHAT'S UP

Ice is thinning and moving as this is written March 8-10, 2020. It would appear that ice-fishing is over. Meanwhile, the Utica Observer Dispatch ran a piece by Frank Tomaino indicating that in 1890 *Sylvan Beach is booming as hundreds of men from Erie and Williamsport, Pennsylvania, are at work harvesting ice from Oneida Lake. So far, dozens of carloads have been cut and shipped south by freight train. The ice is of excellent quality, being from 12 to 18 inches thick.*

Think about that for a moment. And think about visiting the Oneida Lake Fish Culture Station in Constantia the weekend after the walleye nets are set, probably the last of this month.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) has determined that site ID # 633002, known as the Camden Wire Company site, may be deleted from the New York State Registry of Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Sites. This site is located in the Town of Camden within the County of Oneida and is located off Blakesley Road between Route 13 and Old State Road. Comments regarding this action must be submitted no later than April 10, 2020. [Information](#)

**MARK YOU CALENDAR!!!! APRIL 28, 7 pm**

## OLA ANNUAL MEETING!

GILLETTE ROAD MIDDLE SCHOOL ON SOUTH BAY ROAD

March 3 OLA submitted to the USF&WS a letter in public comment on the new cormorant management EIS. A summary of the proposed rule is at <https://www.doi.gov/presreleases/interiors-fish-and-wildlife-service-solicits-public-input-cormorant-management>

OLA , is strongly in favor of the expansion of cormorant management authority. OLA's support extends to all accepted methodologies, including lethal management. OLA is in favor of establishing a new permit for State wildlife agencies for authorizing certain cormorant management and control activities that are normally prohibited and are intended to relieve or prevent impacts from cormorants on wild and stocked fisheries, aquaculture facilities, human health and safety, property, and threatened and endangered species.

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The 29th Annual Big East Camping and Outdoor Sports Show is coming up at the Turning Stone Casino. On March 21 the CNY Youth Fishing Coordinators and other sponsors, will score of a **Youth Casting Contest** between 10AM and 4PM. Three divisions for kids up to age 16 will be awarded prizes.

OLA President Bill Girvan, Director Mike Barretta, and OLA member Don Hahn are running this youth casting contest. If OLA members want to stop by to talk, please do so.

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Remember that past issues of the OLA ENews are achieved on our website, along with many recent Bulletins. Hard copy of all Bulletins are on the shelves of the Syracuse Onondaga County Public Library. We want to duplicate these archives.

**We are looking for helpers** to go to the library and to scan the older issues for posting on our website [www.oneidalakeassociation.org](http://www.oneidalakeassociation.org) and helping us prepare for our 75th anniversary meeting next spring.

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**SAVE THE DATE:** The OLA the Spring Highway Cleanup on April 24, 2020. Contact Director George Reck to help out.

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### Kayak Safety Concerns - Captain Tony Buffa

During the last two charter years (2018, 2019) I have noticed an increase of kayak fishermen on Oneida Lake and Lake Ontario. Sharing fishing space with them is not a concern; however seeing them from a distance is!

Kayaks especially dark colored ones, are not easily spotted from afar. Their low profile and small footprint are a recipe for collision. Even though it is not currently mandated by law, a safety flag would very much improve visibility. An orange or red flag attached to the kayak will easily get the attention of other water users. These flag kits are readily available over the counter and online. If you are a DIY'er go to *Kayak Hacks Fishing on YouTube* for an instructional video.

If you are fishing or paddling at dusk, please wear and use a headlamp!

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## ADVOCACY

CLEVELAND PIER

COVE ROAD BOAT LAUNCH

Come to the Annual Meeting and hear project updates from NYSDEC!

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Consequent to nomination by the OLA, the **New York State Outdoorsmen Hall of Fame Board of Directors** voted **Dr. John Forney to be inducted** into the Hall of Fame in 2020. The induction banquet will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2020 at Theodore's Restaurant formerly the Rusty Rail, 3231 Seneca Turnpike (Rt 5) in

Canastota, NY.

