



Conservation Impacts Waters,

By Burnie Haney - Conservation Director

A short while ago we asked our membership to get out there and work with their communities and DEC Regional Managers to find conservation projects they can get involved in. So far this year we've had a couple of clubs that have done just that and I want to use this opportunity to tell you what they're doing.

Long Island Bassmasters and Twin Forks Bass Club partnered together for a stocking effort to put 1500 large-mouth bass in Lake Ronkonkoma. The clubs worked closely with the DEC Region 1 Fisheries Manager for guidance and final approval of the project. After three months of meetings and raising approximately \$2,500.00 the bass were stocked on May 11th.

On the weekend of 12 & 13 July,

members of Long Island Bassmasters worked with the Peconic Estuary Program and partners, on a multi-year volunteer eradication effort in an attempt to rid the Peconic River of *Ludwigia peploides* (water primrose) and prevent spreading to other Long Island waters.

Another club, Salt City Bassmasters, continues their efforts to prevent the spread of Water Chestnuts and on July 29th, they partnered with the members of the Cornell Cooperative Extension program for a Water Chestnut pull on the Seneca River. The group met and pulled from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m., removing an estimated 1,300 pounds of this invasive plant from the river system. I received an invitation to participate and I took the afternoon off from work to be there. All I can say is wow... We sure have a bunch of Water Chestnuts taking up residence in the Seneca River.

I was paired with our President, Mike Cusano, and a pretty funny thing occurred. We moved up to a dock that had a ski boot hoisted in the air and decided we'd do our final pull for the day around that particular dock. We'd just finished filling six large 30 gallon bags with the plants. Mike is attaching a tag to the

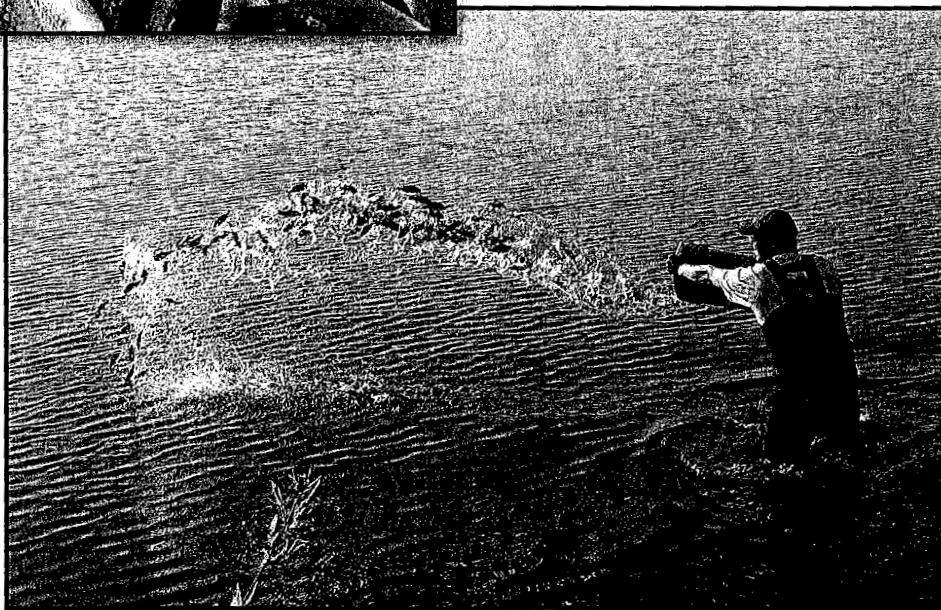


owners dock that gives a short write up on the Water Chestnut, and how to remove it, when and a guy pulls up in his car giving us the watchful eye. We continued our business and I took an after shot to show that even removing just six bags from this general area does make a difference. The gentleman got out of his car walked out on the dock and when we told him who we are and what we were doing he looked almost dumbfounded. He was absolutely speechless for about 20 seconds, and before he said anything Mike gave him the quick 1, 2 on when to pull them and why it's important to pull them now before they get a change to germinate in August. The guy listened and just shook his head and said, "yes we need to get these things out of here... I know my buddies have been working on it."

As we idled back to the launch at day's end, we had several home owners say thanks to us for pulling the Chestnuts, and still several others say good job and you don't see any of those in front of our dock. It's moments like those when you've know you made a difference.

The best part of these type of projects is that bass fisherman are giving back to their local communities, serving as good will ambassadors, so to speak. The people that see you in action and see that shiny bass boat all covered in muck and slime as you work to remove an invasive weed that will ultimately improve their on-the-water experience, sends a very strong message.

