

St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council
49½ Court Street, Canton, New York 13617-1169
Phone: (315) 379-2292 Fax: (315) 379-2252
E-mail: Planning@stlawco.org
Web Site: <http://www.stlawco.org/Planning/EMC.htm>

Draft

MEETING MINUTES

September 19, 2018

**2nd - Floor Conference Room, Public Safety Complex
49½ Court Street, Canton, New York**

Action items in bold italics / Motions underlined.

Blue boxes indicate internal links to sections of these Minutes.

1. **Call to Order:** Matilda Larson called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.
2. **Roll Call, Determination of Quorum:** A quorum was not present.
Members present: Ryan Burkum; Larry Denesha, *BOL Liaison*; Alex French; Richard Marshall; Sue Rau; and Tiernan Smith.
Members absent: Joseph Brant, *Chair*; Don O'Shea, *Vice-Chair*; Catherine Bennett; Jennifer Berbrich; Lance Rudiger; Dana Smith; Andrew Soutar; Pat Whalen, *Secretary* and Bob Zimmerman.
Guest(s): Emily Sheridan, DEC Great Lakes Program.
Staff: M. Larson.
3. **Acceptance of Order of Business, Items for New Business, and Items for Unfinished Business:**
No Action was taken as a quorum was not present.
4. **Approval of the June and July EMC Meeting Minutes:** No Action was taken as a quorum was not present.
5. **Board of Legislators Report.** Mr. Denesha reported:
 - The County's 2017 audit was completed with no findings, which has not happened since 2005, and is due to the hard work of the County Treasurer.
 - Phase II of demolition work at the former J&L site is proceeding, and the anticipated completion date is before the end of November. No buildings will be visible from Route 3.
 - DEC representative Gary McCulloch will deliver a presentation to the Board of Legislators about the clean-up process on Monday, September 24th at 5:30 pm.
 - When asked about the status of the EPA's fuel spill clean-up at J&L, Denesha said new interceptor trenches are being dug, and most of the remaining fuel is trapped underneath a marsh mat.

6. **Hearings, Comments from the Public.**

- No report was given on the September 8th event at SLU on local efforts to address climate change.
- Larson relayed highlights shared by Planning Office Director Keith Zimmerman about the September 12th presentation by a former UN Ambassador at Clarkson University on Climate Change as a National Security Threat. Sheridan said the NOAA also recently held a workshop on establishing a framework for dialogue about climate change.
- EPA presentation on Grasse River Superfund Site: Rau report that a staging area to process contaminated sediment from the Grasse River in Massena is under construction, and the bulk head wall is complete. The infrastructure includes a liner to prevent storm water contaminants from flowing back into the river, and five monitoring wells.
- The processing of soil contamination will occur this spring with the dewatering of sediment with the use of barges, and the soils will be stabilized with portland cement.
- Once the contaminated soils achieve an acceptable parts-per-million threshold, the stabilized soils will be deposited at the Alcoa landfill.
- Upland remediation near old pipe outflows by the chemical ponds will be excavated with the processing conducted elsewhere.
- Rau said former EMC member Peter Skomsky inquired about the remediation of the old power canal and dam upstream, which are not part of the superfund site. Skomsky was informed those locations did not have contamination levels that were high enough to warrant remediation. Members of the Council noted water levels in that vicinity were relatively low, and that the infrastructure was old and unattractive, and if the old dam failed, areas downstream, including the superfund site, would be contaminated.
- Rau suggested inviting the EPA to deliver an update to the EMC in the spring.

7. **Reports by EMC Members on Conversations with County Legislators:** None.

8. **Report of the Committees:**

- Executive Committee:** No meeting; no report.
- Conservation of Resources Committee (CRC):** P q'b gg vpi 'y cu'j gf 'kp"Ugr v0 Larson relayed July 11, 2018 committee meeting highlights. Tiernan inquired about Bassmaster survey results. Larson said she did not have a summary prepared, and said she would ask Tenbusch to provide a follow up at the next meeting.
- Environment + Economy Committee (E+E):** See attached committee report.
 - Burkum said a survey questionnaire was prepared and disseminated online and in hardcopy to a variety of outdoor-based businesses. A number of responses were received and summarized, and a handful are willing to deliver a presentation at a future EMC meeting.
 - A suggestion was made to arrange a future presentation on the current status of recycling, including whether the materials are actually being repurposed, and where the items are going.
- Invasive Species Committee (ISC):** See attached committee report.
 - Larson and Denesha relayed highlights from the September 18, 2018 EAB Task Force meeting.
 - Burkum said after attending a Society of Arborists convention, the danger of hazard trees that have died due to EAB infestation cannot be overstated enough. Burkum reported these hazard

trees are so unstable, they can fall due to the nearby vibration of heavy equipment or trucks, and can pose a serious danger to inexperienced arborists or do-it-yourselfers.

