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## **EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES BASSMASTER ELITE PROS RETURN TO CENTRAL NEW YORK THIS WEEKEND**

***Free Fishing For Kids And Live Fishing Demos At Onondaga Lake Park***

***Free Lifetime Fair Passes And Giveaways At The State Fair Family Fun Center***

Empire State Development today announced the return of Bassmaster Elite Pros to Onondaga Lake in Upstate New York. On Saturday, September 3, B.A.S.S. anglers from across the country will compete for the biggest catch, in friendly competitions, with 10 B.A.S.S. Nation Central NY Pros on Onondaga Lake in Syracuse, New York.

“We are proud to host B.A.S.S. Elite pros at Onondaga Lake for the second time this year, as fishing in New York State continues to be a significant contributor to the tourism industry’s historic economic impact of more than \$100 billion,” **said Empire State Development President CEO & Commissioner Howard Zemsky.** “We invite everyone – whether you’re a New Yorker or Californian, or from any state in between – to plan a trip in one of the state’s 11 vacation regions, where you’ll be amazed at the beauty and endless possibilities of the Empire State’s great outdoors.”

Building on the success of the Bassmaster Elite Series in June, I LOVE NEW YORK is sponsoring a friendly fishing competition and inviting top anglers from across the nation to compete from 6:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. on Onondaga Lake this Saturday, September 3, in conjunction with the Great New York State Fair. Fairgoers are encouraged to watch the fishing competition and attend a free fishing experience hosted by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) from 8 a.m. - 10 a.m. at Onondaga Lake Park. Anglers of varying levels of experience and kids of all ages are encouraged to participate and cast a line on Onondaga Lake. In addition, the B.A.S.S. Elite boats will be on display at Onondaga Lake Park for visitors to see angler gear and equipment up close.

“New York is proud to once again host the Bassmaster Elite Anglers, telegraphing to the world the outstanding fishing opportunities available in Onondaga Lake and across our state,” **said Commissioner Basil Seggos.** “Year after year, Governor Cuomo continues to grow tourism to record levels, proving that the Empire State is second to none for year-round recreation, especially fishing.”

**Free Giveaways and Lifetime Passes to the Great New York State Fair**

Fairgoers are encouraged to stop by the I LOVE NY and DEC Pavilions at the fairgrounds to enter a random drawing to win a lifetime pass to the Great New York State Fair. Winners will be announced during the live B.A.S.S. Elite Pro fish weigh-in at 12 p.m. at the State Fair Family Fun Center, following the fishing competition. Winners must be present and will have a chance to win a lifetime ticket to the Fair, and Fair bracelets for midway rides. Giveaways include fish tapes, stickers and bracelets, and DEC Rod and Reel Kits that include a two piece rod, bobber, artificial lures and worms, and a small tackle box. In addition, I LOVE NEW YORK will have "I 'Fish' NY" t-shirts and hats at the State Fair Family Fun Center. Participants will also have the opportunity to meet the pros and have their picture taken with top anglers from across the nation at the live weigh-in ceremony.

Participating B.A.S.S. Elite Pros include:

- Brandon Lester – Fayetteville, Tennessee
- JTodd Tucker – Moultrie, Georgia
- John Murray – Spring City, Tennessee
- Carl Jocumsen – Frisco, Texas (originally from Australia)
- Fletcher Shryock – New Philadelphia, Ohio
- Bill Lowen – Brookville, Indiana
- Russell Lane – Prattville, Alabama
- Randy Allen – Shreveport, Louisiana
- David Mullins – Mt. Carmel, Tennessee
- Pete Gluszek, fishing with the Elite Pros group – Chesapeake Bay, Maryland

### **Fishing Participants Will Receive Free State Fair Passes**

Participants in Saturday's fishing experience at Onondaga Lake Park will receive a free day pass to the Great New York State Fair. Free fishing will take place at Onondaga Lake Park from 8 a.m. – 10 a.m. All fishing gear and equipment will be provided by DEC instructors at the fishing experience and clinic, which is one of more than 200 free fishing clinics that take place across New York State each year. At free fishing clinics, participants can fish for free without a freshwater fishing license or enrollment in the Recreational Marine Fishing Registry. In addition to fishing, participants can learn about fish identification, fishing equipment and techniques, fisheries management, angling ethics and aquatic ecology. It's the perfect opportunity to try fishing for the first time, bring the kids and family together, or compete with a friend for the biggest catch.

