Councilwoman Kepert Sponsors Resolutions Authorizing the Town to Clean Up the Yaphank Lakes
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Dredging of the lakes will commence this year

Farmingville, NY - At the March 12 Town Board meeting, Councilwoman Connie Kepert sponsored five resolutions which together authorized the long awaited dredging of both Upper and Lower Yaphank Lakes, also known as Lily and Willow Lakes. The dredging will occur between June and October of this year. Funding sources include a Caithness grant and other community benefit funds negotiated by the Councilwoman.

"I'm thrilled that after a long journey we are on the brink of having the Yaphank lakes restored. The lakes are an enormous asset to the community and the Town. Unfortunately, the spread of two invasive species, Cabomba and Variable-Leaf Watermilfoil have had a devastating effect on the ability of residents to enjoy these beautiful historic lakes. I'd like to thank the board for their support in passing these resolutions," stated Councilwoman Kepert.

Members of the Yaphank community reached out to the Councilwoman back in 2007 seeking her assistance in restoring the lakes choked out by invasive species. Considering the magnitude of the problem presented by the invasive species, the Councilwoman formed the Carmans River Working Protection Group. The working group was comprised of elected officials, community stakeholders and experts. The group was chaired by Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director of the Citizens Campaign for the Environment.

A feasibility study, commissioned by Suffolk County and conducted by Nelson Pope & Voorhis, recommended that the lakes be dredged to remove the weed roots and organic material. The Carmans River Protection Working Group reviewed the study and voted to support the recommendation of dredging the lakes.

"The Yaphank lakes are the heart of this historic community. They are a cultural, historic, social and economic asset. Five years of work is finally about to pay off and the community, as well as Councilwoman Kepert, deserve a great deal of credit for their persistent efforts. We are very excited about this project that will begin in June," said Adrienne Esposito, "This is the first effort of its kind on Long Island."

Chad Trusnovec, a member of the Carmans River Protection Working Group who resides on Lily Lake stated, "The people of Yaphank have waited many years for this day to come. For nearly a generation we have watched our lakes slowly deteriorate into a virtually unusable swamp. There is now a bright light at the end of the tunnel. Soon anglers, boaters and outdoor enthusiasts of all types will once again be able to enjoy this beautiful body of water that is the identity of our town. Thanks go out to so many who've made this possible. Councilwoman Kepert, Legislator Browning, committee chairwoman Adrienne Esposito, the NYS DEC, the Brookhaven Rail Terminal, and of course the people of Yaphank whose patience and persistence is finally coming to fruition."

Finally, Bob Kessler, member of the Carmans River Protection Working Group who resides on the Willow Lake stated, "We love our lakes and have been heartbroken by the destruction the weeds have brought. I'm thankful to Councilwoman Kepert for leading the way and helping us to bring our lakes back."

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