- Larson and Denesha said representatives from Nature Up North and National Grid are planning to deliver a presentation about the liability of EAB hazard trees at an upcoming Association of Town Supervisors meeting in Potsdam.
- Burkum indicated that if 20% or less of an ash tree canopy is dead, it can be treated with insecticide every two years, and costs approximately \$200 to \$300 per tree. Burkum said the City of Rochester has been treating ash trees for the last 10 years. Burkum also said there is concern that trees in the olive family may be susceptible to the EAB.
- Emily Sheridan (DEC) said SLELO PRISM met today, and distributed information about the Spotted Lantern Fly. Larson and Denesha said they learned at the last EAB Task Force meeting that the eggs of the SLF can be transported by trucks, lumber, metals and aggregates, and seasonal storage areas for RVs may be susceptible to spreading the invasive.
- Sheridan said a pilot project to use the Eurasian Moth as a biological control measure on the Swallow-Wort is underway at Wehle State Park in Henderson NY, and said there is concern that the moth may not overwinter well enough in the region to be a viable control mechanism. Sheridan said SLELO PRISM is looking to fund the start-up costs on a collaborative project to address the threat of the Swallow-Wort.

e. Watershed Management Committee (WMC). See attached committee report.

- Larson reported Planning staff participated in a boat tour of Hammond's and Morristown's shoreline with consultant Matt Biondolillo and Jake Tibbles from the Thousand Islands Land Trust to identify areas that flooded last spring, locations of habitat restoration projects, and areas for future conservation easements.
- Larson reported the Planning Office mailed out more than 2,000 postcards announcing the availability of funds to reimburse property owners up to 50% of eligible septic replacement expenses (with a cap of \$10,000). Larson said more than 60 households contacted the Office expressing an interest in participating, and that the County anticipates assisting 20 households before the end of this construction season.
- Sheridan inquired if a meeting venue could be secured for a Great Lakes sub-basin work group meeting. Larson said she could help reserve a county conference room.

9. **Report of the Staff:** Larson said staff report highlights for this month were included in the watershed management committee update.

10. **Unfinished Business:** None.

11. **New Business:** None.

12. **Announcements:** Sheridan said the DEC has up to \$200,000 available to fund community composting initiatives.

13. **Message to the Board of Legislators:** Larson wondered if the next EMC message to the Board of Legislators would be a suggestion to expand the use of boat washing stations to include washing RVs. Burkum said the message should be more concise: "Keep thinking about invasives." Another suggestion was; "Watch out for falling ash trees."

14. **Adjournment:** Larson said the next EMC meeting date is October 16th. The meeting adjourned by consensus at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Matilda Larson

Planner II



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council Environment + Economy Committee Meeting Monday, September 10, 2018

Meeting started at 5:00 PM.

Present: R. Burkum. J. Tenbusch attended as staff.

Projects:

- *Survey of Businesses Involved with the Environment.* J. Tenbusch reported that:
 - The Internet survey developed by the Committee earlier this year (see <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SFNNKJQ>) has been sent to:
 - o An initial list of 32 persons/businesses, for which we had email addresses;
 - o An additional 24 persons/businesses with email addresses.
 - During August, the survey was sent via regular mail to the remaining businesses on the list (118 addresses). Several responses have been returned.
 - Tenbusch will compile these new results with previously-reported results, and distribute to Committee members.
 - o See attached.
- *Recycling activities.* Burkum reported hearing numerous stories about issues related to recycling (of all kinds – not just plastics). Burkum and Tenbusch generally discussed the topic.
 - Burkum suggested that the EMC hear from one or more representatives of the recycling industry. Names suggested included
 - o Larry Legault, SLC Solid Waste Operations Manager / Recycling Coordinator;
 - o A representative from Casella Resource Solutions;
 - o A representative from Development Authority of the North Country Regional Recycling Program.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 PM.

The next E+E Committee meeting will be held on Monday October 1st, 2018 at 5:00 PM.