The HOF recognized John's achievements and all that he has 'given back' to the fishery resources of NYS and beyond.

If you care to attend, make reservations at [sfcf@tds.net](mailto:sfcf@tds.net) Dinner is \$25, and starts at 6 PM, so get there early, by 5, to mingle with the crowd!

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### Why aren't your neighbors members of OLA?

There are about 5,750 families or businesses owning property inside the Routes 31-13-49-11 perimeter surrounding Oneida Lake. Of these, it appears that only about 10 percent are members of the organization established to protect and advocate for the resource on which they live.

If you are a member or friend of the OLA who gets and reads this newsletter, ask your neighbor if they are also a member. If not, ask them "why not?!" Is it simply a lack of interest or time, are they too impoverished by the higher taxes to afford \$8, are they unconcerned about the lake's water quality, fisheries, navigation, or other riches of recreation that the lake affords, or do they have some beef that they feel is un-vetted to someone that influences the lake and its nearshore environment?

Before the advent of the internet, membership in the Oneida Lake Association reached folks across the northeast, but most of the 4-5,000 members of the day lived within 50 miles of the lake. To remain a powerful advocate before federal, state, and local governments and dealing with issues of concern to the lake's benefits and future, the OLA must increase and maintain an interested public membership.

Come to the Annual Meeting, Bring a neighbor. Talk to one or more of the Board of Directors. Or, should you or your neighbors prefer, send a note to the Board via email to [president@oneidalakeassociation.org](mailto:president@oneidalakeassociation.org).

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### PLEASE SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT OUR 75TH ANNIVERSARY!!!

The OLA would love to hear your thoughts about the Association and the lake. Send us your memories, your anecdotes, your photos, your ideas.  
What does Oneida Lake mean to you?

**Note a new email address for you or family members to contribute to the OLA's efforts to collect historical anecdotes, names, and events in advance of the Association's 75 Anniversary in April 2020.**

Write to [OLA75th@gmail.com](mailto:OLA75th@gmail.com)

**As you greet your neighbors and friends in the coming months, consider a membership to the Oneida Lake Association!**

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Some of our members may be interested in reading [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-01/documents/nwpr\\_fact\\_sheet\\_-\\_overview.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-01/documents/nwpr_fact_sheet_-_overview.pdf) to better grasp the perspective of "waters of the United States" and regulations associated with clean water via "navigable" and "wetlands".

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In our attempts to stay current on the NEP and activities to curtail erosion and sedimentation affecting inflows to Oneida Lake, Mark Burger of the Onondaga Soil and Water Conservtion District provided this summary of **AGRICULTURE Activities** by his group

- Oneida Lake Beef Farm. AEM Tier 2 worksheet assessment. Potential for barnyard and heavy use area protection BMPs.
- Onondaga County SWCD will author the annual report of SWCD activity for 2019. The report will include work from: Cortland, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Oswego and Onondaga Counties.

OLA representatives will attend a March 13 meeting hosted by OCSWD with the other regional county District representatives.

One member commented on our letter of concern that we cited in the last ENews. He is correct that large developments require permits and rigorous and overlapping reviews by multiple governments. This is what OLA relies on - agencies doing their jobs in protecting lake resources/environment. The member also pointed out - correctly - that many of the sources of contamination to our waters comes from unregulated activities by homeowners and agriculture where exemptions from permitting regulations prompt no reviews of the ramifications of said activities.

So we hope that the local townships can improve knowledge and scrutiny of and relating to the ditching and drainage activities that are not regulated directly by NYS or the EPA/USACE in protecting "waters of the United States". Just be cause an activity by a homeowner or farmer is not 'permitted', outreach by 'those in the know' would go a long way in implementation of Best Management Practices (BMP's) that can protect runoff and ground waters that enter Oneida Lake.

