



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senator Young Announces State Funding to Clean and Preserve Chautauqua Lake

CATHARINE YOUNG July 1, 2015

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ALBANY – Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I- Olean) has announced that she secured state assistance for invasive species prevention for Chautauqua Lake.

As part of this year’s state budget, Senator Young successfully obtained a \$100,000 grant for the Chautauqua Lake Association (CLA), to support the organization’s ongoing battle against invasive aquatic species that can wreak havoc on the lake if not controlled.

“Chautauqua Lake is an economic driver for the county, providing millions in tourism dollars that help keep the economy strong. Our small businesses and residents depend on having a healthy Chautauqua Lake, because it brings so much revenue to our region and helps keep property taxes down. I fought hard to have these funds lined out in this year’s budget, and it is a victory that will help our local economy,” said Senator Young.

Visitors to Chautauqua County spend millions of dollars every year, which directly translates into thousands of local jobs.

“This funding is exciting news for everyone in the county, because we all appreciate the tremendous importance of Chautauqua Lake. In addition to its positive economic impact, the lake also offers year-round recreational activities for residents and visitors alike. Fishing, boating and other watersport activities are just a few of the ways that the lake helps generate much needed revenue for area businesses and Chautauqua County,” said Senator Young.

Assemblyman Andy Goodell, who has joined Senator Young in tirelessly advocating for the lake said, “I am pleased to have voted for an increase in invasive species funding and am delighted Senator Young has been successful in getting the grant approved for the CLA. Chautauqua Lake is extraordinarily important to our county’s economy and is one of the driving factors in over \$200 million spent here by tourist each year.”

Chautauqua Lake Association officials said they were “thrilled” when Senator Young announced the news at the organization’s reception on Monday.

CLA president Douglas Conroe added that, “This funding is an extremely critical component of our funding formula. Without these funds we could not provide an entire summer of service that our three lake crews need to provide. We are so very appreciative of Senator

Young's commitment and support for Chautauqua Lake's maintenance. Words cannot express our gratitude.”

Senator Young said supporting dredging and combating aggressive and invasive weeds in Chautauqua Lake was a top priority during this year’s budget negotiations because of the issue’s importance to the region and the state.

In recent years, the lake has had to combat significant weed problems due to a combination of weather conditions and limited resources. In spite of challenges, the CLA board and staff, along with local officials and numerous volunteers, have joined residents from around the lake and surrounding communities in monitoring the lake for invasive plant species and keeping the lake as healthy as possible.

In 2014, 2,536 tons of storm debris and aquatic vegetation was removed from Chautauqua Lake.

“I commend everyone, including Assemblyman Goodell, the county, numerous private donors and volunteers, and the CLA for pulling together to preserve the lake. Everyone has worked together so cooperatively in supporting the lake,” Senator Young said.

In 2014, Senator Young also secured the CLA a \$100,000 grant to prevent invasive species. In addition, she secured a \$50,000 grant for the removal of debris and sediment in the Chautauqua Lake inlets, including Dutch Hollow Creek, Bemus Creek, Prendergast Creek, and Goose Creek. The Lake Association prioritized the dredging and sediment removal projects based on the level of need for each inlet, and the funding was allocated accordingly.

“Our lakes and waterways, with their unique feature and qualities, are not only irreplaceable natural treasures for residents but also hold huge economic importance. The tourist and recreational benefits they offer raise our quality of life and strengthen our communities. Having healthy and vibrant lakes is crucial to the continued growth and progress of the county and I am happy to have been able to assist in this effort,” Senator Young said.