Report by John Tenbusch

<i>Please tell us about yourself and your business</i>	<i>How does your business make use of the environment and/or natural resources?</i>	<i>Would you be interested in talking to EMC about your business?</i>	<i>Would you be interested in meeting with other businesses or involved in the use of natural resources?</i>	<i>May we contact you to learn more about your business?</i>
Massena Rod & Gun Club, Inc. Opened in 1947, 1,000 members- have to see it. Facebook- Rod & Gun Massena	Cross country ski trails, shotgun sports, woods walk, hunting, rifle, pistol shooting	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hosmers Marina and Smugglers Café. Marina (dockage and gas), bait and tackle store, kayak rentals, bar and restaurant	Provide dockage for boaters, kayak rentals to enjoy the river, fishing tackle to enjoy the river	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grasse River Heritage is not a business. We are a private, non-profit corporation that owns and maintains Heritage Park, the Grasse River Heritage Sculpture Garden, and Dwight Church Park for the use of the public in Canton.	Our parks are locate on islands in the Grasse River and on the waterfront directly adjacent to it. Some of our park space is landscaped, but most of it (Falls Island) is left to grow as it will apart from walking trails. We've also installed interpretive signage that provides information about the ecology and natural history of the site. Our work has involved reclaiming abandoned and, in one location, polluted land on or adjacent to the river, restoring it to health, and making it available for a variety of uses by the public.	We have already talked to a member of the EMC, Ryan Burkum, who has volunteered his services and consulted with us about the care and management of the trees and other plant life in the parks	We're all volunteer- no paid staff- and have a lot to manage, so we're pretty careful with our use of time. But if there is a prospect of useful collaboration or exchange of information that furthers our mission, yes, certainly.	Yes
Curran Renewable Energy, LLC & Seaway Timber Harvesting, Inc.	STH sustainably harvests low grade timber through continuous conservation efforts. CRE manufactures wood pellets for renewable fuel from locally sourced timber through STH.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sweeter Creations Sugar House maple producer	Making maple products	No	No	Yes
Martin's Farm Supply Our passion is to promote and support organic farmers and gardeners with supplies and information. We support people who make use of the environment. Our passion is for healthy land, animals, water, air, food, and people.	We strive for the products we sell to be sourced by environmentally responsible means. And certainly the the use of the products are environmentally responsible. By supporting reasonable farmers, we hope to displace those farmers who pollute the land and water and produce food that's not good for people.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mapleview Dairy LLC	We use almost 5,000 acres of cropland; enjoy use of millions of gallons of natural rainfall for that and recycle nutrients through the use of cow manure as a major source of fertilizer	Yes	Yes	Yes
Miller's Greenhouse I'm a nursery and greenhouse grower for 35 years. Have a degree in Forestry and Wildlife. Have a Retail, Wholesale and Landscaping business. Do Christmas trees and make Christmas wreaths and evergreen products.	We grow plants and trees and shrubs.	Yes	No	Yes
Swingtime Mini-Golf Small seasonal business located on former dairy farm property on USH 11, Potsdam	Beautiful setting - use water from the pond for main water feature that runs throughout the course.	Yes	No	Yes
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation	Trails, camping, marina, beach, nature center, firewood processing, EAB sampling and SLAM plots	Sure	If needed	Yes

Name	Organization	Phone	Email
John R. Hurd	Massena Rod & Gun Club, Inc.	315-769-9207	JHurd7@twcny.rr.com
William Hosmer	Hosmers Marina	315-393-3324	billyhosmer@gmail.com
Louis Tremaine (President, Board of Directors)	Grasse River Heritage	315-824-8130	grasseriverheritage@gmail.com
Kelli Ramsey	Curran Renewable Energy, LLC & Seaway Timber Harvesting, Inc.	315-769-2000	kelli@curranpellets.com
Michael	Sweeter Creations Sugar House	315-322-5555	sweetercreationsugarhouse@gmail.com
Melvin Martin	Martin's Farm Supply	315-265-4180 x 21	melvin@martins4u.com
David Fisher	Mapleview Dairy LLC	315-322-4467	david@mapleviewdairy.com
Munson J. Miller	Miller's Greenhouse	315-393-0374	miller.kv@live.com
Beth Robinson	Swingtime Mini-Golf	315-212-9975	swingtimeminigolf@gmail.com
Doug Croley	NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation	315-769-8663	douglas.croley@parks.ny.gov



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council Invasive Species Committee Meeting Tuesday September 11th 2018

Meeting started at 1:00 PM.

