

(((((*Ripples*)))))))

Oneida County Lakes and Rivers Association Newsletter

OCLRA's Mission: to protect and preserve the quality and riparian habitat of the inland waters of Oneida County.

Oneida County Lakes and Rivers Assn. Annual Meeting

June 13, 2009 Nicolet College, Rhinelander, WI
 Registration: 8:30 A.M. Meeting: 9:00 A.M.

Annual Meeting Featured Speaker

Dr. Timothy Kratz will be the featured speaker at OCLRA's annual meeting on June 13th at Nicolet College in Rhinelander, Wisconsin. Dr. Kratz is the director of the Trout Lake Station at the Center for Limnology at the University of Wisconsin — Madison. His research focuses on the long-term, regional ecology of lakes; how lakes process carbon from the landscape and the atmosphere; and how lakes interact with their surrounding landscapes. He is a co-author of *Long-Term Dynamics of Lakes in the Landscape* and numerous scientific papers on lake ecology.

Dr. Kratz is a principal investigator for the North Temperate Lakes Long-Term Ecological Research project⁽¹⁾ and is the Chair of the Steering Committee for the Global Lakes Ecological Observatory Network (GLEON: <http://gleon.org>). He earned a Ph.D. in botany from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1981 and has lived in the Northwoods since then.

⁽¹⁾See: (<http://lter.limnology.wis.edu>)

AIS Treatment Demonstration

The annual meeting will also feature a demonstration of aquatic invasive treatment technology. The *LittLine*[™] is a patent pending system that was developed by Clean Lakes Inc. to more effectively apply aquatic pesticides for the control of aquatic invasive species (AIS). The *LittLine*[™] system allows pesticide applications to target any portion of the water column — providing the potential to cut pesticide use by up to 80%.

In a test on Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) the *LittLine*[™] technology increased the effectiveness of the treatment and reduced pesticide use by 50%. In another evaluation of the *LittLine*[™] system complete control of EWM was recorded at 145 of 150 pre-treatment sampling points, with small fragments present at the remaining five sampling sites. Control of EWM in the sample area was rated by Mississippi State University scientists at 97% using only 50% of the normal herbicide rate, with little to no impact on the native plant community.

Representatives of lakes that have treated EWM or other aquatic invasive plants or that may have cause to treat AIS in the future will want to see this demonstration.

We look forward to seeing all of you there!

Message from the President

It was a very long winter. As I write this, I sometimes wonder if Old Man Winter has let go yet. "Ice out" has come and gone. As I contemplate the seasons ahead for our lakes — the "crown jewels" of the Northwoods — I am reminded of the first verse of an old hymn.

*Little drops of water,
little grains of sand,
make the mighty ocean
and the beauteous land.*

Small beginnings can indeed have significant results. Events of last year and the beginning of 2009 provide evidence of this. In 2008, OCLRA:

- Actively campaigned for a state-wide ban on lawn fertilizers containing phosphorus. *In early 2009, the state legislature passed and the governor signed this proposed ban into law.*
- Lobbied for the passage of the Great Lakes Water Compact by contacting all 100 U.S. Senators. *The Compact was signed into law by President Bush in October 2008.*
- Campaigned for a state-wide ban on the transport of aquatic invasive species. *A weak and largely ineffective law was passed by the state. However, Oneida County joined Dane, Bayfield and Ashland counties in passing an effective ordinance prohibiting the transport of AIS.*
- Supported the "Clean Our Oneida Lakes" (C.O.O.L.) campaign to remove trash and debris from Oneida County lakes. *This program, initiated by two brothers to clean up a single lake in 2007, cleaned up the shoreline and littoral zone of six lakes in 2008. The group of volunteers has expanded dramatically — and has targeted four County lakes to clean in 2009.*

Luke Lenard, co-founder of C.O.O.L., has been selected to go on a Rotary Youth Exchange in late July for an entire year. He will be spending that year in Langebaan, South Africa which is known as the African Caribbean because of the warm sheltered seven mile long lagoon on which it is situated. That is one reason C.O.O.L. will only clean four lakes this summer. Congratulations, Luke.

- Provided comments on and support for a proposed ordinance to govern the transport of water used to flush County fire department dry hydrants. *On October 21st of 2008 Oneida County became a leader nationwide by passing this ordinance aimed at preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species.*

In March of 2009 Jennifer Holman resigned suddenly and unexpectedly as AIS Coordinator. She was an intelligent person, a dedicated worker with a passion for our lakes and rivers. In February the Oneida County Board passed a policy that all vacated positions remain vacant for a mandatory period of six months. This means that the filling of this position could not be started until September – and we would not have an AIS Coordinator for the upcoming summer season. OCLRA testified before the Oneida County Land & Water Committee in support of having the six month delay waved so the position can be filled. Unfortunately the waiver requested by the Land & Water Committee was subsequently rejected by the Labor Relations and Employee Services Committee.

OCLRA is proud to have played a role in these accomplishments. In a series of strategic planning sessions we have established important goals and objectives for 2009. These "targets" are focused on best serving the interests of our members and on furthering OCLRA's stated mission. That said, the best of seasons is before us. Enjoy it!

