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## NEWS DETAILS

### [FLI Tackles Lake Weeds](#)

*Posted on Friday, August 08, 2008*

There has been a pervasive and growing weed problem along the shores of Cayuga and Seneca lakes for several years. Now, the Finger Lakes Institute at HWS has been asked by State Sen. Michael Nozzolio, R-Fayette, to try to find a solution. As the problem has increased, it has both severely diminished quality of life for property owners along the shore and negatively affected the ecology of the lakes. The FLI will analyze the weed growth and try to find a way to mitigate it.



The issue was recently featured in articles in the *Ithaca Journal* (Aug. 2), *Finger Lakes Times*, (Aug. 4) and *The Post-Standard* (Aug. 4).

The article as it appeared in *The Post-Standard* is below.

#### **The Post-Standard**

**"How can the weeds be pulled from lakes? Finger Lakes Institute to examine Cayuga and Seneca lakes for answer to problem."**

Debra J. Groom • Staff writer • August 04, 2008

**The Finger Lakes Institute** has been contacted to find a way to solve the weed problem on Cayuga and Seneca lakes.

State Sen. Michael Nozzolio, R-Fayette, said he asked the institute to analyze the problem and come up with a solution.

"Many of my constituents have expressed their concerns with the amount of weed growth in Seneca and Cayuga lakes," Nozzolio said. "Despite efforts to harvest the weeds, the growth continues to increase each year and has had a significant negative impact on the quality of life for those living near the lakes."

Weeds have grown so deep and thick on the eastern shore of Cayuga Lake that many residents or summer home owners cannot use their beaches or their boats. The stench is horrendous as fish become caught in the weeds and die and the weeds rot in the sun.

"We can't enjoy our beach," Jeannen Pearson, who lives just south of Union Springs, said a couple of weeks ago. "We're getting more seaweed and leaves. Anything that's out there will float in here. It smells like a sewer."

The seaweed and leaves are about 1 foot deep, extending about 10 to 12 feet out into the lake from the Pearsons' shore area. Jeannen and her husband, Robert, used to have a lovely sandy beach; now, they can't swim there because of the weeds.

Nozzolio said he has asked the Finger Lakes Institute to analyze the conditions causing the weed growth and "provide recommendations on what actions must be taken to significantly reduce the weeds."

Established in 2000 at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, the Finger Lakes Institute helps protect and preserve the Finger Lakes. In addition to providing research and analysis on the lakes' water quality, the institute joins with regional environmental partners and state and local governments to advocate for environmentally sound development practices.

"The Finger Lakes Institute is excited to work in conjunction with Sen. Nozzolio to formulate a plan to address this pressing concern for Cayuga and Seneca Lakes," Marion Balyczak, director of the Finger Lakes Institute, said in a written statement. "We additionally anticipate that efforts to address the problem for the two largest Finger Lakes will also be of importance to the remaining Finger Lakes."

Balyczak said invasive aquatic plants are a challenge in the Finger Lakes.

Ronald Podolak, executive director of the Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District, said more milfoil has reappeared in Cayuga Lake this year. Also more weeds are

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growing because zebra mussels have made the water clearer.

Podolak has had the district's weed harvester out on Cayuga Lake and other Finger Lakes already this summer, but the weeds come back. He expected to go back to Cayuga Lake again.

Nozzolio also has worked with the Finger Lakes Institute to try to reduce pollution and improve the water quality of Owasco Lake. Since 2006, the institute has collected and studied data on the water quality of Owasco Lake and submitted its data as part of the information used to consider how much phosphorus should be discharged into the lake by the Groton wastewater treatment plant.

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