Present: Don O'Shea. John Tenbusch attended as staff.

Item 1: Review Priority Projects.

Emerald Ash Borer.

- Tenbusch reviewed the activities that had been previously reported, including:
 - o Outreach activities conducted by Nature Up North (<https://www.natureupnorth.org/surveyashtrees>)
 - o Presentations by CPO staff to Hammond Town Board, Hammond Village Board, and Chippewa Yacht Club.
 - o Plans for a regional meeting on EAB, to be held in Watertown in October/November.
- Tenbusch reported on the presentation by Jonathan Rosenthal, of Ecological Research Institute in New Paltz. This presentation was held at the Nicandri Nature Center in Massena. Rosenthal discussed the "Monitoring and Managing Ash (MaMA) program. Developed by the E.R.I. in cooperation with the US Forest Service, MaMA offers tools to help citizens identify ash that may show some natural resistance to EAB. It is believed that these so-called "lingering ash" may hold a genetic key to finding resistant strains of ash, thus saving them from extinction.
 - o Rosenthal established a research plot at the Nature Center where this MaMA program can be conducted.
- Tenbusch reported no progress in setting up a regional meeting on EABs.

Harmful Algae Blooms (HABs).

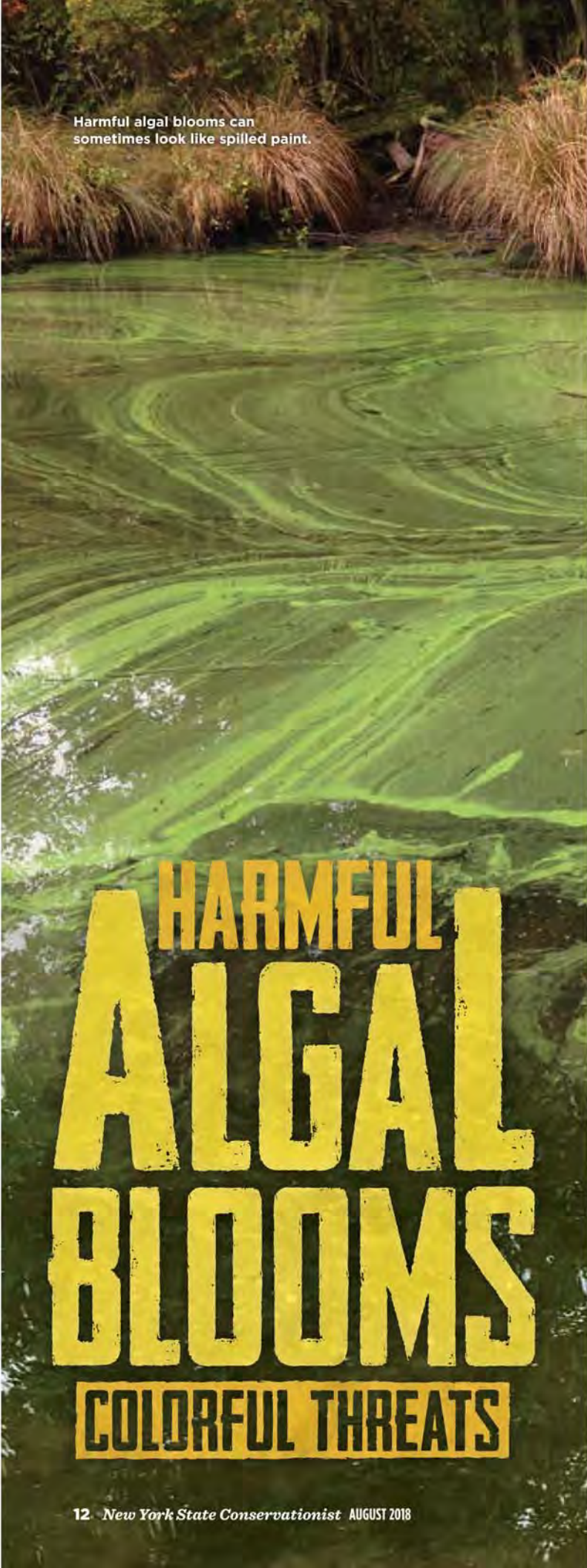
- O'Shea described an article in the recent issue of DEC's *Conservationist* magazine. (See attached.) O'Shea reported that the article had several good links, including:
 - o A map of waterbodies that currently have blooms (www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/83310.html)
 - o Information on how to access funds to combat HABs (www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/113733.html)
 - o How to report suspicious HABs (call DEC at 1-518-402-8179 or email to HABsInfo@dec.ny.gov)

Eurasian Watermilfoil.

