



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John W. Mannion

Senator John W. Mannion and Mayor Ben Walsh Announce Pilot Program for New Harmful Algal Bloom Detection and Rapid Remediation System to Protect City of Syracuse's Water Supply and Skaneateles Lake Communities

JOHN W. MANNION August 6, 2021



SYRACUSE, NY – Senator John W. Mannion (D-Geddes) and Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh today joined Skaneateles Lake stakeholders to announce a pilot program for a new state-of-the-art harmful algal bloom detection and rapid remediation system.

The state-funded \$100,000 effort to combat HABs on Skaneateles Lake is part of a series of new state, federal, and local investments to fortify Syracuse's drinking water infrastructure and protect quality of life and tourism around the lake.

Senator John W. Mannion said, "I worked to secure these funds because we cannot allow HABs to threaten the vitality of our lake communities or the City of Syracuse's water supply. Protecting Skaneateles Lake requires strong partnerships across government, and the new HAB detection and rapid remediation system is good environmental stewardship in action."

Mayor Walsh said, "Protecting the public water supply from HABs requires a comprehensive approach which includes effectively managing the watershed around the lake, working with community partners to actively monitor conditions in the lake, and having a range of tools available to react to blooms when they occur. I thank Senator Mannion for securing the funds to make this pilot program possible. With success, it can significantly improve our ability to identify and respond to lake conditions. We are pleased to again partner with Skaneateles Lake Association and SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in implementing the program."

Skaneateles Lake has experienced harmful algal blooms caused by

Cyanobacteria over many decades. In 2017, a severe, large-scale bloom developed that jeopardized the public drinking water supply. Smaller scale blooms can pop up anywhere

and threaten the health and safety

of the lake community and local drinking water supply. If a bloom is identified early on, it can be monitored and proactively addressed.

The HAB Pilot will focus on hotspot mitigation near vulnerable locations -- specifically, the three main swimming areas located near the Country Club, Lourdes, and the Northern End public swimming area, which is located near the city's drinking water intake pipe.

The detection system incorporates a variety of technologies ranging from dock and boat-based sensors to satellite imagery. If an algal bloom is detected, sensors will trigger the remediation system, which includes of a dock mounted device that uses air bubbles to rapidly kill cyanotoxins

The announcement was made at Syracuse's Woodlawn Reservoir, one of two locations where water originating from Skaneateles Lake is held before flowing to homes and businesses across the city.

Mayor Mary Sennett, Village of Skaneateles said, "Skaneateles Lake provides our community with drinking water, economic support, and is the centerpiece of our quality of life. We're grateful for the leadership of Senator Mannion and Mayor Walsh and applaud their efforts to pursue a solution to Harmful Algal Blooms."

Dr. Neil Murphy, President Emeritus ESF and SLA Board Member said, “The harmful algae like conditions involve warm water, elevated nutrient concentrations and still water. If we focus on these potential hot spots, we can quickly stop the bloom from spreading. Coupling advanced detection systems with compact treatment systems will allow us the tools we need to manage the toxic algal.”

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