

**New Year Brings Changes at CBFS – Senior Scientist Randy Jackson retires, Tony VanDeValk becomes the new Coordinator of the Oneida Fisheries Program and Jim Watkins the new Associate Director of CBFS.**



*Randy Jackson, Richard Noble, and John Forney*

Long-term Senior Research Associate and Associate Director Dr. Randy Jackson retired from CBFS in November, 2021. Dr. Jackson came to CBFS in 2000 working on Oneida Lake and other New York lakes, and has led the Oneida fisheries program since 2009 when he became the leader of the fisheries research program on Oneida Lake. Thanks to his efforts, this research continues to be known and used across the world as one of the best long-term data sets on fish and fisheries in an inland lake. Jackson is only the third leader of this program which may have contributed to its continuity, a program that John Forney started in 1956 and led until 1992, Lars

Rudstam led from 1992 to 2009 and Randy Jackson from 2009 to 2021. During his 21-years at CBFS, Jackson worked on sportfish dynamics in the lake (bass, walleye, perch), as well as lesser-known fish species, such as burbot, sturgeon, goby, white perch, and bowfin, contributing greatly to fisheries science and to the management of Oneida Lake. Jackson was also a strong proponent of fisheries education and fisheries history. He worked extensively with the American Fisheries Society, and is a past President of its History Section as well as regional representative of the Education and Management Sections. He is the past President of the NY American Fisheries Society Chapter and of the Northeast Division of the American Fisheries Society. Dr. Jackson's presentations and insights were always very much appreciated by the audiences he addressed: sport-fishing clubs, the Oneida Lake Association, the American Fisheries Society, college students and fellow researchers. For these efforts, he has received numerous awards for Best Presentation, the Conservationist of the Year award from OLA and the Rosemary Murphy Memorial Service Award from New York State B.A.S.S.. We are pleased that Randy has chosen to remain involved with CBFS and will join John Forney, Ed Mills and Dave Green as our newest CBFS Emeritus Scientist.



Jackson's retirement brought about some changes in our leadership and staffing. Tony VanDeValk has recently been promoted to be the Coordinator of the Oneida Lake Fisheries Program. VanDeValk began his career at Cornell as a Fisheries Research Technician in 1987 and went on to receive his M.Sc. in 2003, working on the effect of anglers on fish populations of Oneida Lake. A well-respected fisheries scientist, VanDeValk is an expert on angler-fish interactions and the importance of various fish predators in Oneida Lake, including walleye, white perch, burbot and cormorants. He is a past

President of the NY American Fisheries Society and a past Director of the Oneida Lake Association. He may know Oneida Lake and its fishery better than anyone after 30+ years studying the lake. We look forward to his continued valuable contributions to the fisheries program at the CBFS.



We also announce the appointment of Dr. Jim Watkins as the new Associate Director of the CBFS. Watkins is a Senior Research Associate and a member of the Graduate Faculty in the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment at Cornell and spends most of his time at CBFS. After receiving his M.Sc. from Oregon State University, Watkins was an instructor for the Sea Semester, sailing on tall ship for several years. In 2005, he became a Technician at CBFS working on Great Lakes. He received his PhD in 2011 from Cornell University, focusing on the mechanisms causing declines in benthic amphipods in the Great Lakes. Currently, he leads the CBFS Great Lakes program, which includes research on all five Great Lakes from Lake Superior to Lake Ontario. Watkins is well-respected in the Great Lakes science community and a sought-after student advisor, with two PhD and three M.Sc. students. These students work on a range of topics, including zooplankton indicators, crustacean fish parasites, mysid shrimps, benthic meiofauna, and benthos as indicators of ecosystem health.

Watkins brings expertise, experience, and commitment to CBFS.