https://buffalonews.com/news/local/dec-to-lift-dredging-restrictions-in-olcott-harbor-ahead-of-construction/article_83e18e12-d024-11ea-88d8-eb7e33927c97.html

DEC to lift dredging restrictions in Olcott Harbor ahead of construction

Thomas J. Prohaska
Jul 27, 2020

Newfane Supervisor Timothy R. Horanburg surveyed Lake Ontario flooding at Olcott in May 2019.

John Hickey

The state's environmental restrictions on dredging in Olcott Harbor may be lifted as plans come into focus for construction next year of a long-awaited breakwall to protect the harbor from Lake Ontario's rising waters.

The Department of Environmental Conservation will hold an online public meeting at noon Thursday to present its plans.

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo announced in February that Olcott Harbor would be dredged in June 2021 as part of a statewide program to deepen 20 locations along the lake and the St. Lawrence River.

Olcott Harbor lies at the mouth of Eighteen Mile Creek. The entire creek, from Lockport to Olcott, was declared a federal Superfund site in 2012.

"It's gotten better over the years," Newfane Supervisor Timothy R. Horanburg said. "The last time we dredged and did all the sediment testing, we didn't find any contaminants above limits."

"We didn't see the heavy metals and PCBs," said Scott Collins of the Niagara County Soil and Water Conservation District. "This outreach event is to let people know that."

The last dredging in the harbor occurred in 2014, and the federal navigation channel also was dredged in 1985 and 1997.

"We're showing everything is much better than it was back in the '80s," Horanburg said.

The removal of the ban would affect only areas north of the bridge that carries Route 18 over the creek at the southern end of the harbor, Horanburg said.

The EPA's planned dredging of creek sediment as part of its Superfund cleanup would occur several miles south of the harbor, a DEC spokesman said.

Thursday's meeting can be accessed through the Eighteen Mile Creek Remedial Action Plan website.

Friday, town officials will meet with the Army Corps of Engineers to pitch a redesigned breakwall project that Horanburg said would be more effective than the one the state approved last October.

Horanburg said testing showed there is no bedrock to support the $14 million breakwall at its originally planned location, 200 feet north of the ends of the two federal piers at Olcott.

The new plan calls for the piers to be lengthened by about 100 feet, with walls of stone rubble to be built along both sides of both piers. Then, Horanburg said, at least four cells of sheet piling filled with concrete will be lined up in an east-west formation about 500 feet north of the new pier ends.

"We've already modeled it," Horanburg said. "It will absorb waves from all directions."

The east pier, which is 18 inches lower than the west pier, is often swamped by northeast winds that send waves into Olcott Harbor. Horanburg said the rubble walls will block those waves, and the walls also will make a good fish habitat.

The state's October announcement also included a $1.7 million set of containment walls for the harbor and a $1.8 million berm to guard the residential area west of the harbor. The berm may be built from sediment dredged from the harbor.

Newfane is paying $680,000 toward the project, including a $500,000 state study grant announced in 2018, while Niagara County will chip in $221,000.

https://www.lockportjournal.com/news/local_news/eighteen-mile-creek-dredging-ban-may-be-lifted/article_510eedf7-1fda-53fa-b99a-d2b3954fb489.html

EDITOR'S PICK FEATURED

Eighteen Mile Creek dredging ban may be lifted

ENVIRONMENT: State seeks public input on Eighteen Mile Creek management.

By Benjamin Joe ben.joe@lockportjournal.com
Jul 28, 2020

This file photo shows Eighteen Mile Creek as it flows behind 62 Mill St. at the former Lockport Paperboard property. This section was on the EPA's list for dredging to remove PCBs, lead and other contaminants.

Representatives of the state Department of Environmental Conservation and the Niagara County Soil and Water Conservation District will meet with members of the public, albeit virtually, from noon to 1 p.m. Thursday to discuss lifting the longstanding ban on dredging Eighteen Mile Creek.

A Beneficial Use Impairment (BUI) previously placed on Eighteen Mile Creek restricts dredging activities in the creek. The restriction was originally put in place after contaminants including PCBs were documented in creek sediments in the navigation channels below Burt Dam. Possible sources were industrial wastewater discharges and inactive hazardous waste sites noted by the DEC in 1997.

"After a review of recent navigational dredging activities and a thorough assessment of Olcott Harbor sediment quality, DEC and partner agencies have determined that the conditions for (lifting the restriction) have been met. DEC and partner agencies will be seeking public feedback regarding the proposed change in designation," reads a release from the DEC announcing the meeting.

Eighteen Mile Creek presently has five BUIs, including restrictions on eating fish or wildlife, degradation of fish and wildlife populations, bird or animal deformities or reproductive problems and the degradation of benthos (the flora and fauna found at the bottom of a body of water). The restriction on dredging is the first BUI proposed for removal.

"Ultimately, the goal is the removal of all BUIs... and the eventual de-listing of Eighteen Mile Creek as a (Great Lakes) Area of Concern," said Donald Zelazny, DEC's Great Lakes Basin programs coordinator.

