

# F C L A



A Publication of The Fulton Chain of Lakes Association, Inc.  
PO Box 564 • Old Forge, New York 13420  
[www.fultonchainoflakesassociation.org](http://www.fultonchainoflakesassociation.org)

## PRESIDENT'S NOTES

As I look over my notes about FCLA activities in 2007, I realize that the overall theme for the year has been **partnerships**. This newsletter is full of examples:

The FCLA has continued to work closely with the Towns of Webb and Inlet on issues affecting our lakes. We continue our support of the Town of Webb's septic dye testing program, and the results of this support is evident in the water quality report. We've continued to work closely with Inlet and Webb on Eurasian water milfoil control. A tremendous amount of work has been done and tons of invasive weeds removed. We were also successful in aiding Inlet to obtain a second grant from New York State that will allow these efforts to continue.

We've also partnered with two local organizations on two exciting projects: We gave our support and a financial donation to the Arts Center's Ecology Gallery project. We also supported the efforts of the Central Adirondack Arts and Sciences

Advocacy group in their efforts to establish an environmental research laboratory in the soon to be empty Arts Center building. Both projects will increase public appreciation of our resources, and we urge everyone to support them.

After all these years, even with substantial lakeside development, we continue to have water whose quality rivals that of undeveloped lakes. If there is one thing the last forty years have shown, it's that we are all in this business of protecting the lakes together. Together, we will continue to have success.

2008 marks our fortieth anniversary. We think we have a record to be proud of and will be celebrating our accomplishments during this anniversary year. We invite your comments and memories about FCLA. We would especially like to hear from individuals, families and properties that have been with us for our entire history.

As always, thanks to all for your continued support.

Don Kelly

## FCLA RECEIVES COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT

Heather Stafford and Don Kelly

The Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, Inc. has been an effective force for improving lives and inspiring philanthropy throughout the region since 1952. It was a great honor for the Fulton Chain of Lakes Association to receive an unrestricted grant of \$1000 from the Community Foundation's Town of Webb Fund in the summer of 2007. The foundation awarded over \$30,000 in grants in 2007. We will use our grant for general support in our ongoing efforts to preserve the quality of our lakes. Thanks to the Community Foundation for all of its contributions to our area.

# WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE REPORT

Bob Wheeler and Connie Schreppel

## Water Quality

The Water Quality Committee undertakes a broad range of activities in an effort to maintain the high quality of our waters. In 2007, these activities included:

- ◆ Acting as a member of CSLAP (the Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program), we collected water samples in Second Lake on a bi-weekly basis, June-October and sent them to a state certified laboratory for analysis.
- ◆ We conducted monthly surveillance of the water perimeter of the Chain (Old Forge Pond to Fourth Lake): observing weed locations, selecting and identifying weeds as indicators of possible Eurasian water milfoil infestation, and collecting water samples for lab testing.
- ◆ We worked with the Town of Webb Codes Enforcement Office in its septic system dye testing program.
- ◆ We managed the Eurasian water milfoil harvesting project under the NYSDEC grant awarded to the Town of Inlet in 2005.
- ◆ We wrote a successful grant application on behalf of the Town of Inlet to allow the continuation of control of Eurasian water milfoil in Upper Seventh Lake.

## The Citizen's Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP)

FCLA has participated in CSLAP for over twenty years, using Second Lake as the test site. Results of years of testing show that the lakes continue to be healthy, with extremely good water quality.

The control and integrity of the data collected for CSLAP is very important. It provides data that

can be compared to other lakes throughout the State. It is important that our sample collector adhere to very detailed protocols in the collection process.

We want to thank Dave Pierson for his years of testing prior to his moving to the Rochester area last year. We also want to thank him for training our new CSLAP volunteer, Steve Pitela of Fourth Lake.

## Lake Surveillance

Sampling and testing conducted in the other lakes continue to show a high water quality. The average results of the testing in 2007:

– E. coli	1 per 100 ml.
– pH	8.5 pH units
– Alkalinity	15 mg/l as CaCO <sub>3</sub>
– Hardness	14 mg/l as CaCO <sub>3</sub>

These data follow the trends shown in previous years. The pH was a bit higher (more alkaline), probably due to the lower than normal rainfall last summer. E. coli levels were very good throughout the chain (range of 0 to 4 per 100ml).