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Increasingly scientists and lay persons are advocating a new term relating to or denoting the current geological age, viewed as the period during which human activity has been the dominant influence on climate and the environment. We've become a major force of nature in this new "**Anthropocene epoch**".

Articles like this are following on the heels of "The Sixth Extinction" by Elizabeth Kolbert and previously reviewed in ENews.. **Fossil Corals Suggest a Mass Extinction Is on the Way**: If those who don't know history are destined to repeat it, then we should pay close attention to the last time that life on Earth almost ended. That's according to a team of scientists who have found compelling evidence that another mass extinction is underway.

Read in Newsweek: <https://apple.news/ABRuoAS8yQjOTPF7dFNg3fA>

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**If you have an avocation and interest in serving OLA, please reach out to one of the Directors. Our contact info is at our website.**

**Directors serve 2-year terms, meet once a month, and may spend 3-6 hours a month on OLA business.**

**Each Director must serve on at least one standing committee, volunteer for special events, and anticipate advancement to an officer's position.**

**The BOD currently has three Director vacancies.**

**Write out your avocational resume and send it along with a brief note outlining your professional experience and personal interests to any OLA Director, or to [President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org](mailto:President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org)**

**We are in particular need of someone who can assist in creating content for this monthly newsletter.**

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## SOMETHING NEW?

I am presenting this article, starting with “A”, as challenge to OLA Directors sitting on the Fisheries Committee, and/or other general members and friends with a technical fisheries background. Submit your short treatise on another of Oneida Lake’s fish – past or present – and my successor ENews editor will work his or her magic in future issues. Your contribution will survive on the OLA’s website.

Notes from the *Roosevelt Wildlife Annals – Oneida lake Fishes, November 1928*  
<https://www.rooseveltwildlife.org/collections>, and C.L. Smith's *Inland Fishes of NYS*

Let’s talk about *Anguilla rostrata*, the American eel.

It is a facultative catadromous fish found on the eastern coast of North America. This means that it is native, and swims to sea to spawn (unlike anadromous salmon, that swim inland to spawn). American eels have jaws and a pectoral fins, but no pelvic fins. They breed in the Sargasso Sea in late winter. Larvae float on the current north along the east coast. Some suggest that the European eel is the same fish, but because those stay longer in the larval period drifting beyond Canada they develop 6-8 more vertebrae - American eels have 103-111! Hudson and St. Lawrence River eel larvae mature into 2-3” elvers that move upstream in April and May. Males tend to stay near the brackish river mouths while females will move up rivers to, for instance, Lake Ontario and Oneida Lake.

Or used to. In the early 1960’s 10,000+ eels a day would attempt passage in the Canadian passage device on the dam between Massena and Cornwall. Dams of the era past were rarely designed to include even moderately effective fishways. If a yearling female made it over the dam, she lived for ~10 years and then went downstream through the turbines. So plentiful were the out-migrants that turbines choked and generation shut off. Pieces of fish floated downstream. After a few decades the fish became ‘of concern’. An American eel ladder was constructed in 1974 at the Moses-Saunders Dam to facilitate the upstream migration. Several million eels passed through this fishway between 1974 and 1979. Other than occasional locking, there is essentially no passage up the Oswego River once gates are closed. So American eels in Oneida Lake have been exceedingly rare over the last 60 years.

Investigations 1914-21 showed 59 species of fish in the lake. In 1916 the main catch at Caughdenoy were American eels - 100 tons - taken in two rows of 3-trap weirs (envison 3 side-by-side chevrons with the wide end open upstream, and a box at the bottom/downstream of the funnels) set 12 inches from the shore/bank.

Hiram N. Coville, a fish dealer in Brewerton reported that the eels he caught had an average weight of 4 pounds; a large one may exceed 7 pounds and be 3.5 feet long (*modern NYS angling record is 5# according to Smith*). He listed, in order of commercial importance:

1. eels, (a harvest of 33,839 pounds reported in 1914)
2. pike-perch (walleye), yellow perch, bullheads, and pickerel
3. pumpkinseed, black and red-fin suckers
4. rock bass
5. catfish
6. tullibee, which either fresh or salted yielded 4-5 annually.

