

LAKE GEORGE PARK COMMISSION

A NEW YORK STATE ENVIRONMENTAL, PLANNING AND PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCY
DEVOTED TO THE PRESERVATION OF LAKE GEORGE AND THE SAFETY OF ITS USERS

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ANNUAL REPORT

July 2005

Commission Exerts Jurisdiction on Annual Log Bay Event

The Lake George Park Commission and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation want to curb underage drinking, boating while intoxicated and other problems resulting from “Log Bay Day”, an annual live music concert that attracts crowds by car and boat to Log Bay and adjacent forest preserve land at Shelving Rock along the lake’s eastern shore. The two State agencies have advised event coordinators that a permit is required for any such event in 2005 and beyond. “The number of drunken teenagers at the event in 2004 made for a very disturbing situation and we are asking parents and community leaders to help us avert a serious injury or worse,” said Bruce Young, Chairman of the Lake George Park Commission.

The Commission’s Marine Patrol has patrolled the event for several years as it has grown in size requiring ever-larger contingents of State Police, Environmental Conservation Police, and Warren and Washington Counties Sheriff Deputies. “Police have done an excellent job, however the size of the event now is such that event sponsors must take some responsibility for security to prevent underage drinking, for sanitation, and for litter cleanup,” said DEC Regional

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An Assessment of Water-Based Recreation

In the next several months over 2000 lake users will be selected and asked to complete a questionnaire about their water recreation experiences on Lake George as part of a multi-year project by the Commission to assess water-based recreation. Beginning in July, researchers from Cornell University’s Human Dimension Unit and Holmes and Associates will be conducting interviews at launches, lake access points and beaches to gather information from people about their use of the lake and about public safety and satisfaction with their recreation experience. Beginning in September, commercial dock owners and a random sample of boaters and dock owners will begin receiving survey questionnaires from Cornell’s Human Dimensions Unit by mail. The study results will help the Commission understand the level and distribution of boating and other activities, gauge visitor perceptions and identify and reduce safety hazards. The Commission is encouraging the public to respond to the surveys and to contact us with any questions or concerns.

The random sample technique allows the survey

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LAKE GEORGE PARK COMMISSION

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Water-based Recreation *(cont'd from pg 1)*

results to be projected to the larger populations from which the sample is taken, however, public comment and participation is being encouraged in other ways as well. The Commission has invited over twenty-five organizations (government, commercial, recreation, education, environmental, public interest, etc.) to participate in framing the issues to be considered in the overall study. To date there have been two very well represented stakeholder group meetings to provide input into the project. The Commission is encouraging written public comments from any interested party as well and researchers will compile a summary and response to these comments as part of the study design. Please mail or e-mail us your thoughts and comments.

Data from the annual and short term registration of boats and an annual boat census performed by the Commission's Marine Patrol provide some limited information about the level of boating use. However, almost no data exists on peak levels of use, how use is distributed, and the activities in which people are engaged. The purpose of the study is to gather such information about the amount, distribution and variety of water-based recreation on the lake during the four seasons of the year (ice use conditions are included.) The study will also compile lake user perceptions about conditions on the lake especially in relationship to public safety. The Commission also wants to evaluate whether people who use the lake perceive any change in the lake's natural qualities and characteristics. The information will help the Commission fulfill its legislative mission—to promote reasonable public access to the lake without congestion, overcrowding and safety hazards and to preserve the natural resources of the lake, especially its superior water quality.

The results will be compiled into a draft report that will be released for public comment in the spring of 2006. Public review and comments on the draft report will occur during the summer of 2006. The draft will include recommendations for management actions which will be derived from the suggestions and perspectives in the surveys and stakeholder group participation. A final report will be released in the fall of 2006.

The Commission has emphasized that it is *not* considering any specific management actions. Rather, the Commission wants to ask the public about their use and enjoyment of the lake and about any ideas they may have for improvement.

Annual Log Bay Event *(cont'd from pg 1)*

Director Stuart Buchanan. There were 80 arrests for underage possession of alcohol, possession of marijuana and other crimes and 5 boating while intoxicated arrests during and following the 2004 event.

The event is a scheduled concert with live music performed from a barge anchored in shallow water in Log Bay, a sandy-bottomed cove popular among boaters for anchoring and swimming. "Children as young as 16 and 17 arrive by the carload and boatload for the day with conspicuous consumption of alcohol while swimming and playing water sports during the live performance," according to Lt. Joseph Schneider, Law Enforcement Director for the Commission. "It's scary. I doubt parents would condone it if they were aware," he said.