We collected weed samples throughout the summer and area residents brought in samples for identification. None were identified as Eurasian water milfoil. A team of three SCUBA divers and several snorkelers did a thorough survey of the south shoreline of Fourth Lake to depths of 25') from the channel out of Fifth Lake to Tom McCabe's camp. Again, no invasive milfoil was found. We expect to continue this survey in 2008.

## Sixth and Seventh Lake Water Quality

Bill Landmesser, Water quality Chair of the Sixth and Seventh Lake Association, reports that his committee tested water quality weekly from late May through August for clarity, pH, dissolved oxygen, nitrates and phosphorus. They also conducted conductivity sweeps to detect possible hot spots for pollution from septic systems. Results indicate high water quality in both lakes.

## 2007 DYE TESTING REPORT & GOALS FOR 2008

Andy Getty, Town of Webb Codes Enforcement Office

Last summer was another active year for dye testing, both around the Chain of Lakes and on Big Moose Lake. Through the program, 224 tests were performed, 171 on the Chain of Lakes and 53 on Big Moose Lake. There were additional dye tests done but were not recorded as part of the program. Most were by complaint, request or ordered as part of a property sale.

Five failures were found, only two on the Chain of Lakes and three on Big Moose. Notice that the Chain had less than Big Moose Lake, even though three times as many tests were done. Why is this? The Fulton Chain of Lakes Association has been doing this program for twenty years cooperatively with the Town of Webb. Every two or three years, each property on the chain is tested. Through the years, the awareness level has increased and the more serious problems have been corrected.

As problems are discovered corrective actions are required. The more catastrophic problems are dealt with immediately. If necessary, the use of the system is halted, water turned off in the building and pumping of the septic tank is required immediately. Once the problem is better understood, corrective action can be identified. Unless the problem is only a septic tank, not involving the leach system, typically engineers are required. The day of just digging a hole and putting another 55 gallon drum in the ground are gone. Drywells are out too. Most do not even come close to being appropriate or within the State requirements from 1972. None should be any closer than 150 feet to the water.

Another interesting fact, not represented in the dye testing program and report, is how many new replacement systems were installed, not related to the dye testing program. Almost 100 new systems were permitted, many on waterfront properties, both on the Chain of Lakes and Big Moose Lake. Some were part of an expansion or renovation of an existing building and some were done just because the owners realized they were starting to have problems and voluntarily decided to take care of it.

Those are the easy situations to deal with. Unfortunately, not every problem is corrected this way. When problems are discovered, or suspected, the owners are contacted and the issue openly discussed. Denial is a common first reaction, like "it's been this way forever." Raw sewage running onto the open ground, even if it's been "forever" is not grandfathered.

Things that the dye tester will look for include obvious overflow onto the ground, dye in any water body, leaky pipes and odor. Identifying the age, location and type of system is also important. Some of the more common problems found have been failed septic tanks which have either collapsed or have rotted out internally allowing sludge, grease and solids to move to the leach area. A failed septic tank is a cause for the failure of the entire system, even if there is no obvious evidence of effluent into the water or beyond the property line. Pump stations need to be water tight to prevent storm water infiltration. Also, failing a "stink" test is usually a sure indicator something is not right.

As older existing systems are replaced, new systems are installed properly, and problems that are discovered are corrected, our water quality and most precious natural resource will continue to improve. Although dye testing does not find everything, it plays a huge role in awareness and education. Both the Fulton Chain of Lakes and Big Moose Lake Property Owners Associations have taken the long term goal of protection of our lakes seriously. For all that have stepped up to the plate and replaced or corrected problems, you should be acknowledged. For those who avoid it, one way or another, it will catch up.

This coming summer we should be scheduling dye tests as early as the middle of April. Of course, many places will not be occupied yet, but there are a number of year round or early seasonal properties to look at. Hopefully the dye testing program continues to be a wonderful tool of education and public awareness to the overall issue of water quality.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH MILFOIL?

Ron Smith and Heather Stafford

This past year brought more good news in our battle to control the invasion of our lakes by Eurasian water milfoil (milfoil). In June, FCLA directors Bob Wheeler and Ron Smith wrote a proposal for a new Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) invasive species eradication grant. The proposal again involved a broad spectrum of local stakeholders and was designed to be administered by the Town of Inlet. The grant was awarded to Inlet in November and will provide matching funds to be used in our efforts to remove the massive milfoil beds in upper Seventh Lake. We also continued our original eradication and control project that focus on Fifth, Sixth, and lower Seventh Lakes and our efforts to identify additional areas of concern in the lower chain.

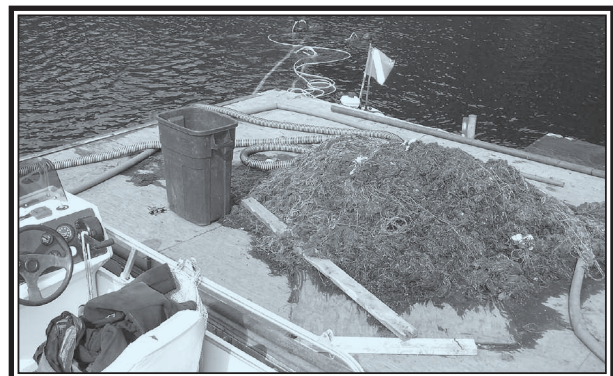
In the new proposal, the Town of Inlet was again the formal applicant with the Town of Webb acting as co-applicant. The project will continue to receive financial support from both towns, as well as Herkimer County and the FCLA. The new project also includes two new contributors; Hamilton County and the Sixth and Seventh Lake Association. The proposal was submitted to The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), who in “a competitive evaluation process ranked and prioritized the proposals. The projects selected were viewed to have the best potential for achieving long-term reductions in the presence of invasive species.”

The new grant will provide up to \$82,168 in matching funds from New York State. The local matching funds may include “in kind” values such as the use of the FCLA pontoon boat (donated to us by Rivet’s Marina), docking space donated by Payne’s Marina on Sixth Lake, transport of milfoil by Inlet’s highway department, and volunteer time by members of the FCLA and the Sixth and Seventh Lake Association. The newly funded project will focus primarily on removing the massive milfoil beds that were identified in the northeast end of Seventh Lake near the Eighth lake Campground. The density of these beds makes hand harvesting significantly more

difficult for the divers. FCLA’s suction pump will be utilized by the divers to pump the plants to the surface. While this requires more labor per hour, the increase is more than offset by the greater rate at which the divers can harvest the extremely dense beds.

During the summer of 2007, all of the known milfoil beds in the original project area located in Fifth, Sixth, and lower Seventh Lakes were hand harvested at least twice by a team of scuba divers. Due to the success of the project in 2006, the average volume of plants in each bed was down by over 90%. Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Lakes were also thoroughly surveyed by our divers and a few additional areas containing scattered milfoil plants were discovered and harvested. In 2008, project divers will continue to monitor, and hand harvest as necessary, all identified milfoil beds.

We also continued to investigate new areas of concern. Our project divers volunteered along with FCLA members to conduct a survey of the South Shore Road portion of Fourth Lake near Inlet, and numerous plant fragments were brought to the Inlet Town Hall for identification. Fortunately, no new beds or even individual plants have been discovered in the Chain below Fifth Lake. We encourage people on and around the lake to continue to point us to areas of concern. We also hope to increase the scale of our volunteer diver surveys of the lower chain during July and August.



*Some of the milfoil removed by divers from Seventh Lake. Photo by Ron Smith*



## NAVIGATIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Jim Murphy

Greetings friends of the Fulton Chain of Lakes!! Once again we look forward to spring and a safe and happy boating season!!

We are preparing for a new printing of our most welcome 'lake map brochure'. Again, thanks to many of you for your input on improvements to the map. Each time we re-print it we change it this way or that to make it more user friendly and a true navigational aid. Hopefully, it will be out in early May. It is available at local marinas, information centers and police stations.

As overall safety of vessels on our lakes is always one of our main concerns, please feel free to let us know of your concerns. Last year on a couple of different occasions we were made aware of concerns with navigational hazards or the navigational lights. We quickly passed those along to our great friends at DEC and the problems were addressed immediately!

Boater safety classes will be held again this year. Please contact the Herkimer County Sheriff's Office or the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office for dates, times and local training sites. In addition, information regarding recreational boating and education is located on the web site for the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic

Preservation. This is a great way to find out where training classes are available outside of Hamilton/ Herkimer counties for those of you who may want to take the courses "closer to home". The web site is: (just click on boating, then education)

<http://www.nysparks.com/>

Both Sheriffs said they would continue to provide support for patrolling the lakes, to continue to support safe and responsible boating on our waterways.