Sincerely,
Bob Williams, President

Aquatic Invasive Species Update

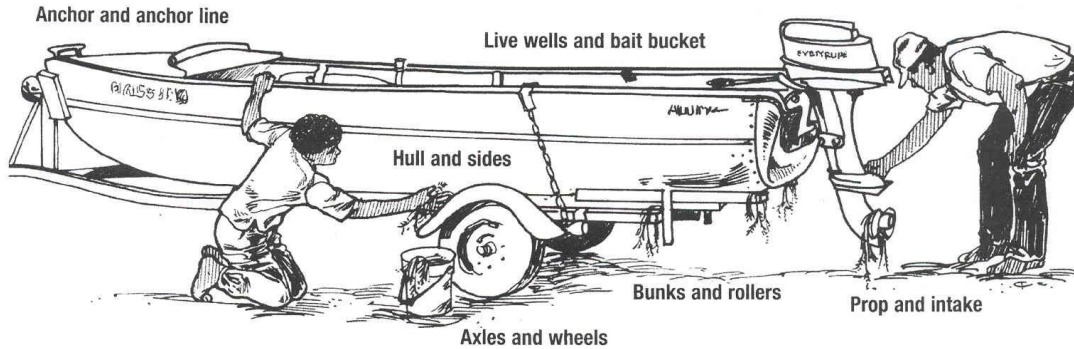
A report from January 2006 lists 15 AIS infected lakes and rivers in Oneida County and 20 infected lakes and rivers in Vilas County. **As of March 6, 2009, Oneida County has 99 infected lakes and rivers. Vilas County has 138 infected lakes and rivers.** To see a list of lakes and rivers by county and which invasive species each has, go to www.dnr.wi.gov/lakes/ais and then select "Waters with Invasives". The printout for the entire state consists of 38 pages with 39 lakes and rivers on each page!

What You Need to Know About AIS

Currently there are no methods of treatment to permanently eradicate any of the Aquatic Invasive Species that infest our lakes and rivers. Therefore, education and diligent attention to prevention are necessary to prevent other lakes and rivers from becoming infected with any invasive species. Anyone living on a lake or river, or using any lake or river should educate themselves about Aquatic Invasive Species:

- What they are
- What they look like
- How they are transported from and to a lake or river
- The affect they have on water quality, fisheries and recreation

What You Can Do to Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers



Before you leave a body of water:

- **Inspect** and remove aquatic plants, animals, and mud from boat, trailer and equipment before leaving the landing.
- **Drain** all water from boat, motor, bilge, live wells and bait buckets and other containers before leaving the water access.
- **Ice** your catch; don't leave the landing with live fish, bait, or fish eggs.
- **Dispose** of unwanted bait in the trash, not in the water or on land.
- **Rinse** your boat and equipment with hot or high pressure water OR dry your boat for 5 days before entering another lake or river.



In addition to the above directives from the Clean Boats Clean Waters initiative:

- Report new sightings with a saved specimen.
- Consult authorities before trying any control treatments.
- These preventions apply to **anything that has been in the water** — fishing and swim equipment, anchors, all watercraft, scuba and snorkel equipment, boots, decoys, etc.

Aquatic Invasive Species in Wisconsin Waters

- **Eurasian Water Milfoil** — Highly invasive plant, able to form dense mats near the surface that entangle motor boat propellers and interfere with swimming. Spread by watercraft and trailers. Crowds out native plants and reduces light penetration. A tiny piece can grow into a large plant.
- **Curly-leaf Pondweed** — An underwater cold water plant that can grow even under ice. It shades out native plants with a dense mat that makes it tough for boating and swimming.
- **Purple Loosestrife** — An invasive perennial plant in wetlands, shorelines and roadside ditches, it crowds out native plants and reduces food, shelter and nesting sites for wildlife, birds, turtles and frogs.
- **Rusty Crayfish** — Dark, rust-colored spots on body in front of tail. More aggressive than native crayfish, can displace or hybridize with them. Graze on and eliminate native plants. Eat fish eggs and young.
- **Zebra Mussels** — Prolific small mussels can clog water intakes and damage equipment by attaching to boat motors and hard surfaces. They can harm fisheries, smother native mussels and crayfish. Their sharp shells can litter beaches.
- **Spiny Waterfleas** — Small crustaceans that collect in masses on fishing lines, clogging eyelets of rods, damage a reel's drag system and prevent fish from being landed. Their eggs can resist drying and establish new populations.
- **Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia** — A viral disease that causes hemorrhaging and death in all species of fish and bait fish. This virus, if it gets established, could wipe out all fisheries.

In addition to the above, the DNR also lists Banded Mystery Snails, Chinese Mystery Snails, Freshwater Jellyfish, and Rainbow Smelt by lake and river infected. To date, Rainbow Smelt is the only one **NOT** in Oneida County.

For more information on aquatic invasive species, check the websites listed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Only YOU can prevent new infestations of aquatic invasive species!

It's the law...

Oneida County Ordinance §10.05

Oneida County has passed an ordinance making it illegal to transport any aquatic plants or invasive animals. The ordinance states that **all** aquatic plants or invasive animals shall be **removed** before entering a roadway open to the public! Failure to do so will result in fines **ranging from \$200 to \$500**.