Too often we find ourselves mis-labeled as gear heads in fast boats, takers that only want to take fish from the lake



A New York BASS Chapter Federation member helps stock 1,500 bass in Lake Ronkonkoma



As Well As Bass Anglers' Image

with total disregard for others or the environment. Of course we know nothing could be further from the truth, and that's why its up to all of us to help dispel that awful uninformed opinion.

These clubs set prime examples to follow, as they've selected conservation projects you can get involved in that improve the habitat and benefit all user groups.

Believe me when I tell you people notice, they always notice and they're always watching whether you know it or not.

Another hot topic we talked about in our last installment is the Clean

Boating Act of 2008, and after almost a year of continual effort, this bill has passed both houses and is on its way to the President's desk for final approval. It took awhile to get it through, but the collective efforts of everyone that contacted their elected officials and voiced their support for this initiative, has probably saved the individual recreational boater hundreds of dollars in permit fees had the bill not passed.

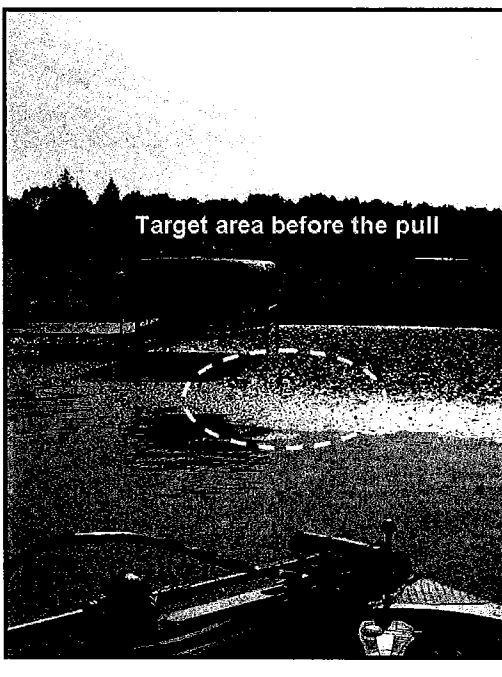
The last thing I'd like to ask, is for all of our clubs to send me your end of season tournament creel results. I'm attempting to build a data base that will capture all of our creel results from all of tournaments our clubs hold in 2008.

My intent is to provide this data to our DEC Regional Fisheries managers. I feel its one small measure of quantifiable data they can use to help them better assess a given lake or watershed. If we can easily provide this data to them... then why not do so.

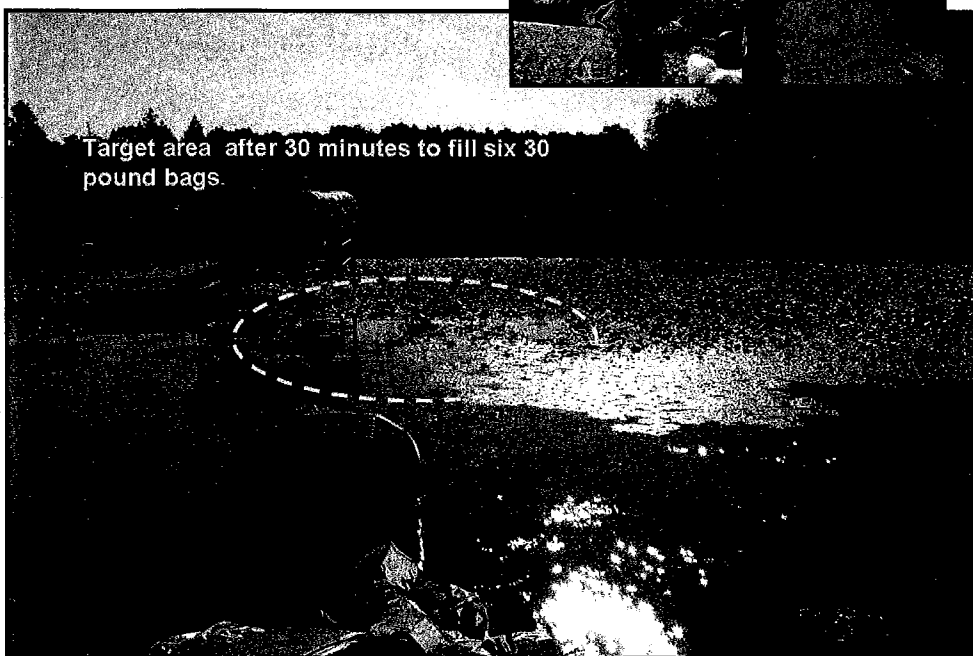
In closing, I encourage all of our clubs to get engaged with your DEC Regional Fisheries Managers. The more they know about your club the better off we'll all be, and especially if they decide to do something that has the potential to impact our bass fishery. **FL**

Practice Selective Harvest & Free the Fighter

Burnie Haney
Conservation Director



Target area before the pull



Target area after 30 minutes to fill six 30 pound bags.