

TOXIC ALGAE OUTBREAKS – or harmful algal blooms (HABs) – within each of the Finger Lakes have generated alarming headlines over the last few years. Their persistence is motivating FLLT to take immediate action to protect our waters. Please visit FLLT.ORG/WATER to find the following pages and more:



TOXIC ALGAE – FACTS FOR EVERYONE TO KNOW



TOXIC ALGAE – OUTBREAK RESOURCES & NEWS



ACTIONS WE ALL MUST TAKE TO FIGHT TOXIC ALGAE



HOW IS THE FINGER LAKES LAND TRUST FIGHTING TOXIC ALGAE?



OUR PROJECTS TO SAVE LAKES, STREAMS & DRINKING WATER



OUR PARTNERS IN FINGER LAKES WATER QUALITY PROTECTION



ACT NOW

Help us save more land and water forever — thank you!

FLLT.ORG/GIVE

PROTECTING WATER QUALITY IN THE FINGER LAKES REGION

The new Finger Lakes Land Trust initiative to fight toxic algae – and save our lakes, streams, and drinking water



FLLT.ORG/WATER

IN RESPONSE TO INCREASING WATER QUALITY CONCERNS, the Finger Lakes Land Trust (FLLT) has launched a new initiative to expand the organization's current water protection efforts. Since 2017, each of the 11 Finger Lakes has experienced at least one outbreak of toxic algae – or harmful algal blooms (HABs) – and for most of our lakes it has become a regular, annual occurrence. While research into the causes of outbreaks in our region is underway, there is a growing consensus that a combination of climate change, excessive nutrient runoff, and introduced non-native, invasive species are to blame.

Shifting weather patterns, including hotter summers and increasingly intense rain events, create conditions favorable to cyanobacteria. Nutrients enter the lakes from a variety of sources, including agricultural fields, roadside ditches, and poorly maintained septic systems. Researchers suspect that invasive quagga mussels might also be altering the balance of nutrients in a way that favors these outbreaks. Important questions remain, but there is a clear need to reduce nutrients washing into our lakes. After a late spring “gully washer,” one need only look over the south end of most of our Finger Lakes to observe the substantial sediment plumes flowing from the lakes' major tributaries.



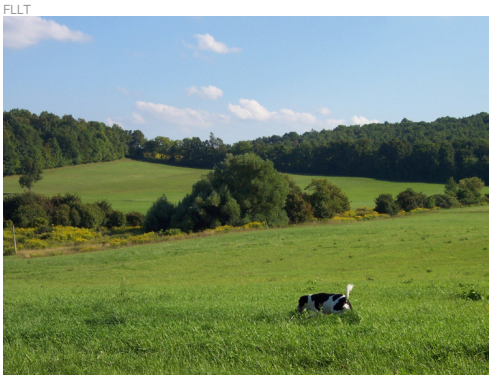
The Finger Lakes Land Trust is reaffirming our commitment to protect the region's clean waters by escalating our work in five strategic areas highlighted here:



BILL HECHT

Greater Emphasis on Lakeshore & Stream Corridors

Protecting our lakeshores is a longstanding priority of the Finger Lakes Land Trust, and the organization already protects lakeshore properties on seven of the eleven Finger Lakes. With support from New York State and private funders, FLLT has been increasing efforts to save our last undeveloped lakeshore and protect pristine frontage on tributaries. Recent lakeshore acquisitions include projects on Owasco, Skaneateles, and Otisco lakes, and FLLT is currently working to protect additional shoreline on Cayuga and Seneca Lakes.



FLLT

New Focus on Creating Natural Buffers Along Our Streams

Many streamside areas have been cleared of trees and shrubs to allow for agriculture or development. To restore this important natural filter system, FLLT will plant trees and shrubs along streams in areas that will be permanently protected. Long-term management of buffer sites will ensure that these plantings can withstand competition from invasive shrubs.

Restoring Streams & Wetlands to Slow Down Storm Runoff

For nearly 200 years, drainage systems in our region have been enhanced by each generation – in an attempt to dry farm fields and developed areas, and to keep our roads from flooding. These efforts have the dual effect of increasing runoff to our lakes. To restore some of the resilience of our original landscape, FLLT will work with partners such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to restore filled wetlands and streams that have been straightened. On a pilot basis, we will also create detention basins to slow storm runoff from intense weather events.



ANDY ZEPP

Creating an Educational Resource Hub on Toxic Algae

The Finger Lakes Land Trust is curating an educational resource about toxic algae as part of our Water Quality web site at flt.org/water. The pages provide easily accessible information and demonstrate actions individuals can take to reduce nutrient runoff. Staff will be updating the information available regularly and will be out in the field meeting landowners, community organizations, town officials, and others.



JEFF KATRIS

Strengthening Partnerships & Piloting New Programs with Our Lake Associations

Each of our 11 Finger Lakes is served by a nonprofit lake association or watershed group. FLLT is committed to working in partnership with these organizations. For example, we recently developed a formal agreement with the Skaneateles Lake Association and The Nature Conservancy to ensure the coordination of our efforts and maximize our collective impact in the Skaneateles Lake watershed. We are also working in partnership with the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Association to launch a new series of watershed-based educational programs that will launch in 2020. Elsewhere in the region, we will tailor our approach to complement and strengthen local watershed protection efforts to ensure the best result.



BILL HECHT

See this 5-point initiative and more about protecting water quality:

FLLT.ORG/WATER