



## 2020 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

# 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

Our world has changed significantly since the 2019 FCLA newsletter. Last year I spoke of how blessed we were to have our slice of paradise within the 6 million acres of the ADK park, literally in our back yards. The Fulton Chain of Lakes Association's mission to "Preserve and Protect" has not changed but may have expanded and taken on greater urgency. The physical health of our neighbors and friends is now more vulnerable and the economic health of those same neighbors is more vulnerable as well. We all have come to realize the interconnectivity of all our environments. We must be even more mindful of how we "share" our resources as part of fulfilling the association's mission to the waters and surrounding watershed of the Fulton Chain region. Your board now asks how do we, as your lake association, be proactive in "protecting and preserving" our lakes and their ecological and human environments in such a way that we emerge stronger, bound together with greater unity of purpose. With that in mind:

- We have continued to be active in monitoring and testing our lakes (CSLAP and CEC) to assure the continued quality of the waters of "the Chain."
- We extensively support, in both time and money, the work of the Adirondack Watershed Institute (AWI) monitoring our boat launches to insure that we continue to educate and inspect the watercraft entering and leaving our waters to minimize "invasive species." In addition to the inspection points on the Fulton Chain the AWI provides a sanitation station to clean/wash boats near Inlet, NY

to ensure our lakes maintain their status as one of the healthiest bodies of water in the Adirondack Park.

- Your Association continues to actively promote safe and enjoyable boating on our lakes, working with both Hamilton and Herkimer County Sheriffs supporting water safety patrols and rescue barges. We also support the lake community with our popular Fulton Chain of Lakes area map and boating safety pamphlet.
- The Association continues to try to provide representation and an interface between the various "stakeholders" that enjoy all the benefits of our lakes throughout our communities.
- Your board puts significant, year-round time and energy into the Association BUT we need your help. Attend our board meeting, volunteer for committee work, spread the word to your neighbors and friends about the benefits of joining and supporting the Association.

As our personal health and physical climate change and the recreational use of our lakes expands so do the challenges to the ecosystem. We must closely monitor these changes and be vigilantly watchful for those we cannot yet see.

Many, many thanks for your continued support. Stay safe and healthy and very importantly consider and be considerate of those sharing our slice of paradise with us.

John Jeffery – President

## WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE REPORT

Tom Vawter – Chair of the Water Quality Committee

### CSLAP RESULTS

The Citizens' Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP), supported by the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation (NYDEC) and the New York Federation of Lake Associations (NYSFOLA) trains citizen volunteers to collect data on water quality on over 400 New York State lakes. The Fulton Chain of Lakes Association (FCLA) enrolled Second Lake of the Fulton Chain in the program from 1986-1990 and from 1995 to 2012. Sampling of Second Lake was suspended between 2013 and 2017, but FCLA re-enrolled the lake in 2018.

In 2019, FCLA board members, John Jeffery and Tom Vawter sampled water quality on the lake at roughly 2-week intervals between June and September. John and Tom measured some parameters on site and collected a series of water samples to be sent to the lab at Upstate Freshwater Institute for detailed chemical analysis. The detailed results of this analysis would have been posted early in 2020, but because of COVID-19, they are not available at this writing.

In summary, the results show that there has been very little change in water quality in Second Lake since CSLAP sampling began in 1986. The lake is moderately "unproductive," which is good. "Productivity" in the ecological sense means able to grow unwanted algae. The pH of the lake is near neutral, which is good for fish production. The lake remains good for all recreational uses.

Although invasive Eurasian and Variable-leaf Milfoil remain present in the Fulton Chain, they have been well controlled, especially in the lower lakes, and no invasive animal species (e.g., Zebra and Quagga Mussels) have been detected. (See report of Lake Steward Program below)

New York State, like many other lake districts globally, has recognized an alarming increase in the occurrence of what are called "Harmful Algae Blooms" (HABs), which are actually blooms of Cyanobacteria, often mislabeled "blue-green algae." Not only are such blooms unsightly, they can release toxins into the water that pose a number of serious threats to human and animal health. Such blooms were recorded in September of 2017 in Seventh and Eighth Lakes in the Fulton

Chain, but not in 2018. The reasons for these outbreaks are not very clear, and the chemistry of Second Lake indicates that the chances of such blooms are low. Nonetheless, the fact that they have occurred in similar nearby lakes and are increasing in frequency throughout the state gives reason for watchfulness, and it is important to prevent pollution of the lake with phosphorus, a chemical that promotes HABs. Interested citizens can find reports of lakes with HABs during the summer at <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/83310.html> and an archive of lakes affected in the past at <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/83332.html>.

