



ONTARIO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Thomas P. Harvey^{AICP}, Director

June 9, 2023

Dear Honeoye Lake Shoreline Landowner,

Ontario County is preparing for the 2023 Honeoye Lake **Aquatic Vegetation Management Program (AVMP)**.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND GOALS

Honeoye Lake is a shallow, eutrophic (nutrient-rich) lake supporting abundant aquatic plant growth. While plants are an important part of the lake ecosystem - providing oxygen, food, and protection for a variety of species - excessive plant growth can interfere with boating and recreation. A mechanical weed harvester is used in summer months to remove excessive vegetation from Honeoye Lake. Harvested plants are composted at local sites including farms.

Goals for Seasonal Harvesting of Aquatic Vegetation on Honeoye Lake:

1. **Improve access** for recreational users by cutting and removing aquatic plants where they have reached the lake surface or close to it around the lake perimeter.
2. **Remove nutrients** taken up by plants from lake water and bottom sediments.
3. **Aid circulation of water** in localized areas choked by aquatic weeds.

2023 OPERATING SCHEDULE: MON-THU, JULY 5-AUG 31

The schedule may vary due to weather conditions. The first week of operations includes staff training.

HARVESTING AND WEED MANAGEMENT:

AVMP targets harvesting to areas most affected by dense vegetation along the lake perimeter. AVMP does not harvest in the Sandy Bottom Swimming Beach area nor the regulated wetland at the south end of the lake. Residents can request harvesting in front their shoreline property or ask to be excluded (see instructions below). Be advised the harvester cannot cut close to and in between docks as the machine is not designed to maneuver in small spaces. Those interested in controlling weed beds adjacent to docks should consider other localized methods including hand pulling and benthic barriers, also called weed mats. The latter is covered under a general permit from NYS DEC (see <https://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/106121.html>). Residents should advise the AVMP about the placement of benthic barriers so the crew can take steps to avoid disturbing them.

SHORELINE PICKUP & COMPOSTING:

Aquatic weeds are excellent for water retention in gardens and boosting soil nutrients. Residents who wish to compost themselves are encouraged to pick a location away from the lake and streams whenever possible. AVMP utilizes a Shoreline Barge to serve those who wish to have aquatic vegetation that has washed up on shore taken away for off-site composting. To be eligible for Shoreline Pickup, three prerequisites apply:

1. **Adequate barge access.** Docks that are close together, shallow water or low lake level, or manmade or natural features may limit access.
2. **Landowner permission.** Anyone requesting shoreline pickup should email (or call) the program office per instructions below.
3. **Aquatic vegetation must be raked into piles or rows, and separated from stones, gravel, sticks, and yard waste.** Care should be taken when forming piles to avoid including stones and sticks that can damage the equipment, and may not be taken away by the AVMP.

Please be aware that the shoreline pickup program was created to assist neighbors with removal of excessive plant debris that washes onto shore, but is not intended as, nor has it capacity to be, a regular property maintenance program. Weather (even moderate wind) impacts barge operations, and schedules can and do abruptly change. While the AVMP crew attempts to get to all areas of the lake, an emphasis is on quantity and thus shoreline areas that receive disproportionate amounts of weed fragments from prevailing winds and currents are visited more frequently. In cases where large amounts of vegetation have accumulated onshore and access can be provided, the harvester may be backed in to utilize its large storage bin rather than the barge.

Cooperation among neighbors is appreciated. In locations like Lakes End Lane, North Shore, and Cottage Cove neighbors often work together to collect shoreline weeds and put them in one or more central pickup locations. This allows AVMP to schedule a pickup time with a designated point of contact and neighbors commonly help to load material onto the harvester or barge. (Thank you!)

REQUESTING SHORELINE PICKUP, HARVESTING, OR NO HARVESTING @ YOUR PROPERTY

Requests can be made by email (preferably) at infoweeds@ontariocountyny.gov, or by calling (585) 396-4458 during the operating season with the information below.

Name	Email/Telephone #
Street Address	
Color/Description of house/# on dock?	Description of waterfront – docks/boats/rafts/flags?
Other distinguishing features (color of neighbor’s house, flagpole, break wall, etc.)	
For shoreline pickup, note where piles are located	

PROGRAM OPERATIONS AND STAFFING

Program updates will be posted on the County’s website at: <https://ontariocountyny.gov/452/Aquatic-Vegetation-Management-Program>. Betsy Landre of the County Planning Department serves as Program Manager. The 2023 AVMP staff includes Andrew, Judy, Nick and Pauline, and Randy part-time. Additional staff may be hired.

WATERLINE INFORMATION

Private waterlines extending beyond docks are at risk of being damaged by the harvester. Residents should take care to mark them at the foot valve with a floating object or buoy. The County will not be held liable for damaging unmarked waterlines.

LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR HONEOYE LAKE

A great resource for learning more about your lake and lake management can be found on the Honeoye Lake Watershed Task Force’s website at: <https://www.honeoyelakewatershed.org>. Water quality updates based on monitoring are posted weekly.

The AVMP team looks forward to working with our partners and the landowners around Honeoye Lake.

Sincerely,

Ontario County Planning Department

<p><u>AVMP CONTACT INFO:</u></p> <p>Email: infoweeds@ontariocountyny.gov</p> <p>Tel: (585) 396-4458</p>
