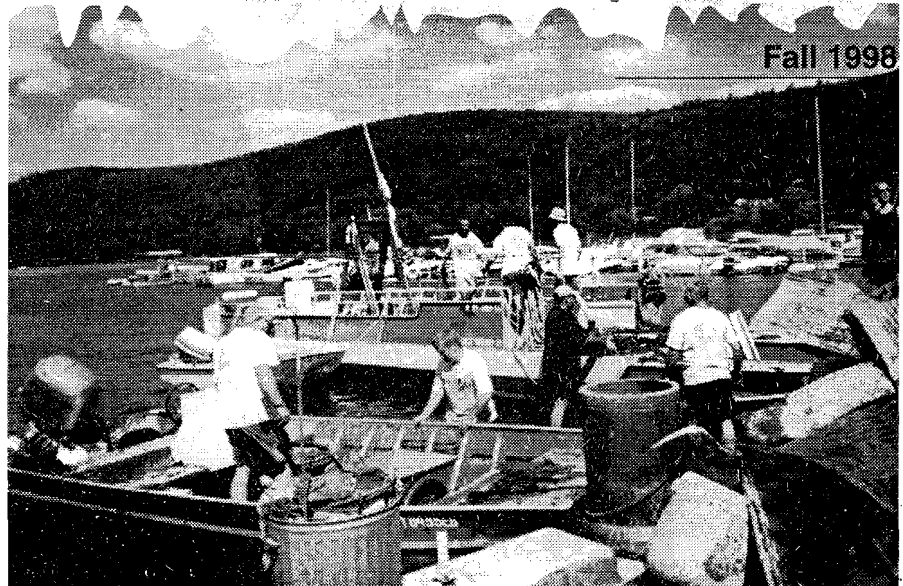


REPORTER

Fall 1998

“Magic” on the Roads

Winter road maintenance is a challenging issue in temperate climates. While the priority is to provide safe road conditions, factors such as cost (both direct and indirect) and environmental impacts require consideration. Historically, the Village of Cooperstown has used road salt (sodium chloride) to melt ice. While cheap, salt is very corrosive to cars, spreading equipment, bridges and roadways, making indirect costs high. Also, the marked increase in chlorides in Otsego Lake has raised environmental concerns. In response to BFS studies, the Village began relying on an abrasive/salt mix in the late 1980s. While this reduced the use of salt, concern shifted to the possible impacts of the abrasive. A large fraction is composed of clay and silt, which wash off the roads during storm



Lake Clean-up Day, July 1998

runoff. Most flows through Willow Brook and reaches the Lake. Also, clay and silt carry much phosphorus, and keeping this nutrient out of Otsego is the primary goal of our Lake Management Plan.

After investigating alternative options for winter road maintenance, this year the Village intends to use a new product called “Ice Ban Magic.” This is a byproduct of the fermentation and processing of agricultural products to which magnesium chloride has been added. Though it is more expensive than road salt, it is not corrosive. In

fact, there are claims that it actually inhibits corrosion, which will lead to long-term savings for the Village and for all of us who drive its roads. The primary concern, however, relates its phosphorus content. While the amount of this nutrient in Ice Ban is very high (3-5 grams per liter), it is supposedly in a form that is insoluble. Most should not reach the Lake, and that which does should not be in a form that algae can use. The Field Station is currently seeking funds to monitor Willow Brook to try to verify these claims.

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Located in Cooperstown and founded in 1968, the Biological Field Station is a unique facility serving the Upper Susquehanna Watershed, Otsego County and the immediate Cooperstown area. It is primarily a teaching and research center for undergraduate and graduate

students from across New York, the United States, and Canada. Directed by Dr. Willard Harman and staffed with talented, experienced professionals, the Biological Field Station is presently the focal point for information about issues affecting Lake Otsego and the Susquehanna River.

Do we have your correct address?

Otsego Lake Planning & Accolades

A "Plan for the Otsego Lake Watershed" was approved by the Watershed Council this last April. It is a statement of the problems confronting the Lake as recognized by our local towns and the Village and lists recommendations to address them. Also noted are Federal and State agencies, local governments and private organizations willing to facilitate corrective actions by acquiring the necessary resources. A second document, "Otsego Lake Management Issues: A Framework for Watershed Planning", is a report to the US Environmental Protection Agency indicating public response to the Biological Field Station research publication, "The State of Otsego Lake: 1936-1996". It includes management objectives agreed to by BFS and DEC scientists specifying the Lake's current status and quantitative targets for such things as phosphorus and oxygen concentrations. Taken together, these works provide the documentation needed by government agencies and local private groups to garner funds from Federal, state and private sources to implement the "Plan's" recommendations.

