



PRESS RELEASE

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Otsego Lake Walleye Stocking Program Is Topic of March WQCC Meeting

COOPERSTOWN – Holly Waterfield, research support specialist at the SUNY-Oneonta Biological Field Station, will give a presentation titled “Walleye Stocking in Otsego Lake: It’s Not Just for the Fishermen” at the next Otsego County Water Quality Coordinating Committee meeting on Wednesday, March 27. The WQCC meeting, which begins at 1 p.m. in Classroom A of The Meadows Office Building, 140 County Hwy. 33W, Cooperstown, is hosted by the Otsego County Planning Department. This event is free and open to the public; **pre-registration is required by Tuesday, March 26.** Those interested in attending should e-mail WQCC Facilitator Darla M. Youngs at admin@occainfo.org or call (607) 547-4488.

“The Biological Field Station has been involved with monitoring and managing Otsego Lake since 1968. While most efforts have focused on human watershed activities, one of our most successful strategies has involved stocking walleye, a popular game fish,” Waterfield said. “Alewife, a forage fish that was illegally introduced in 1986, became the dominant fish in the lake by the early 1990s. They decimated the plankton community, leading to drastic lake-wide changes in the food web and water quality, similar to those caused by nutrient pollution, such as low transparency and low oxygen.”

Walleye stocking began in 2000 with the goal of controlling the alewife population and ultimately achieving a more balanced food web. Waterfield will highlight the details of this successful project. This event is made possible thanks to the Otsego County WQCC which, in order to better satisfy the educational component of its mission, has restructured its monthly meetings to include public information sessions. The OCWQCC was established in 1992 as a sub-committee of the Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District. It is comprised of a diverse group of people representing state and local government agencies, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and lake associations. These members have technical expertise and knowledge and are committed to working to improve and maintain the quality of water in Otsego County through the reduction of nonpoint source pollution within its boundaries.

For more information on the WQCC, visit www.otsegosoilandwater.com/waterqualitycc.html