New Wisconsin State Legislation

The recently passed **Clean Lakes Law** prohibits the display, sale, and use of lawn fertilizer containing phosphorus, with certain exceptions. OCLRA strongly supported this legislation. This law goes into effect on May 1, 2010.

The new **Slow-No-Wake Law** establishes a slow-no-wake zone for motorboats within 100 feet of a lake's shoreline. The slow-no-wake zone for personal watercraft ("Jet Skis") remains at 200 feet from any shoreline.

Boating too close to shorelines contributes to shoreline erosion, reduced water clarity by stirring up lake bed sediments, releases phosphorus from lake bed sediments and harms fish habitat when propellers or prop wash uproot aquatic plants. ***Please observe all of Wisconsin's Boating Laws.***

A Request For HELP From One Of Our Members!

Question: *"Can you clarify whether our lake association can be required to pay state unemployment insurance when "seasonal" employees leave after a summer's work?" - OCLRA Member*

This question which OCLRA received from a member association reflects an important issue faced by all volunteer organizations with paid employees. After extensive research on the issue, a careful reading of Wisconsin Statutes and information from the Department of Workforce Development -Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division, and with help from State Senator Jim Holperin, the following points appear to be key to answering what appears to be a simple question (but in reality is not).

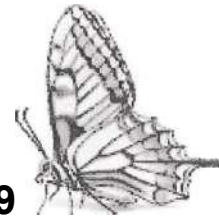
- Obtain 501(c)(3) IRS status. An association recognized as a 501(c)(3) non-profit tax-exempt entity by the IRS, AND having fewer than four employees working on the same day in 20 or more weeks in a calendar year, is not required to participate in the unemployment compensation system.
- Document all employer/employee records. As an employer of one or more individuals in Wisconsin, you are required to maintain employment records that will permit an accurate determination of your unemployment tax liability - if any.
- Document notice to employees regarding "seasonal" and nonprofit status. As an employer, you are required to provide notice of the "seasonal" nature of the work you are offering and that you are a nonprofit organization.

Becoming a 501(c)(3) organization appears to be the key to avoiding the payment of unemployment insurance benefits. The exclusions outlined by the Department of Workforce Development --Unemployment Office only apply to 501(c)(3) organizations.

Becoming a 501(c)(3) organization is not a difficult process, although it does require periodic filings with the Internal Revenue Service. Perhaps a local attorney can "contribute" to your organization by assisting in the filing process and advising on this matter.

Section 108.02(15)kl9 of the Wisconsin Unemployment Insurance Law details "seasonal" employment and provides guidelines to **employees** who want to apply for unemployment benefits. It is safer to assume that any employee might apply for unemployment benefits; and therefore, you should be knowledgeable about these guidelines. In addition, pamphlets from the Unemployment Insurance Division provide more detail and commonly asked questions about unemployment issues. In general, Wisconsin Unemployment Insurance Law is fairly generous to the employee, and careful documentation of your clarification as a seasonal employer with employees might prove critical.

Do you have questions or issues that OCLRA can help you with? Let us know — we are here to help your lake or river association.



County Cost Share Grant Monies Available for 2009

Oneida County Land and Water Conservation Department wants to support riparian landowners that are interested in restoring their shoreline buffers or preventing sediment loss due to shoreline erosion. **County Cost Share monies are available in 2009 for eligible projects.**

Are you tired of mowing and fertilizing your lawn? Are you concerned over the use of pesticides? Do you have problems with geese on your lawn? Why not restore your lawn to its natural state? You will have no need for mowing, fertilizing or pesticide use. You will see and enjoy butterflies, dragonflies, birds, frogs, and other beneficial wildlife. Why not enjoy color, texture, and depth with a restored shoreline? You could enjoy all of these benefits – plus know that rainwater runoff from your property will be that much cleaner once it enters the lake.

Does your shoreline show signs of erosion and sediment loss? Whether it is caused by storm water runoff or wave energy from the lake, financial assistance from the Oneida County Land and Water Conservation Department may be able to assist you technically and/or financially. There are many ways to help stop shoreline erosion. To obtain an evaluation of your shoreline and to determine if it is eligible for the County's Cost Share Program, contact the Oneida County Land & Water Conservation Department at 715-369-7835 or 715-369-7837, or via e-mail at jhansen@co.oneida.wi.us.

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Visit our Website
<http://www.ocrla.org>

OCLRA's Board of Directors

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**Our strength grows with our membership.
Our voice grows stronger with the addition
of yours.**

OCLRA is a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and preservation of Oneida County's lakes and rivers. Our newsletter, **Ripples**, is published twice a year – spring and fall. To become a member, please visit our website and complete the Membership Application. Dues are invoiced annually in January. Dues can be paid by mailing payment to our post office box at the address below.

Our 2009 Annual Meeting will be held June 13, 2009 at Nicolet College in Rhinelander.



Have you had your septic tank pumped lately?

Protect your lake by having your septic system pumped **at least** every three years.

**Oneida County Lakes and Rivers Association, Inc.
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