



# OLA News

June 2005

## Members Meeting

Sat. June 18, 8:30 - 10:30 AM.

### Agenda

Cooperstown Graduate Program  
conference room  
(same building as  
the Biological Field Station)

Silent Auction / Refreshments

Agenda Review  
Introductions /  
Acknowledgements  
Treasurer's Report  
Elections

Membership Drive  
Cooperstown Launch  
Springfield Launch  
NWZ Buoys / Walleye Stocking  
/ Zebra mussel Update /  
Drop a Brick  
Aerial Survey of Land Usage  
Website  
OLA Apparel / Merchandise  
Questions from members

Lake Festival  
Demonstration Buffer Strip

Mud in Your Lake: Impacts on  
Aquatic Plants & Lake Trout

Wildlife Learning Company →

Election Results  
Silent Auction Winners  
Brick Inspections  
Social ½ hour

Adjournment

## General Membership Meeting: June 18

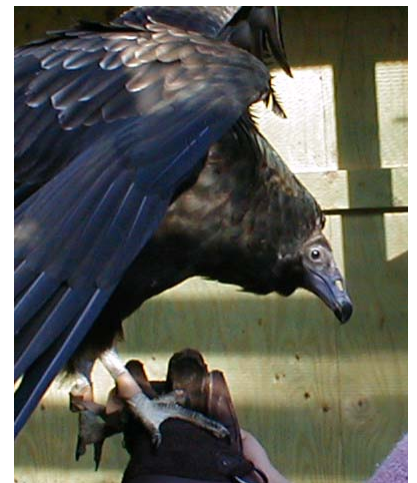
OLA's annual general membership meeting will be held June 18<sup>th</sup>. A detailed agenda is posted to the left. This short general meeting is packed with information you can use to protect and preserve Otsego Lake. Bricks passed out last year will be inspected. Additionally, you can question current directors and officers and elect your OLA president and directors. There will be two formal presentations: one will describe wildlife around Otsego Lake and the Chesapeake Bay while the other details how mud is a pollutant in the Lake. Be there – and bring a friend.

Featured at the Annual Members Meeting:



Wildlife Learning Company, based in Hartwick, is a full service environmental education business that offers diverse experiences to audiences of all ages. Susan and Jeff O'Handley have selected a few of their favorite staff members (bullfrog, wood turtle, horseshoe crab & turkey vulture) to introduce you to their company and programs!

Stop in and meet Morty!



# OLA & OLT: More Alphabet Soup

In this article we describe an allied organization with a focus as precise as our own: the Otsego Land Trust or OLT. The OLT seeks to conserve the distinctive rural character of Otsego County, New York by protecting open space, lands of scenic value, fragile ecosystems, farmland and forestlands. This mission statement makes the OLT a natural ally of Otsego Lake and those who seek to restore and protect the Lake.

In fact, the OLT has done much to preserve the scenic vistas and the quality of waters entering Otsego Lake by their aggressive concentration on obtaining protective easements for watershed lands. OLT's successes, as regards Otsego Lake, are portrayed on the map [following page].

The OLT has a paid executive director, Jeff Reynolds, and a cadre of serious minded volunteers who establish appropriate easement requirements and ensure compliance with easement provisions. Jeff recently helped the Otsego Lake Association board of directors put out our yearly membership solicitation. While doing so, he briefed your directors on plans for expanding protections in the Otsego Lake watershed. This is a man eager to work with landowners to protect what we all love about the Lake and its surroundings. If you are a landowner interested in protecting your land and curious about available land conservation options or if you are interested in learning more about the OLT's work, e-mail [info@otsegoandtrust.org](mailto:info@otsegoandtrust.org) or call 607-547-2366.

## What is a Conservation Easement?

A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that permanently limits uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. It allows the landowner to continue owning and using the land, and to sell it or pass it on to their heirs.

When a conservation easement is granted to a land trust, the landowner gives up some of their rights associated with the land. For example, one might give up the right to build additional structures, while retaining the right to grow crops. Future owners are also bound by the easement's terms. The land trust is responsible for making sure the easement's terms are followed.