- O'Shea reported an article in the *Watertown Daily Times* that had described a milfoil-harvesting operation on Black Lake. (See attached.)

The meeting ended at 1:30 PM.

The Next ISC meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 10, 2018 at 1:00 PM.



Harmful algal blooms can sometimes look like spilled paint.

BY REBECCA GORNEY AND STEPHANIE JUNE |
PHOTOS PROVIDED BY AUTHORS

For many people, a lake is an oasis. When the weather heats up in summer, folks daydream about spending time at a lake—basking on the beach, swimming in crystal clear waters, or fishing from a dock. But there’s a problem that is affecting hundreds of lakes in New York—harmful algal blooms. Although the word “harmful” is clear, people may not know what a harmful algal bloom, or “HAB” is, and how it might affect their lake and potentially their health. Perhaps the best way to understand it is to go directly to the source.

Who am I?

I am cyanobacteria, an ancient microbe that has been living on the earth in some form for at least 3.5 billion years. Technically speaking, I am a photosynthesizing prokaryotic bacterium; however, you may have heard me called a blue-green algae or HAB (harmful algal bloom). Either name works for me.

Fun facts about me: I am partial to color. Depending on my type, I can appear green, blue-green, yellow, white, brown, purple or even red. I am not usually one to brag, but I am kind of big deal in the ecosystem. I supply usable energy to other organisms around me through photosynthesis, providing oxygen and sometimes serving as a food source for organisms like zooplankton. Those who know me would describe me as crafty or thrifty. I like to be prepared for any sticky, no-nutrient situation, so I store extra phosphorus in my cells, wherever I can find space. I also have this neat way to fix or transform nitrogen from the air, which allows me to eat when and where I want.

Despite being a single-celled organism, I am passionate about travel. Depending on my type and the weather, I can move throughout the water column using gas vacuoles (air pockets inside my cells), which allow me to travel between a lake’s surface and bottom. Or, I may just float, letting the wind push me around. (Take-home message: just because you saw me enjoying the lakeshore early in the morning doesn’t mean I’ll stick around all day.)

What do I look like?

Just like people, all cyanobacteria do not look alike. I come in a variety of colors and forms, and might be part of an overgrown colony that is clearly visible on a lake.

HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS

COLORFUL THREATS

Where can you find me?

My relatives and I can be commonly found in low densities in ponds, streams, lakes, marine waters, some soil and even in hot springs. Our main needs include nutrients (such as phosphorus and nitrogen), warm water temperatures, calm weather conditions, and plenty of sunlight.

Lakes or other waterbodies that are rich in nutrients can support excessive plant and algae growth, including cyanobacteria. I'm not particular about where nutrients come from; they may be from wastewater, septic systems, or runoff from agricultural land or urban areas. On occasion, mostly in nutrient-rich environments, I can grow quickly and become very dense. When this occurs, I am called a bloom.

Why are you seeing me more?

Each waterbody is unique, and causes of my blooms vary from lake to lake. My presence—whether or not it's a bloom—can be heavily dependent on local water quality and immediate environmental conditions. This explains, in part, why my abundance in some locations may change from year to year, but in other locations I show up every year.

Climate change has led to more frequent and intense precipitation events, as well as longer periods of dry and warm weather. As my ideal living conditions become common and widely distributed, blooms are occurring more frequently and in more locations. Factors that directly contribute to the appearance of blooms and their impacts are not totally understood by scientists. Though most agree that the increase in nutrient levels in a lake, particularly phosphorus (whether due to increased pollution sources or increased runoff events), plays a major role in bloom conditions, there are lots of factors to consider.

Should you avoid me?

An important reason why you are hearing more about me is because I can produce harmful compounds, called cyanotoxins. Not all cyanobacteria produce toxins, however, and types that are capable of producing toxins don't produce them under all conditions. Scientists still have a lot to learn about why cyanobacteria make these compounds. But one thing is clear: the best way to keep yourself safe is to avoid all contact with visible blooms.

Exposure to any cyanobacteria HABs can cause health effects in people and animals, so it is important to avoid touching or swallowing any water that has blooms, or inhaling any airborne droplets from those waters. This is true regardless of toxin levels. I can cause a lot of nasty symptoms, including diarrhea, nausea or vomiting; skin, eye or throat irritation; and allergic reactions or breathing difficulties.