The Eighteen Mile Creek Corridor, which stretches from Lockport to Olcott, is a registered U.S. Superfund cleanup site. Remediation was planned in four phases by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The first phase, acquisition of contaminated residential properties and demolition of the long-vacated Flintkote building, both in the area of Water and Mill streets in the city of Lockport, has been completed.

Remaining phases are in progress and include: remediating contaminated industrial properties in the creek corridor, remediating contaminated creek sediment from Lockport to Lake Ontario; and remediating contaminated residential sediment east of the industrial and commercial properties.

More information on the meeting and how to participate is posted at http://www.eighteenmilecreek.com.

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Thu, Jul 30 — Music, Singing & Video Camp (Ages 6-12) — Online at your Home

Thu, Jul 30 — Children's Etiquette Online Intro Course -... — Online at your Home

Thu, Jul 30 — Free Online Coding / Minecraft Coding Class — Online at your Home

Thu, J — Activ Yoga — Onlin

THU 30 FRI 31 SAT 1 SUN 2 MON 3 TUE 4 WED 5 THU 6 FRI 7 SAT 8 SUN 9 MON 10 TUE 11

https://www.lockportjournal.com/news/local_news/eighteen-mile-creek-restrictions-explained/article_c32d4d92-73e6-51ec-83f1-3886cd34a723.html

EDITOR'S PICK

Eighteen Mile Creek restrictions explained

ENVIRONMENT: Public comment period on easing dredging restrictions remains open.

By Benjamin Joe ben.joe@lockportjournal.com
Aug 4, 2020

Scott Collins works for the Niagara County Soil and Water Conservation District as its Remedial Action Plan coordinator. He characterizes his job as making sure the correct actions are taken to restore the watershed in Niagara County.

At the moment, Collins and his team are working on removing cautionary guidelines around polluted Eighteen Mile Creek, specifically the red flag on dredging in the area beneath Burt Dam and toward Olcott Harbor. Eventually, all five guidelines promoting restrictions will be removed, should the site be judged ready.

"The restriction of fish and wildlife consumption, that's by the Department of Health. … For the degradation of fish and wildlife population, it's fish community metrics such as diversity, abundance and biomass (that guides when restrictions will be eased)," Collins said.

Collins said his coordination team works with the Remedial Advisory Committee, a group of local community representatives. They decide what the clean-up goals should be. His team also works with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Army Corp of Engineers to determine the criteria for removing restricting guidelines, he said.

"Whenever we update the removal criteria we try to keep it realistic. We have some background reference data so we don't have to reinvestigate everything about it. The bird and animal deformity, the new criteria for that one is that the levels of PCBs are comparable to functional feeding groups. Specifically, American mink are very sensitive to PCBs to where if there's too many PCBs in their diet, they can't reproduce, or (they) develop other deformities," Collins said. "That's our benchmark."

Collins said the restriction on dredging was put in place because of high concentrations of lead and PCBs in the silt at the head of Eighteen Mile Creek.

In 2014, the Town of Newfane applied for and received a permit to do dredging. At the time, it was concluded the contaminants were not at the levels they once were.

"If the Town of Newfane had went out to dredge and found heavy metals and contaminants …. that would be something to show this impairment has not been restored … and it (would not have been) safe for them to be able to just go and dredge," Collins said.

With dredging restrictions in place, Collins said, even when a permit is granted, there is likely "extra work" involved for the applicant in handling sediment, including directions on where to put it and how to pull it out. Extra testing might also be required.

For a 30-day period, the state Department of Environmental Concern is taking comments from the public on whether the restrictions on dredging should be lifted. Comments can be directed to eighteenmilerap@gmail.com.

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Women's League
Lockport Country Club

Free Live Classes for Kids
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Music, Singing & Video Camp (Ages 6-12)
Online at your Home

Music with Chaia (Ages 1-10)
Online at your Home

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WED 5 | THU 6 | FRI 7 | SAT 8 | SUN 9 | MON 10 | TUE 11 | WED 12 | THU 13 | FRI 14 | SAT 15 | SUN 16 | MON 17

Outdoors calendar

Posted in the Buffalo News: July 29, 2020

https://buffalonews.com/sports/outdoors-calendar/article_189c2828-d1ba-11ea-a3d9-2bfb7ba2bda9.html

Scott Gauld and Alex Gauld show the bass they caught to place second in the Chautauqua Bass Tournament.Courtesy Scott Gauld

July 30 – Safe Harbor Open Bass League fro 6 to 9 p.m. Best three fish. Cost is $40 per boat. One- or two-person teams. Pay at the launch in Safe Harbor. Rescheduled from July 29.

July 30 – Virtual public meeting on Eighteen Mile Creek area hosted by DEC and Niagara County Soil and Water Conservation District from noon to 1 p.m. For more information and how to participate, visit eighteenmilerap.com.

Aug. 1 – Lake Ontario "Big Boys" Tournament, a new one-day event out of Point Breeze, Orleans County. Best six salmon contest. For more information, contact Capt. Vince Pierleoni at 585-615-1197.

Aug. 1 – Application deadline for Deer Management Assistance Program. Go to dec.ny.gov for more info.

