

# OSWEGO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## 2015 Water Chestnut Control Chemical Treatment Oswego River

During late winter/early spring of 2015, a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Permit for Applying Aquatic Herbicides was developed and submitted in April 2015.

In March 2015, a general mailing went directly to all riparian property owners that would be having this treatment done in front of their properties, advising them of this activity and giving them an opportunity to discuss any concerns that they may have pertaining to such action(s).

A State Permit was received on May 20th, 2015 to conduct the treating of up to 219.5 acres of Water chestnut (*Trapa natans*, L.). A Public Notice was then printed in a local newspaper on July 23rd, advising that the proposed treatment would soon be taking place.

Based upon a public bidding process, Allied Biological, LLC was awarded the contract and began treating on July 28th, and completed the final spraying on August 20th. The treatment approach included an airboat with two people on board - one as the pilot and the other as the applicator. Application was done by means of a spray nozzle & hose, purposely targeting only Water chestnut plants.

Eight different areas or plots in the Oswego River between Minetto and Phoenix, New York were treated. The actual permit allowed for up to 219.5 acres to be treated. Populations and plant densities were very light as compared to the previous year; therefore, actual treated acres of previous sites were down considerably ~ between 80-90%. This reduction then allowed for the further upstream areas within Ox Creek to be treated, thus, reducing the only remaining seed generating area within the Oswego River.

Due to the fact that this treatment utilized the chemical called Clearcast and was used in an open flowing water body; according to the conditions of the New York State Permit,

water samples had to be pulled both downstream as well as upstream from the treated sites. This was done in order to monitor the lingering aspect of any residual chemical for the purpose of the restrictive use of the river water for irrigation purposes. This restriction was lifted within one week after application based upon water sample results.

Looking to 2016 and based upon the seemingly recent success of chemical treatments, majority of the eight different sites will need to be controlled through a physical hand pulling effort. There will still be the need for a limited chemical treatment in the areas that produce a sizable infestation for such. These sites will include the Oswego River as well the Rice Creek Estuary.

Conversations will be taking place during the off season with other agencies and organizations to better solicit their support and coordination in mustering up an organized hand pull effort for not only the Oswego River, but the many other sites in Oswego County as well (i.e. Oneida Lake, Oneida River, Salmon River, Little Salmon River, and Sage Creek). There may also be a new outbreak of WC which will need to employ an ED/RR (Early Detection/Rapid Response) approach for control.

It was a successful and engaging year for Water chestnut control in the Oswego River in Oswego County. This agency wishes to thank all of those that supported and/or allowed us to conduct our control program with very little problems.

Funding for this effort was through New York State Senator Patty Ritchie as well as the Finger Lakes Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance.

Thank you - John DeHollander, District Manager.



Chemical treating  
Water chestnut in  
Ox Creek area of  
the Oswego River



A recently  
located three  
acre patch of  
Water chestnut at  
the mouth of  
Rice Creek, near  
Lake Ontario



Having fun  
in the sun -  
hand  
pulling  
Water  
chestnut at  
Battle  
Island area



The culprit -  
known as  
Water chestnut  
(*Trapa natans*,  
*L.*)  
Up close and  
personal,  
before  
flowering stage