As examples, local USDA sister agencies (Natural Resource Conservation Service [NRCS] and Farm Service Agency [FSA]) and our local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), will receive almost \$1,000,000 for implementation of local agricultural best management practices and related works over the next few years. The Army Corps of Engineers has about \$3,000,000 that may be spent locally on wetland reclamation and dam renovations that will reduce sediment and nutrient loading to the lake. Matching funds may come



Tavis Austin, Bill Harman, Bob Johnson, Darcy King

from NYS environmental bond act revenues. Congressman Sherwood Boehlert sponsored a bill authorizing \$350,000, a portion of which should be used locally to "...address high nutrient concentrations" in Otsego Lake. He is now working on appropriations. A recent "Request for Proposal" from the NYSDEC tailored specifically to implement lake management plans has been answered by a coalition of local organizations and agencies requesting about \$80,000.

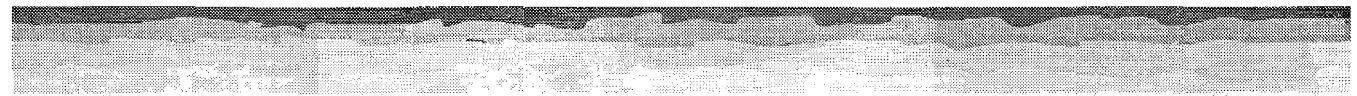
The "Plan" is a compromise, satisfying all parties to assure full support; this was necessary for Federal and State agencies to perceive complete community backing. Importantly, any group that wishes to push ahead in some area of concern well beyond anything spelled out in the Plan can



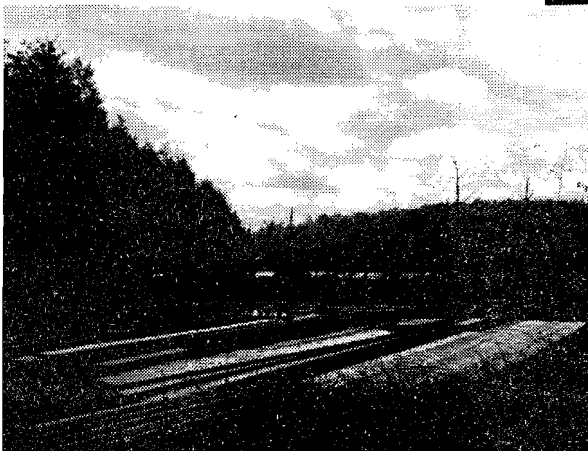
Egg-throw at BFS annual party, Rum Hill

do so. It is not legislation, but a protocol spelling out ways to address Lake problems accepted by the community. Other ways are not precluded. That is a real plus for the future of the Lake. This marks the end of the beginning. It is time to stop talking and start changing things. Finally, from the Field Station's perspective, we have a functional mechanism in place to save our Lake Otsego.

Long overdue accolades are due to those who pioneered Lake protection activities over 30 years ago as the BFS began to document problems. In those times, with a much smaller and less diverse population of Lake users, the Field Station was able to function closely with Lake advocates. In recent years myriads of people using the lake with varied agendas have



Trout stocking



Dock at Cranberry Bog, Greenwoods

Sanik, Mimi Sauer, Bob Seaver, Alex Shields, Clark Simmons, Bob Sioussat, Milo Stewart, Sam Smith, William Thayer, Rufus Thayer, Harry Troger, Ed Trossett, Butch Weir and Eugene Wells. During the last 15 years with the increase in awareness brought about by boat launch issues and decreasing water quality, a host of concerned citizens, local governments and groups with special interests have all contributed to the present management configuration. All deserve the community's heartfelt thanks. *

evolved. Therefore, we provide the results of our research with lots of advice and depend on those in the community to provide remedial actions. Several families have provided gifts of land and access to the BFS that has resulted in our existence and present configuration: The Clarks provided the first land in the Cooperstown area and the site of our main laboratory; the Goodyears, Goodyear Swamp Sanctuary; the Thayers, Rum Hill; and recently the Petersons, Greenwoods Conservancy. Willis D. Hadley was the first influential individual from Cooperstown to use his personal resources to support BFS activities. Bill Harman met with him and F.H.V. Mecklenburg (Menky) informally many times to discuss ways the OCCA, the BFS and the Hadleys could work together to

help the Lake. Since Messrs. Hadley and Mecklenburg passed away, Mrs. Hadley has carried on their tradition of support. Likewise, continued sponsorship from the Clark and Gronewaldt Foundations has been extremely important in getting us to our present situation.

