

**Lake George Park Commission
PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET**

Program: Lake George Park Marine Patrol

Mandate:

Article 43 of the Environmental Conservation Law

Mandated Funding Level:

N/a

Brief Description/History/Background:

The marine patrol provides emergency response, assistance and law enforcement on Lake George. Patrol activities are integrated with the agency's regulations governing boating and other recreational activities toward the legislatively directed goal of reducing congestion, overcrowding and safety hazards on one of the nation's busiest waterways. The patrol also serves agency resource protection objectives. The patrol is an integral arm of the Commission as it educates, inspects and enforces regulations on sanitation, water quality and invasive species. The patrol has been a public service since 1961.

Issues:

None.

Population Served:

Primarily the patrol serves boaters, campers and lakeshore property owners which are estimated to include 50,000 people,

Performance Measures:

An evaluation of social carrying capacity was performed in 2006 and included a survey of user satisfaction with the quality of recreational, safety and marine patrol services. Annual program output metrics are recorded and include: the number of assists provided, tickets issued, details completed, accidents investigated, fires extinguished, contacts made, etc.

**Lake George Park Commission
PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET**

Program: Eurasian Watermilfoil Management/Invasive Species Prevention

Mandate:

The responsibility to manage nuisance aquatic plants in New York is vested with the Department of Environmental Conservation pursuant to Article 15 of the Environmental Conservation Law. The Commission has entered into a delegation agreement with DEC to undertake a program of Eurasian Watermilfoil management in Lake George. The Commission also volunteers as a coordinator of activities to prevent the introduction and spread of other invasive aquatic species.

Mandated Funding Level:

N/a

Brief Description/History/Background:

Eurasian Watermilfoil has gained recognition as one of the most destructive aquatic invaders by decimating the quality of hundreds of waterways across the county. Introduction of the plant is consistently associated with a decline in resource quality, property values and tourism. EWM overtakes and displaces native plant communities and can form dense canopies which preclude normal water-based recreation. The Commission has built a program of response and physical controls that has been a model of design and information for scores of other lakes. As a regulator of boating and marinas, the Commission is uniquely situated to educate and coordinate efforts to prevent and detect a growing list of potential aquatic invasive species.

Issues:

None.

Population Served:

The preservation of Lake George serves the People of the State of New York, and international population of Lake George lovers, eight lakefront communities, a thriving lake-based tourist sector, thousands of lakefront property owners and tens of thousands of boaters and campers. The defense of the lake against the invasion of Eurasian Watermilfoil and other invasive species is universally regarded as an essential objective for the lake's preservation.

Performance Measures:

The Commission issues an annual report of program outputs. For instance, in 2007 there were 158 locations in Lake George where invasive milfoil has been identified at one time or another. Of those locations 81% were cleared of milfoil or remain clear from prior year's effort.

**Lake George Park Commission
PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET**

Program: Regulatory Programs

Mandate:

Article 43 of the Environmental Conservation Law directs the agency to implement rules and regulations governing wharfs, moorings, marinas, boating and other recreational uses, stormwater runoff, wastewater management, tree clearing and stream corridor protection. The stated purpose of these programs is to protect the natural resources of the Lake George Park including the lake's superior water quality and to prevent overcrowding, congestion and safety hazards.

Mandated Funding Level:

N/a

Brief Description/History/Background:

This program represents the core regulatory, permitting and enforcement functions of the agency. The staff and consulting services expenses provide technical and enforcement functions which implement and manage the regulatory programs of the Commission. In many cases the agency has coordinated with other New York agencies to provide for the smooth implementation of consistent environmental policies for the lake. Current programs include the regulation of wharfs, docks, moorings, marinas and water-based recreation such as anchoring, parasailing, jetskiis, tour boats, vessel speed and noise. The regulations also establish permit requirements and standards for land development appertaining to the management of stormwater runoff. This program includes the agency's revenue functions that account for more than 25,000 transactions annually. The wharf, dock and boat registration fess administered through this program represent the majority of the agency's revenue. The Commission is currently developing regulations on stream corridor management. These regulation will necessarily be administered within the set of functions of this program.

Issues:

None.

Population Served:

By protecting Lake George, the program serves the People of the State of New York especially those who regard the conservation of the lake as an important objective.

Performance Measures:

The quantity of program activities (i.e. the number of permits, cases, inspections etc.) are reported monthly to the Commission and public. Periodic surveys of lake users measure overall satisfaction with the recreational experience and safety. Regulatory programs are subject to review every five years under the provisions of the State Administrative Procedures Act.

