

# SLPID

## 2020 FALL NEWSLETTER

SLPID, PO Box 2551, Malta, NY 12020 | [www.SLPID.org](http://www.SLPID.org)



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# REMINDER: CUTOFF DATE FOR FERTILIZING LAWNS IS DECEMBER 1

If you plan to fertilize your lawn this fall, remember that it is against New York State law to fertilize lawns between December 1 and April 1. Some areas also have local laws about selling and using lawn fertilizers.

Visit [DEC's Lawn Fertilizer webpage](#) for more information. The law does not apply to agricultural fertilizer or fertilizer for gardens.

Choose a lawn fertilizer with no phosphorus.

Lawn fertilizer can have unnecessary phosphorus that runs into waterbodies. Excess phosphorus in freshwater lakes and ponds can cause algae overgrowth, with serious impacts to the environment and public health.



# BOAT TRAFFIC AT THE 9P BRIDGE

A rising number of complaints about boat safety in the vicinity of the 9P Bridge have been reported to SLPID board members this season. This area represents the center for boat activity since it is anchored by the State Boat Launch and supported by commercial docking for over 700 boats. The area is a critical pinch point where boats from the marinas of Fish Creek and the State Boat Launch converge and move out into Saratoga Lake under the 9P Bridge where they encounter more boating activity generated from several other active marinas on the south side.

The cause of the complaints and concern may be explained by recent expansions and other improvements at several nearby marinas. In addition, the State Boat Launch has realized an increase in usage reaching its maximum capacity on a regular basis throughout the 2020 summer months. The number of kayaks and paddleboards has risen significantly which has resulted in congestion around the area of the 9P Bridge and a concern for safety going forward.

To be responsive to this concern, SLPID is investigating the placement of the navigational channel at the 9P Bridge. Early in the year, with input from the Saratoga County Sheriff's Department and Saratoga Rowing Association/Club, SLPID made some adjustments of the 5mph buoy locations. SLPID is further considering whether the navigational channel can be adjusted to permit and direct non-motorized boats into the two side channels when going under the bridge.

To address these questions and provide a foundation of existing conditions, SLPID conducted a one day study that observed boat traffic in the region between Stafford's Bridge and the 9P Bridge. On the same day as the lake wide annual boat count was being conducted (7/19/20), the drone company, Hand and Frame Creative, was hired to gather video and aerial photographs of the area over a half-hour period when boat traffic was at the highest level of the day.





# BOAT TRAFFIC AT THE 9P BRIDGE

## Existing Conditions

There are five marinas between the area of the 9P Bridge and Stafford's Bridge. These marinas support docking for approximately 706 boats. Approximately 223 boats were out of their slips between 1:00 and 1:30pm. This represents that approximately 32% of all boats docked at marinas (assumes 100% slip occupancy at all five marinas) and can be assumed to be the maximum since it was a beautiful weekend summer day. A summary of the resources of the five marinas and State Boat Launch are provided in the chart below. Photos taken from the drone are provided at the end of the report.

Additional boats were generated at the State Boat Launch. According to the records of the SLPID boat stewards, there were a total of 222 boats checked in by the Stewards on July 19. These included 161 motorboats, 55 PWCSs, and 6 kayaks. This count did not include the estimated 25 boats that did not elect to stop at the boat inspection checkpoint.



