

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Charlie Ames

Here it is the 1st of April and we're still in Florida. We've had great weather down here and we missed a tough winter in CNY. Bill Thomas and I have had a good time catching Crappies but the bite has slowed down. The temperature has been in the high 80's and it is extremely dry. It's time to head home and we expect to be back by early April.

In past years the best fishing in the winter has been in our marina which is about a half mile upstream from Lake Harris on the Palatukaha River. However, the water levels dropped about 3 feet over the summer which apparently discouraged the crappies from running up the river. Therefore all of our fishing was in Lake Harris. They had a major Crappie tournament this year in February. There were 60 two man teams entered from all over the southeast. One team came from Pennsylvania. We talked with a number of them at the weigh in and picked up a number of pointers. All of the guys we talked to were extremely friendly and more than willing to share their techniques. Crappie fishing is becoming a big time sport here.

Every winter that I spend in Florida makes me appreciate the great fishing we have in CNY even more. The freshwater fishing here is pretty much one-dimensional. You are limited to fishing for crappies or largemouth. For the past couple of months most of the largemouth fishermen are sight fishing on the beds which to me is one small step above snagging. I'll be glad to get home where we have the greatest freshwater fishing in the country.

I was saddened to hear that Joe Riefer passed away recently. Joe and his wife Shirley kept all of us informed what was happening at the west end of the lake with their website www.attheoak.com. Joe was the inventor of the Pirate spoon and was one of the pioneers of the Lake Ontario fishery. Our condolences go out to Shirley and the Riefer family. He will be sorely missed.

For those of you who have not yet renewed your membership this will be the last newsletter you will receive. By now you will have received a renewal reminder package. I urge you to renew ASAP. We need your support.

We did not get the response to our survey that we expected. Apparently most of you are happy with the status quo. We had no one interested in becoming an officer. This continues to be a major concern since with the exception of Tom Lott the rest of us are getting "long in the tooth" as they say. Some of you are going to have to step up soon if this organization is going to continue in its present form. 74% of those who did respond indicated they would support an increase in license fees if it were targeted to the Conservation fund. It appears this is what is going to happen so hopefully the fund will remain solvent.

Be sure to attend our April 15th meeting at Gander Mountain. Jerry Lougnot and Tom Lott will give a presentation on spring Walleye fishing. **The meeting starts promptly at 7:00 PM.**

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the next newsletter will be May 1. All information should be sent to Libby Lougnot, 8205 Yukon Dr., Cicero, NY 13039 e-mail: LibbyL@twcnny.rr.com

**Combined
Annual DEC State of the Lake
ELOSTA Monthly Membership Meeting Minutes
Thursday March 9, 2009
(Also available at www.elosta.org)**

Gerry Bresadola called Elostas first monthly meeting of the 2009 summer season to order at 7:00 PM on March 9th at the BOCES Education Center on County Rte. 64 in Mexico, NY. Gerry briefly explained Elostas objectives and he noted that tickets for the Lowrance sonar/GPS drawing and various articles of ELOSTA clothing were available for sale. President Ames and VP Doug Fuegel who are in Florida and Texas respectively should return in time for the April 15th meeting. Between 50 and 60 guests attended to hear and contribute to DEC staff summaries concerning the current status of Lake Ontario and St Lawrence River fishery resources. Mac MacKenzie acted in his capacity as Secretary.

Gerry noted that the reading of the October 08 minutes and Tom Lott's Treasurer's Report would be tabled until the April meeting at Gander Mountain. At 7:12PM he turned the meeting over to Dan Bishop who introduced the various speakers and their specific areas of interest. Handouts depicting the statistical data and graphic presentations contained in the annual report entitled Executive Summary (ES) and, a new report entitled Lake Ontario Fish Community Objectives (LOFCO) were available. Simply put, the FCO is similar to a corporate plan that addresses current programs, alternatives, and long range goals. The major topics addressed in the reports included:

Sport Fishery Assessment – Is based primarily upon a long term average of angler catch rates and charter trip surveys. Angler effort remained strong for the period and the 2008 catch rates for Chinook salmon, rainbow trout, and brown trout continued to be comparable to the long term means. In general the number of boat trips indicates no change in the targeting of trout and salmon in recent years. The 07 -08 pre-season effort on bass was below average. Bass seasonal catch rates also remained below average. Suspected, among other localized influences, is the presence of round gobies.

Prey Fish Assessment - The overall abundance and condition of adult alewife which has increased from 2007 and was higher than anticipated and consistent with a ten year mean. Statistics suggest that alewife populations tend to maintain levels that are consistent with the production of food resources from the lake's lower food web. Rainbow smelt continue to be scarce and improved netting equipment has returned increased numbers of deepwater sculpin, once thought to be extirpated. Gobies, first identified in 2002 are now prevalent along the entire south shore of Lake Ontario. The highest populations are just east of the Niagara River with some relatively large specimens lurking around out there.

