



A clean lake reflects well  
on all of us

# ONONDAGA LAKE PARTNERSHIP NEWS

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO 'SAVE THE RAIN'?

Onondaga County's 'Save the Rain' public education campaign debuted Saturday, March 14 at the St. Patrick's Day parade. A parade float displayed various ways to reduce stormwater runoff and improve the environment. The goal of the 'Save the Rain' campaign is to raise public awareness about green technologies available to reduce and reuse stormwater.

Green infrastructure involves cost effective, sustainable, and an environmentally friendly solutions to wet weather management. Using natural systems, green infrastructure technologies infiltrate, capture and reuse stormwater. By reducing the amount of stormwater going into the sewers, the County hopes to reduce the need for more costly solutions involving large facilities and pipes called gray infrastructure.

There are many green measures you can implement at home to 'Save the Rain' including use of rain barrels and cisterns, and planting rain gardens. Business and industry can install green roofs, biowalls, and porous pavement to reduce stormwater runoff.

- Rain barrel is a water tank used to collect and store rain water, typically from rooftops via rain gutters for home use, watering gardens, washing cars, agriculture, and for retention of stormwater for release at later time.

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- Cistern is a receptacle built to catch and store rainwater ranging in capacity from a few liters to thousands of cubic meters.

- Rain garden is a sunken garden designed to absorb rainwater from impervious areas such as roofs, driveways, walkways, and compacted lawn areas. Rain gardens reduce runoff by allowing stormwater to soak into the ground, as opposed to flowing into storm drains and surface waters, which can cause erosion, water pollution, flooding, and diminished groundwater.

- Vertical garden is a wall, either free-standing or part of a building that is partially or completely covered with vegetation and, in some cases, soil or an inorganic growing medium. They are also referred to as living walls or biowalls.

- Green roof is a roof of a building that is partially or completely covered with vegetation and soil, or a growing medium, planted over a waterproof membrane. Green roofs are used for stormwater management, energy efficiency, and aesthetics. Green roofs absorb stormwater and release it back into the atmosphere through evaporation and plant transpiration, while reducing urban temperatures.

- Porous pavement allows precipitation to infiltrate the soil underneath the pavement. It can be used on roads, parking lots, and walkways and consist of porous asphalt, concrete, paving stones or bricks.

Visit the County's Save the Rain website to learn more: <http://www.ongov.net/savetherain/index.html>

REFLECTIONS

# BEARTRAP CREEK HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT, MATTYDALE, NY

**B**eartrap Creek is a 3½ mile tributary of Ley Creek and Onondaga Lake. The creek flows in a north-south direction, parallel with Interstate 81, adjacent to the Mattydale community in the Town of Salina. The creek watershed is located west and east of I-81, and includes a major portion of the Syracuse Hancock International Airport. The stream reclamation project began in 1991 when an anonymous tipster contacted the Central New York (CNY) Chapter of the Izaak Walton League. Beartrap Creek was loaded with trash, tires, and barrels of rusted oil and fuel containers. As a result, the CNY Chapter adopted Beartrap Creek for a reclamation project and stream monitoring program.



A section of Beartrap Creek behind the Roxboro Middle School in Mattydale, NY.

The water quality monitoring was initiated using the Izaak Walton League's "Save Our Streams" Program which included investigating physical, chemical, and biological parameters. Monitoring occurred in March and April when the effects of aircraft deicing chemicals were most noticeable. In 1993, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation required the City of Syracuse to study pollutants used at the air-

port and evaluate the potential for the release of pollutants to the creek. This resulted in construction of a \$10 million aircraft deicer collection and treatment system at the Hancock Airport in fall of 1996.

Student and citizen volunteers joined Chapter members in cleanup activities to remove trash, barrels, and tires from the tributary. Since 1994, student groups from Liverpool High School and the Roxboro Road Middle School in Mattydale have participated in water quality monitoring. Testing shows gradual but steady improvements. In 2003, grant money from the Onondaga Lake Partnership (OLP) funded a 6-month investigation of existing habitat conditions and resulted in the 2004 Ecological Status Analysis of Beartrap Creek report. The report noted a diverse population of various minnow and sucker species, but the instream habitat conditions were not suitable for trout survival.

