

TO: Honeoye Valley Association
FROM: Robert L. Pierce, Jr.
DATE: December 17, 2002
RE: 2002 Harvesting Season

This will be one of the shortest end of the year reports that this office has ever filed with the Honeoye Valley Association (HVA). If one was to read the opening paragraph from last years report it would read close to the same as this years. Many days over 90 degrees (20), no storm events, plenty of Zebra Mussels, late spring and early summer water clarity, low lake levels, and weeds. The Aquatic Weed Management Program harvested the most vegetation of the 16 years of harvesting, 660 tons. The five hours lost to weather was below average, but the 23 hours of mechanical down time was above average. The two seasonal employees (Randy 15 years and John 10 years of harvesting experience) observed the following: extremely clear waters early summer, more adult Zebra Mussel, lower than normal lake levels, extremely dry and hot summer, heavy algal bloom in August and September, and odors from decaying algae.

Here is a quote from November 11, 2002 Democrat & Chronicle: "officials and residents are working to pinpoint ways to make the lake even cleaner so it's fit to play in and be around. Weeds and algae flourish there, along with E. coli bacteria, and zebra mussels - contributing factors to the lake's murkiness." Does this sound familiar, local politicians and Honeoye Valley Association trying to get a handle on the problem involving Honeoye Lake? The fact is this article is addressing Conesus Lake.

Also, D&C from August 18, 2002 quote: "Soil and Water Conservation District has received an \$80,000 state grant to buy an aquatic weed harvesting machine" and "conservation district already has two weed harvesters, but a third machine is needed to keep the plants under control." Wayne County will receive the monies to expand weed harvesting. Hearing and reading the negative comments that came from a few Honeoye Lake cottage owners during the 2002-harvesting season about weed harvesting, one is to wonder if we are living in two different worlds.

The residents of Kashong Point in the Town of Geneva are asking the town to purchase a weed harvester to clear the vegetation in front of their cottages on Seneca Lake. Two such articles appeared in the Finger Lakes Times. What is one to think?

This office will be working with the HVA over the coming months to try and get a handle on the problems that plague Honeoye Lake, but education should be the first thing that the HVA should address. The misinformation does no one any good. The problem are difficult and complex and need to be explained in detail. There are no easy solutions to these difficult problem.

On November 20, the Honeoye Valley Association had a public meeting at the Masonic Lodge. The turn out was great and the presentation was excellent. The HVA took the first step to explain the problem in detail, clearing up the misinformation. Did this happen? While setting at the rear of the room, one could observe about 90% or more of the attendees paying attention, keeping an open mind, and listening to what the presenters had to offer. The other 10% or less sat with a closed mind, rudely talking, and not hearing a word that was spoken. This office will never be able to help those that are not willing to listen. One can only hope that the 90% + will not be drowned out by the few.

The following is a comparison of statistics for selected harvesting seasons.

2002 JUNE/SEPTEMBER

	<i>LOADS</i>	<i>HOURS</i>	<i>HRS/LD</i>	<i>TONS</i>	<i>TNS/HR</i>
SANDY BOTTOM	68	99	1.46	204	2.06
CALIFORNIA RANCH	94	169	1.8	282	1.67
NY BOAT LAUNCH	58	100	1.72	174	1.74
TOTAL: 220 LOADS		368 HOURS	1.67 HR/LD	660 TONS	1.79 T/HR

2001 JULY/SEPTEMBER

	<i>LOADS</i>	<i>HOURS</i>	<i>HRS/LD</i>	<i>TONS</i>	<i>TNS/HR</i>
SANDY BOTTOM	19	42	2.21	57	1.36
CALIFORNIA RANCH	80	133	1.66	240	1.8
NY BOAT LAUNCH	80	138.5	1.73	240	1.73
TOTAL: 179 LOADS		313.5 HOURS	1.75 HR/LD	537 TONS	1.71 T/HR

1994 JULY/SEPTEMBER

	<i>LOADS</i>	<i>HOURS</i>	<i>HRS/LD</i>	<i>TONS</i>	<i>TNS/HR</i>
SANDY BOTTOM	34	50.5	1.48	42	2.02
CALIFORNIA RANCH	115	149.5	1.3	345	2.3
NY BOAT LAUNCH	62	92	1.48	186	2.02
TOTAL: 211 LOADS		292 HOURS	1.38 HR/LD	633 TONS	2.17 T/HR

Even though the Aquatic Weed Management Program (AWMP) harvested more tonnage in 2002, only 1.79 tons were harvested in an hour compared to 2.17 tons harvested in one hour in 1994. The weed harvested in 2002 was more comparable to 2001 when 1.71 tons were harvested in one hour. The problem this year was more an algal bloom enhancing the weeds. One can only hope that in 2003 the temperatures will moderate some from the 90's to the 80's. Also, one can hope a few more storm events and a few more windy days will oxygenate the lake. If **Mother Nature** can increase the oxygen levels in the lake, the odds that the lake will go anaerobic, the condition that helps creates the algal bloom, will decrease. The phosphorus levels will come down and so should the algal bloom. Algal blooms significantly decrease the efficiency of the harvester because the water is so cloudy you can't see what you just cut. If the harvester can see the weeds, the harvester can cut them. If the algal bloom is as bad next summer as this past year, it will again be like finding a "weedle" in a haystack.

As in the past, the AWMP is looking forward to working with the HVA to both find solutions and educate the public on the problems of a nutrient rich shallow lake. One book that is available to help educate is "**DIET FOR A SMALL LAKE**", a New Yorkers Guide to Lake Management prepared by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 1990. The AWMP has a few copies in its office if the HVA cannot find any copies. As for the past 16 harvesting seasons, the AWMP is looking forward to both working with the HVA and the 2003-harvesting season. I personally would like to thank the hundreds of cottage owners that have supported us with their positive comments over the past 16 years and will do everything within the capabilities of this office to serve the cottage owners on Honeoye Lake. As stated last year, the office door to the AWMP is always open for those who wish to have a constructive conversation or you may call 396-4489. Thank you.

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