



2025 Save Our Sodus Year End Report

Authors: Don Riling, Nan McCoy, Ann Ghyzel, Janet Halasinski & Jessica Stone

November 30, 2025

Presidents Statement

Thank you for a breakthrough year.

The Native Americans have a proverb that reads, “All the flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today.” 2025 has definitely shown us the power contained in that sentiment. In 2023 and 2024, you joined us to plant those seeds; work that we invested together – well before we even could taste the fruit. It’s work that will continue as we move into 2026. There are so many fields to plant!

But don’t you agree, it’s so wonderful to see the flowers turn to fruit!!

2025 brought a tremendous harvest in the donation of the Rose Lummis. She is a catalyst for all that Save our Sodus does. We see her playing a role in our educational programming for the underserved students in our region, conducting water quality research, providing eco-tours, raising revenue for our programs, creating corporate sponsorship opportunities and more!

We saw our investments in partnerships and advocacy bear fruit as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers agreed to establish a regular monthly meeting with our team and began to work more closely with us to roll out information on the break wall project to the community. SOS is now a regular member of the Wayne County Shoreline Resilience Committee, in conjunction with municipal governments and NY Sea Grant.

We saw that fruit in the beginning of 2025 when we invited our academic partners onto a call only to sit back and watch the synergy between science educator, Dr. April Luehmann, and microplastics researcher, Dr. Sami Romanick. That collaboration gave birth to **Sodus BayWatch**. Initially, they worked with us to write a grant proposal to fund it. When that funding opportunity dried up, Dr. Luehmann found some funding through her university. When Washington froze a federal grant we planned to use for

the rest of the camp, we were rescued by a new partnership with Constellation Energy which is also investing in our eco-camps for 2026.

And when Rose Lummis was delivered, we gained new partners and advocates for our mission in the form of dozens of volunteers who have collectively invested thousands of hours in making her bay-worthy and bringing her onto the bay for tours.

We continue our regular investments in advocacy with area environmental and community groups, such as New York Sea Grant and Wayne County Soil & Water Conservation District, and we are now also actively partnering with local school districts to provide their students with research and eco-tour opportunities.

Save our Sodus wants to thank all our donors, partners, and volunteers for a landmark year—2025! The COMMUNITY responded to our vision, stepped in and made these programs possible.

In fact, we counted up all the hours from nearly 50 volunteers – which totaled a whopping 5,680.5 hours (yes we count down to the decimal.) According to independentsector.org, the collective value of those hours is \$219,162.84. At the beginning of each category of action in the following report, you will see a note with how many volunteer hours were donated and their dollar value.

We encourage you to reach out to us with additional partnership suggestions and opportunities. Finally, we would greatly appreciate your referrals for corporate sponsors – for both programs and the Rose Lummis herself. [See Appendix A for Corporate Sponsorship levels.]

On the last page of this report, you'll find a complete financial accounting of 2025 revenue and expenses. Here are the areas of operation for your review:

I. Rose Lummis

- A. This fully-restored historic river boat was purchased by an anonymous donor to catalyze all three arms of mission – especially our goal to create a sustainable community through education and tourism. Thousands of volunteer hours and donor dollars were dedicated to reassembling her, certifying her and operating her for a full set of eco and entertainment cruises three days a week.
- B. We look forward to expanding her role as a floating classroom, providing research opportunities for the region’s students, conducting water quality assessments, and offering summer camps that focus on the ecology of Sodus Bay and the regional watershed that feeds the bay.

II. Return to Water Quality

- A. Weekly Water Wellness marked Year Two.
- B. Nab-A-Hab marked Year Three.
- C. Battle Weeds: SOS planned and executed two weed harvesting sessions in the summer and organized a petition drive to encourage Wayne County budget funds to replace two of the old weed harvesters as well as funds to improve the program.
- D. We launched the Shoreline Stewards program which supplied most of our HAB reports this year.

III. Advocacy and Partnerships

- A. The SOS board empowered the organization to investigate and establish relationships with federal, state, and local agencies and organizations that are existing stakeholders or have current government mandates associated with water quality and shoreline retention. In 2025, we laid significant groundwork for SOS to become a partner in exciting programs that will benefit the communities around the bay in the coming years.
- B. Laying the groundwork has been instrumental in re-establishing Save Our Sodus as a credible partner to give voice to larger initiatives that advocate for our community’s needs.

IV. Education Initiatives

- A. Sodus BayWatch: A MicroPlastics Education Curriculum and Community Cleanup Day
- B. Discovery Days: Testing curriculum for 2026 Eco-Camps
- C. Rose Lummis Eco-Tours for families: SOS hosted more than 300 kids and their parents on eco-tours.

V. Grants & Communications

- A. In 2025, SOS set out to expand our community engagement growing our E-newsletter mailing list and elevating our social media presence.
- C. With more programs and events for the community, SOS had reason to reach beyond our usual circle of communication and participate in radio and TV segments to promote the SOS mission.
- D. Social media engagement rose by 150%. Website traffic surged by 500%, and our E-newsletter audience expanded by 400%. More people than ever are tuning in to learn, volunteer, and support our mission.

As we move into 2026, our board is energized, professionalized and focused on leveraging the **Rose Lummis** to create more impact - in water quality assessment for the Bay, community eco-camps and shoreline resilience education. It certainly would not have been possible without your support!

Please enjoy our 2025 recap below, which is a compilation of reports from our team and discover the exciting initiatives we have in mind for 2026.

We are incredibly grateful for all that this community has done to support the SOS Mission.

We look forward to hearing from you in the coming year!

Don Riling, President
On behalf of the SOS Board of Directors

I. Rose Lummis



Photo Courtesy: Keith Smith

Total Volunteer Hours: 2929
Dollar Value: \$101,899
(calculated at independentsector.org rate)

A. Challenge:

At the end of 2023, a local businessman read the 2023-2024 Strategic Plan and our vision to conduct eco-tours for local families and students who might not otherwise have access to the water. He contacted SOS, asking if he could purchase a boat to make that vision a reality. The donor searched for almost a year without success. During a board meeting in late 2024, board member, Nell Gardner, asked, "Did you know that the Rose Lummis is for sale, in Appleton, Wisconsin?" SOS quickly passed on the

information to the donor and within a few weeks, the newly-restored Rose Lummis was on its way to Sodus Bay. Arrival meant the SOS team had to spring into action and pull together a team of skilled craftsmen and women on short notice. Our community responded!

B. Response:

Over thousands of volunteer hours, under the direction of Boat Operations Manager, Keith Smith, half a dozen skilled tradesmen and women in the community assembled, painted and added a new logo to the Rose Lummis. Keith and Owen Fisk also formulated systems on passenger booking (fareharbor,) crew uniform, providing music onboard, volunteer hour tracking and crew booking.

C. Outcomes:

SOS dedicated the **Rose Lummis** at the Under the Sea Gala held at Pier 53 on June eighth. We welcomed 70 donors and partners to celebrate our mission and the arrival of the **Rose Lummis**. After christening her, SOS operated tours for about six weeks at the end of the summer, beginning August 1. We offered 1-2 eco-tours and 1-2 evening entertainment tours. We also used the boat for private charters and Eco-Camps during Sodus Bay Watch and Discovery Days.

D. Learning:

Rose Lummis has opened up a much wider range of options for both educational initiatives and revenue generation within the community. She has raised the profile of Save our Sodus considerably, and we aim to build on that increased visibility. We look forward to outfitting her as a floating classroom and make her available to area school groups, to host policy discussions on shoreline resilience, and deepening the region's connection to Sodus Bay.

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*“Wonderful trip! The crew was very helpful and patient with everyone on board – very knowledgeable! I really enjoyed the history and environmental impacts of Sodus Bay... well done! Also - there was*

*excellent communication prior to the boat ride via email.” ~ Elaine Rubal, passenger.*

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II. Expansion of Water Quality Commitment



Photo Courtesy: Mary Fantuzzo

Total Volunteer Hours: 485

Dollar Value: \$16,856

(calculated at independentsector.org rate)

A. Challenge:

Save our Sodus has its roots in water quality protection. In 2025, SOS sought to expand its water quality commitment to expand Weekly Water Wellness to include invasive species and additional metrics and to create a Shoreline Stewards Program.

B. Response:

In May, SOS launched its Shoreline Stewards Program, training volunteers to regularly patrol and catalogue the presence of trash on their beach-front property as well as any identifiable hazardous algal blooms. In 2025, SOS continued Weekly Water Wellness and Nab-A-Hab (blue-green algae detection) as well as the DEC Citizen Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP) participation. The organization also planned two community water chestnut pulls and an informational lecture on the history of fishing in the Bay. SOS is exploring the possibility of consolidating Nab-A-Hab into Shoreline Stewards in 2026.

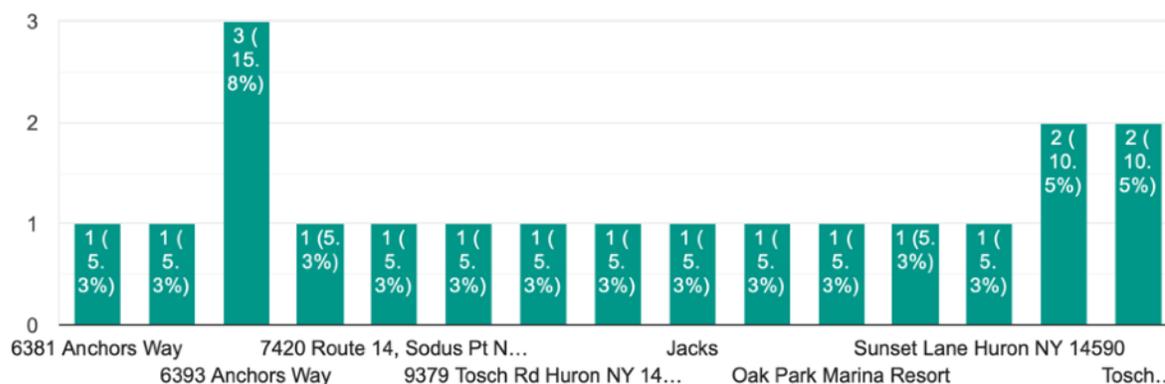
C. Outcomes:

1. Shoreline Stewards

In 2025, Beth Palmer and Don Riling launched the Shoreline Stewards program, to encourage shoreline residents to commit to taking weekly shore walks to (1) collect accessible trash; (2) inspect water appearance for possible Harmful Algae Blooms (HABs); (3) take photos of potential HABs and/or collected trash; and (4) send photos with their completed survey of findings to SOS the same day. Thirteen people signed up to participate. In this test program, five people collectively, filed 17 reports, and were responsible for locating a majority of SOS’s reportable HAB’s this season. Here is a breakdown of locations monitored:

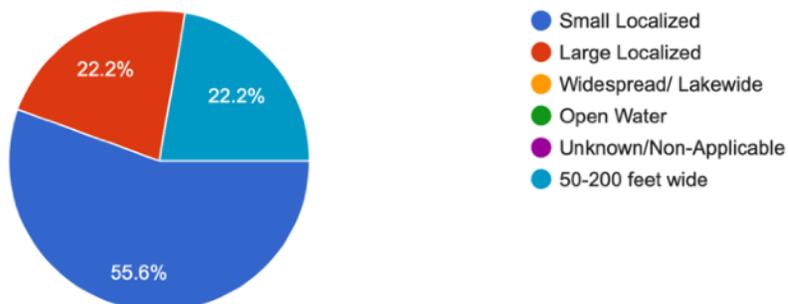
Location I monitored today (Street, city, state, zip):

19 responses



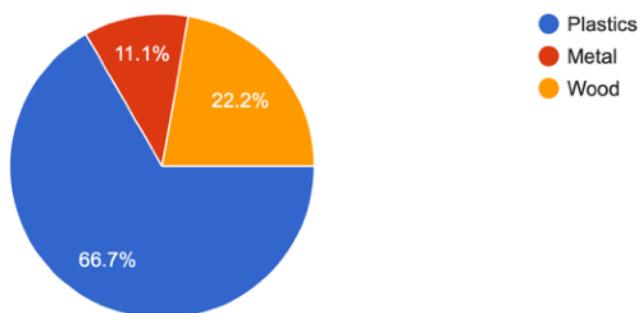
One third of the reports found positively-identified HAB’s of the following types:

Please describe the extent of the bloom. Small Localized The HAB is contained in a very small area of the lake, limited from one to several neighborin...e HAB on the shoreline. Unknown or Not applicable
9 responses



Less than 20% of respondents found or picked up trash, but among those who did, here's the breakdown of type of trash.

I collected the following types of trash:
7 responses



2. Weekly Water Wellness Program (W3)

Team Members:

(L-R) Dennis Chasse, Ann Ghyzel, Farmer Gardner, Nell Gardner



Photo credit: Ann Ghyzel

In 2025, the team conducted water samples over a 16-week period from June to October. Each week team members tested three locations on each side of Sodus Bay. Approximately 200 tests were completed, including water temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and conductivity. They also recorded the presence and type of aquatic weeds and collected samples for identification. Overall the native species of aquatic weeds were the most abundant.

Three commonly known invasive aquatic weeds were identified in the following locations:

1. **Water chestnuts**: Second Creek, Bay Bridge, Oak Park Marine, Lake Bluff
2. **Curly Leaf Pondweed** was seen in almost all locations.
3. **Eurasian Watermilfoil**: Lake Bluff, Second Creek.

The team also identified two additional invasive aquatic plants in 2025:

- **Brittle Naiad** at First Creek and **Bladderwort** also at First Creek. Bladderwort is an invasive carnivorous plant with little pockets for capturing and digesting small invertebrates.

Throughout the summer, the W3 team hosted two Cornell Water Resources Institute Researchers - Dr Evie Brahmstedt and her Intern, Maria Villa. They took water samples in Sodus Bay to measure pesticide levels prior to the invasive Lanternfly arrival, which was expected to significantly increase pesticide use. They also saved two painted turtles who were crossing Rt 14 and moved them to a safe location.

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*“The results from our water testing have shown that the Bay is in pretty good shape overall.” ~ Dennis Chasse, SOS W3 volunteer.*  
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Photo credit: Nell Gardner

Our Weekly Water Wellness Team also hosted an evening lecture, titled The REEL Report in July, featuring Chris Arney and SeaGrant's Stacy Furgal. This informative talk covered the history of fishing in Sodus Bay and the current SeaGrant research on fish in the Bay and Lake Ontario.

See Appendix B for the full W3 Report from volunteer, Ann Ghyzel. All graphs and testing results are included. It's a very interesting read.

3. Nab-a-Hab

The Nab-A-Hab program marked its third year in 2025. The team is led by SOS board member, Beth Palmer and quickly becoming a reliable resource for the community to call when there's a sighting of Blue-Green Algae, also known as hazardous algal blooms (ie. "HAB."). Nab-A-Hab is designed to give Bay residents or visitors a method for alerting authorities to the possible occurrence of blue/green algae which can make animals and humans sick. Summer 2025's warm weather gave the team a quick start to the season in June lasting all the way through October.

SOS responded to multiple reports of possible HAB's, and verified six of them. We then announced our findings on social media and provided the information to the authorities. A majority were found on the East side of the bay. Our results are included in the DEC reporting [here](#):

Special thanks to our trained volunteers: Mary Fantuzzo, Sue Bassage, Catherine Brokaw, Tom & Nancy Tschieder, Keith Smith, Mike Healy, Sondra Bonner, and Beth & Gerry Palmer for standing at the ready all summer and responding at a moment's notice.

4. CSLAP Testing

The Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program is a project of The NY State Federation of Lake Associations (NYSFOLA). They have been a powerful force in protecting the lakes statewide. Board member, Beth Palmer, has been a long-time member of the Sodus Bay CSLAP testing team (along with volunteers Gerry Palmer and Mike Healy) and is certified

to collect monthly samples for the statewide database NYSFOLA maintains. See Appendix C for more background on CSLAP.

5. Battle Weeds



Photo Courtesy: Mary Fantuzzo

The 2025 initiative this year was to:

- Plan two “Get Out and Get Dirty” community Water Chestnut Pulls.
 - Increase the cadence and reach of weed harvesting on the bay
1. Save our Sodus hosted two community water chestnut pulls in summer 2025. One was held on the West Side of the bay on July 19, 2025. The other was held on the East Side of the bay on August 9, 2025. Half a dozen community members attended each one, pulling in 12 bags of water chestnuts in July and 12 bags in August
 2. In October 2025, Save our Sodus initiated a petition drive to encourage the county to purchase two new weed harvesters to replace two aging ones and increase its budget to operate them in more parts of Sodus Bay, ensuring a greater impact of them. Huron Town Supervisor, Dave Fantuzzo, initiated the effort. To date, SOS has gathered more than 130 signatures and comments from concerned residents who back spending the estimated \$400,000 on expanding Wayne County Soil & Water’s program, which is conditioned on Wayne County getting two \$250,000 grants to

purchase two harvesters. On December 2, the Wayne County Board of Supervisors will make its decision on final approval.

D. Learning:

Very few of the shoreline stewards who initially responded to the survey actually wound up responsively participating. SOS is exploring other ways of encouraging additional participation in future years. Stewards did not use the Rubbish app to record pictures and locations of trash. Beth Palmer suggests we consider adopting the use of the iMap Invasives app, an online tracker for invasive species in several states across the country instead run by NatureServe. The team says the Stewards program has helped raise awareness of SOS among potential volunteers, and the tracking form for Stewards also proved very useful to track ALL Hab reports over the summer. SOS plans to review the way it reports positively-identified HAB's going forward to make sure the public understands that they are less dangerous to people and animals on the Bay than they are on the Finger Lakes. This is because, HAB's on Sodus Bay tend to dissipate much quicker than they do on the Finger Lakes – thanks to Lake Ontario wind speeds combined with the broader water surface area of our Bay. The team has also requested that we move to use info@saveoursodus.com as a contact point for the public to report HAB's as opposed to the previously-established, nabahab@saveoursodus.com. We also want to thank CSLAP for allowing Beth to do her monthly collections alongside the Weekly Water Wellness team which will save time and money and still allow SOS to provide the data the state uses through that program.

III. Advocacy and the Importance of Partnerships



Photo credit: Lana Soroka

Total Volunteer Hours: 1500
Dollar Value: \$52,185
(calculated at independentsector.org rate)

A. Challenge:

SOS had to rebuild much of its institutional knowledge and relationships with regional environmental organizations, which historically enabled the advocacy work of the organization and its largest initiatives.

B. Response:

SOS has focused a significant amount of time and resources on establishing relationships with each of the local, state and federal agencies which touch our three arms of mission.



Photo Courtesy: Don Riling, Emerson Shenandoah, Dr. April Luehmann, Dr. Lisa Glidden

C. Outcomes:

SOS has also established a regular cadence of meetings with NY SeaGrant, Wayne County Soil & Water Conservation District, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo Office who is charged with rebuilding the East Breakwall. SOS also regularly attends regional workgroup meetings

for the International Joint Commission Great Lakes Water Quality Board, NYS Department of Conservation's Great Lakes Action Agenda, NY State Federation of Lake Associations, the Finger Lakes Institute, the New York Water Resources Institute, and more. This year, Don Riling was also invited to serve on an economic development board for the Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary, which is a conduit for environmentally responsible economic development dollars.

SOS now maintains working relationships with University of Rochester Warner School of Education, Lake Ontario MicroPlastics Institute, Cornell University's Water Resources Institute, SUNY Oswego's Great Lakes Institute, and Indiana University's O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs.

The ***Rose Lummis*** enables SOS to establish partnerships at the school district level. Teachers have approached us to offer eco-tour field trips, research opportunities for their science curriculum, and of course to offer additional programming over the summer-months through our eco-camps. 2025 brought partnerships with Marion Central, Sodus Central, and Rochester Schools' nature-based learning coach, Kyra Stephenson. Going into 2026, we are building new relationships with Wayne Central, Rochester School of the Arts, East Palmyra Central, Newark Wayne, Williamson Central and North Rose-Wolcott Central.

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*"One of the things that is important in rural communities is that kids get provided with opportunities." ~ Dr. Ellen Lloyd, Superintendent Marion Central Schools*  
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D. Learning:

This progress was made possible because SOS recognized that the level of opportunity and expectation required us to think and plan at a different level. We are increasingly operating like a staffed-non-profit with recording systems, greater levels of financial transparency and a higher level of

organizational communications. The volume of work could not be done alone by an all-volunteer board made up of working professionals and several retirees. We presented this idea to our supporters, who liked the idea, and invested. Our corporate and community foundation partners agreed. We now have a paid bookkeeper to assist with compliance and financial record-keeping, and we are working towards a paid position to manage boat operations. SOS efforts to professionalize were recognized by Constellation Energy when it awarded a second grant in 2025, bringing the annual total to \$70,000 for the year. We are also keenly aware that the donation of the **Rose Lummis** would not have occurred if SOS had not begun to professionalize its operations in 2024.

IV. Education through Action:



Photo Courtesy: Molly Wilson

Total Volunteer Hours: 436

Dollar Value: \$15,168

(calculated at independentsector.org rate)

A. Challenge:

In order to grow the next generation of environmental stewards and create space for more comprehensive community involvement, SOS piloted additional education opportunities in 2025.

B. Responses:

- Began Eco-tours on Sodus Bay, providing an interesting and entertaining experience on the Rose Lummis.

- Partnered with Sodus and Marion Central Schools and Dr. April Luehmann’s *Get Real Science* programs, to prepare future generations for environmental stewardship.
- Piloted Discovery Days with around 10 kids in late summer alongside Kyra Stephenson to experiment with a new curriculum for 2026 eco-camps.

C. Outcomes:

The ***Rose Lummis*** supercharged our opportunities to educate the region’s families about the eco-history of the bay. We also leveraged the boat as a floating classroom for Sodus BayWatch and Discovery Days.

1. EcoTours

Rose Lummis began tours on August 1st. Over a six week period, the Rose Lummis provided eco-tours to a total of 357 adults and 167 kids. A majority of those passengers took advantage of the \$1 per person fee, thanks to the generous donations of the boat’s anonymous donor who wanted to make sure that the cost for the tour would not be a barrier to experiencing the bay.

See Appendix D below for links to ***Rose Lummis*** dedication

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*“There is not enough public access to the bays and lake. I see the eco-tours as being a partial remedy for this problem.” ~ Rosa Fox, Town of Huron Historian*  
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2. Local School Partnerships

SOS has now successfully formed collaborations with University of Rochester’s Dr. April Luehmann’s *Get Real Science*, experiential learning programs as well as Rochester School’s Kyra Stephenson’s nature-based learning solutions. We also continue to work with microplastics expert and researcher, Dr. Sami Romanick. Both she and Dr. Luehmann crafted the 10 day Sodus BayWatch Science Action Course which educated more than

50 students on the dangers of microplastics, allowed them to publish their research in a journal, and facilitated a day of community outreach at Sodus Beach on the topic. Through the *Rose Lummis*, 2025 brought partnerships with Marion Central, Sodus Central, and Rochester's nature-based learning coach, Kyra Stephenson. Going into 2026, we are building new relationships with Wayne Central, Rochester School of the Arts, East Palmyra Central, Newark Wayne, Williamson Central and North Rose-Wolcott Central.