### 6TH AND 7TH LAKES

Volunteers of a separate Lake Association on 6th and 7th Lakes, which reports to FCLA, monitors water quality annually. They sample 4 locations in each of the two lakes, and averages of their results over all 8 sites indicate that both lakes are "healthy" with neutral pH of 7.0, less than 0.88 parts per million (ppm) of nitrate, less than 0.20 ppm of phosphorus, and a dissolved oxygen content of 7.0 ppm in 6th Lake and 6.7 ppm in 7th Lake. Secchi disk readings measure water clarity and were 21.4 ft in 6th Lake and 21.3 ft in 7th Lake.

### CHEMICALS OF EMERGING CONCERN

In the summer of 2018 and 2019, John Jeffery and Tom Vawter, along with their CSLAP sampling, cooperated with a program to assess potential problems of "Chemicals of Emerging Concern," that is potentially harmful chemical pollutants that may appear in low quantities and are not regularly monitored, including the agricultural herbicides, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and household products. A few compounds were found in samples from Second Lake, but all of them were in small quantities. The full report will be posted on the FCLA website.

### LAKE STEWARD REPORT

Throughout the Adirondack Park, the Adirondack Watershed Institute (AWI) Stewardship Program maintains a system of inspection and decontamination stations, protecting Adirondack lakes from invasive

## 2020 Annual Newsletter

aquatic organisms. Park wide, in 2019, the Stewardship Program conducted 100,894 inspections and 3,965 decontaminations. They intercepted 2,694 invasive aquatic organisms, mostly Eurasian milfoil. This number of interceptions is significantly fewer than 2018. Their full report for 2019 is delayed because of NY PAUSE restrictions.

In partnership with the FCLA the Adirondack Watershed Institute maintains 3 inspections stations on 4th Lake: the Rocky Mountain Trailhead Parking Area off Route 28, the State Boat Launch near Inlet, and the launch for Alger Island off Petrie Road. The station on Route 28 at the Rocky Mountain Parking Area is also a decontamination station. Personnel from AWI conducted a total of 2,290 inspections among the 3 sites and decontaminated 161 vessels from May to November 2019. They intercepted 37 boats carrying aquatic invasive species, again mostly Eurasian watermilfoil, but also variable-leaf milfoil and zebra mussels. Again, down significantly from the 69 contaminated boats in 2018.

Owners of all types of vessels, including kayaks, canoes and paddleboards, should be mindful of the spread of aquatic invasive species and drain, wash and dry their vessel before moving to a new water body. There is a move by the Adirondack Council to make boat washing mandatory whenever a vessel is moved from one water body to another.

### TOWN OF WEBB SEPTIC SYSTEM DYE TEST PROGRAM

The Town of Webb Code Office conducts routine dye tests and superficial inspection of septic systems around the Fulton Chain and some other nearby lakes. During the summer of 2019, the town had trouble retaining personnel. Peg Carroll, who had done the testing for a number of years resigned, and a new hire quit after only a few days on the job. As a result, only 104 properties were tested, approximately a third of the tests usually done. No failures were discovered.

## PUBLICITY

Paul Willsey

The Fulton Chain of Lakes Association was founded in 1968 with the mission of protecting and preserving the waters and shorelines of the Fulton Chain and, in addition, we strive to keep the lakes a safe place to enjoy boating, swimming, fishing etc. The Publicity Committee's goal is to make all the areas stakeholders, residents and visitors alike aware of issues that affect the quality of our waters, safe boating and enjoyment on our lakes.

Watch for articles and ads during the summer in the *Adirondack Express* related to our efforts towards fulfilling our mission. We continue to expand our social media presence through Facebook and Instagram. Mike Schreppel, who is an enthusiastic diver, is very active on the sites and has many friends that enjoy his photographs and postings. In addition, we continue to try to expand our Instagram presence with postings reflecting both the beauty and the activities of the Fulton Chain.

Our website, <http://fultonchainoflakesassociation.org/index.html>, continues to be updated. On the website

you will find useful information about our organization and how you can help us with our mission of preserving and protecting the unique environment of the Fulton Chain of Lakes. There is information on steps you can take to prevent introduction of pollutants and invasive species into our lakes so that the current excellent water quality is maintained. There are links to other organizations that are facing a variety of threats to their water quality and steps they are taking to protect their water. In addition to water quality, safe boating is important to all of us. The website has information on how to make your boating experience safer. It also includes information on New York State and local boating laws.

In addition to our website the FCLA uses Facebook and Instagram to provide interesting, fun and relevant updates on and around the Lakes. Please join us at these social media sites and share, comment and engage with others like yourselves.

## MEMBERSHIP EXPANSION

Butch Hartsig

Over this past winter, the membership committee worked on plans to increase membership across all our stakeholder groups in the Fulton Chain of Lakes area. Our efforts were focused on expanding membership within the existing local and seasonal stakeholders, welcoming new property owners to the area and convincing past members to reestablish their membership. In addition, the FCLA is hoping to provide the business community some benefits with a “business supporter” program. For a small donation the FCLA will provide a business with a window decal recognizing their support as well as providing recognition on our website and exposure on our other social media platforms. We are in the process of reaching out to representatives of two business groups in Inlet and Old Forge about a plan to best reach their membership. Additionally, we have developed initiatives to address the other projects mentioned above.

These membership initiatives have been delayed from the original spring launch with the current COVID-19 pandemic causing upheaval and uncertainty in the area, and specifically the tourism market. The plans will be revisited over the summer with an eye towards implementation in the spring of 2021.

We ask everyone to be safe, stay healthy and respect the health and safety of others during this uncertain time.

## SCHOLARSHIP

Thomas McCabe, Sr. Environmental Studies Scholarship

Last year, the FCLA Board of Directors established a scholarship for Town of Webb Schools graduates engaged in studies in environmental fields. This annual scholarship program is open to current graduates and alumni of the Town of Webb Schools proposing or engaged in study in fields such as water quality, water use, water-related land use and climate change. Applicants are evaluated based on their proposed fields of study, their academic records, and their records of community service. By supporting students studying in environmental fields, FCLA is furthering its mission of educating the community about the importance of water and water quality to our quality of life.

FCLA Scholarship Committee members Danielle Kiefer, Tom Vawter and Don Kelly presented two Thomas McCabe, Sr. Environmental Studies Scholarships for the 2019-2020 academic year. This year’s recipients of \$1000 scholarships are Macgregor Ritz-Kenny, completing his sophomore year of studying environmental biology at Cazenovia College and Alexandra Sutherland, who has begun her studies in environmental engineering at Montana State University. FCLA congratulates both and wishes them the best in their studies.



*Tom Vawter presents scholarship to Alexandra Sutherland*



*Don Kelly presents scholarship to Macgregor Ritz-Kenny*

## NAVIGATIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Mark Steigerwald

As I write this on, the 22th of April, I am ever hopeful that when this arrives for you to read we will have received strong indications of a return to some degree of normalcy for those ever popular months of July and August. We would like you to know that all of your directors here at the Fulton Chain of Lakes Association are hopeful that you and yours have and continue to persevere through this unprecedented tragedy in good health and with limited personal impact.

The Governor, through the Adirondack Park Authority and the DEC has issued guideline as to how we are to utilize the waterways of New York State. It is the responsibility of us all to stay informed and up to date and remain with these guidelines as they evolve. Below are some activities to consider that will allow all of us to enjoy our lakes safely, in consideration to all. Kayaking and canoeing are great ways to take in the outdoors and get some exercise. This can be done individually or with a small group. Fishing is another popular and appropriate way to enjoy the outdoors within the guidelines, just make sure your license is current, but of course, those 15 years old or younger do not require a fishing license in New York State. You can also take a free On-Line Boaters Safety Course and get your NYS Certification. Anyone operating a Personal Watercraft (JetSki, Wave Runner, etc.) must have a boating safety certificate, and be at least 14 years of age or older. Also, as of January 1st 2020, operators of any powerboat born after January 1st 1993 are required to have a valid boating safety certificate. This age requirement will continue to be phased in so that effective January 1st 2025 all operators of motorized vessels, regardless of age, will need a

boating safety certificate. So why not spend the time now, sit down in front of your computer and get yourself certified. I guarantee you'll be surprised by a few safety and courtesy considerations you didn't know. Here is the link to get started: <https://www.boatus.org/newyork/>

If you plan on launching a boat it's advisable to check first to see if the launch you intend to use will be open. Of course, whenever you transfer a boat from one waterway to a different body of water, by law, you must properly clean the exterior of the boat, its bilge, any fish basins and its trailer before relaunching. On the Fulton Chain we have several inspection sites staffed by Adirondack Watershed Institute Stewards and a sanitation station just before entering Inlet, NY. Please, always be courteous, respectful and cooperative with the on-site boat inspectors. Their job is so very important in keeping our pristine lakes clear of aquatic invasive species.

Still have some spare time and looking for something to read or information to brush up on, try the New York State Boater's Guide. It's chock-full of interesting information and an invaluable resource for boaters. Use this link to read it on-line or to download and print a hard copy: <https://parks.ny.gov/recreation/boating/documents/NYSBoatersGuide.pdf>

The Fulton Chain of Lakes, what a beautiful natural resource. Let's get out there and enjoy them always keeping in mind to "Preserve and Protect" and always being respectful and courteous of others as they enjoy them in the same responsible manner.



## DAM REMEDIATION – PROGRESS REPORT

Ray Letterman

Our last summer’s 2019 Annual Newsletter article “Dam Remediation” described how the FCLA was monitoring the Hudson River Black River Regulating District (HRBRRD) as it prepared to remediate the Old Forge and Sixth Lake dams on the Fulton Chain of Lakes. The HRBRRD, a New York public benefit corporation, operates and maintains the dams using funds from assessing downstream beneficiaries of flood control and hydroelectricity generation. Earlier analysis by several engineering firms had found that improvements were needed to make them safer.