## SUMMARY OF MARINA DOCKS AND BOATS INFORMATION

| MARINAS                                | # DOCKS, BOATSLIPS, AMENITIES  | # BOATS OUT | % BOATS OUT ON LAKE | # PARKING SPACES   |
|--|--|-------------|---------------------|--|
| <b>Saratoga Marina Dock Club</b>       | 9 dock complexes, 147 slips, launch, tour boats rental boats (future)  | 54          | 37%                 | 70+  |
| <b>Saratoga Lake State Boat Launch</b> | Boat launch only<br>boat inspection & wash station   | -           | -                   | 59 trailers plus 5 handicap, 10 car plus 2 handicap cars |
| <b>Lee's Park</b>                      | 8 dock complexes, 192 slips, 1 launch with dock boat rentals, pontoon boat tour, hydro hover board, jet ski rental | 73          | 38%                 | 65+  |
| <b>Point Breeze Marina</b>             | 7 dock complexes<br>172 slips<br>1 launch & gas dock<br>Boat sales & rentals                                       | 54          | 31%                 | 53+  |
| <b>550 Waterfront</b>                  | 3 dock complexes<br>96 slips (potential expansion to 139), restaurant<br>boat rentals                              | 22          | 23%                 | 141+   |
| <b>Fish Creek Marina</b>               | 7 dock complexes, 101 slips, kayak rentals restaurant  | 20          | 20%                 | 52+  |

Notes: Assumes all marina dock spaces are rented. The number of boat slips and parking spaces at marinas are estimated based on aerial photos taken on July 19, 2020.



# BOAT TRAFFIC AT THE 9P BRIDGE

## Findings and Analysis

The 2020 annual boat count had an increase of 185 boats representing a 54% increase over the 2019 boat count. This significant increase could be explained by a combination of very warm and sunny weather, the pandemic, which has given some people more time for leisure activities with appropriate social distancing. The increase was also due to the availability of more kayaks and paddleboards rentals in the Fish Creek area.

Congestion in the vicinity of the 9P Bridge is common during times of high boat activity on weekends. It is not unusual to have several boats in a holding pattern on the north side of the bridge with boats trying to launch and leave both the State Boat Launch and the Saratoga Marina launch. The area near and under the bridge is extremely limited and made more problematic by other motorized and non-motorized trying to pass under the bridge.

One of the elements to consider for future seasons is the potential for a significant increase in the number of boats using Saratoga Lake at the same time. As noted in the above discussion, only 32% of the boats currently leasing slips at the five marinas observed were out on the day of the boat count. The number of boats remaining in commercial marina slips was approximately 483. This means there is the potential to nearly double (92% increase) the number of boats that were out on Saratoga Lake on the day of the 2019 boat count. Even a modest increase in the number of active boats on the lake would effectively decrease the carrying capacity of the lake and likely result in congestion and safety concerns.



**Saratoga Marina Dock Club**



**Saratoga Lake State Boat Launch**



**Lee's Park**



**Point Breeze Marina**



**550 Waterfront**



**Fish Creek Marina**





# SLPID'S SHIFTS IT'S MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

SLPID welcomed **Victor Mazzotti** as a new commissioner representing the Commissioner At-Large board position. Victor is a founding partner of Martin, Harding and Mazzotti LLP, is in charge of the firm's Litigation Department. Victor is married and has two children and spends much of his free time fishing on Saratoga Lake with his two sons.

SLPID also named **Cristina A. Connolly** into the new position of Lake Administrator **Kathy Simmonds**, representing the City of Saratoga Springs is the new SLPID Chairperson.

Other board members include **Karl Hardcastle**, representative from the Town of Stillwater, **Tom Carringi**, representative from the Town of Saratoga, and **Walter Supley**, representative from the Town of Malta. **Mike Van Patten**, CPA, was named Assistant Treasurer and **Deborah Curto** as Recording Secretary



# Q&A WITH SLPID

The following are some of the many frequently asked questions concerning the Saratoga Lake Protection and Improvement District. Please submit your questions to Cristina Connolly at [Cristina.Connolly@slpid.org](mailto:Cristina.Connolly@slpid.org) and we will do our best to answer it and publish in future newsletters.

## **What is the Saratoga Lake Protection and Improvement District (SLPID or District)?**

SLPID is a special purpose tax district that was formed by the New York State Legislature in 1986 by passage of Assembly bill A.9211-B and Senate bill S. 7690-B which is found in the 1986 Laws of New York State. This legislation set up a Board of Commissioners comprised of a representative from each municipality that fronts on the lake plus an At-Large Commissioner. The Commissioners are all equal with a single vote during meetings to consider the business of the district. Commissioners are selected by the Chair of the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors. The Commissioners select a board member to be the Chair of the Board of Commissioners.