Cold Water Fishery Management – Low flows of relatively warm water in the Salmon River during the fall of 07 resulted in a significantly reduced number of fish (all species) available for stocking in the spring of 08 However, angler surveys revealed that the mean weight and length of Chinook salmon had increased over previous years. Rainbow trout continue to run smaller than the long term average.

The establishment of base flows from hydro electric facilities on the Salmon River several seasons ago has resulted in a significant increase in the natural reproduction of Chinook salmon. The 2008 hauls of YOY Chinook indicated levels that were well below average. This drop is also attributed to low flow and warm water conditions in the Salmon River during the fall of 2007. The use of DEC's new mobile fish counting and

marking facility to tag every Chinook stocked will provide the data long needed to ascertain the actual numbers of naturally reproduced fish in the system.

The eleventh year for net-pen projects along the southern shore of Lake Ontario has once again proven to be highly successful. Low mortality rates for Chinook salmon and steelhead reared at these sites have resulted in a relatively large number of fish reaching target weights.

Lake Trout Restoration – The catch rates for lake trout continue to be low. The relatively poor return is contributed, in part, to a major decline in the population of adult fish and much improved Chinook opportunities. No significant changes in the current status of lake trout are anticipated.

Warm Water Fisheries – Over 55 thousand walleye fingerlings were stocked in various Lake Ontario embayments and the Niagara River. Walleye abundance in 08 was well above the previous five and ten year averages. The strong 03 year class represented over 18% of the 08 catch. Overall, the Catch-Per-Unit-Effort (CPUE) in the 2008 Eastern Basin gill netting surveys was higher than the previous five and ten year averages. These increases are attributed to a much higher prevalence of white and yellow perch. Smallmouth bass populations remain well above 2000 -04 levels but are slightly below the 06-07 averages. The occurrence of gobies in predator diets has increased throughout the 05-08 period

DEC staff fielded numerous questions from the floor and distributed a document entitled **Lake Ontario Fish Community Objectives Survey.** The purpose of the survey is to obtain public input and concerns regarding preferred fishing techniques, fish species, management programs, related recreational interests, environmental concerns, and demographic segmentation etc. The results of the survey, which could prove to be interesting, will be sent to those who provided their names and addresses.

Dan Bishop thanked all those who attended and the meeting was adjourned at 9PM. Next meeting is at 7PM, Apr 15 at Gander Mountain in Cicero. Walk -ins are welcome.

NOTE:

This will be the last Newsletter you will receive if you have not submitted your renewal applications by April 15, 2009. Second renewal notices have been mailed and application forms are available at www.elosta.org.

WIND POWER – THE WRONG COLOR GREEN Mac MacKenzie

The Great Lakes stretching across the country's northern tier have aptly been described by the scientific community as "a jeweled necklace consisting of five sparkling diamonds". These vast inland seas represent a fresh water resource with life supporting amenities that are without equal on a global scale. New York State is indeed wealthy and privileged in this respect. It is one of a few States with the opportunity to contribute to the management and perpetuation of these National treasures for generations to come.

This is an immense task that requires perceptive and knowledgeable leadership. Do we have that leadership...apparently not? Our governor and representatives are plunging headlong into the development of energy producing alternatives that are based upon nothing more than thoughtless green generated knee jerk reactions. The proposed Galloo Island wind farm is a glaring example.

The Hounsfield project involves the installation of 84 wind turbine/generators approximately 1000 feet apart across the width and breadth of the little four mile long island. The units, which are well over 400 feet high, will essentially be placed upon shallow bed rock which ranges up to an additional 55 feet above lake level. Any approval to convert one of the few US islands in the entire lake into a visual eyesore of th is magnitude will literally destroy the aesthetic qualities of the Eastern Basin...not to mention the unthinkable precedent it will establish.

In its I Love NY and Seaway Trail literature, among others, New York State proudly extols (at considerable public expense) the virtues of the “Big Lake” and its tributaries. Prospective anglers are lured by visions of noisy riffles and clear waist deep streams flagged with shade producing trees and shrubs. Open water boaters are shown enjoying an uncluttered endless horizon...not unlike that experienced on an ocean. These images just touch upon the visual qualities that contribute to the overall fishing and boating experience.

Once again it appears that the only shade of green involved here is in tax payer subsidies and higher costs to the rate payer. On the bright side...look at it this way. We will have our very own uneconomical non-reliable monument to justify the need for the proposed nuclear addition at nine mile point. Let us also not forget that DEC’s endless and expensive political tap dance around the cormorant predation issue in the Eastern Basin will also be resolved. The birds simply can’t tolerate us!!!