Photo Courtesy: Molly Wilson

a. Sodus BayWatch

In June, more than 50 Marion Central Schools students participated in nearly two weeks of research, data collection and study of MicroPlastics on Sodus Bay, culminating in a research publication project and student-led community day of action. To achieve this, SOS partnered with the following instructors:

- University of Rochester Get Real Science director, Dr. April Luehmann
- Lake Ontario MicroPlastics Center researcher, Dr. Sami Romanick
- University of Rochester undergraduate sustainability fellows
- University of Rochester Doctoral Science Student Molly Wilson
- Marion Central Schools Science Teachers

On June 21, 2025, Marion Central Schools students lead the community in a MicroPlastics Awareness Event & Cleanup Day with a goal to teach residents how to identify microplastics in sand and water at Sodus Point Beach Park and repurpose collected plastics into art forms

Sodus BayWatch almost didn't happen, but thanks to Constellation Energy's response to our social media blitz in the spring, we received the funds needed to facilitate this 10 day program. Constellation also generously provided volunteers to staff the June 21st community day event.

See Appendix E for the video of the day

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*"We hope this work will drive change in Sodus Bay to reduce plastic pollution." ~ Dr. Samantha Romanick, MicroPlastics Researcher.*

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Photo Courtesy: Lana Soroka

b. Summer Eco-Boot Camp Development

This fall we also piloted Discovery Days, in anticipation of beginning to design a 6-8 week program with Alasa Farms/Cracker Box Palace for students in 2026. During the camp, participants will learn about topics including: the ecological and social history of the Sodus Bay watershed; the importance of water quality monitoring; methods to conduct various water quality assessments; microplastics research and how data collection and analysis can be used to improve the health of a watershed. We are collaborating on curriculum with Kyra Stephenson, nature-based learning coach and teacher in the Rochester City Schools. We have received \$50,000 in funding from Constellation Energy, a portion of which will go towards this program even as we seek additional funding.

SOS is dedicated to the educational part of our mission, and we will continue to look for ways in 2026 to fund the summer Eco-Boot Camp through specific donations and sponsorships.

IV. Communications & Grants

A. Challenge:

SOS began 2025 with an intent to build on the momentum generated from the Bay Day celebration - both in terms of community involvement and awareness and sponsorship interaction and participation. The SOS communications consultant began to leverage deeper relationships, expand our network with researchers, and co-write grants for large funding opportunities in the education space. In 2024, SOS recognized that these partnerships would yield greater programmatic opportunities which in turn would need to be matched by greater funding streams. 2025 brought the clearest evidence of that, when SOS literally received a donation of a tour boat that could be used as a floating classroom for educational programming and awareness-building, and when the organization's partnerships with educators and researchers began to yield specific programmatic funding needs. Simultaneously, the consultant engaged in grant-writing for a Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary grant for educational programming, encountered a funding freeze. A separate funding freeze almost derailed Sodus BayWatch, but SOS's social media campaign resulted in a corporate donor (Constellation Energy) filling the gap. SOS continues to see the need to build a permanent and vital connection between communications and funding as we move forward into 2026 – most likely by engaging a part time grant writer.

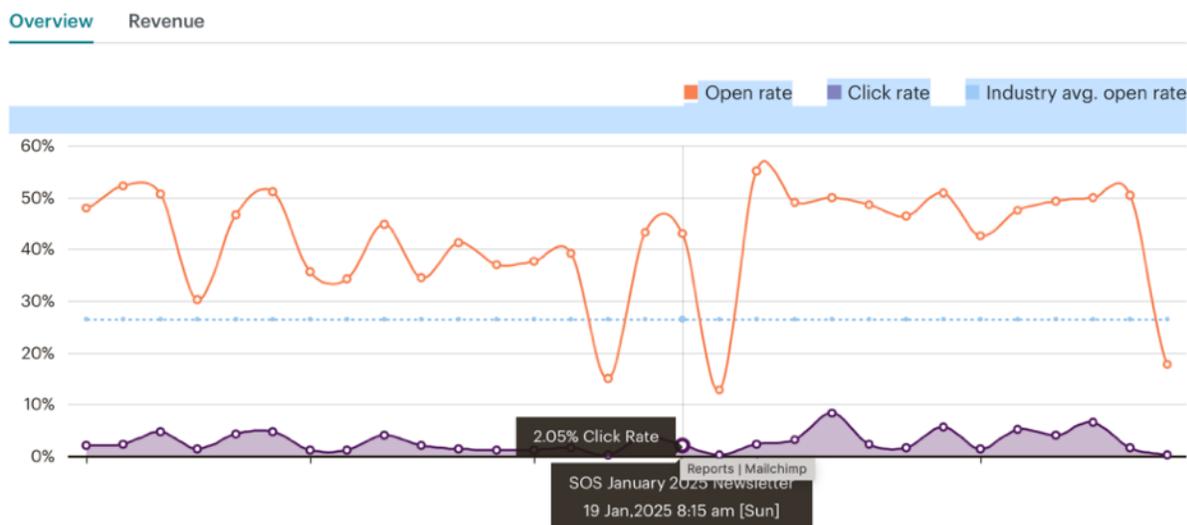
B. Communications Response:

In 2025, Save our Sodus's receipt of the **Rose Lummis** provided a unique opportunity to leverage community buzz and broader implications for school districts, children's groups and environmental interests. All in all - SOS had plenty to communicate about on radio, television and social media. The unfortunate loss of a federal grant for Sodus BayWatch turned into a communications success when a community-member who works for Constellation Energy saw the SOS social media campaign to find new funding for Sodus BayWatch. She came forward to provide a generous donation from Constellation Energy, enabling us to go forward with the program.

C. Communications Outcomes:

A. SOS E-Newsletter

In 2025, SOS continued to release a monthly E-newsletter to keep the community engaged with SOS activity. Since January, SOS sent out 14 E-newsletters and added more than 350 new active email addresses. These newsletters are cross-posted on our Facebook page. We have an enviable open rate of 43.5%. Mailchimp reports an average 40.04% open rate for non profits. As you can see in the chart below, beginning in January of 2025, email engagement plateaued at a higher level than last year's average readership.



B. Social Media (Facebook + Instagram)

1. Audience

Since January 2025, SOS has added nearly 550 new followers on its Facebook page through mid-October and attracted more than 700,000 views through the end of October 2025, with one post reaching more than 100,000 views alone. Here's a snapshot of our Facebook followers. Most come from Rochester, followed by Alton and Sodus Point.