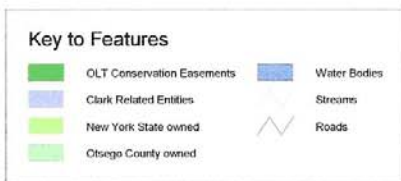
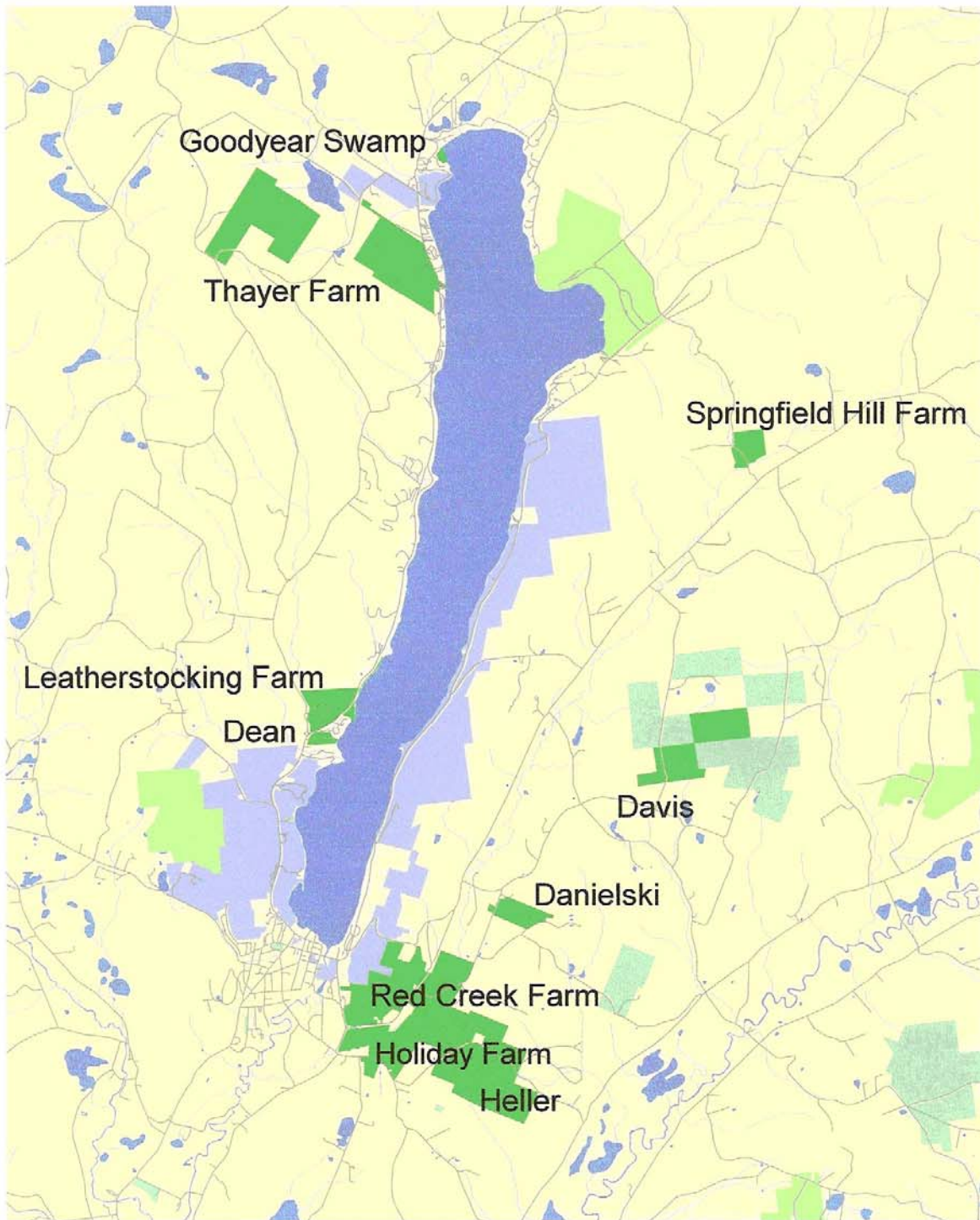
Conservation easements feature flexibility. An easement on property containing rare wildlife habitat might prohibit any development, for example, while one on a farm might allow continued farming and the building of additional agricultural structures. An easement may apply to just a portion of the property, and need not require public access.