**Lake George Park Commission
PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET**

Program: Pollution Investigation and Prevention

Mandate:

Article 43 of the Environmental Conservation Law directs the agency to coordinate with other New York agencies to prevent the pollution of Lake George from any source. Historically, the lack of an effective response to suspected pollution problems resulted in a large measure of public dissatisfaction with New York's programs to protect the lake. The Commission's assumption of the role of first-responder and of coordinator of other state program functions fills a critical gap.

Mandated Funding Level:

N/a

Brief Description/History/Background:

This program represents a first response to water quality samples and public referrals that indicate a potential problem. For more than 20 years, the Commission has taken it upon itself to follow-up on high bacterial counts in water samples that are produced from a privately funded program. The Commission's efforts are directed at finding and abating failed septic systems. Also, the program inspects active construction sites for sediment and erosion concerns and responds to spills and other water quality issues. The Commission operates and advertises a pollution hotline so that the public knows where to call and be assured a timely response.

Issues:

None.

Population Served:

By protecting Lake George, the program serves the People of the State of New York especially those who regard the conservation of the lake as an important objective.

Performance Measures:

The program tracks the number of investigations, cases, and time required for an appropriate response.

**Lake George Park Commission
PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET**

Program Water Quality/Stormwater Management

Mandate:

Article 43-0112 of the Environmental Conservation Law directs the agency to promulgate rules and regulations governing land development with the specific guidance that stormwater control measures be required and incorporated to ensure the water quality of the lake is not diminished following any development project. The law also requires the promulgation of rules and regulations governing local stormwater management plans with the goal of reducing the harmful effects of past development on water quality.

Mandated Funding Level:

N/a

Brief Description/History/Background:

The effects of urban stormwater runoff on the water quality of Lake George are well documented. The Commission has promulgated rules and regulations and prepared local stormwater management plans. Also, the agency has approved several local government plans and stormwater regulatory programs. Accordingly, most development in the lake's watershed is subject to permit requirements and standards. The Commission processes permit applications, conducts compliance activities, educates the public and engages in enforcement actions when appropriate.

Issues:

The Commission's vacant position in regulatory programs significantly undermines the agency's capabilities to fulfill this program.

Population Served:

By protecting Lake George, the program serves the People of the State of New York especially those who regard the conservation of the lake as an important objective.

Performance Measures:

The program tracks the number of investigations, cases, and time required for an appropriate response.

**Lake George Park Commission
PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET**

Program: Tree-cutting and Vegetation Removal

Mandate:

Article 43 of the Environmental Conservation Law directs the Commission to promulgate rules and regulations relative to tree-cutting in order to preserve the water quality of the lake and its tributary streams and the scenic beauty of the lake and the surrounding countryside.

Mandated Funding Level:

N/A

Brief Description/History/Background:

The removal of large areas of vegetation subjects the exposed soil to the forces of erosion and can lead to sedimentation of the lake and its tributaries. The Legislature directed the Commission to develop rules governing tree-cutting that are protective of the water quality of the lake.

Issues:

Assigning a low priority to this function may be perceived by the public as a failure to address the legislative mission in this regard.

Population Served:

By protecting Lake George, the program serves the People of the State of New York especially those who regard the conservation of the lake as an important objective.

Performance Measures:

N/A

**Lake George Park Commission
PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET**

Program: Water Quality/ Stream Corridor Protection

Mandate:

Article 43 of the Environmental Conservation Law directs the agency to promulgate rules and regulations relative to stream corridor protection including specifications for road and utility crossings and vegetation removal in stream corridors. The purpose of the regulations is to preserve the natural resources of the Lake George Park including the superior water quality of the lake.

Mandated Funding Level:

N/a

Brief Description/History/Background:

The Commission is amid an initiative to promulgate regulations and has contracted to prepare an environmental impact statement and draft regulations for public review. To date there has been significant public participation organized by the Commission toward a consensus rule-making. The assessment of environmental impacts and the evaluation of proposed regulatory standards will be followed in 2009-10 by an assessment of regulatory impacts, costs and benefits.

Issues:

None.

Population Served:

By protecting Lake George, the program serves the People of the State of New York especially those who regard the conservation of the lake as an important objective.

Performance Measures:

The initiative has a project schedule and progress is being monitored against key milestones.

**Lake George Park Commission
PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET**

Program: Lake Level Management

Mandate:

The Commission oversees the lake level and operation of the outlet dam under an agreement with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Mandated Funding Level:

N/a

Brief Description/History/Background:

The lake's water level is the subject of considerable public interest and the management of the outlet facilities, although governed by set guidelines, is in private hands. The Commission maintains administrative oversight, assembles and reports data and addresses public inquiries about the lake level.

Issues:

None

Population Served:

By protecting Lake George, the program serves the People of the State of New York especially those who regard the conservation of the lake as an important objective.

Performance Measures:

Annual reports track lake levels against specified targets.

**Lake George Park Commission
PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET**

Program: Regulation of On-Premise Advertising Signs

Mandate:

Article 43 of the Environmental Conservation Law establishes the authority of the Commission to regulate on-premise advertising signs and sets thresholds for exempted signs.

Mandated Funding Level:

N/A

Brief Description/History/Background:

The Lake George Sign Law is an artifact of a time before the Adirondack Park Act and local sign ordinances. Its purpose when enacted was to prevent and reduce garish and gaudy attention-getting displays from distracting from the natural scenic beauty of the lake and the surrounding countryside. The Commission administered the law and rules and regulations promulgated under the law from 1962 until 1978 when the Commission staff and budget were eliminated. The adoption of the Adirondack Park Act and approval of local land use regulations under the APA act resulted in separate authority over signs and several of the APA approved local land use programs adopted the Lake George Sign Law standards by reference. The Commission was re-established in 1988 with a broad, new mission to protect the lake's water quality and preserve the safety and quality of water-based recreation. Enforcement of the sign standards necessarily received a low priority in the agency's emerging work plans. There have been benefits in retaining the law up to this point. The law has certain self-effectuating provisions, it is incorporated by reference into several local regulations and selected enforcement cases have been brought to remove particularly offensive or outlandish attention-getting displays (i.e. search lights, inflated displays revolving signs etc.)

Issues:

A low priority on sign enforcement results in a slow erosion of compliance. There has been a proliferation of mostly small signs.

Population Served:

The local business community and any one who appreciates the value of the natural scenery of Lake George over garish advertising.

Performance Measures:

N/A

**Lake George Park Commission
PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET**

Program: Wastewater Management

Mandate:

Article 43 of the Environmental Conservation Law directs the agency to implement wastewater management regulations which govern the discharge of sewage effluent from any facility within the Lake George Park. The regulations are subject to approval by NYS Departments of Health and Environmental Conservation but may be more restrictive than the standards promulgated by those agencies.

Mandated Funding Level:

N/A

Brief Description/History/Background:

In 1987, a task force of agencies, local governments and the public found that despite a complicated and overlapping array of jurisdictions, concerted action to address the water quality impacts of failing on-site wastewater treatment systems was lacking. In 1988, the Legislature established new authority for the Commission to implement rules and regulations, which may be more stringent than those of DEC or DOH. There are thousands of commercial, institutional and private on-site wastewater treatment systems surrounding the lake. The identification and remediation of ineffective treatment systems or failures is a technically complex need which invokes a variety of complicated and interactive environmental, social and economic variables. Absent a source of funding for a rule-making and the subsequent program implementation, the agency has had to defer on action in this regard.

Issues:

The inability of the agency to advance this legislative mission may be associated with a lack of satisfaction by the affected constituents.

Population Served:

N/A

Performance Measures:

N/A

Agency Programs/Activities: Inventory and Key Data
Lake George Park Commission

Relation to Core Mission (H/M/L)	Spending Category (SO, ATL, CAP)	3/31/09 FTEs (All Funds)	General Fund Disbursements (\$000s)			State Special Revenue Funds Disbursements (\$000s)			Capital Projects Funds Disbursements (\$000s)			
			2006-07 Actual	2008-09 Plan	2009-10 Projected	2006-07 Actual	2007-08 Actual	2008-09 Plan	2009-10 Projected	2006-07 Actual	2007-08 Actual	2008-09 Plan
H	Marine Safety/Law Enforcement Patrol	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	Eurasian Watermillfoil Management	1	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H	Regulatory Programs for Resource Pritol	4	0	0	0	\$198	\$182	\$255	\$301	\$341	\$250	\$250
H	Pollution Investigations	0.5	0	0	0	\$34	\$36	\$41	\$44			
H	Water quality/Stormwater Management	1.5	0	0	0	\$276	\$197	\$309	\$315			
H	Water Quality Planning/Rulemaking	1	0	0	0	\$88	\$100	\$162	\$164			
M	Lake Level Management	0	0	0	0	\$84	\$88	\$89	\$93			
L	Sign Regulation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
L	Tree-cutting Regulation	0	0	0	0	\$35	\$0	\$0	\$0			
L	Wastewater Management Regulations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
	Total	9	16	0	0	0	\$985	\$878	\$1,219	\$132	\$215	\$250