Audience

Export

Demographics

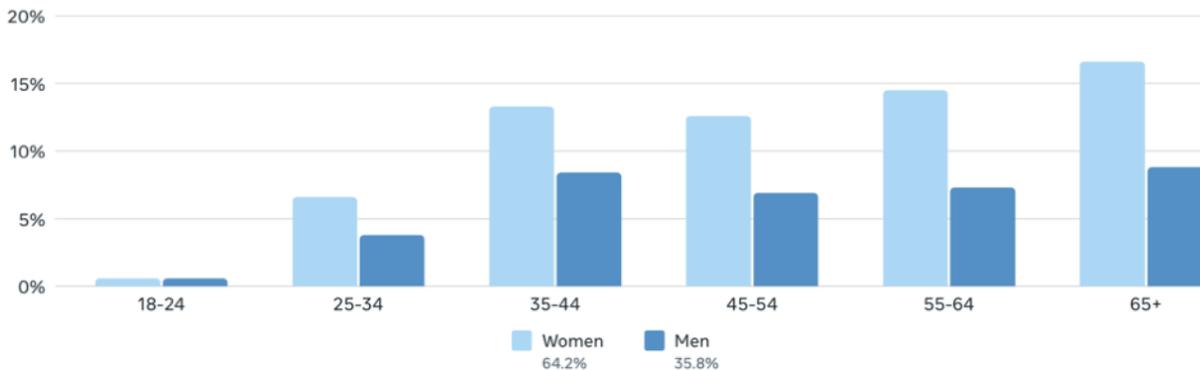
Trends

Potential audience

Followers ⓘ

3,178

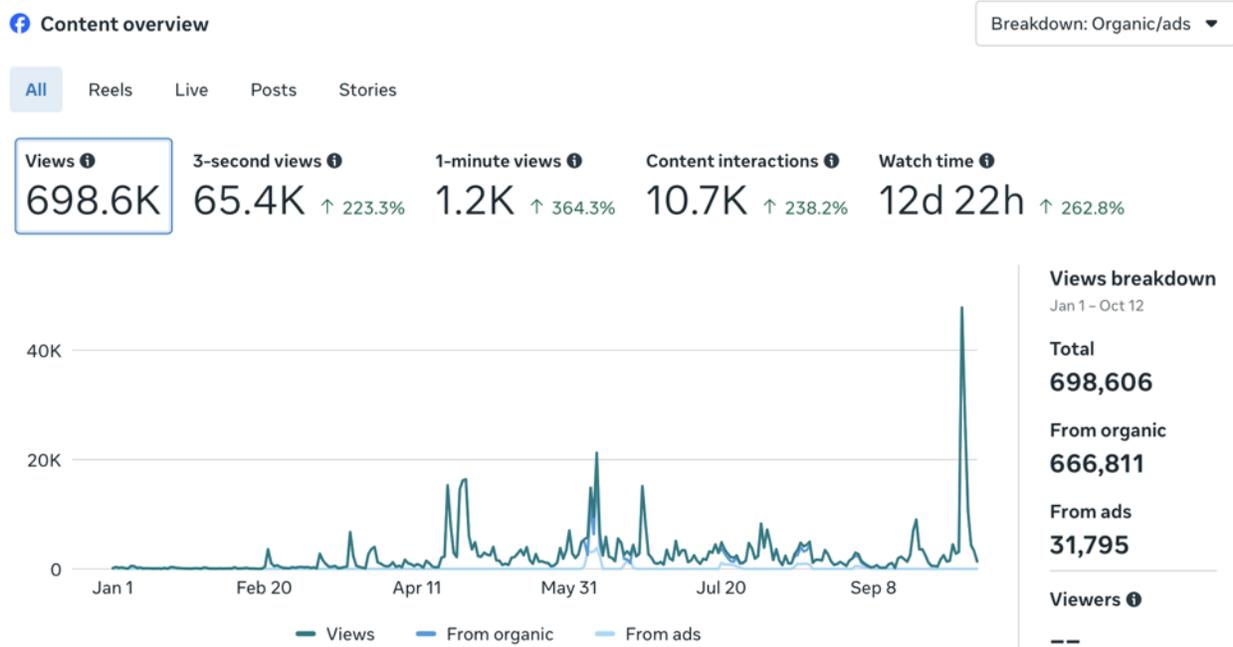
Age & gender ⓘ



2. Engagement

According to Facebook analytics, visits to the SOS page increased over 2024

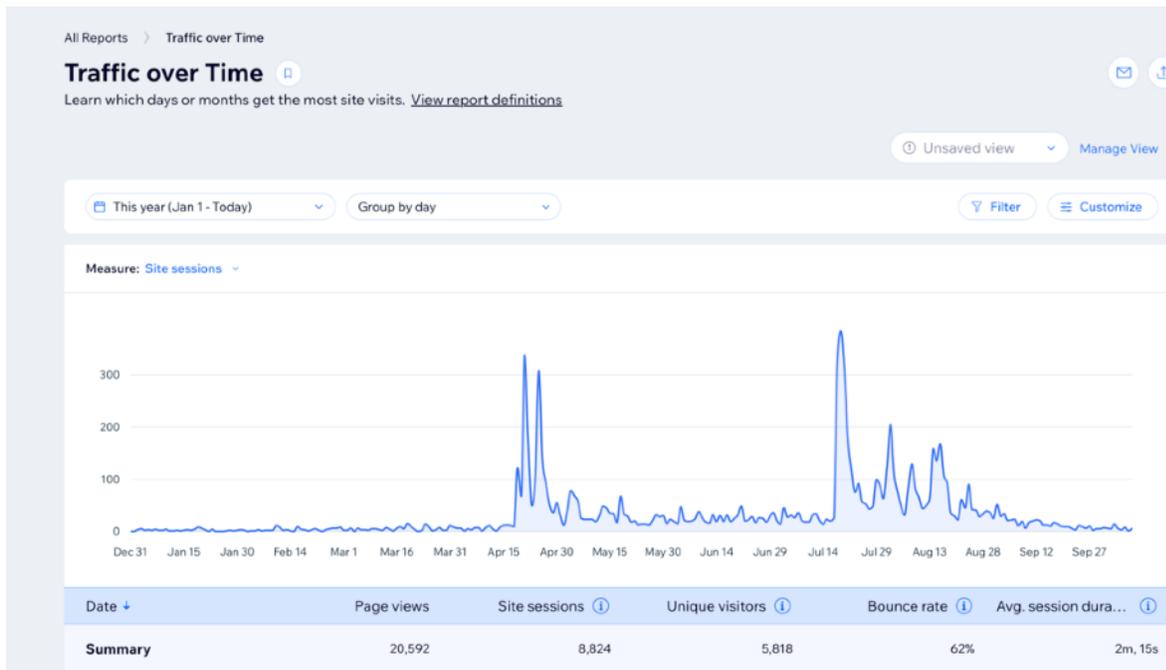
by more than 150%, and SOS kept visitors' attention longer with videos, reels, surveys and critical information about the Bay. SOS saw content interactions up by more than 238%, with watch time increasing by more than 250%.



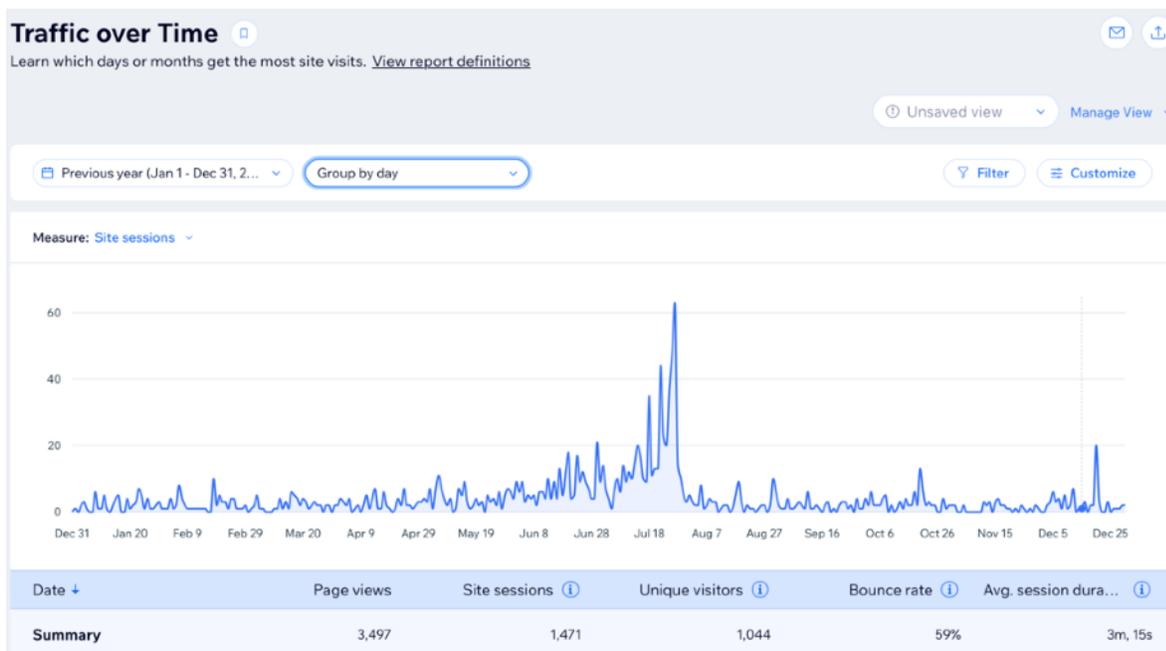
C. Website (www.saveoursodus.com)

After a total redesign of www.saveoursodus.com in 2023, SOS continued to build traffic. Thanks to the addition of the Sodus Bay Tours booking component on the website, our engagement grew dramatically. As you can see, from the moment in April, we announced the arrival of the **Rose Lummis**, through the end of the summer, we saw increased engagement, more than 20,000 page views in 2025 up from 3500 the year before. We received six times more unique visitors than 2024 and site sessions increased nearly six times as well – that’s an increase of 500%! Best of all, according to WIX, 28% of our traffic comes from returning visitors – that’s more than double most non-profits.

2025 TRAFFIC:



2024 TRAFFIC:



D. Event Promotion (earned media)

Announcing the arrival of **Rose Lummis** as well as the microplastics awareness event Sodus Baywatch gave us ample opportunity in 2025 to raise the profile of Save our Sodus further. Click on the hyperlinks below for stories featuring our board members, volunteers and research partners.

[Spectrum News with Seth Voorheese](#)

[WROC with Leann Byer](#)

[WXXI “Environmental Connections” with Jasmine Singer](#)

A. Grants Response

Summary of work with SUNY Oswego, NSF/Indiana U/Constellation, ESL, Reliant, Stuart Family Foundation, etc.

B. Grants Outcomes

1. In January, we continued our work with the director of SUNY Oswego’s Great Lakes Institute, Lisa Glidden, to apply for a grant under the Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary Community Fund. We began expanding our reach into the indigenous communities across our area and made a plan to solicit their inclusion in a new grant application to the same entity after our initial proposal was rejected in December 2024.

Unfortunately, not long after grants were awarded to the 2024 submissions, the federal government froze the program so we were unable to continue our application.

2. Indiana University National Science Foundation Grant (NSF) In 2025, SOS continued working on this grant application to assess hazard mitigation in two comparative lake towns – one in Michigan, and the other in Sodus Point. Consultant, Jessica Stone, had previously reached out to and worked with Dr. Diane Henshel of Indiana University to include Sodus Bay residents in Henshel’s survey research about risk assessment for communities subject to shoreline erosion and flooding. This set the groundwork for an outreach by Henshel as she is now working on an National Science Foundation grant which will enable more cataloguing of risk mitigation for communities like Sodus Point.

b. In June 2023, SOS learned from Tony David, Director of the Saint Regis

Mohawk Tribe's Environment Division that Sodus Point is the most vulnerable to lake level fluctuations of any location on Lake Ontario due to its low-lying level. David is also a member of the International Joint Commission's Lake Ontario St. Lawrence River Board which makes decisions on lake levels for Lake Ontario. SOS hosted Mr. David for an informational event, and has subsequently used that information to seek out opportunities to participate in studies and grant-making opportunities to position Sodus Bay residents for more aid should flood waters again rise on Lake Ontario.

c. To that end, SOS is currently participating as a partner in this large grant application with Dr. Henshel and Indiana University to bring research dollars to Sodus Bay residents to assess their risk preparations for flood conditions and to better equip them to respond in the future. The initial deadlines were in 2025, but have been moved to 2026 due to the changes in funding streams at the federal level which have impacted NSF.

3. This year SOS applied for and received a Henry Stuart Foundation Grant in the amount of \$2,000.

4. SOS went through the grant submission process for ESL Federal Credit Union community grants, but was ultimately deemed ineligible for their grant process.

5. SOS was the recipient of the **Rose Lummis** and its first year operating costs from an anonymous donor. This was not the result of grant applications, but of relationship-building. We continue to see positive results with our corporate sponsors.

B. Grant Learning:

On the whole, we have historically achieved better results with individual and corporate sponsorships than foundations/large government grant entities. We have put funds in the budget to work with a professional grant writer to apply for and manage larger government grants.

V. Organizational Structure & Compliance

A. Challenge

SOS is now positioned to receive and administer larger corporate and government grants, so we need the systems to do so.

B. Response

We recognize we need a system of standardized financial reporting and compliance as well as organizational structure to better preserve and record the organization's history and future.

1. Outcomes

- This year, we set up a non-profit google account so that we could have one terabyte of free storage and unlimited emails for board members. This saved about \$400 to the organization and allowed us to expand our documentation storage capacity to move our records to a safe place.
- SOS moved out of its longtime office/conference room space at the village hall and began formally cataloging, organizing all SOS paper records and uploading all electronic records to the shared google drive.
- SOS hired a part time bookkeeper who implemented a monthly financial reporting mechanism to deliver reports to the board and major donors.
- Secretary/bookkeeper Nan McCoy and consultant, Jessica Stone began working on recording formal policies and procedures for **Rose Lummis** and other program administration
- Formulating board member expectation document
- Conflict of interest disclosures for all board members
- Sexual Harassment pledge for all board members
- Volunteer expectations document
- Volunteer record keeping app/spreadsheet for recruitment goal is to recruit a volunteer coordinator

- Thank You Notes record keeping spreadsheet for all donations over \$15.00. Secretary/bookkeeper, Nan McCoy, is working with Mary Fantuzzo, board member on writing and recording.
- Our first intern – Owen Fisk — helped run the nascent business of the **Rose Lummis**.

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*“Volunteering with SOS is great. It’s the best volunteer work I’ve ever done,” says Owen Fisk, first SOS intern on board the Rose Lummis.*

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C. Learning

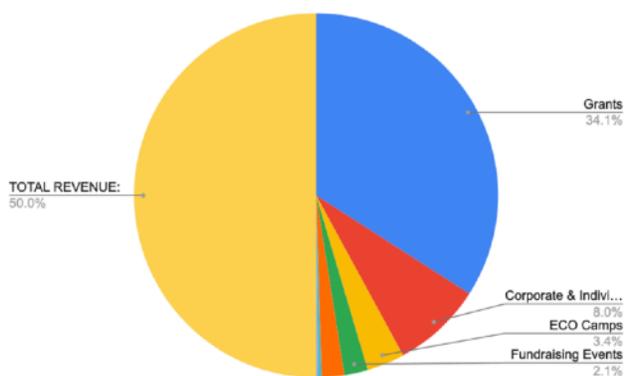
- Transparency is vital to any organization. Record keeping provides that transparency.
- Transparency provides confidence to our donors, sponsors, volunteers, community leaders and community members that their valuable time, energy and dollars are being used properly and wisely.
- Recognizing our volunteers and their importance in reaching our organizations goals is part of our record keeping.
- Organization of our historical documents & references is critical to move forward with guidance from the past. Why “reinvent the wheel”?

2025 Budget Year-End Report

SOS SAVE OUR SODUS - ROSE LUMMIS

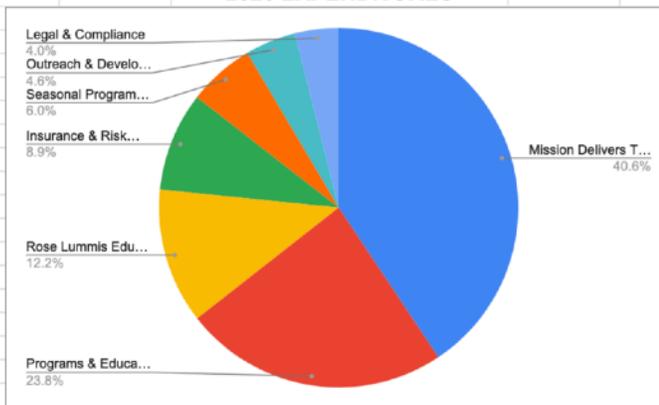
2025 REVENUE

SOS 2025 REVENUE	
Grants	\$122,000.00
Corporate & Individual Giving	\$28,600.00
ECO Camps	\$12,000.00
Fundraising Events	\$7,511.00
Rose Lummis Ticket Sales	\$7,217.00
Rose Lummis Charter Income	\$1,000.00
Other Events	\$600.00
Interest Income	\$90.00
TOTAL REVENUE:	\$179,018.00