Read the sidebar "Cyanobacteria and Health: *Know It. Avoid It. Report It.*"

Cyanobacteria and Health: *Know It. Avoid It. Report It.*

NYS's *Know it. Avoid it. Report it.* campaign helps educate New Yorkers about how to recognize blooms, how to reduce exposure, and how to report blooms to state and local agencies.

KNOW IT

- It might be a HAB if you see: strongly-colored surface water (blue-green, green, yellow, white, brown, purple, or red), a paint-like appearance, floating mats, or scums.
- NYS DEC's HABs website (www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/77118.html) has several informative webpages, including a photo gallery of HABs and non-harmful algal blooms, a FAQs page, and a notifications page which includes a map of waterbodies that currently have blooms (www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/83310.html).

AVOID IT

- Always stay away from blooms, scums, and floating mats in surface waters.
- Don't swim, fish, boat, or wade in areas with blooms, and don't eat fish caught from these areas.
- Boiling water does not remove HABs or their toxins. If you are not on public drinking water, bloom or no bloom, never drink, prepare food, cook, or make ice with untreated surface water. During a bloom, don't use untreated surface water for these uses even if you treat the water yourself.
- If you are on public water, your water is treated, disinfected, and monitored for drinking and household uses. Your water supplier will notify you of any issues with the treated water.

REPORT IT

- Report blooms to HABsInfo@dec.ny.gov, your local health department (contact info at www.health.ny.gov/EnvironmentalContacts), or harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov.
- Report HAB-related health symptoms to your local health department or harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov.
- Consider visiting a healthcare provider if you, your family, or animals are experiencing symptoms that may be related to contact with HABs.

What is NYS doing about me?

Under Governor Cuomo's direction, DEC, in close cooperation with the State Health Department, oversees one of the most comprehensive HABs monitoring programs in the country. Through coordination with citizen scientists, local health departments, and other concerned lake water advocates, DEC collects information on HABs from all regions of the state. More than 300 lakes are monitored each summer and hundreds of additional lakes with regulated swimming areas are inspected regularly. More information about DEC's HABs Program can be found on DEC's HABs website (see sidebar on previous page), including the Notifications Page, which has a map of current bloom locations around the state that is updated weekly. The Archive page provides historical data about previous year's notifications. You can also sign up through GovDelivery to receive free, weekly updates on HABs and other water-related issues through *MakingWaves*, DEC's Division of Water e-newsletter.

Several strategies can be used to try to control cyanobacterial blooms. Through the Governor's HABs initiative, the state has developed 12 action plans to address the causes of HABs in certain waterbodies. Both nutrient reduction and in-lake management strategies have been demonstrated to successfully mitigate the recurrence of blooms, and New York has a network of statewide water quality programs and laws that help control pollution and keep nutrients from entering surface waters. In addition, funding is available to municipalities, soil and water conservation districts and non-profit organizations for projects that reduce nutrient runoff. Visit DEC's one-stop HABs Funding webpage at www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/113733.html for more information on the \$65 million available to combat HABs.

See you on the water?

I have been here for billions of years, and will continue to live here for many years to come. The next time you are enjoying your favorite lake, pond, or stream, keep an eye out for me in the water. If you see me hanging around somewhere new, snap a photo, fill out a Suspicious Algae Bloom Report (found on DEC's website), and send an email to DEC at HABsInfo@dec.ny.gov or call DEC at (518) 402-8179.

I may be ancient, but I'm in the prime of my existence and ready to enjoy the water! So, if you want to enjoy the water and stay healthy—keep your distance.

Rebecca Gorney and **Stephanie June** work in DEC's Division of Water in Albany.



HABs and Pets

Keep pets away from discolored water or areas of water with floating mats, scums or blooms. Animal exposure to cyanobacteria cells or toxins can occur through swimming or wading, drinking water, grooming fur after swimming or wading, or eating or chewing shoreline debris when a bloom is present. In case of exposure, rinse your pet with clean water as soon as possible to remove algae from fur, and seek veterinary medical assistance if the animal shows any symptoms. Learn more about HAB-associated animal illness symptoms and prevention at www.cdc.gov/habs/pdf/habsveterinarian_card.pdf.