In 1916 eels as harvested brought 6 cents a pound, 10 cents if dressed; smoked eels sold for 20 cents a pound. Eel oil, for harness grease, cost \$1.50 a quart, while skins were \$30/1000 and used for lining whips and book binding. These were the days when horses outnumbered cars, and you could buy a good shotgun (made in Fulton, Oswego, or Utica) for \$10. Such was the value of the American eel; they are ‘priceless’ today, ironically, but still found in Asian markets.

Ok, so Tom Brooking authored a nice piece on lake sturgeon that is posted on our website. **Who will be the next author of a few paragraphs on a fish, waterfowl, songbird, amphibian, crustacean, or denizen of the depths of Oneida??** This is your -

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## FISHERIES

While we don't have barnacles, I thought some of you might be interested in this [video](#) created by fellow ES&F grad, and retired Duke utility biologist, now living and exploring the northwest. Our lake's clams and mussels are filter feeders, partly responsible for our clear (relative to the last century) waters. Todd wrote *Here's 25 seconds of barnacles filter feeding using their cirripedia. Due to the shallow depth of field in my microscope camera, I used 3 different barnacles to get different views of the cirripedia. I brought these barnacles home from a beach walk to see if they would open up and feed. (The red filament in one view is debris, not part of the barnacle.) I'm planning a beach field trip to help several home-school kids with their high school biology.*

At one time the OLA Board was working on a program for related school curricula to be run as field trips using Oneida Lake as a classroom extension. The vision was (is) to have Member teachers and citizen scientists volunteer and create a variety of modules. Interested school clubs or groups would visit different 'stories' of the lake, discovering changes/differences that come with low and high energy environment of the near-shore at several locations. With support, the 'book' of modules would be integrated into a program of hands-on (feet wet) woven into STEM classroom lessons.

We still have a few academics on the Board, but lack the thoughts and support of the general membership. If you have some suggestions, please reach out to a Director. Meanwhile, be observant (and spend the time with your youngsters) attentively looking at the small things in life. Some of what you see may not be around forever.

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### Member's **FISHING TIPS.**

Feel free to offer up some of **your** short hints, tips, and tricks.

Yellow perch spawning takes place when water temperatures approach 50 degrees and perch move into the shallows. Females spread eggs in long strands over old weed beds or shallow rocky areas. Fishing a small worm or minnow held just above the bottom by a small bobber is a sometimes and effective tactic. Take a kid with you!

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**If you or someone you know has a special avocation and interest in serving the Oneida Lake community, please contact us.**

**We are in particular need of help creating and editing this ENews.**

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### MEMBER QUESTIONS?

Remember that many of the frequently asked questions about the lake are posted with responses on the website.

**Q:** Is the annual meeting on a Tuesday this year? Not on the traditional Wednesday?

**A:** YES, April 28, 7 PM at Gillette Road Middle School on South Bay Road, Cicero. Doors open at 6, so some early and look at the displays.

Sent your questions and opinion to [President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org](mailto:President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org)

There are 20 signs around the lake bearing advertising support for the OLA's mission. At this time about a dozen firms of these advertisers are no longer in business.

If your company has interest in adopting one of these signs, and promoting both your business and OLA at a nominal expense, please contact an OLA Director or email [President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org](mailto:President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org)



Donate

Help OLA function. Memorials and contributions to our program are most welcome.

Advertise in our Bulletin, or adopt a sign..

Memorial remembrance\$ take the edge off some of our expenses.



[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/>.

**Report environmental violations.** Please remember to obey all laws, rules, regulations, and codes of ethics as they pertain to boating, fishing, hunting, and management of Oneida Lake and its drainage basin. Be civil. **1-844-DEC-ECOS (1-844-332-3267) or 1-800-TIPP DEC (1-800-847-7332)**

*Edited by Scott Shupe and John Harmon.*

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