

Buoys, Patrols Return To Otsego Lake Soon

1/15 Freeman Journal
STAFF REPORT 1/15/2

OTSEGO LAKE

Law enforcement coverage, and therefore the 200-foot no-wake-zone buoys, will return to the waters of Otsego lake in the near future.

An agreement has been reached between the Otsego County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation that will restore the police presence to last year's levels. The sheriff will provide five hours of lake time per week, and the DEC six.

According to Otsego Lake Association officials, who had lobbied the county Board of Representatives to restore the funding for the program and met with DEC officials, the return of patrols solves the liability insurance roadblock that will allow the Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District to take possession of the buoys. The floating markers delineate a wakeless zone 200 feet from the shoreline, which is intended to slow the release of phosphorus into the lake from shoreline erosion.

The now defunct Watershed Council had owned the buoys, and when the coverage evaporated, no group would take possession.

"We owe a debt of gratitude to both Sheriff Don Mundy and to Acting Captain Tim Duffy of the DEC," OLA President Robert Einreinhofer said. "The association is also grateful to Bob Banta and

Buoys

7/25 Journal 2012
continued from Page 3

Jason Mulford of the County Soil and Water Conservation District, whose organization will now own the buoys. I would also like to thank in advance Paul Lord and his dive team from the Biological Field Station, who will be installing the buoys in a few weeks."



7/24 crew Health of lake should be priority

The Town of Springfield has a long-standing but a laxly enforced rule that its public landing is for residents only. Only well after Springfield turned down an offer for a power washer and decided against having adequate coverage at the launch where boats could be inspected to keep out exotic plants and animals did they tighten up their rule by issuing ID cards to properly identified residents. This approach was taken even though the Town Board's attorney had advised using stickers to be affixed to resident boats or trailers. The potential for abuse of the card system was apparent, and has come to pass. Some Town officials have misused the cards by making them available to non-Springfield friends.

For Springfield's officials to be involved in such cronyism is an insult to residents whose taxes support the dock building, personnel and maintenance of public landing. Worse yet, it opens the door to potential lake infection by exotics. I find this situation appalling as both a taxpayer and leader of an association whose

agenda is implementing the Lake Management Plan, which Springfield agreed to. That Plan states that signatories to the Plan should "maximize efforts to prevent the introduction of exotic species into the lake."

The health of Otsego Lake must not be comprised by official misconduct and neglect. The lake is the region's crown jewel and every effort must be made to keep it that way. A secure sticker system and more coverage involving inspection and a required boat wash if necessary would make Springfield a meaningful partner in the effort to protect Otsego Lake.

Bob Einreinhofer
President
The Otsego Lake Association