Report a HAB-associated animal illness to one of the following agencies:

- Local health department (www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/doh_public_contacts_map.htm)
- NYS DOH—harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov or
- NYS DEC—HABsInfo@dec.ny.gov





A drone captures images of an algal bloom on Owasco Lake.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Scott Kishbaugh: Lake Protector

Scott Kishbaugh spent his childhood splashing around in a small stream near Philadelphia, and, not surprisingly, was a huge Philadelphia Phillies fan. At a high school career day, he met a former Phillies meteorologist who was also a civil engineer and volunteer aquatic ecologist. Fueled further by his love of citizen science, this “Eureka” moment set Scott’s career path. He earned two degrees from Cornell and landed his dream job at DEC fresh out of college—32 years ago.

Scott has run DEC’s Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP) since it began in 1985, working with the New York Federation of Lake Associations to oversee a community of citizen scientist volunteers who help monitor and protect state lakes. The program has expanded from monitoring 25 lakes its first year to more than 160 lakes this year.

Scott was named Chief of the Division of Water’s Lake Monitoring and Assessment Section in 2009, and initiated DEC’s efforts to monitor and control harmful algal blooms. He is the senior author of both editions of *Diet for a Small Lake: The Expanded Guide to New York State Lake and Watershed Management*. He is an unflagging supporter of lake study, and a crucial resource for DEC, based on his understanding of aquatic plants and encyclopedic knowledge of most New York lakes.

Scott loves working with colleagues to solve problems, or answering questions of a third-generation lake resident. A “good” day for him is not unusual; at the end of most days, he is proud to think he “did okay today.”

The young boy who splashed around in a Philadelphia tributary now samples “some of the most beautiful lakes in the world.” When he thinks back to his motivation for what he does, he recalls sampling a small lake with serious water quality problems. A local family who swam in the lake was advised that DEC was working on the problem, but residents should stay out of the water because it could make them sick. As Scott and his colleagues drove away, he glanced in the rearview mirror and saw the family going back into the water. It was a stark reminder of the importance of DEC’s work to ensure clean and healthy lakes.

Black Lake businessman uses milfoil harvester to cut out invasive water plant

By LARRY ROBINSON
LROBINSON@OGD.COM

PUBLISHED: MONDAY, AUGUST 6, 2018 AT 12:30 AM
UPDATED: MONDAY, AUGUST 6, 2018 AT 6:56 AM

See https://youtu.be/i6g9v_WJ78c

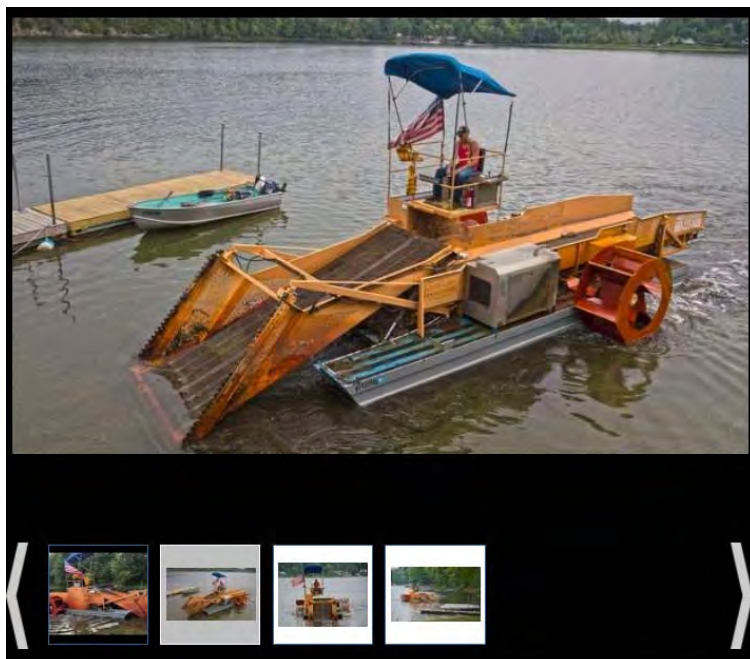
HAMMOND — One man's invasive species is apparently another man's business opportunity.

A mechanical milfoil harvesting machine has seen steady work on Black Lake this summer, according to one of the owners of the apparatus.

Black Lake resident Bob Gordon said he purchased the equipment along with fellow businessman Jay Carter and has been contracting with local waterfront property owners to help pull up and remove floating blankets of the invasive weed species known as Eurasian milfoil.

Mr. Gordon said the milfoil harvester has proved to be a good investment and a valuable tool in helping some Black Lake residents keep the spreading milfoil invasion from taking over their shorelines.