In summer 2006, Roxboro Road Middle School, received a \$2,600 Mini-Grant from the OLP to complete a restoration project. Several truckloads of stone cobbles were placed in a section of Beartrap Creek, 25 yards in length, located between the Middle School and Interstate 81 in Mattydale. Biological surveys found enhanced populations of crayfish, minnows, and brook sticklebacks in the restoration area.

Students continue to monitor water quality conditions. A decade of survey results indicate a steady improvement in stream macroinvertebrate populations. The intermediate goal is to provide more diverse stream bottom habitat to enhance proliferation of minnows and aquatic invertebrates. The long term goal is to restore trout habitat. Most trout-inhabited tributaries are located south of Onondaga Lake.

However, the addition of rock-enhanced stream reaches could lead to greater habitat diversification. As a result, we may see the return of viable trout populations to this small, but inherently valuable, northern tributary of Onondaga Lake

*Les Monostory, Izaak Walton League*



Three Roxboro Middle School students take a closer look at the creek.

## IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE TO HOST A FREE FISHING WEEKEND

**T**he Central New York Chapter of the Izaak Walton League will host a Free Fishing Weekend June 27-28, 2009 at Onondaga Lake Park near Long Branch Road. The event, sponsored in part by the Onondaga Lake Partnership Outreach Committee, will include a carp fishing tournament and family fishing derby. This event coincides with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation free [sport] fishing weekend events where participants do not require a fishing license.

# PUBLIC TO PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE IN LAKE BOTTOM CLEANUP

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) recently released the final Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) for the Onondaga Lake Bottom Site, a subsite of the Onondaga Lake Superfund Site (available online at [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37558.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37558.html)). The CPP provides a formal, yet flexible plan for communication with the public during this multi-year dredging, capping, restoration, and monitoring project. It identifies specific community outreach and participation activities such as fact sheets, websites, newsletters, annual reports, speakers, public meetings, and roundtable discussions.

A key component of the CPP is the creation of a lead Community Participation Working Group (CPWG). The CPWG is to provide for community involvement in the cleanup of Onondaga Lake

Join Onondaga Lake News and DEC will send you occasional project information, updates and public meeting announcements concerning the remediation of the Onondaga Lake Bottom site and associated upland sites - right to your e-mail inbox! To subscribe visit: [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37558.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37558.html).

throughout all phases of the remedial design and construction process so that the public is informed and has opportunities to contribute information, opinions, perspectives and recommendations about the program. The CPWG will be a volunteer group consisting of citizens, public officials, community leaders, and conservation and environmental leaders from the communities surrounding Onondaga Lake. It will take a broad overall look at Onondaga Lake remediation issues and community outreach activities, and recommend opportunities for the community to contribute and receive

information. It will be assisted, on an as needed basis, by technical experts from the DEC and Honeywell. Feedback from the CPWG will be received by the technical design team for lake cleanup, who will evaluate and consider the feedback throughout the design process.

## WORLD WATER MONITORING DAY 2009 – A FUN AND EDUCATIONAL EVENT!

Join us for World Water Monitoring Day September 16, 2009 along Onondaga Creek at Kelley Brothers Memorial Park in Syracuse. The event, sponsored by the Onondaga Lake Partnership Outreach Committee, will provide an opportunity for middle and high school students from Onondaga County to learn about water quality and monitoring. The students will participate in hands on activities, collect water samples, and view samples of creek fish and macroinvertebrates. For additional information teachers may contact Onondaga Environmental Institute at (315) 472-2150 or [OLPoutreach@oei2.org](mailto:OLPoutreach@oei2.org).