From the late 1960's through the early 1980's many dedicated people were involved in hands-on work to protect the Lake in diverse ways. While too numerous to list in full, special thanks go out to: Russ Bland, Tom Goodyear, Joe Cruickshank, Fred Doolittle, Ray Fry, Drum Hadley, Lew Hamilton, Lou Hager, Sr., Lou Hager, Jr., Joe Homburger, Harold Hollis, Marion and Bill Karl, Bea Marr, F. H. V. Mecklenburg, Irene Mozolewski, Mel Norris, John Olson, Ted Peters, John

Enclosed is a self addressed envelope to facilitate our annual fall request for support. If you have given before, please do so again, if not please consider it now. We need your help. Your gift of any amount is important to show broad community support for our research, monitoring and educational efforts. Volunteers have recently completely revised our mailing lists. If your name or address is not correct, or if you want to supply us with your new "911" address, please include a note to that effect in the gift envelope.

"Magic," cont. from p. 1

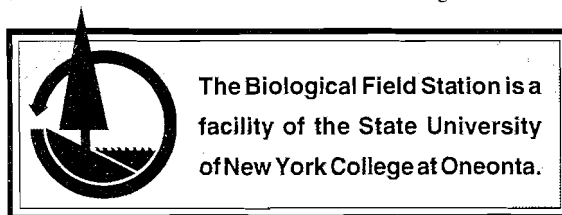
Our hats are off to the Village of Cooperstown, particularly to Giles Russell, Village Administrator, who promoted the use of Ice Ban Magic with an eye toward making Lake protection an important component of road maintenance policy. *

Updates

- **Doug Hamilton** retired at the end of August. We are pleased to announce that he will continue with us as a full time volunteer. **Dr. Earle Peterson**, with whom we have a working partnership regarding Greenwoods Conservancy, has also become active in our cadre of volunteers.
- **Jill Poulette** and **Darcy Williams**, respectively holding Thayer and MacWatters internships this summer, have remained with us this fall for 10 weeks, assisting in putting the finishing touches on this summers data analysis.
- This September the OCCA and Otsego 2000 sponsored an Otsego Lake Forum at Fairy Springs Park. The well attended meeting was addressed by **Henry Cooper, Bob Paulson, John Mitchell, Bill Harman, Adrian Kuzminsky** and **John Miller**, the latter being President of the New York State Federation of Lake Associations. They provided an introduction and background, progress on national landmarking efforts, the Otsego Lake Management Plan, the state of the Lake, the living machine, and an innovative citizens septic pollution control program, respectively.
- Thanks to **Prof. Carol Ryder** for thinking of the BFS after her recent retirement from the Oneonta State Biology Department. We are making good use of several cases of educational materials including living marine invertebrates now on display at the main laboratory.
- **Dan Rosen** recently completed a compendium of articles published in the Cooperstown Crier and the Freeman's Journal, entitled: "Otsego Lake - A Guide to its Ecology and Management". We intend to use it for introductory classes in aquatic biology and ecology in our field trip program and to give anyone attempting to understand Otsego's problems.
- **Christy (Nelson) Michaels** 85', and **Catherine Flowers** 85' visited the Station this summer for a short period. Christy is teaching high school in Dryden, NY and Cathy is an environmental engineer in Anchorage, Alaska.
- **Bill Harman** presented a paper, "The Management of Otsego Lake: Unique Links Between Community and Government" at the 18th International Symposium of the North American Lake Management Society, November 10-13, Banff, Alberta, Canada. **Matt Albright** also attended the meetings.
- We recently purchased our fifth four-stroke Honda engine as we continue our efforts to equip our boats with non-polluting power. These engines are clean burning and the oil is returned to the oil pan during use rather than being partially burned and discharged into the water. *

Fiscal challenges in recent years have constrained the work of the Biological Field Station. Private gift support from individuals, foundations, and corporations is essential and an investment in the Biological Field Stations' continued success and services to the community. For more information, call or write:

Dr. Willard Harman
Professor and Director
RD#2 Box 1066
Cooperstown, NY 13326
(607) 547-8778



The College at Oneonta Foundation receives and manages gifts for the Biological Field Station. All gifts are used expressly for the purposes for which they are given and they are tax-deductible. Information is available through:

The College Foundation Office
Netzer Administration Building
SUNY College at Oneonta
Oneonta, NY 13820
(607) 436-2535.