Originally native to parts of Eurasia and North Africa, the plant is now found in waterways across New York, including Black Lake, according to the state Department of Environmental Conservation.



CHRISTOPHER LENNEY / WATERTOWN DAILY TIMES
The cutting deck on Bob Gordon's aquatic weed harvesting boat can extend 6 feet below the surface of the water.

After decades of property owners searching for ways to contain the weed's spread, Mr. Gordon said he saw a business opportunity that could help out shoreline property owners while also helping maintain the lakes's ecosystem. The largest lake in St. Lawrence County, Black Lake is considered a fishing mecca for many anglers.

However, in recent years, spreading blankets of Eurasian milfoil have made it difficult to fish, and difficult to swim for those who rent camps during the summer months with their families. The weed is also blamed for depleting oxygen supplies in the water, harming some fish and promoting harmful algae blooms.

For many property owners with camps on the water, the milfoil is a summertime curse.



CHRISTOPHER LENNEY / WATERTOWN DAILY TIMES
Weeds cut by Bob Gordon's aquatic weed harvester travel up a conveyor belt to a holding platform.

“I had a guy tell me he didn't care how I got it out of there, I could pull it out, I could cut it with a chain saw or I could use my teeth,” Mr. Gordon said. “When it gets so bad that people can't fish and the kids can't swim off the dock, people want it gone.”

On average, Mr. Gordon said he charges \$200 an acre to pull up the weed with his milfoil harvester. He said the system uses a series of top, bottom and side sickle blades to cut the milfoil. A conveyor system then brings the plant to the boat for later off-load.

“When we are done, we off-load the weeds into a dump trailer of a dump truck,” Mr. Gordon said.

Use of the milfoil harvester didn't begin until after the bass hatching season in the middle of June, according to Mr. Gordon. He said since that time he has provided the milfoil removal service to approximately 25 customers. He said although the removal process is not perfect, and it will not

completely eradicate the plant, it can be a big help for property owners who need to clear their waterfront either on an annual basis or every few years.

He said other methods of controlling the weed across the state include the use of a small bug called a milfoil beetle that eats the plant, shade clothes to limit growth and even herbicides.

“We don’t get all of the weeds, there will always be some, but we can get 90 to 95 percent of it if you do it right,” Mr. Gordon said. “So far, I’ve had a lot of happy customers.”



CHRISTOPHER LENNEY / WATERTOWN DAILY TIMES
Bob Gordon pilots his aquatic weed harvesting boat between the docks on Mile Arm Bay on Black Lake.



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council Watershed Management Committee Meeting Tuesday, September 11th, 2018

Meeting started at 4:00 PM.

Present: J. Brant, Chair. J. Tenbusch attended as staff.

Item 1: Review Priority Projects.

- *Stencils for storm drains.* No report.
 - Tenbusch will ask Alex French for a report on stencil activity that occurred earlier in 2018 in Potsdam by a Clarkson University student group.
 - Tenbusch will ask Adrienne Rygel at SUNY Canton if her student group is still interested in stenciling storm drains in Canton.
- *Shoreline Resiliency Planning Project.* Tenbusch reported that the Planning Office has hired a consultant team to conduct this study. The team includes Matthew Biondolillo, a Certified Environmental Restoration Specialist, and staff from Bernier-Carr in Watertown.
 - Tenbusch reported that staff from CPO, the consultants, and staff from Thousand Islands Land Trust (T.I.L.T.) had travelled by boat around Chippewa Bay and the St. Lawrence River as far as Oak Point. They observed conditions along the shorelines, and investigated sites of property damage from high water/storm activity in 2017.
- *Black Lake Issues.* Brant reported that he had looked up data regarding nutrient load into Black Lake from various sources.
 - He noted that nutrient load from the Indian River had significantly lower concentrations than nutrient load from Fish Creek.
 - Brant also reported a correlation between reported nutrient loads in Black Lake, and the increased population during summer tourist season.

Item 2: Speakers for Future EMC meetings.

- Tenbusch will try to contact Scott Schlueter about making a presentation to the EMC (U.S. Fish & Wildlife; coordinator of the Fish Enhancement, Mitigation and Research Fund FEMREF).
- Tenbusch will also try to schedule Richard Henderson, president of the Black Lake Association.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 PM.

The next meeting of the Watershed Management Committee will be held on Wednesday, October 10th, 2018 at 4:00 PM.