2025 EXPENDITURES

SOS 2025 EXPENDITURES	
Mission Delivers Team	\$59,018.00
Programs & Educational Services	\$34,549.00
Rose Lummis Educational Vessel & Facilities	\$17,693.00
Insurance & Risk Management	\$12,934.00
Seasonal Program Staff	\$8,676.00
Outreach & Development	\$6,617.00
Legal & Compliance	\$5,739.00
Facilities	\$764.38
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	\$139,487.00



VI. Appendixes

A. Appendix A- Corporate Sponsorship Levels

1. \$10,000+ Sponsor

- Prominent placement on Rose Lummis sponsor Board (May-September)
- Exclusive Save Our Sodus Sustaining Sponsor recognition on the homepage of our website & newsletter for 1 year. (We include a live link to your homepage.)
- Prominent logo placement on signage for SOS events
- Business mentioned as sponsor in press releases
- Special verbal thank - you during eco-tours on Rose Lummis
- Personalized thank-you letter and plaque for your business, home or lake house
- Dedicated article/feature in our newsletter
- 10 FREE tickets for Rose Lummis eco-tours
- Opportunity for your business to supply gift-items or or coupons on our cruises

2. \$5,000 Sponsor

- Placement on Rose Lummis Sponsor Board (June-August)
- Exclusive Save Our Sodus Sustaining Sponsor recognition on the homepage of website & newsletter for 1 year. (We include a live link to your homepage.)
- Prominent logo placement on signage for SOS events
- Dedicated article/feature in our newsletter
- 10 FREE tickets for Rose Lummis eco-tours
- Opportunity for your business to supply gift-items or or coupons for visitors and students on our cruises

3. \$2,500 Sponsor

- Placement on Rose Lummis Sponsor Board (May & September)
- Recognition of your business on the program webpage of your choice (We include a live link to your homepage.)
- Prominent logo placement on signage for SOS events

- Dedicated article/feature in our newsletter
- 10 FREE tickets for Rose Lummis eco-tours

4. \$1,000 Sponsor

- Recognition in our newsletter
- Acknowledgement on the SOS website on About page (We include a live link to your homepage.)
- Logo listed as a sponsor on signage for SOS event
- 5 FREE tickets for Rose Lummis eco-tours

Choose a Project to Support:

As a sponsor, we invite you to direct your contribution to one of the following key programs that align with your passion for the protection of Sodus Bay:

- Eco Tours on Sodus Bay – Sponsor educational eco-tours for schools and local communities, every week on the newly arrived Rose Lummis!
- Eco Camp for Local Kids – Help fund educational summer camps focused on environmental stewardship.
- Shoreline Stewards Program – Support our efforts to engage local homeowners in shoreline protection.
- Water Quality Programming: This includes Weekly Water Wellness which supports ongoing monitoring and educational programs about water health, our HAB response program (Nab-A-Hab)

We know that businesses and waterfront owners care deeply about the future of Sodus Bay and Lake Ontario. Your partnership is crucial in helping us continue this important mission.

B. Appendix B Complete W3 Report

SOS Water Wellness Data Charts 2025

Samples Taken by: Ann Ghyzel, Nell Gardner & Dennis Chasse

Observations by: Farmer Gardner

Instrument used: Hanna Instruments model #HI98199 Multiparameter Meter pH/mV, EC, Dissolved Oxygen & Temperature, HI3874 Nitrate Test Kit and HI3833 Phosphate Test Kit.

Locations:

Sodus Bay, surface water, water depth ~ 2-4 ft:

1st Creek

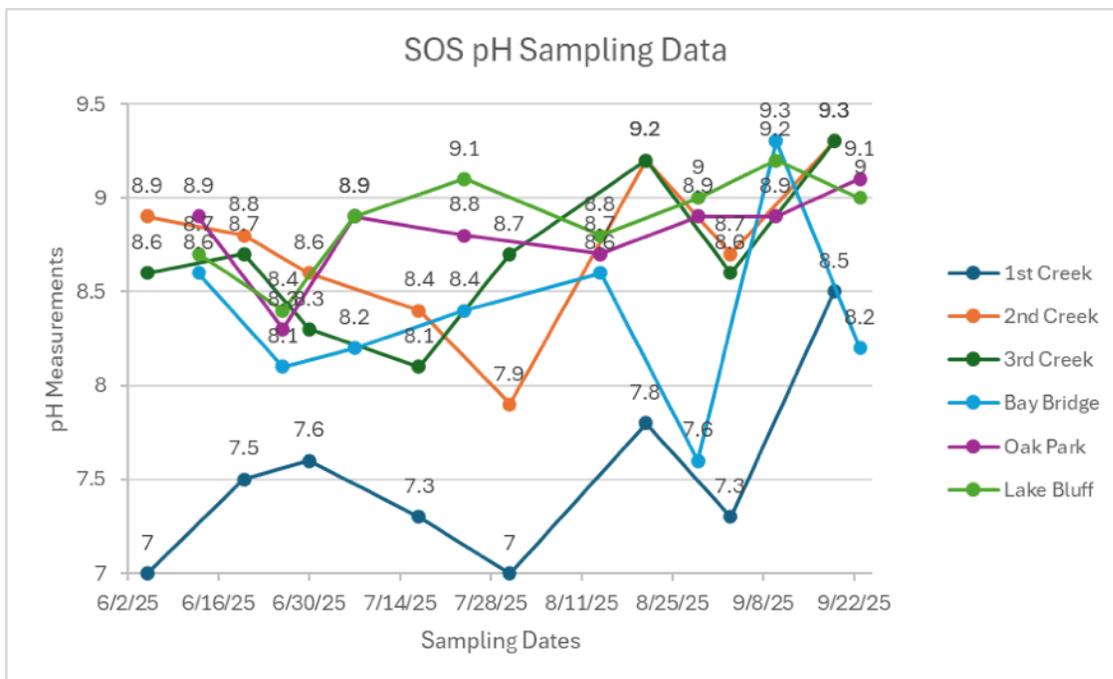
2nd Creek

3rd Creek

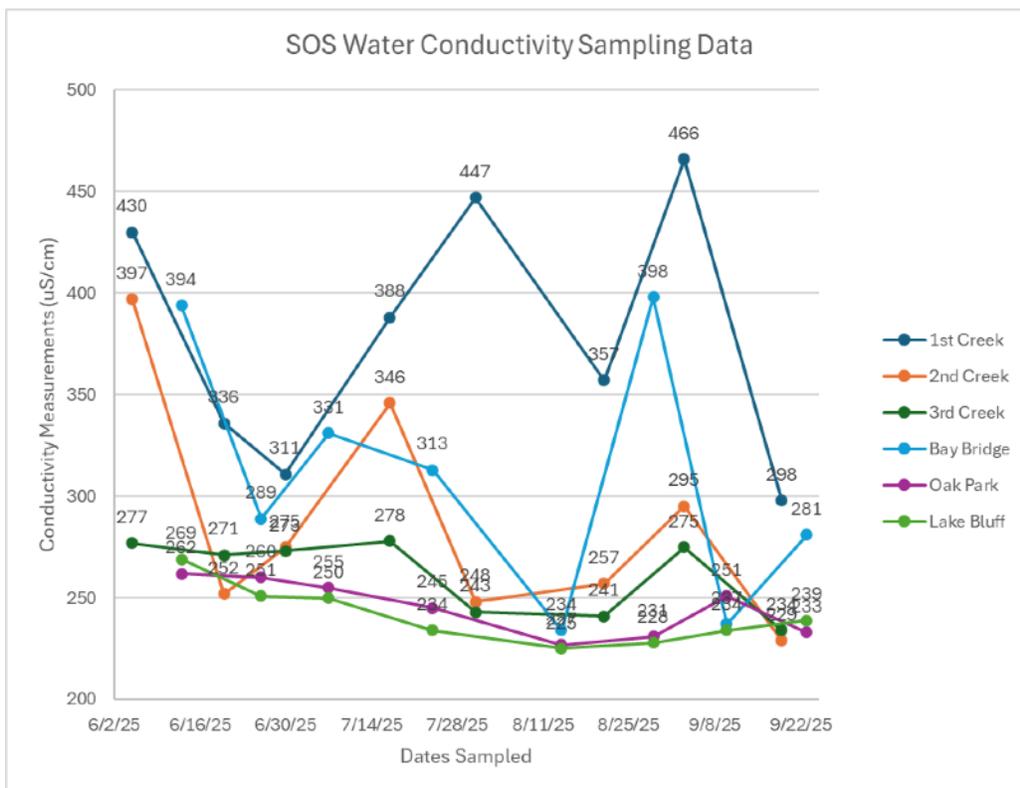
Bay Bridge

Oak Park (Clark Creek)