## **Why was SLPID formed?**

In 1983, a Phase 1 Diagnostic Feasibility Study funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was completed on Saratoga Lake to identify the best method to manage the growth of Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) which had spread throughout the lake shallow water zone. This study recommended that a program of aquatic plant harvesting be started and that a tax district be formed to operate the harvesting program. Harvesting was selected as an interim control since EWM was already widespread and therefore it would not cause significant new spreading of EWM.

## **What are the responsibilities of SLPID?**

SLPID is responsible for the operation of the harvesting program and that has evolved into a large-scale effort to manage aquatic invasive species (AIS). To manage AIS, SLPID carries out the following programs and activities:

- ✓ Annual review of the integrated pest management strategy to control AIS.
- ✓ Funds the registration and use aquatic herbicides to manage AIS.
- ✓ Funds the mechanical removal of AIS and native aquatic plants when that is the best management tool.
- ✓ Funds annual aquatic plant surveys to support planning efforts.
- ✓ Funds the Lake Steward program and boat inspection program to limit the introduction of new AIS.
- ✓ Funds water quality testing.
- ✓ Operates a harvesting program to remove aquatic plants from in front of docks so that lake front owners can access and enjoy the lake.
- ✓ Purchases and maintains the needed equipment to operate the harvesting program.
- ✓ Works cooperatively with the lakefront municipalities on issues of common interest.
- ✓ Communicates with taxpayers and various other groups including Saratoga Lake Association, Saratoga Rowing Club, Saratoga County Water Quality Committee, Saratoga County Sheriff's Department, NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation, and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.



# Q&A WITH SLPID cont.

## **What is the boundary of the SLPID Tax District?**

A map of the District can be found on the web site. The SLPID boundary is slightly different than the Sewer District 1 boundary. Property owners in the District pay a special assessment tax to Saratoga County which becomes SLPID's main source of funding.

## **What else can SLPID do to improve the Saratoga Lake?**

SLPID works with the communities in the watershed to protect water quality of the streams that flow into the lake. The largest community effort was in 2001 and 2002. This was at the beginning of the expansion of the federal stormwater rules to include commercial development that was over an acre in size. SLPID also attends the meetings of the Saratoga Water Quality Coordinating Committee. SLPID will be working more closely with the riparian towns of Malta, Stillwater, Saratoga, and city of Saratoga Springs to determine the projects that need to be completed to further protect the lake shore area.

## **Does SLPID have a plan for lake harvesting?**

SLPID's harvesting program has evolved over the years to become more sophisticated to meet permit requirements, address the capability of the harvesting equipment, adjust to changes in the aquatic plant community, and meet the changing needs of the local communities. SLPID completed the Saratoga Lake Aquatic Invasive Species 2019 Long-Term Management Plan which provides the foundation for permitting and the direction for the treatment and management of invasive species.

## **What is SLPID doing to improve the harvesting program?**

In 2020, SLPID approved the purchase of a second dump truck so that harvesters can be unloaded faster. The two H-11 harvesters have a 1,000 cubic foot(cf) hopper while the existing truck holds around 300 cf. Adding a second truck will limit wait times to off-load the harvesters. These trucks need to be small since there is limited space on Fitch Road and they must fit under the conveyor trucks. If larger trucks are used, the conveyor incline becomes too steep and the harvested plants fall down the conveyor back into the harvester.

SLPID is always looking for appropriate takeout locations on the lake shore. When fully loaded, the harvesters need three feet or more of water depth and 20-30 feet of space along a shoreline area that is not obstructed by docks. On shore, the conveyor and dump truck occupy an area that is 40-50 feet long. It is difficult to find sufficient water depth and space on shore. SLPID will always investigate any site suggested. Another issue SLPID has had is finding dump locations near the lake to dispose of the aquatic plants. This year there were four dump sites with an additional site available in 2021.





# Saratoga Lake TAKE THE PLEDGE



## TAKING CARE OF SARATOGA LAKE IN THE WINTER

### PROPERTY OWNERS IN THE SARATOGA LAKE WATERSHED, HOW CAN YOU IMPROVE AND MAINTAIN THE HEALTH OF SARATOGA LAKE IN THE WINTER?

Property owners living within the Saratoga Lake Watershed have a direct affect on the health of Saratoga Lake. Because the Saratoga Lake Watershed is so large, it is important that all property owners within the watershed understand how their actions directly and indirectly influence the lake. Steps that protect the lake can also be beneficial to your home and your safety. Below are some suggestions and requirements for maintaining and improving Saratoga Lake quality in the winter.

## It is important to...

### MINIMIZE RUNOFF OF ROAD SALT

- WHY:**
- In the winter, road salt is a major cause of chloride and calcium runoff. Runoff of road salt into the lake causes dead zones. Dead zones are areas that are depleted of oxygen and cannot sustain life.
- DO:**
- Leave a buffer of grass, hedges or native flowers between the lakefront and your lawn. This will reduce runoff into the lake.
  - Reduce impermeable surfaces with natural walkways and permeable or gravel driveways and patios.
- DON'T:**
- Plow snow from driveways and roadways onto lake ice or lake shore.
  - Use excess salt on driveways and walkways.
  - Build concrete patios and walkways along the shoreline.

### PROPERLY DISPOSE OF CHRISTMAS TREES

- WHY:**
- As trees dry out, they become more likely to be fire hazards.
  - Christmas tree mulch can be used as an erosion barrier for lake shoreline management.
- DO:**
- Recycle your Christmas tree. Clean the tree of all ornaments and cut the tree into 4 ft portions. The Saratoga County Public Works Department organizes tree removals. Check their website to see where trees can be dropped off. Several towns within Saratoga County also collect trees from curbside.
  - Repurpose your Christmas tree. Parts of your tree can be used as decoration, to build a birdhouse, to enhance a pond, to create coasters or

# Saratoga Lake TAKE THE PLEDGE

to make mulch.

- DON'T:**
- Recycle your tree by leaving it on the lake ice.
  - Recycle by dumping or anchoring it to the lake bottom.
  - Recycle a tree larger than 7 ft without cutting it into smaller pieces.
  - Recycle a tree without removing all ornaments.
  - Leave a tree in your home to rot. It is a fire hazard and can make a mess.

### BE AWARE OF ECOLOGICAL CHANGES IN THE LAKE

- WHY:**
- Ecological changes occur in the winter as parts of the lake turn to ice. Cold temperatures slow the metabolism of aquatic life reducing rates of photosynthesis and respiration. Life is sustained however due to the properties of water molecules that make ice less dense than water. Thus, ice floats on the top of the lake. This allows aquatic organisms to remain alive below the ice.
- DO:**
- Adhere to fishing regulations specific to ice fishing. On Saratoga Lake, there is a special restriction on Sunfish in the winter. They can be caught at any size and the daily limit is 15 fish.
  - Beware of changing weather conditions.

### BE CAUTIOUS AROUND SNOWPLOWS

- WHY:**
- Snowplows are used to make roads safer. However, because snowplows are so large and because snowplow drivers often have low visibility, people should be cautious around them.
- DO:**
- Place your garbage can in your driveway 4 inches from the white line. Garbage cans can become projectiles when a snowplow comes through.
  - When you are driving, give the snowplow space and slow down. The driver may not be able to see your car. "Beeps" signal the truck is backing up.
- DON'T:**
- Allow kids to play or build tunnels next to the road.
  - Crowd the plow while driving.
  - Pass the plow on the right. Plows push snow to the right shoulder, and many are equipped with a wing plow a 6-8 foot extension on the right-hand side of the plow.