The adjacent forest preserve lands, under the jurisdiction of New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, are not equipped with sanitation or waste facilities. "We have a responsibility to protect the forest preserve and it's expensive for our crews to do the cleanup of litter and other waste required after the event," said Stuart Buchanan, Regional Director for DEC.

The Commission is invoking a section of State law that it administers which prevents the operation of a place of amusement from a boat, barge or vessel without a permit. A DEC permit for the temporary use of the State Forest Preserve will also be required. Notice was provided in early May to give event coordinators time to apply for required permits and for agencies to undertake a review. Failure to obtain permits could subject event sponsors to substantial fines. "We do not wish to interfere with anyone's responsible enjoyment of the lake but the lack of control especially over teen drinking is not responsible," Chairman Young said.

Fiscal Affairs

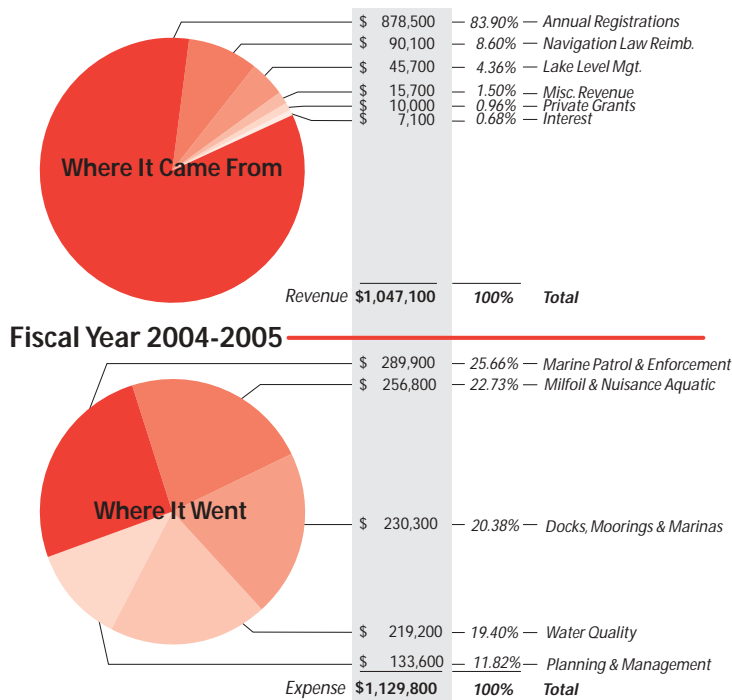
The Lake George Park Commission is a New York State agency. Under law, revenue to the Commission from all sources is transferred for deposit to the Lake George Park Trust Fund, a special fund in the care and custody of the New York State Comptroller. Expenditures from the Trust Fund must be against New York State budget appropriations and are made upon audit and warrant of the Office of the State Comptroller.

The programs of the Commission are developed to accomplish as much of the Commission's broad mission as possible while keeping annual expenses in line with projected revenue. Any surplus of revenue over expenditures is retained in the Lake George Park Trust Fund. If expenses exceed revenue, the deficit reduces funds on deposit.

The Commission will complete an administrative re-structuring this year. By improving several processes and undertaking some job re-alignments, one of the Commission's nine permanent positions is being eliminated. This is expected to produce savings beginning early in the current fiscal year.

The following figures report on the period April 1, 2004, to March 31, 2005, and are rounded to the nearest whole dollar. Income to the Lake George Park Trust Fund was \$1,047,124. This is \$86,676. less than the previous year, influenced mostly by fewer boat registrations during the rather cool 2004 boating season. The Commission reported expenditures from the Lake George Park Trust Fund of \$1,107,316. Accordingly, income was less than expenses by \$60,129. or 5.4%. The Commission also expended \$22,565. in New York State General Fund appropriations.

The Commission absorbed increases especially in fuel and equipment costs in several areas including general operations, Marine Patrol, and Eurasian Watermilfoil Management.



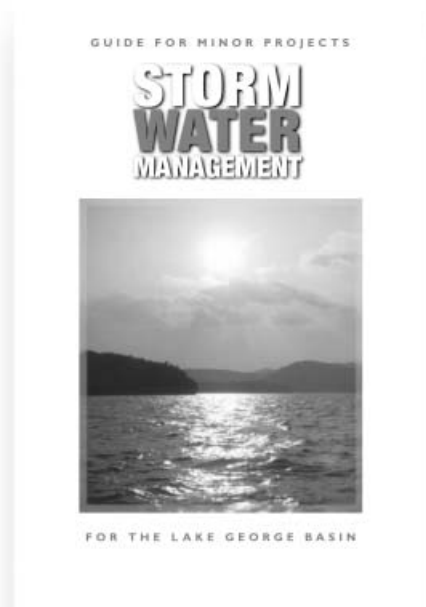
Stormwater Management

More and more, at the State and National level, the key focus in environmental protection is stormwater management. Luckily for Lake George, there has been a stormwater management program in place for over a decade. As early as 1983, studies of the lake and its tributaries confirmed that stormwater runoff from developed areas of the lake's watershed is a significant source of negative water quality impacts.