Aug. 1 – Birding at Beaver Meadow, 1610 Welch Road, North Java. 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Preregistration required at 585-457-3228. Cost is $10.

Aug. 1 – Reptiles and Amphibians Meet and Greet at Beaver Meadow, 1610 Welch Road, North Java. 2 to 3 p.m. Call for more info at 585-457-3228. Free.

Aug. 1 – New York State Licensed Guides exam for anyone who has previously registered. In Western New York, the exam will be held at Birdseye Park in Steuben County, County Road 96, Bradford. Call 518-402-8838 for more info. New applicants' exam is Sept. 17.

Aug. 1-2 – Rayzor's Big Dawg Walleye Tournament out of Dunkirk. Two-day tournament, three fish each day. No length limit, New York waters only. Call Mark Mohr at 998-9871.

Aug. 2 – ATA trap shoot at Allied Sportsmen Club, 12846 Clinton St., Alden. Registration will begin at 8 a.m., shooting begins at 9 a.m. The club will follow social distancing protocols.

Aug. 3 – Greater Niagara Fish Odyssey Derby registrations will go on sale at fishodyssey.net. The derby is set for Aug. 22-30 in Erie, Niagara, and Orleans counties.

Aug. 4 – Lake Ontario Charter Boat Association monthly member meeting at Irondequoit Bay Fish and Game Club, 658 Bay Front S., Rochester, starting at 7 p.m. lakeontariocharterboatassociation.com

Aug. 5 – Safe Harbor Open Bass League double dip Wednesday start from 6 to 9 p.m. Best three fish. Cost is $40 per boat. One- or two-person teams. Pay at the launch in Safe Harbor.

Aug. 6 – Kayaking Basics with Tina at Beaver Island State Park from 6 to 8 p.m. For more information and to register, call 282-5154.

Aug. 9 – 25th annual Hunting Heritage Banquet of the Niagara County Gobblers Chapter of NWTF at Youngstown Volunteer Fire Co. Doors open at 3:30 p.m. Dinner at 5 p.m. Call Pam or Herb Lederhouse at 791-3151 for details. This had been scheduled for June 14.

Aug. 9 – Fall Trap League start at Allied Sportsmen Club, 12846 Clinton St., Alden. Shooting Sundays 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and Tuesdays from 6 to 8 p.m. New shooters and public welcome. Ten scores by Oct. 6. Call Joe at 867-1458 for more info.

Aug. 12 – Safe Harbor Open Bass League from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Best three fish. Cost is $40 per boat. One- or two-person teams. Pay at the launch in Safe Harbor.

Aug. 17 – Niagara County Fisheries Development Board in-person meeting at the pavilion located at Porter on the Lake, Youngstown, starting at 6 p.m.

Aug. 19 – Safe Harbor Open Bass League from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Best three fish. Cost is $40 per boat. One- or two-person teams. Pay at the launch in Safe Harbor.

Aug. 20 – Kayaking Basics with Tina at Beaver Island State Park from 6 to 8 p.m. For more information and to register, call 282-5154.

Aug. 21 – Reelin' for a Cure Ladies Salmon Tournament out of Wilson and Olcott. Best six fish. For more info, contact Stephanie Pierleoni at 481-6388 or reelinforacure.com.

Aug. 21-22 – Innovative Outdoors Walleye Challenge on Lake Erie out of Dunkirk. Best six walleyes for Saturday. Big fish Friday contest optional. For info, innovative-outdoors.com or call 481-5348.

Aug. 21-Sept. 7 – Fall Lake Ontario Counties Trout and Salmon Tournament. $25,000 for grand prize for largest salmon. $68,000 in total prizes. Check out loc.org for more details.

Aug. 22-30 – 44th annual Greater Niagara Fish Odyssey Derby for Niagara, Erie and Orleans counties. Kids 15 and under can fish for free. Go to fishodyssey.net for more info.

Rescheduled

Sept. 19 – 11th annual Sons of American Legion Gun Raffle at Post 880, Eden, from 4 to 9 p.m. Tickets are available at Legion Post 880 or contact Mark (868-7509) or Ken (498-0560). Current tickets sold will remain eligible.

Sept. 26 – Spring Gun Raffle, Three-F Club, Lewiston, 904 Swann Road. Current tickets sold will remain eligible.

Canceled

July 27, Aug. 3, 10, 17 – Buffalo Audubon Summer Camps at the Beaver Meadow Audubon Center in North Java. For more information, call 585-457-3228.

Aug. 1-16 – Orleans County Rotary Derby due to Covid-19.

Aug. 7-9 – Northern Chautauqua Conservation Club walleye tournament. Will be rescheduled in 2021.

Sept. 11-13 – Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Workshop at the Greek Peak Resort in Cortland.

Sept. 12 – Youth Mentor Pheasant Hunt at the Three-F Club, Lewiston, due to Covid-19.

Oct. 14-16 – St. Mary's Archers Club Catch and Release Tournament on the Oak Orchard River due to Covid-19.

Submit calendar items to billhiltsjr@gmail.com at least three weeks in advance.