



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John A. DeFrancisco

State Senators Announce Planned Improvements to the Water Quality of Owasco Lake

JOHN A. DEFRANCISCO July 14, 2015

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(Auburn, NY) - State Senators John A. DeFrancisco, Michael F. Nozzolio and James L. Seward today (7/13/15) joined officials from the Owasco Watershed Lake Association to announce that significant water quality improvements are planned for Owasco Lake and its watershed.

Earlier this year, the Cayuga County state legislators secured \$600,000 in the State Budget to support ongoing and long-term efforts to improve water quality throughout the watershed. Owasco Lake is currently on the New York State Priority Waterbody Listing as “potentially impaired” for such uses as water supply and recreation. Water quality improvement projects will address phosphorous removal and reduction, lake inspections, ongoing research, public education and outreach, and project management.

Senate Finance Chairman John DeFrancisco said, “The funding for Owasco Lake was one of several measures included in the State Budget that reaffirms my strong commitment to protecting New York’s natural resources. I was pleased to move this initiative forward and to

work with the Senate team from Cayuga County to secure this vital funding, which will help to preserve Owasco Lake, safeguard our drinking water, and enrich the local economy.”

Senator James Seward said, “Local officials have already embarked on a responsive path toward rejuvenating Owasco Lake and my senate colleagues and I are pleased to assist in continuing the work. This grant will further enhance the ability of the Owasco Watershed Lake Association and other stakeholders to make notable improvements to this prime source of drinking water, recreational activity, and future economic development.”

Senator Michael Nozzolio said, “As State Senator representing the Finger Lakes region, the health of our lakes has always been one of my top priorities. Owasco Lake is one of our region’s most unique and magnificent environmental jewels, and decisive action was needed to prevent further pollution of the lake. I am pleased my colleagues and I were able to secure this funding to help preserve and revitalize Owasco Lake, ensuring its protection and securing its potential for generations to come.”

Owasco Watershed Lake Association President James Beckwith concluded, “Owasco Lake is a showcase for all that the Finger Lakes offer, but the lake is in turmoil because of nutrient loading. Senators DeFrancisco, Seward and Nozzolio recognize the lake’s significance to the future of this region. This funding will help advance the work that is already being done by OWLA, and its partners, and ensure a future for Owasco Lake that will enrich the lives of all who visit or live here with clean water and gourmet foods.”

Owasco Lake is the drinking water source for approximately 44,000 residents in Cayuga County, as well as an important natural resource for the local economy and many watershed residents. Unfortunately, Owasco Lake is listed as “potentially impaired” for the following uses of water supply, public bathing and recreation. NYSDEC suspects the impairments are caused by, among other pollutants, silt and sediment that carry nutrients into the lake, including phosphorous.

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