Both fishing enthusiasts and first timers are welcome to take advantage of free fishing days throughout the year. In addition to weekends in February and in June, on November 11, Veterans' Day, residents and visitors are encouraged to participate in free fishing day.

[Click here](#) to visit DEC's website for a list of free fishing clinics.

"Having the Bassmaster Elite Series pros compete on Onondaga Lake against the New York B.A.S.S. Nation anglers will be a fun and very compelling event," **said B.A.S.S. CEO Bruce Akin.** "It will be interesting to see whether touring pros can hold their own against local experts on a fantastic fishery like Onondaga. We are so proud of all of our anglers who are wonderful ambassadors for our sport."

**Senator John A. DeFrancisco said**, “I’m pleased to hear that top anglers from across the country, along with their families and friends, will return to our community this weekend for a fun-filled, friendly competition on Onondaga Lake. This event will help to highlight the rebirth of Onondaga Lake and coincide nicely with the Great New York State Fair.”

“Fairgoers who love to fish, or who want to learn, have the opportunity for a special experience on Saturday at Onondaga Lake Park. I encourage anglers of all ages to attend, spend some time honing their casting skills, and meet the pros. Free day passes to the Fair top off what is sure to be a memorable family outing,” **Senator David J. Valesky said**.

“Fishing is a great way to experience the outdoors, especially for kids,” **said Assemblywoman Pamela Hunter**. “I’m excited to see the Bassmasters return to Central New York, and I hope fairgoers will take advantage of the wonderful opportunity provided by the free fishing clinic.”

“I am excited to welcome Bassmaster anglers back to Onondaga Lake this Saturday for friendly fishing competitions, free fishing for fairgoers and live fishing demos,” **said Assemblyman Magnarelli**. “Experience the great outdoors with friends and family and enjoy the excitement of the Great New York State Fair while fishing at Onondaga Lake Park and watching the live bass weigh-in at the State Fair Family Fun Center. What a great time to be in Syracuse, NY!”

“The Bassmaster Elite Series event earlier this summer was a tremendous success,” **said Onondaga County Executive Joanie Mahoney**. “Thank you Governor Cuomo for bringing this fun fishing competition to Onondaga Lake. We look forward to seeing the Bassmaster Elite Pros compete here Saturday and encourage fair goers to join in the fun.”

New York is home to some of the nation’s best fishing at beautiful vacation destinations, and with 165 different fish species found across the state, both residents and travelers continue to cast their lines here. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service study, the economic impact of expenditures related to fishing trips in New York State exceeded \$1.9 billion in 2011. The State’s robust fishing industry continues to positively impact tourism as well.

New York’s world-class fishing and wide variety of cold water, warm water and saltwater fish species can be found in more than 7,500 lakes and ponds, 50,000 miles of rivers and streams, and hundreds of miles of coastline in New York State. To learn more about New York’s 11 vacation regions and top fishing destinations in the Empire State, visit [www.iloveny.com](http://www.iloveny.com). Details on fishing license requirements and other regulations along with fascinating in-depth info on the many species that call New York home are available at [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov).

### **About New York State**

New York State features 11 beautiful vacation regions. New York’s attractions span from landmarks such as Niagara Falls to the wine trails of Hudson Valley and treasures like the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. Whether it’s wide-ranging outdoor activities for the whole family like hiking, kayaking, snowmobiling, skiing and snowboarding, culinary wonders and farm-to-table fresh foods, or exploring the rich history and culture of one of the 13 original colonies, New York State offers diverse activities for all travelers. For more information, visit [www.iloveny.com](http://www.iloveny.com). Media can find press releases and more at [www.iloveny.com/thebeat](http://www.iloveny.com/thebeat).

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