In addition to our boater information we are including a "fish stocking" report for those interested in our great "fisheries". (see the report). For additional information regarding other lakes, ponds and streams see the DEC website:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7739.html>

After talking with a representative from DEC, there was NO VHS disease found in 4th Lake last summer. The dead fish are believed to have died from a lightning strike.

**Reminder to all fishermen: Bait restriction regulations continue!! Check with your local bait store and/or the New York State Department of Conservation for details.**

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/65.html>

HAPPY BOATING!!!

## NOTES FROM YOUR HISTORIAN

Ed Stafford

In 1965, I purchased a home on Third Lake. What attracted me to the area was the quiet resort town of Old Forge. Activity in the area centered on the lakes in the summer and skiing on Maple Ridge and McCauley in the winter. It was a laid back community where it seemed everyone knew one another or shared a phone party line.

During the summer of 1966, an excessive number of ear infections occurred in the town. Dr. Bob, (Robert Lindsay, MD) suspected the cause to come from swimming in the lake. The Health Department of New York State tested the water in the Pond. The results were poor with the fecal coli count at alarmingly high levels. The N Y State Health Department wanted to close the beach.

Many town meetings ensued, held at the Town of Webb High School, but no solution was agreed upon. A group of local residents began holding meetings in their homes. Out of these meetings the Fulton Chain of Lakes Improvement Association was formed in 1968, Forty Years Ago.

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## HELP SAVE SKULL ISLAND

Don Kelly and Heather Stafford

Have you ever visited this tiny island in Second Lake? It adjoins DeCamp's island, and at one time there was a footbridge connecting the two. The pines on the island form a beautiful doorway connecting the lakes. Unfortunately, Skull Island is eroding away. The island and surrounding portion of Second Lake are wonderful places to enjoy activities with the family. The water is shallow, great for swimming. A rope swing hangs from one of the island's pines, and many children have enjoyed swinging over the water. Unfortunately, the heavy use of the island by boaters and swimmers and the wave action of passing boats is wearing away the island's shores. Heavy foot traffic has trampled most vegetation in the



*Skull Island*



*Closeup of erosion on Skull Island.  
Photos by Pat Whalen-NYSDEC*

island's understory, and continuing shoreline erosion and high winds threaten the island's trees.

Skull Island needs our help. FCLA is working with the Department of Environmental Conservation on the development of a remediation plan that will restore the island's vegetation, protect eroding shorelines, and extend the island's life. The intent would be to allow continued use of the island as the restoration takes place, but to direct activities to selected areas to allow other portions of the island to recover. As restoration proceeds, it will be important to keep the public informed and to get everyone's cooperation. We would welcome input, support and help from interested members of the lake community.

## MEET OUR NEW DIRECTOR – MARGARET MURPHY

Tom McCabe

When you read this it will be early spring and our lakes will probably still be frozen, but I ask you to imagine a beautiful warm summer day on the lakes and a young girl, say five years old, fishing off the end of her dock. She has all those young thoughts while concentrating on fishing: When will I get a bite? Is my worm gone? Is my bait too deep? And with our very clean and clear lakes, she can even see her bait if there are no ripples on the water.

But this young girl is inspired to deeper thoughts as well: How do the fish get here? Where do they live in the summer and in the cold winter? Are they healthy? What do they like to eat? And this interest in and curiosity about fish and the lakes, which began on her parents Eagle Bay dock as a young girl, stayed with Margaret Murphy and shaped her life.

She obtained a B.S. in Biology from Siena College and an M.S. and PhD. in Fisheries Biology from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. She is currently Managing Scientist at Quantitative Environmental Analysis, an environmental consulting firm. She is also Past President of the Northeast Division of the American Fisheries Society. Margaret is married to Patrick Murphy and they are the parents of two daughters, one in high school and the other in college.

The FCLA is pleased to welcome Margaret to its board with her deep knowledge of and love for our lakes! Anyone interested in serving on one of FCLA's committees or on its board, please contact Tom McCabe at [tmccabe862@aol.com](mailto:tmccabe862@aol.com).

## 2007 ANNUAL MEETING

Heather Stafford

The 2007 Annual Meeting was held in Inlet and was, as always, most informative. This year's meeting featured three guest speakers. Jack Hasse, Fisheries Biologist with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation is responsible for the Fulton Chain area. Jack reported on the fish kill that



*Ron Smith presents information on milfoil harvesting. Photo by Ed Stafford*

occurred in Fourth Lake in June 2007. Tests done on the fish found no specific cause for the kill. The tests did rule out VHS (Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia) as a cause. VHS is a viral disease that causes fish to bleed to death. It has infected fish in western New York, but fortunately has not been found in this area. Jack reiterated DEC's advisory not to eat the Lake Trout from our waters. This advisory remains in effect, especially for larger trout. Jack reported that DEC stocks Salmon, Rainbow Trout, Lake Trout and Tiger Muskies annually in the Fulton Chain. Northern Pike are also found in our lakes, but it isn't clear how they arrived here.

Debbie Jones, Executive Director of the Arts Center/Old Forge explained in detail the various measures that the Arts Center is taking in the construction of their new "green" building. A geothermal heating system and solar panels are being used to reduce energy consumption. Eight hundred square feet of the new building will be dedicated to an Ecology Gallery, which will offer an interpretative center for residents and visitors to learn about the wildlife and geology of the Adirondacks. Several FCLA directors will be working hand in hand with the Arts Center in the design of the Gallery.

Our third speaker was Ron Smith, Science Teacher with the Town of Webb Schools and also a Director of the Fulton Chain of Lakes Association. Ron updated those of us who attended on the Eurasian water milfoil control project. His article appears in this newsletter.

Meeting dates for 2008: Board of Directors meetings will be held on May 24, June 28, July 26 and August 23. The 2008 Annual Meeting will be Friday, August 1 in the Town of Webb Park Avenue Building.

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### NOTES FROM YOUR HISTORIAN *continued from page 5*

A septic dye testing program began. The FCLIA hired an inspector who was approved by the Town of Webb. The FCLIA raised the money to pay the salary of the inspector, who worked closely with the Codes Enforcement Officer of the Town of Webb. Each year, septic systems of lakefront homes were tested and the number of faulty systems was staggering. Property owners were usually unaware of the problems and were eager to have their septic systems replaced or repaired in order to conform to code.

Within two years, the water quality began to improve and it slowly returned to what we enjoy today, pristine water, the envy of many lake associations throughout New York State. Septic dye testing continues today and new challenges for maintaining water quality are met each year.

Without members like you our group, now named the Fulton Chain of Lakes Association, would not have succeeded. It is your annual monetary donation and the countless hours of volunteer efforts that have made this beautiful body of water what it is today. It is my hope that everyone who enjoys this area and the lakes will become a member or continue their membership in the association. We are now forty years young. We hope that you will continue your support and urge others to join us.

**FCLA Officers & Directors – 2008**

President	Don Kelly
1st VP	Jim Murphy
2nd VP	Mike Burke
Sec/Treasurer	Phyllis Sanzone
Historian	Ed Stafford

**Board Members:**

Bob Wheeler	Ron Smith
Mike Schreppel	Tom McCabe
Mark Steigerwald	Helen Black
Jodelle Pross	Amy Sauer
Phil Sanzone	Heather Stafford
Bill Landmesser	Conie Schreppel
Margaret Murphy	

**Committees:**

**Water Quality:**

Bob Wheeler-Chair	
Connie Schreppel	Don Kelly
Ron Smith	Mike Burke
Bill Landmesser	Amy Sauer
Helen Black	Margaret Murphy
Steve Pitella-CSLAP volunteer	

**Scholarship:**

Phil Sanzone-Chair	
Ed Stafford	Ron Smith

**Publicity:**

Heather Stafford-Chair	
Jodi Pross	Helen Black-website

**By-laws:**

Phil Sanzone-Chair	Heather Stafford
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**Nominating/Awards:**

Tom McCabe-Chair	
Heather Stafford	Phil Sanzone

**Navigation/Boating:**

Jim Murphy-Chair	
Tom McCabe	Mark Steigerwald
Charles Bartoletti-volunteer	

**Annual Meeting:**

Don Kelly-Chair	
Phyllis Sanzone	Connie Schreppel

To become a member, fill out the application below and either give it to a FCLA representative or mail it with your check to FCLA, PO Box 564, Old Forge, NY 13420.

**Membership Application  
Fulton Chain of Lakes Association**

Please print

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Fulton Chain 911 Address \_\_\_\_\_

Local Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Camp Sign or I.D. \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership dues are:  \$10 Basic  \$25 Family  \$35 Sponsor  \$50 Friend of the Lakes  \$100 Patron

Date \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_