The Commission's stormwater program approaches the problem from several directions and levels. The Commission works with State and local highway officials to set and implement standards for highway construction and maintenance projects within the watershed. Commission grants to local government support local citizen committees to plan stormwater improvement projects for lakeside communities. A Commission model stormwater ordinance is the basis for several local regulatory programs. Whether implemented by local ordinance or directly by the Commission, basin-wide standards for development ensure proper stormwater control measures are part of virtually every new construction project.

In 2004 there was a heightened attention to enforcement of the Commission's stormwater management regulations. It is the Commission's stated objective to ensure effective compliance with the permit and design requirements of the program in a fair and uniform manner. This requires having to invoke the enforcement powers and penalties provided for in the regulations.

There were over two hundred separate program activities sufficient in work demand to be assigned a case or inspection number during 2004. These include: inspections; permit reviews; case reports; assistance to local government; highway project reviews; and enforcement actions. Eight enforcement actions were concluded under the program, each resulting in a fine and remedial action. Also during 2004, 32 stormwater management permits were issued in the Towns of Hague, Ticonderoga, Putnam, Dresden and Fort Ann where the Commission has permitting jurisdiction.



Stormwater Management Guides are available at the LGPC offices

Eurasian Watermilfoil Management

The Lake George Park Commission has been involved in the management of Eurasian Watermilfoil since the discovery of the invasive plant in the Lake in 1985. 2004 was the tenth straight year of Commission sponsorship and management of a program of controls including hand harvesting, suction harvesting and benthic barriers.

Each year, divers for the Commission inspect every location where invasive milfoil has ever been identified (148 sites as of 2004.) Scattered milfoil plants found during the inspection are removed by hand harvesting. The Commission reports these sites as cleared for that year. Hand harvesting scattered milfoil plants prevents milfoil from expanding into dense beds, a process that can happen in just a few seasons. Milfoil may re-establish itself at hand harvested sites by the next growing season (probably from roots or fragments left behind) but often at reduced density. Repeated hand harvesting for several years may eradicate milfoil from a site. The Commission reports these sites as cleared, as well.

During 2004, 112 of the 148 milfoil sites were cleared of milfoil. This is significant since each of these sites has the potential to become a dense bed of milfoil if not managed. This approach has proven both effective and reasonably efficient especially considering there are virtually no identified alternative control methods for small, scattered milfoil colonies.

The Commission also uses suction harvesting and benthic mats each year, as funding allows, to remove or kill milfoil at some the 28+/- locations where moderate or dense beds of milfoil exist. In the majority of cases, these dense beds of milfoil have existed for many years having been “discovered” in the mid to late 1980s following the first identification of the Eurasian Watermilfoil in Lake George in 1985. The Commission has increased annual allocations from the Lake George Park Trust Fund which were approximately \$167,000. in 2004, the tenth year of the Commission’s involvement. Prior to 1994, the Department of Environmental Conservation administered the program. Darrin Freshwater Institute provided the management services for many years and continues to provide invaluable scientific support. The FUND for Lake George, Inc. has made annual contributions of financial support since the Commission’s adoption of the program in 1995.

The adjoining table is from the Commission’s 2004 program report. During 2004, the Commission contractors installed over an acre of new benthic barrier primarily at three dense bed locations thanks in part to a grant from the Lake George Watershed Conference and the New York State Environmental Protection Fund. The Lake George Watershed Conference is a consortium of State and local governments and not-for-profit organizations led by the New York State Department of State.

Since the Commission’s adoption of the program in 1995, the program has controlled all newly found milfoil colonies preventing the development of any new beds. The focus in the past few years has been to expand the program to reduce the number of milfoil beds. The number of bed areas has been reduced from a high of 34 in 1999 to 20 in 2004. The relationship of cleared sites to total sites has also improved from 60% in 1995 to 76% in 2004.

