

**Oneida County Office**  
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September 7, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

In this day and age, I believe all of us (some more than others) unintentionally take the beauty and uniqueness of our water resources for granted. With the improvements in infrastructure and transportation, along with the continued advancements in technology, we are able to access and use these resources to our liking more quickly. Our society moves at such a fast pace that it's hard, and sometimes impossible, not to get caught up in the rat-race! However, for those of you that either live in or visit the Northwoods, have you ever taken the time to sit near a quiet lake shore and simply absorb the sights, sounds, and feel of the serenity? If you haven't done this before, set aside a few minutes to do so. Yes, leave behind the cell phone, I-pod, or whatever other technological gadget you're dependent on, and just enjoy the tranquility of the water and its surrounding environment. After this short experience, I'd be willing to bet that you'll be trying to take the time to experience this more often! You'll also likely gain more of an appreciation for the beauty and uniqueness, as well as the personal benefits, provided by our lakes, rivers, and streams.

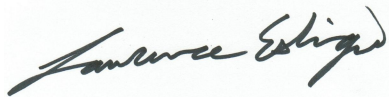
Unfortunately, along with the benefits associated with the ease of accessibility to these water resources come a number of problems that threaten their integrity, as well as the opportunities and benefits they provide for others (including sons, daughters, grandchildren, etc.) to enjoy. Problems such as aquatic invasive species (AIS), improper shoreline development, and pollution, are a few that have the ability to quickly degrade these deceptively sensitive environments. Therefore, it is critical that we, as users and beneficiaries of these water resources, respect them, and do what we can to protect, and if necessary, try to restore them. Their sustenance is directly connected (in one way or another) to our livelihoods here in the Northwoods.

Fortunately for us, as water resource users and beneficiaries, there are lake organizations. Lake organizations (associations and districts) consist of dedicated men and women willing to invest their efforts (time and money) to assure a long-lasting commitment to the protection and enhancement of local water resources, of which we all benefit from. I would encourage anyone, especially those that are fortunate enough to either have waterfront property and/or live near a waterbody, to join and support a local lake organization. If for nothing else, support them because their work helps to protect your pocketbooks! Yes, know that your property values are greatly affected by the health of the water in your surrounding area. In my position, I can honestly say that I've received phone calls from individuals interested in purchasing property, asking about the problem of aquatic invasive species on a particular waterbody, and what's being done about it. So if you think that contributing a few dollars annually to local lake management efforts is unnecessary, think again!

For the most part, lake organizations consist of associations and districts. Each serve similar purposes (protect the integrity of the water, along with the value to its users), but the most

notable difference between them is that a lake district is actually a specialized unit of government. Therefore, lake districts have the ability to tax property within the district boundaries. Individuals that live within (resident), or only own property within (non-resident), then have the right to vote, hold office, and help guide the operations of the district. Although being incorporated under another taxing body is not typically desirable, being incorporated under a lake district can provide a number of benefits to its property owners, such as, but not limited to: acquiring financial assistance through grants for lake projects (e.g. AIS control) and management plans, protecting lake habitat through restoration efforts and land acquisition, maintaining water levels, enhancing recreational boating and boater safety, and providing public services. However, in my opinion, the single-most advantage of a lake district is the ability to ensure that a secure base of partners (i.e. district members) and finances will be available to conduct lake management activities to protect individual aquatic resources, personal investments and values. If you live on or near a waterbody, understand that problems associated with aquatic invasive species, water quality and habitat degradation, and others affecting our waters and coincidentally, our pocketbooks, will continue. Therefore, making an investment to protect your values, livelihoods, and enjoyments is necessary and well worth the benefit of being able to enjoy the beautiful water resources found here in the Northwoods! Please support the efforts of your local lake organizations, and be involved! Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lawrence Eslinger". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name.

Lawrence Eslinger  
Oneida County Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator