

all interested persons concerning the establishment of this viticultural area. ATF received one comment regarding Notice No. 957 from Representative Amo Houghton of New York's 31st Congressional District. Representative Houghton supported the establishment of the Seneca Lake viticultural area and commented, "It is the largest, most diverse community of wine producers in the Eastern United States. The twenty-one wineries along the shores of Seneca Lake offer individual and unique expressions from one of America's finest wine districts \* \* \*. Carved by glaciers, and surrounded by vineyards since the mid 1800's—a Seneca Lake viticultural area has already been created through geologic and human history." Additionally, Representative Houghton mentioned benefits to the viticultural area's establishment. "This unique area's recognition by the ATF would perfectly complement an existing regional framework of tourism, research and economic development, and promotion of the Seneca Lake identity and all that it represents. This would be of great benefit to consumers who seek products that allow them [to] capture, in a bottle, the essence of places and regions that enthrall them."

*What Evidence Was Provided To Show the Name "Seneca Lake" Is Locally or Nationally Known?*

According to the petitioner, Seneca Lake was named after the Seneca people of the Iroquois Nation who lived along its shores hundreds of years ago. Many local places and geographic features are named after the Seneca people. These include, for example, Seneca Lake, Seneca County, the Seneca River, Seneca Castle, Seneca Army Depot, and Seneca Lake State Park. Additionally, the organization known as the Seneca Lake Winery Association includes many of the area's wineries.

To demonstrate that the area is locally and nationally known as "Seneca Lake," the petitioner included several newspaper and magazine articles as evidence of the name's use. In an article from the Rochester, New York Democrat and Chronicle newspaper of November 15, 1999, entitled "Your Land, Our Land: Finger Lakes in the Fast Lane," Ray Spencer, vice president of operations of Glenora Wine Cellars, stated that many "already refer to Seneca Lake as 'the Napa Valley of the East.'" In the February 1997 issue of *Wines & Vines*, a California based magazine, author Philip Hiaring described his visit to the Seneca Lake region and his interviews with winery owners and winemakers.

In addition, Seneca Lake is mentioned in "The Oxford Companion to the Wines of North America." The book states that Seneca Lake is surrounded by more than two-dozen wineries, is one of the two largest Finger Lakes, and is the deepest "with the greatest heat storing capacity, offering the surrounding hillsides the strongest mesoclimatic benefit." While the lake's first winery was built in 1866, the book notes that the emergence of vinifera varieties resulted in an increase of winery openings in the 1980's that brought new momentum to the region's grape-growing industry.

*What Boundary Evidence Was Provided?*

The boundaries of the Seneca Lake viticultural area encompass about 204,600 acres of largely rural land surrounding Seneca Lake, the largest of upstate New York's eleven Finger Lakes. While some of the road names used in the boundary description do not appear on the submitted USGS maps, the petitioner provided the locally known names of these roads, as well as a more detailed map of the town of Watkins Glen indicating minor roads.

Using roads and streams, the petitioner drew the Seneca Lake viticultural area's boundaries to contain the vineyards influenced by the lake's climatic effect. In addition, the petitioner noted that distinct ridges divide Seneca Lake from its closest neighbor, Cayuga Lake, and the nearly 800-foot elevation change within the 7.5 miles between them gives the two lakes their own microclimates.

*What Evidence Relating to Growing Conditions Was Provided?*

The "lake effect" weather phenomenon makes the Seneca Lake viticultural area a "unique and superb" wine-growing region, according to the petitioner. The "Oxford Companion to Wine", published by the Oxford University Press, Inc., New York, describes lake effect as "the year-round influence on vineyards from nearby large lakes which permits vine-growing in the northeast United States and Ontario in Canada despite their high latitude."

The "Oxford Companion" also notes that the lake effect influence on grape vines changes with the seasons. It states that:

In the winter, the large lakes provide moisture to the prevailing westerly winds, which creates a deep snow cover, protecting vines from winter freeze even in very low temperatures. \* \* \* In spring, the westerly winds blow across the frozen lake and become cooler. These cooler breezes blowing

on the vines retard bud-break until the danger of frost has passed. In summer the lake warms up. By autumn/fall, the westerly winds are warmed as they blow across the lake. The warm breezes on the vines lengthen the growing season (balancing the late start to the growing season) by delaying the first frost.

The petitioner also provided an extract from Richard Figiel's book "Culture in a Glass," that describes how the lake effect phenomenon affects the Finger Lakes region. Noting that both Seneca and Cayuga Lakes drop well below sea level, Figiel states that since the lakes are "(n)arrow slices of water with relatively little surface area, they tend to maintain a stable temperature throughout the year." Figiel notes that the depth and heat storing capacity of the lakes act as a large radiator for the surrounding area during the winter months. "Not only do the lakes take the edge off frigid upstate winters, often keeping vineyards 10–15° warmer than locations just a half mile away," the book adds, "but they also cushion the transitions of spring and fall." Figiel also points out that the "(d)istinct microclimates along the hillsides rising from the lakeshores make it possible to reliably ripen grapes in a region that is generally too cold for viticulture \* \* \*."

The petitioner stated that it is the size and depth of Seneca Lake that gives the lake its ability to influence the local climate. Additionally, a report provided by the petitioner, entitled "Viticultural Distinction of Seneca Lake in the New York Finger Lakes", includes a physical description of Seneca Lake. The report states that, "Seneca Lake is the largest of the Finger Lakes covering 67.7 square miles. The lake is 35.1 miles long and is an average of 1.9 miles wide with a shoreline of 75.4 miles. It has a volume of 4.2 trillion gallons with a maximum depth of 634 feet. At 150 feet, the water temperature remains at 39°F (4°C) year around. Above that level, the water temperature varies seasonally, but the surface temperature generally does not go below 39.5°F (4°C)." While Seneca Lake chills down, the petition adds, it rarely freezes during the winter months. The petition also noted that the Seneca region has the longest frost-free period in the Finger Lakes, with a growing season of about 190 days. In contrast, neighboring Cayuga Lake's growing season is only 165 to 170 days long.

Seneca Lake's latent heat storage capacity alters the local climate to such an extent, the petition stated, that grapes can be grown in an area where they otherwise would not survive the cold temperatures of early spring, or the late autumn frosts. Together with the good