Year	Total Sites	Bed	Moderate	Scattered	New ¹	Cleared
1985	3	3	0	0	3	0
1986	22	9	0	13	19	0
1987	43	8	0	29	21	6
1988	55	8	0	35	12	12
1989	66	12	6	23	11	25
1990	76	13	8	19	10	36
1991	91	11	7	27	15	46
1992	97	16	4	40	6	37
1993	106	21	13	10	9	62
1994	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1995	111	26	13	5	1	67
1996	118	25	11	9	7	73
1997	123	28	11	13	5	72
1998	127	31	7	6	4	83
1999	134	34	7	4	7	91
2000	136	28	8	3	2	94
2001	141	24	11	4	5	103
2002	144	23	7	4	3	110
2003	146	22	6	3	2	114 ²
2004	148	20	8	2	2	112

¹ New sites are accounted for in the appropriate 'density' or 'clear' category

² This is a correction from the 2003 report (King & Lyman 2003)

Regulatory Services

The Commission is directed by Article 43 of New York's Conservation Law to promulgate regulations to preserve and protect the lake, especially its superior water quality and to promote reasonable public access to the lake without congestion, over-crowding or safety hazards. The Commission regulations include such topics as: stormwater management; docks, moorings, and marinas; parasailing; tour boats; and other recreational activities. Assisting the public with information about permit requirements, processing and issuing permits, and performing and coordinating the required environmental and engineering reviews is the job of several staff members collectively referred to as the Regulatory Services Program.

The Commission members also devote considerable attention to regulatory services and Commission's regular monthly agenda is crowded with projects for approval. The Commission may be interpreting the regulations (a very necessary and continuing aspect of any regulatory program), considering a variance (a kind of regulatory relief to relieve special hardship), or deciding a contentious issue (an almost monthly occurrence with so much at stake). Whether the issue is the aesthetic impact of a boat house, proposed PWC rentals, or a dock variance for a major subdivision, the skills of the regulatory services staff are fully engaged.

The following data, while providing a sense of the trend and overall volume of permit activity, does little to convey the real work-load of the program. Even simple projects are very important to people and often require hours of individualized staff attention from initial consultation to final inspection. Characteristically, the public dropping by the office finds friendly advice and a helpful manner from a staff member on hand. The larger or more contentious projects consume a tremendous amount of time always with the goal of providing a fair review and the highest quality analysis for the Commission's decision.

The significant trend in the program is the increase in the number of stormwater permits but dock permits and small scale marinas are increasing as well. Under the Lake George Park Stormwater Management Program, the Towns of Queensbury, Lake George, Bolton and the Village of Lake George have adopted the Commission's model local stormwater control ordinances. The Commission administers the code in other areas of the Park. The number of stormwater permits issued pursuant to this program continued to increase in 2004.

Applications Received in 2004

New Docks	25
New Moorings.	13
Dock Modifications	53
New Cribs & Repairs.	54
Stormwater	37
Class A Marinas.	1
Class B Marinas.	4
Marina Modifications/Renewals.	8
Recreational Uses	1



Pollution Investigations

The Lake George Park Commission conducts inspections and follow-up activities of failed septic systems and other forms of pollution into Lake George. Reports of pollution receive immediate investigation by Commission water quality staff. Reports typically include concerns of sedimentation and erosion resulting from new development, failed septic systems, spills or the dumping of harmful materials.

In addition to investigation reports of pollution, the Commission monitors weekly water sampling data collected and reported by the Darrin Freshwater Institute (DFWI). DFWI collects water samples at many tributaries and stormwater outflows during the summer. The Commission issues a water quality watch whenever two or more sample results exceed the New York State Department of Health allowable levels for contact recreation. This means that municipal officials and the Commission are conducting additional testing of the water in the area. A water quality warning is issued for the most serious cases of persistent problems. In both cases, the Commission coordinates directly with local Boards of Health and other state agencies.

No water quality advisories were issued during the 2004 summer season. The Commission initiated a total of 26 investigations throughout 2004. Two investigations were made as follow-up to high coliform reported by DFWI, two oil or gasoline spills, four septic system investigations, thirteen erosion, sedimentation or other stormwater runoff, five miscellaneous (pool pumping, beaver dam release (2), West Brook discoloration, and the Dockside Marina collapse.

Boat and Dock Registrations

Over 14,000 customers registered more than 20,000 boats, docks, and moorings with the Commission during 2004. The Commission's customer service staff assisted thousands of callers and walk-ins with registration questions, boating information, safe boating course schedules, and referrals for camping, launching, repairs, and similar information.