NOTE:

For comparison purposes the nine mile point cooling tower is 543 feet high. The twin stacks at Oswego top out at 700 feet.

**“DEC INVITES PUBLIC COMMENTS ON HOUNSFIELD WIND FARM D.E.I.S.
Public Meeting Slated for May 18; Comments Accepted Through May 29”**

“The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has released a draft assessment of the possible impacts of the Hounsfield Wind Farm project proposed for Galloo Island in eastern Lake Ontario. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) includes detailed assessments of a number of potential impacts including water resources, wildlife habitat, agricultural resources, public safety and visual resources.”

The DEIS can be viewed at: www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6061.html#windfarm

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Doug Fuegel

I hope all our members had a great winter; we had excellent safe ice this year and although I only made it out once on Sandy Pond my son Jeff kept me busy cleaning perch all winter. I read an article recently that cormorant diet study's confirm they are eating gobies in abundance, perhaps this is the reason perch fishing has been so great the past year both last summer and this past ice fishing season; lets hope it continues.

Again this year there are two Bills introduced into the legislature concerning the sale of perch; Bill A826 in the Assembly and S854 in the Senate. The legislation almost made it into law last year but some language in the bill was not clear and opponents in Jefferson County opposed it. In my opinion this legislation is long over due, we have seen countless abuses of the 50 daily limit by those flaunting the law to make a fast easy buck. This is a game fish protected by daily limits just as bass and walleye. Also in my opinion ELOSTA should go on record as supporting this state wide ban on the sale of perch. At the March meeting of the Lake Ontario Fishing Coalition a motion was made and passed to write letters to their legislators including Senator Aubertine to exempt Jefferson County from the ban. To exempt a single county from the legislation would prove to be a nightmare for law enforcement when you have border waters as Sandy Pond that lies in both Oswego and Jefferson Counties. Allowing the sale of perch or any game species where dollars are involve brings out the worst in anglers, just recently two men were indicted for possessing nearly 500 perch caught near Ogdensburg in the St. Lawrence River and we can ask ourselves how many of these violations go undetected. Just recently my son Jeff related to me that while hunting for deer sheds near Henderson Harbor a couple weeks ago he came across a huge pile of perch dumped just off the road, the perch had not been cleaned; the amount would overflow a bushel basket and the motive for dumping these tasty fish will likely never be known.

Perhaps the gobies will prove to be a blessing to the system providing a great food source for both the cormorants and the perch; last summer we caught beautiful perch that we have not seen in many years; they are a great game fish to catch and equally great on the table.

Concerning legislation there are a mountain of anti gun legislation bills filtering through both our state legislature and at the federal level, way too many to list, if you care about your guns, your 2nd amendment rights then keep vigilant and stay in contact with your local legislators. Don't expect someone else to do this for you.

The Conservation Fund Advisory Board and he New York State Conservation Council have rubber stamped a license fee increase on most all resident licenses that if passed by the legislature will go into effect October 1st of this year. Considering approximately 70 percent of the Conservation Fund is directed to administrative fees, i.e. salaries, benefits, etc, this should be a topic of discussion at our April meeting.

Time to get out boats ready for the water; see you at the next meeting April 15th 7:00 p.m. at the Cicero Gander Mountain Store, bring a friend.

TROLLING FOR DUMMIES

Dave Myers

Since there is very little information provided by the outdoor sporting media concerning our beloved sport of trolling for salmon and trout, I thought it would be helpful to compile a glossary of terms to help our members explain what's going on to new clients or guests.

Dodger - A boat trolling west when the fleet is headed east

Slider - What you become if you don't clean the fish slime off the deck

Little Blue Boy - A client who forgets to bring cold weather gear

Screamer - A boat captain who crosses your bow dragging 600 ft. of copper wire

Oh Dark Thirty - The time you have to get up to catch the early bite

Cheater - The mannequin you place in the cockpit so that you can set out two extra rods

Wire Diver - The guy who has to go overboard to clear the line from the prop

Wonder Bread - The mysterious stuff in your sandwich that makes fish bite when you are eating lunch

Slippy - Filling for Wonder Bread

Sharkey - a \$100 deposit on the east bank of Ford Shoals

Probe - Add \$250 bucks to your deposit

4 to 5 footers - Waves that become 6 to 7 footers back at the dock

Dipsey - A captain who decides to go out in 4 to 5 footers

Monkey Puke - What the mate has to clean up after the Dipsey goes out in 4 -5 footers

N.B.K. - What every fisherman thinks he is as the boat leaves the dock

Shoot em up - What the Coasties will do if you try to fish the "bubble"

A beautiful day on the water - What you say after you've been skunked

Have fun and good fishing!