## Summer is here! Get Your Gear ...

Be stylish while announcing your concern and support for Otsego Lake! Call Scottie Baker (547-5356) to place your order for OLA shirts and our new ball caps. Casual tee-shirts and informal denim shirts will provide you cover and a statement. Order through the newsletter, and get the shirt and cap at a reduced price: shirt \$11 (shirt); \$15 (cap). Regular prices are \$15 and \$18. The soft, sanded twill khaki cap and t-shirt are sage green, the "in" color this year. The OLA classic denim shirt is still a great value at \$30.



# OLT Map of Otsego Lake Area



May 25, 2005



Otsego Land Trust map of Otsego Lake area depicting lands under protective easements and lands owned publicly and by the Clark Foundation.

## Muddying Otsego Lake Waters

Otsego Lake, 4200 acres in area, drains 46,500 acres of land. Water from this basin enters the lake via 13 streams, many of which on the east shore run only in springtime and when storms occur. The Lake's volume is 110 billion gallons which is replaced every 2.5 to 3.5 years.

In a recent year, 20 million pounds of sediment entered the lake via streams. Nearly 19 million pounds of sediment sank to the lake bottom; the balance left the Lake via the Susquehanna River. This sediment "loading" of the Lake contributes to a filling-in process, smothering plant beds and fish spawning sites. Even more importantly, sediment transports phosphorus and fecal coliform bacteria into the lake and deposits them on the lake bottom, where they disrupt the ecology of the entire water body.

Based on data from the early 1990's, the top three streams ranked by tons of sediment loading were Shadow Brook, Hayden Creek and Cripple Creek, while the top three ranked by tons per acre of drainage area feeding the stream were Willow Brook, Shadow Brook and Hayden Creek. We note that sediment loading from Willow Brook dropped markedly after the Village of Cooperstown discontinued "sanding" roads during the winter.

Rugged land with heavy vegetation contributes little sediment to streams because plants hold the soil and prevent sediment from forming, runoff is slowed by vegetation and the contours of the ground, and the soil is permeable, allowing water and sediment to soak in. Forests are heroes against sediment loading; exposed soil and pavement are villains. Converting forests and fields to roof area, driveways and parking lots creates high-speed water runoff from hard surfaces that carries with it soil, animal waste, dust, pollen, etc. Poor farming practices and careless roadside maintenance allow erosion that compounds the problem.

There are ways to reduce the problem. Instead of farming and mowing up to the edge of streams, buffer strips of shrubs and trees can be planted to intercept sediment and pollutants. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (547-8337) works with local farmers on such projects. Commercial development can include detention basins, slowing water flow before it reaches streams and allowing sediment to fall out of suspension. Seeding exposed soil around development sites and along roads greatly reduces erosion. Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District (547-8337) performs service in this area.

If you live within the watershed that feeds Otsego Lake, you have the power to harm or help the lake. Examine your property for existing conditions that contribute to sediment loading. Know what to do and who can assist you to improve those conditions.

## 2005 OLA Election

At the 2005 membership meeting we will elect our president and three members of the board of directors to take us through 2005 and into 2006.

Nominated are:

For President:

David Sanford.

For Board of Directors:

Chuck Hage;

Scottie Baker;

Burr Southworth.

Nominations from the floor will be accepted!

## Lake Dates

- June 18: OLA Membership meeting.
- July 9: Otsego Lake Festival.
- August 20: OLA Information meeting.

Go to your OLA website:

[www.otsegolakeassociation.org](http://www.otsegolakeassociation.org)

## **Otsego Lake Festival 2005**

**Saturday, July 9**

1:00-9:00 PM

Appreciate! Educate! Celebrate!

This first-ever event, organized by the Otsego County Water Quality Coordinating Committee, features an impressive program: exhibits by artists, photographers, students and lake organizations; a classic boat assembly, parade, and display; on-the-water activities for children and adults, a 5-mile lakeside walk, model float-plane demonstration, Arm of the Sea theater, musical entertainment; book signings; and opening and closing ceremonies!. For sale: food, shirts, caps, posters and books.

If you can assist in the OLA booth educating the public as to Otsego Lake's need for implementation of the Lake Management Plan, handing out brochures, or selling books, caps, and shirts call Mickie (547-2791) and sign up for a "time slot".

Otsego Lake Association  
PO Box 13  
Springfield Center, NY 13468