

NYSFOLA CONFERENCE RECAP

APRIL 29-30, 2021

The annual New York State Federations of Lake Associations (NYSFOLA) conference took place on Zoom this year. The organization, founded in 1983, is a not-for-profit coalition of lake associations, individuals, and corporate members dedicated to the protection and restoration of New York lakes.

Sara Warner & Mary Jo Watts represented MLA, attending this event for the first time. We provide here a brief summary of the proceedings. An archive of the two-day conference, with selected presentations, can be viewed here: <https://nysfola.org/nysfola-annual-conference-to-go-virtual-for-2021/>.

Day One (6 Sessions)

1. Professor Peter Tobiessen, author of *The*



Secret Life of a Lake: The Ecology of Northern Lakes and their Stewardship, gave a broad overview of lake ecosystems and the dangers of phosphorous.

2. Dr. Willard Harman and grad student Heather Murphy spoke about watersheds and best management practices.

3. **NYHABs: New York's Online Harmful Algal Bloom Notification System.** Stephanie June, Research Scientist with NYS-DEC, said each year 350-400 bodies of water in NYS report HABs (cyanobacteria, toxic form of blue-green algae. Numbers are increasing (climate change, run-off, and other factors). Avoid them are report outbreaks!

DAY ONE continued

4. HAB Case Study: Hopatcong Lake, NJ. Dr. Fred Lubnow of Princeton Hydro, shared success of using BioChar to reduce HAB outbreaks.

5. ProcellaCOR® Case Study using new herbicide to reduce watermilfoil, an invasive plant.

6. Prof. Dan Stitch on importance of native fish to lake ecosystems.

7. **Grass Carp:** Aquatic Ecologist Alejandro Reyes said we need to revise best practices for using this fish as a weed control tactic and to use carp as part of a comprehensive vegetation control plan,

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Affiliate of the North
American Lake
Management Society
www.nalms.org.*

Grass Carp continued

not as a primary action.

Grass carp live 30 years (not 10 as thought), and older fish eat more than younger ones. Carp will eat milfoil, but this is not their first choice. If overstocked, devegetation can happen in as little as 2 years.

In the closing Q&A session, people discussed the new NY program for Septic Grants (Cortland

County chose Skaneateles as its recipient).

Day Two (7 Sessions)

1. **Short Term Rental Case Study (Lake Placid)**. John R. Langey, a lawyer at Cooney & Fearon said rentals up 40% due to COVID and offered suggestions for lake association guidelines and regulations.

2. Fundraising laws governing non-profits.

3. Invasive species spread and prevention talk by Josh Thiel (DEC). Most plagued by zebra mussels and milfoil. Snails not an issue for others. Encourages associations to have boat inspection protocols.

4. Award Ceremony: Melody Lake Wins!

Bob Rosati, Lake Steward of the Year!

MLA President Bob Rosati was awarded the Lake Steward of the Year Prize, and he became the first person in NYSFOLA history to earn this distinction twice, in recognition of his decades of conservation efforts. Bob was also celebrated in the Lake Association Newsletter category, earning second prize for best publication. Congrats, Bob!

5. Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP) reports that there are now 179 participating sites, the most in the program's history. MLA is a long-time member.

6. Poster Session: graduate students gave reports on preservation efforts using floating islands and macroinvertebrates.

7. Breakout Sessions: we shuffled between the conversations on **dam safety** and the presentation on **conflict resolution**, where 95% of the participants were women who spoke about their frustrations with membership meetings (the fights, threats, and communication problems). The facilitator's presentation on de-escalating tension is online.



New York State Federation
of Lake Associations