

TO: Honeoye Valley Association
FROM: Robert L. Pierce Jr.
DATE: December 31, 2003
RE: 2003 Harvesting Season

The 2003 harvesting season showed a vast improvement over 2002 when comparing the amount of vegetation harvested. The tonnage harvested was way down from **660 tons** in 2002 to only **387 tons** in 2003. The harvesting season began the end of June and extended into the middle of September. A record number of harvesting hours were committed this year due to five Fridays of overtime approved by the Towns of Canadice and Richmond. Harvesting time lost to poor weather and repairs was 28.5 hours.

Cottage owners witnessed a different cutting schedule this year. Since vegetation was light this year, the harvester started at California Ranch and harvested down the southwest side and up the southeast side, mid-lake. Randy DePew and John Miller (seasonal harvesting employees) would head back to California Ranch with a load of vegetation and unload by noon. In the afternoon they would head up the northwest side of the lake, around Sandy Bottom, and then down the east side until they had another load. For about six weeks, this would be their pattern, harvesting in front of all cottages desiring the service.

When the Eurasian Milfoil beds started to grow in or around mid-August, the schedule returned to the previous method. The most prevalent species of vegetation were Elodea and Eel grass. Eurasian Milfoil, which is usually the most abundant species on Honeoye Lake, was absent at the beginning of the harvesting season. Eurasian Milfoil that was present did not look very healthy early in the harvesting period but came on strong during the third week of August. The algal bloom was very light compared to last year. The first signs of an algal bloom appeared around Labor Day weekend and only lasted for about a week.

There is a strong relationship between weed growth and climate. In years when Honeoye Lake experiences a very cold winter with thick ice followed by a cool wet spring, the vegetation has not been as heavy during the summer. 2003 was a year following such a pattern. The winter of 2001-02 was quite mild. Not only did the AWMP harvest a record 660 tons, but the algal bloom resembled the algal blooms of the 1970's, "pea soup."

At the end of July, Honeoye Lake area received extremely heavy rainstorms, including a flash flood on July 29. This caused a tremendous amount of runoff to the lake via the tributaries, including the inlet at the south end. This resulted in a large amount of Duckweed being flushed in from the wetlands. Since Duckweed is a small floating herb, the harvester has a hard time collecting and retrieving this vegetation. Duckweed falls through the conveyor chain. Ultimately, the weed travels north, toward the outlet, with the help of prevailing southerly summer winds, and collects around the docks of shoreline owners at the north end of Honeoye Lake. There is little that can be done to prevent this problem given the nature of the problem and the limitations of the equipment available.

The progression of anything floating in most of the Finger Lakes, if not all of the Finger Lakes, is that what is floating at the south end of a lake and anything floating in-between, heads north, towards the outlet of said lake. In addition, prevailing summer winds are, for the most part, from the south. These circumstances inevitably generate dissatisfaction from a small number of complainers who exercise their sentiment through the local press. Both conditions are entirely natural, and apparently unavoidable. Lakeshore residents understand that these same factors that all combine each year to make Honeoye Lake a very enjoyable seasonal retreat also make it a challenging resource to manage.

The AWMP has proven to be a very effective means to significantly reduce the negative effects of aquatic weeds in Honeoye Lake. The harvester retrieves and removes a very high percentage (95%+) of weeds that it cuts from the lake. Aside from those pulled by natural forces, most weeds drifting on the Lake have been cut or pulled by skiers, or boat props, or cottage owners who cut weeds and don't pull them out. The harvester does catch some of these weeds from the other sources and remove them from the lake.

The following compares harvesting statistics for selected harvesting seasons.

2003 JUNE/SEPTEMBER

	<i>LOADS</i>	<i>HOURS</i>	<i>HRS/LD</i>	<i>TONS</i>	<i>TNS/HR</i>
CALIFORNIA RANCH	111	344	3.11	333	.97
NY BOAT LAUNCH	18	46	2.56	54	1.17
TOTAL:	129 LOADS	390 HOURS	3.02 HR/LD	387 TONS	0.99 T/HR

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	

Employees of the AWMP have attended HVA meetings to address the aquatic weed problem on Honeoye Lake. The consultant hired to address algal bloom problems, has given the HVA guidance that do not eliminate weeds and algae, but help control the problem. With some State funds and assistance from Ontario County, the 2004 and future years will bring many enjoyable days on Honeoye Lake if all concerned continue to work together.

As Program Coordinator for the past seventeen years and on behalf of the staff of the Ontario County Planning Department, Aquatic Weed Management Program, we appreciate the thoughtfulness and consideration shared with us this past year-especially to the AWMP's two seasonal employees, thank you. We are looking forward to the 2004 harvesting season and praying for a cold winter and thick ice. Please remember our doors are always open. Please feel free to contact us for constructive conversation on managing the Lake at 396-4489. Thank you.

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