



"Who owns the lake?"

In your conversations about Honeoye Lake you've probably heard people say, "well, they should do" this or that, or "I don't know why they don't do" whatever. But, exactly who are "they" - DEC, USACE, HLWTF, HVA, someone else? All of these confusing acronyms and seemingly countless organizations just obscure the question, "who gets to decide what happens to Honeoye Lake?" Although this is a simple question, the answer is a bit more complicated because of the various organizations, each having their own focus and sphere of influence.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) are together the sole jurisdictional entities for many lakes in the state, including Honeoye Lake. The DEC was created on April 22, 1970 by Governor Nelson Rockefeller whereas, the USACE is a federal agency committed to protecting the Nation's aquatic resources and navigation capacity. Honeoye Lake is classified as a navigable body of water therefore it falls under the jurisdiction of not only DEC, but also the USACE. The mechanism by which DEC and USACE exert their co-authority is through DEC's allocation of monies via the grant process, and by jointly issuing or withholding required permits.

DEC's headquarters is housed at their Central Office in Albany where it is headed by a commissioner, who is assisted by executive managers. The department has 24 divisions and offices, and is further organized into bureaus to fulfill the functions and regulations established by Title 6 of New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (6NYCRR). Some programs are also governed by federal law. The state is also divided into nine regions, each with its own headquarters and many with additional sub-offices. Honeoye Lake resides in Region 8 headquartered in Avon, NY.



DEC accepts grant proposals and issues permits, in conjunction with the USACE, for water quality improvement projects through either an established watershed task force or a watershed council. These organizations are typically comprised of a representative selected by the town supervisor or town board from each town/city in the lake's watershed. Some task forces and councils also include a representative from the lake association. The Honeoye Lake Watershed Task Force (HLWTF), formed in 1998, is the task force that serves Honeoye Lake. Its members include representatives from the Town of Richmond, Town of Canadice, Town of Bristol, Town of South Bristol, Town of Naples and the Honeoye Valley Association (HVA).

The HLWTF requires broad and deep factual information to responsibly fulfill its obligations. Therefore, it relies on the research of various academic institutions, coordination with environmental conservation organizations, and services of professional consulting firms. Details and expertise from these groups along with stakeholder objectives are all taken into consideration when HLWTF makes decisions. To put these decisions into action, HLWTF works with various Ontario County organizations to craft grant proposals and submit them to DEC, and also apply for any required permits.

Once a grant is awarded, permits approved, and funds appropriated, the project is handed off to Ontario County for implementation. Ontario County is staffed and equipped with the resources needed to tactically execute projects. Ontario Soil and Water Conservation Department manages projects that take place in the watershed, while Ontario Planning Department manages those on the lake. In both cases, the project teams report progress and updates to the HLWTF.

Lake associations are also prevalent in lake communities however, they lack authority or decision-rights regarding water quality actions for the lake. Instead, their role is more typically to inform and educate the lake community on topics and issues relating to the lake. They may also sponsor community



events. Additionally, lake associations contribute volunteers to assist in the various monitoring and sampling activities that take place on the lake. The Honeoye Valley Association (HVA) is the lake association for Honeoye Lake. It was formed in 1986 and currently has about 150 members. HVA continues to be a strong advocate for Honeoye Lake and its surrounding watershed.

We welcome your feedback at the email address below and encourage you to exchange viewpoints with your neighbors, family and friends. HVA has been, and will continue to be, an active partner in the future of the Honeoye Lake watershed and is committed to communicating accurate information that leads to informed opinions regarding lake management recommendations.

Watch for more articles in the coming weeks and get to Know Your Lake!

- Here's a list with links to HLWTF partners including DEC:

<https://www.honeoyelakewatershed.org/partners>

- If you want to dig into DEC's 6NYCRR for all the regulations that govern Honeoye Lake go to: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/regulations.html>
- Not familiar with HVA, or would like to learn more about us and our history, visit <https://hvaweb.org/page-1723989>

We'd love to hear your feedback, questions and comments. Please email us at: [honeoyecontact@gmail.com](mailto:honeyeyecontact@gmail.com)