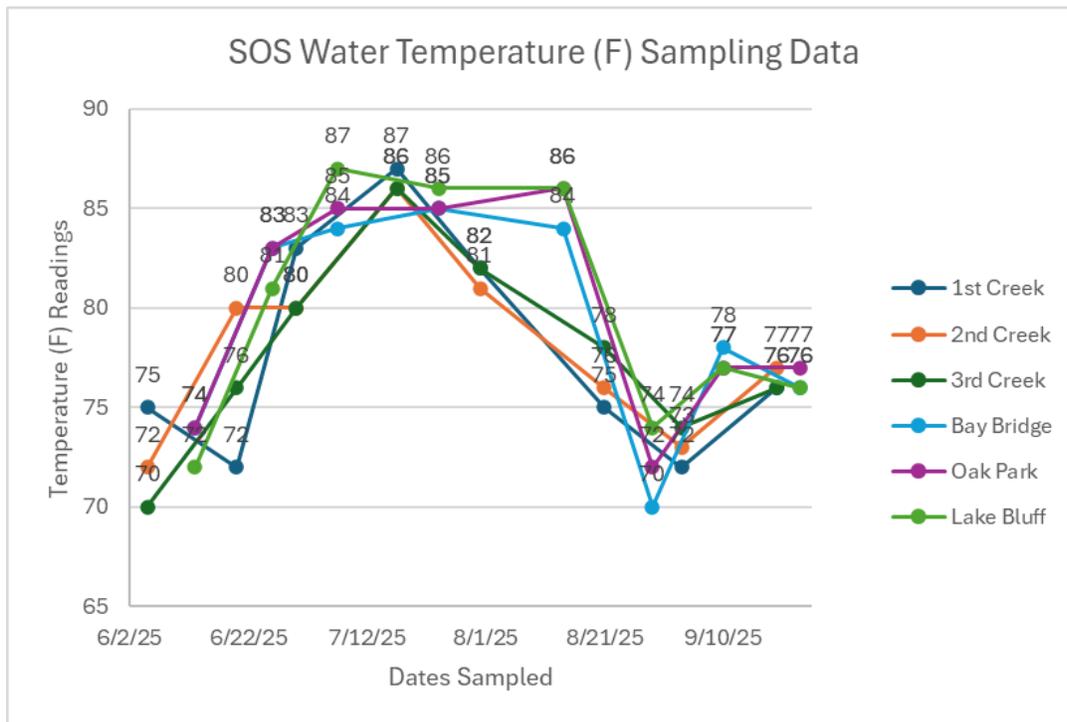
Lake Bluff (East End of Crescent Beach)



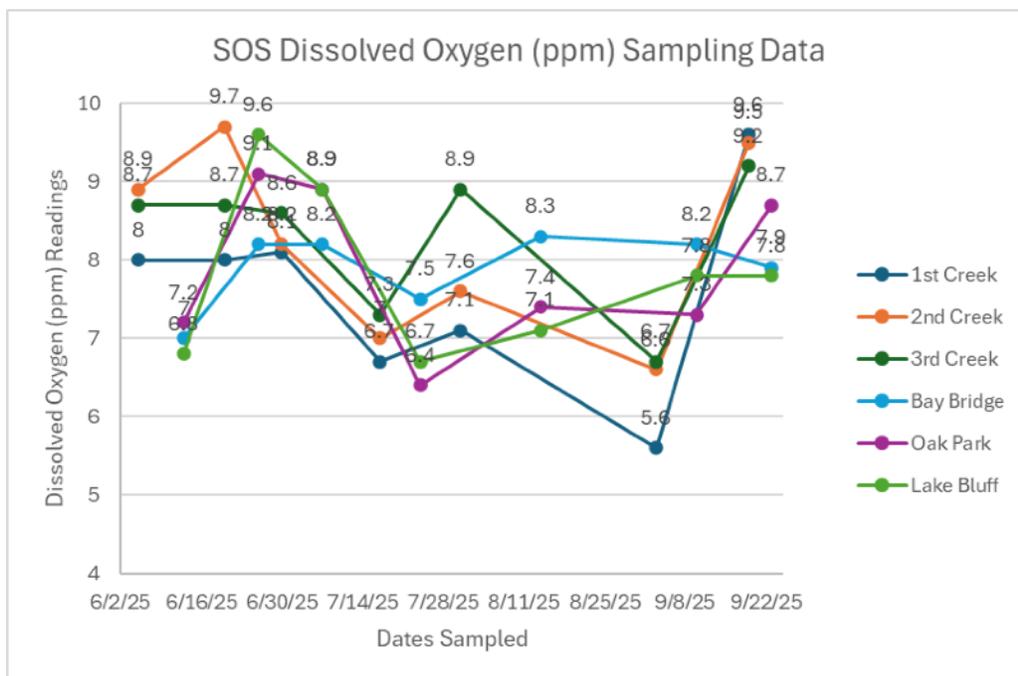
Note: Most fish prefer pH range from 6-9.



Note: High conductivity (1000s of uS/cm) indicates the water is salty or contaminated with chemicals



Note: Water temperature affects the growth of plants and the amount of dissolved oxygen.



Note: Dissolved oxygen <5 ppm can negatively affect fish. Dissolved oxygen decreases as water temperature increases.

C. Appendix C Background on CSLAP

The Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP) is a volunteer lake monitoring program run by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the NYS Federation of Lake Associations, Inc. (NYSFOLA). It was established by NYS Environmental Conservation Law Section 17-305 in 1985. CSLAP was modeled after successful volunteer programs in Vermont, Maine, Illinois and Minnesota. Each participating lake association is a member of NYSFOLA, a not-for-profit coalition of lake associations and others interested in lake management. NYSFOLA was founded in 1983 and presently serves nearly 300 lake associations as well as individual and corporate members. Over 160 NYSFOLA member lake associations currently participate in CSLAP. Trained citizen volunteers from NYSFOLA-member lake association (Sodus Bay covered by SOS volunteers) are responsible for collecting periodic water quality data and samples from June through September. More than 400 volunteers participate in the program each year on approximately 180 sites. Samples are collected from surface waters (epilimnion) for shallow lakes. Bottom, or hypolimnion, samples are collected from deeper lakes/bays. Water samples are sent to a NY state lab for analyses. These results and other lake measurements are forwarded to NYSFOLA and NYSDEC. Each participating lake receives a report highlighting the year's sampling results. In addition, results are stored electronically to allow for comparison of historical data and current conditions. This allows changes and trends in water quality to be observed and predicted for CSLAP lakes. Ultimately, CSLAP participation provides NYSDEC and NYSFOLA lake associations with a basis for making management decisions. An annual statewide NYSFOLA conference is held in May. In addition, CSLAP holds several regional conferences throughout the summer months. SOS attends the Central Region conference (usually held south of Syracuse.) SOS strives to keep updated through presentations on experts on any existing or

developing issues affecting freshwater health and simply to share information and ideas with other Central Region CSLAP fellow lake association members. It is impressive to see the dedication of so many NYS volunteers dedicated to the health of 'their' particular lake.

<https://nysfola.org/what-is-cslap>.

D. Appendix D – Links to arrival of ***Rose Lummis***

<https://saveoursodus.com/sodusbaytours#rose-lummis-history>

E. Appendix E – Links to Sodus Bay Watch video

<https://saveoursodus.com/copy-of-shoreline-resiliency-1#sodus-baywatch-microplastic-community-cleanup-day>