## WE'LL COME TO YOU...

The OLP's Speakers Bureau is comprised of representatives from a variety of State and Federal agencies and local organizations working to revitalize Onondaga Lake and its watershed. We are available for your meetings, conferences, or other events to present information on a wide range of topics related to Onondaga Lake and its watershed.

To request a speaker for your event or for more information about the program, please contact the Onondaga Lake Partnership at 1-800-833-6390 (press '1').

## ONONDAGA LAKE PARTNERSHIP RECEIVED THE 2009 EARTH STEWARD AWARD

Syracuse Commission for Women hosted the Annual Women's History Month Luncheon; this year's theme was 'Women Taking the lead to save our Planet'. The Partnership was one of 11 recipients of the Earth Steward Award which recognizes organizations who have blazed the trail in the green movement.



Major Lars Zetterstrom and Ms. Julie Zielinski from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District accepted the award on behalf of the Partnership.

# STUDENTS EXPLORE ONONDAGA LAKE WITH HELP OF OLP EDUCATION FUND

Free money is hard to come by, but that is just what the Onondaga Lake Partnership (OLP) is offering local teachers in Onondaga County. The OLP continues to accept applications from K-12 teachers on a rolling basis for small grants for classroom and field projects to educate students about the environment of Onondaga Lake, its tributaries, and watershed. Awards of up to \$500 are available per teacher, per school year. The following 2008 grant recipients included projects that combined classroom learning with hands-on experiences and field trips:

- Fowler High School, Syracuse, Mr. Rob Woolery's Global Environment Class, "Of Waste and Watersheds"
- Blodgett K-8 School, Syracuse, Ms. Jessica Kauffman's 7th Grade Science Class, "Watershed Warriors"
- Elden Elementary School, Baldwinsville, Mr. Dan Hyland's 3rd Grade Class, "Environmental Study of Onondaga Lake"

The education of our youth is a critical component to provide a cleaner Onondaga Lake in the future.

Teacher's Education Fund information and applications are available online at [www.onlakepartners.org](http://www.onlakepartners.org) or by calling (315) 472-2150.



Through OLP Teacher Education Fund grants, Fowler High School students tested water quality and collected macroinvertebrate samples along portions of Onondaga Creek, Fall 2008.



## WE WELCOME YOUR PARTICIPATION!

All Onondaga Lake Partnership meetings are open to the public. Date, time, and location of upcoming Executive, Project, and Outreach Committee meetings are updated monthly and posted on the Partnership website at [www.onlakepartners.org](http://www.onlakepartners.org). For additional information about committee meetings call 800-833-6390.



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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Chaired by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- New York State Attorney General
- Onondaga County
- City of Syracuse

### PROJECT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Chaired by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation*

- Representatives of Executive Committee agencies, as well as the:
- State University of New York - College of Environmental Science, & Forestry
  - U.S. Geological Survey
  - New York State Canal Corporation
  - Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District
  - Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board
  - Metropolitan Development Association

### OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Chaired by Onondaga County*

Representatives of Executive Committee agencies, as well as the:

- Izaak Walton League
- Atlantic States Legal Foundation
- League of Women Voters
- Cornell University Cooperative Extension, Onondaga County
- State University of New York - College of Environmental Science & Forestry
- Onondaga Historical Association

The OLP Executive Committee establishes and maintains the mission of the partnership and the lake improvement effort.

The OLP Project Committee serves as the partnership technical center of expertise on specific projects and develops and maintains the funding strategy for projects.

The OLP Outreach Committee works to enhance public knowledge and understanding of the partnership and the status of the lake improvement effort.

The Onondaga Lake Partnership (OLP) promotes cooperation among Federal, State, and local governments, and other involved parties in the management of the environmental issues of Onondaga Lake and the Onondaga Lake watershed in the Syracuse, New York, area.

You can contact the OLP at: (800) 833-6390 or [info@onlakepartners.org](mailto:info@onlakepartners.org). For more information, visit the OLP web site at: [www.onlakepartners.org](http://www.onlakepartners.org)