

# CNY Regional NYSFOLA Conference

September 13, 2024

## Conference Focus:

- Review of areas that fall under the control of lakefront residents to improve or sustain water quality.

## Shorescaping:

- **Janet Allen (Wild Ones Chapter Habitat Gardening in CNY)**– provided a case study of why we are better off creating a lake friendly habitat minimize pesticides/herbicides by minimizing lawns and using native plants to landscape our yards. Her website contains many examples and list of native plants for our area (<https://www.hgcny.org/projects/shopping/>)
- **John Jablonski III (Lake Chautauqua Special Projects Coordinator)** – shared the projects around the lake that focus on reducing lawn size and chemicals. They have a program offering free of charge to the homeowner, an assessment and recommendations to improve their landscape. We will follow up to learn more.

## Septic Systems and Phosphorus Bioavailability:

- **Sharon Moran and Mackenzie Gregg (ESF Environmental Studies professor and student)** – Mackenzie shared her capstone study on the utilization of the NYS Septic System Replacement Fund Program (SSRP Septic systems remain out-of-sight and out-of-mind, to the detriment of the communities and watersheds).
- **Dr. David Matthews** (UFI Technical Director) – spoke on the bioavailability of phosphorus from septic systems. They are finding that dissolved phosphorus is immediately available to the algae; thus, reducing dissolved phosphorus has a more significant impact on the reduction of algal blooms. Septic systems release bio-available phosphorus unless the system has phosphorus removal capability. Areas to consider are types of systems, maintenance, type of soil used by the septic systems, and setback from the water's edge. Significant storm events also release phosphorus nutrients into the lakes adding to the phosphorus load.

## Harmful Algal Blooms:

- **Dr. Greg Boyer** (Director of the Great Lakes Research Consortium) – Greg is an expert on harmful algal blooms (HABs) and helped analyze the 2023 summer Bradley Brook lake-wide bloom. Greg asked conference attendees to bring samples from their lakes. He examined the samples with an iOlight microscope and shared the results in real time. The microscope identifies the type of microcysts but not the toxicity. Further lab analysis is required to determine toxicity.

## Invasive Species:

- Representatives from the **Finger Lakes Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM) and the iMapInvasives** organizations were present. Both programs offer the ability to identify and track invasive species (aquatic and land). Their websites have lots of information on using the tools and they are always willing to engage with community organizations. (<https://fingerlakesinvasives.org/>, <https://www.nyimainvasives.org/>)

## Panel Discussion (all speakers and additional invitees)

- Many questions from the audience focused on harmful algal blooms, septic systems, and shorescaping.

**Presentations available at the NYSFOLA website:** <https://nysfola.org/regional-conferences/>