Customer volume was remarkably steady compared to 2003 with one exception. Registration of boats not-equipped for overnight-accommodation were 308 less in 2004, a drop of 4%. This continues a two-year decline from 2002.

Temporary boat registration increased modestly but remained slightly below 2002 levels as well.

The number of 2004 registrations by category are shown below.

Boats Registered on an Annual Basis

Not-equipped for overnight.	8,413
Equipped for overnight	2,419
Total Annual.	10,832

Short-term (1 day or 1 week) 6,027

Wharfs and Docks

Residential	2,708
Association	295
Commercial Dock Facilities	257
(1 or many docks)	

Moorings

Residential.	441
Association	82
Commercial.	134
Total Moorings	657

People Notes

The Commission honored three retiring staff members during 2004-05: Linda Butler, Margaret Sturtevant, and Kathleen Ledingham. Congratulations and best wishes.

Andrea Maranville of Bolton Landing was appointed Director of Governmental and Community Affairs for the Commission in January, 2005. Ms. Maranville, a resident of Bolton Landing, previously served as the Deputy Director of Legislative Affairs, Office of Governor George Pataki.

Margaret Stevens of Brant Lake was appointed Principal Account Clerk for the Commission. Ms. Stevens was previously employed in the same title with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Ray Brook.

Michelle Way has joined the Commission staff as a Keyboard Specialist after a long stint as a contractual employee.

Richard J. Bartlett, Esquire, of Fourteen Mile Island and Glens Falls, was honored by the Commission in December, 2004, for his many years of voluntary service to the Commission. The Commission noted that Mr. Bartlett has devoted countless hours of volunteer time since becoming the Commission's General Counsel in 1987. He was also acknowledged for his support and commitment to other lake organizations. Mr. Bartlett continues to serve as Commission General Counsel and as a partner in the firm Bartlett, Pontiff, Stewart and Rhodes.



Lake George Park Commission Marine Patrol

The mission of the Commission's Marine Patrol is public safety and recreational quality through emergency response and assistance, public education and effective law enforcement. The Patrol provides a wide array of services to the boating public such as: boater assistance; search and rescue; first-aid; vessel and forest fire fighting; public education; emergency towing and courtesy gas service; and enforcement of State Navigation Law, Commission regulations and local ordinances.

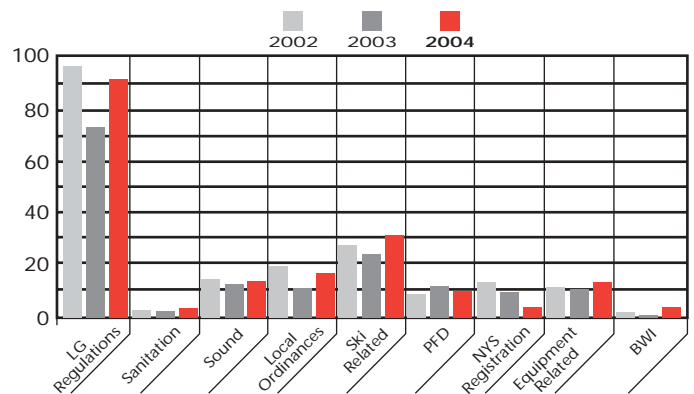
The Patrol consists of eight patrol boats staffed by eight uniformed patrol officers and two sergeants. The Patrol operates seasonally from the middle of May to Columbus Day. Full scale operations occur from early July through Labor Day with a maximum of eight patrol units on duty.



LGPC Patrol Officer's 2004 Activity Statistics

	2003	2004
Assistance:		
Courtesy Gas	20	8
Stranded Boater	95	74
Vessel Tows	20	23
First Aid	51	27
Assist Other Agency	69	43
Other Boater Assist	1220	854
Searches	11	21
Fires	6	13
Ambulance/Rescue Called	25	12
Reported Drowning	2	1
Accidents:		
Investigate	12	13
Investigate Fatal (with WCSD)	1	0
Property:		
Stolen/Lost Vessel	1	2
Stolen/Lost Motor	0	0
Stolen/Lost Miscellaneous Property	4	2
Property Recovered	10	15
	(\$21,000)	(\$50,000)
Vessel Inspections:		
On Water	227	283
At Launch	75	62
At Marina	347	290
Enforcement:		
Complaints	105	76
Vessel Contacts	1555	1501
Warnings	505	439
Arrest/Summons, Navigation Law	46	109
Arrest/Summons, Other	121	117
BWI Arrest	1	4
Regattas Patrolled	45	50

A.T.'s by Type of Offense





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LAKE GEORGE DAILY LAKE ELEVATIONS 2004