Arcadis of Syracuse was hired in 2017 to design and supervise the construction of any needed changes at the dams. Last year’s annual newsletter estimated that Arcadis would be presenting the HRBRRD Board with design and cost alternatives that summer (2019). The process has apparently taken longer than planned and now the HRBRRD is expecting to receive the report from Arcadis this fall. Recently, we received this email message from the HRBRRD chief engineer, Robert Foltan, P.E.:

*Subsurface investigation work, which was started last fall at Sixth Lake, will be completed in April. Upon completion of the subsurface investigation, Arcadis will complete its assessment and evaluation of the facilities. By fall, we anticipate Arcadis will be developing remediation design concepts, if needed and as necessary, which will address any areas of concern.*

Mr. Foltan uses the words “if needed and as necessary” so perhaps nothing will have to be done to the dams, but that is probably unlikely. A number of years ago, when engineers did the State’s required safety analysis of the First Lake Dam at Old Forge they concluded that damage to the Village of Old Forge and downstream by a catastrophic failure would be mitigated by the rectangular culvert under Route 28 just below the dam. The culvert, they concluded, would act as a “bottle-neck” throttling the flow and reducing the damage. There is a similar culvert under Route 28 just below the Sixth Lake dam. It will be interesting to learn what Arcadis proposes this fall.



## 2020 Annual Newsletter

There are many old dams in New York State that need rehabilitation or removal for safety and environmental reasons. If you would like to learn where they are and their condition go to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) website on dam safety. If you have Google Earth on your device you can access the NYSDEC's database "NYS Inventory of Dams." It is a clickable map format and very interesting. There are many dams in New York and they are everywhere.

Dam remediation is occurring routinely around the State. For example, the NYS Canal Corporation is responsible for numerous dams in the vicinity of the Erie Canal (both the old canal and the newer one, the "Barge Canal"). They are currently rehabilitating the dam on the De Ruyter Reservoir on Limestone Creek about 15 miles south of Fayetteville. (Limestone Creek was a feeder stream for the Erie Canal and the reason the De

Ruyter Reservoir was built in the 1800s). Last year the Canal Corporation prepared a slide presentation for the reservoir property owners so they could see what was planned. It is interesting because it might be a preview of what we will see if and when the HRBRRD starts working on our dams in a year or two.



## 2020 Annual Newsletter

### FCLA Officers & Directors – 2020

**President** John Jeffery  
**1st VP** Mark F. Steigerwald  
**2nd VP**  
**Sec/Treasurer** Phyllis Sanzone

#### Directors:

Butch Hartsig  
Don Kelly  
Danielle Kiefer  
Bill Landmesser  
Ray Letterman  
Tom McCabe Jr  
Jim Riedel

Phil Sanzone  
Connie Schreppel  
Michael Schreppel  
Ron Smith  
Tom Vawter  
Paul Willsey

#### Honoraries Directors:

Robert Moore – Town of Webb Supervisor

#### Directors Emeriti:

Janet Blakeman  
Jack DeBevoise  
Richard Knight  
Jim Murphy

Amy Sauer  
Ed Stafford  
Heather Stafford  
Bob Wheeler

**Ex-Officio:** Lowell McBurney – President  
6th & 7th Lake POA

### Committees

#### Thomas B. McCabe Memorial Scholarship

Phil Sanzone-Chair  
Ron Smith

Don Kelly  
Tom Vawter

#### Water Quality

Tom Vawter-Chair  
Bill Landmesser  
Mike Schreppel

Don Kelly  
Connie Schreppel  
Ron Smith

#### Publicity/Marketing

Paul Willsey-Chair  
Jodelle Pross

John Jeffery  
Danielle Keifer

#### By-Laws

Phil Sanzone-Chair

**Website:** John Jeffery

#### Nominations/Awards

Tom McCabe-Chair  
Phil Sanzone

Don Kelly

#### Navigation/Boating

Mark Steigerwald-Chair  
Tom McCabe

Paul Willsey

**Membership:** Butch Hartsig

#### Annual Meeting

Mike Schreppel  
Phyllis Sanzone

Jodelle Pross  
Connie Schreppel

#### Government Liaison

Tom McCabe-Chair  
Don Kelly

Kevin Jost  
Ron Smith

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

### Membership Application Fulton Chain of Lakes Association

[www.FultonChainofLakesAssociation.org](http://www.FultonChainofLakesAssociation.org) • Email: [info@FultonChainofLakesAssociation.org](mailto:info@FultonChainofLakesAssociation.org)

*Please print*

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

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

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

Summer Mailing Address (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Local Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

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

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