The State Of “The State Of The Lake” Report

A draft of the “State of Otsego Lake, 1935-95” was sent out in December to DEC and parks (OPRHP) for their use in development of the “Draft Environmental Impact Statement” for the recent boat launch proposals from those agencies. The Governor’s office also requested a copy. The same document was sent to four select limnologists for their review. They are: Dr. Joseph Makarewicz, Chair and Prof., Dept. of Biological Sciences, SUNY Brockport; Dr. Ray T. Oglesby, Prof., Dept. of Natural Resources, Cornell University; Dr. Kenton Stewart, Prof., Dept. of Biological Sciences, SUNY Buffalo; and Dr. Steven W. Effler, Dir. of Research, Upstate Freshwater Institute, Syracuse. To date all have responded. We are very pleased with their critiques.

After hearing from all the reviewers, we are making the appropriate alterations to the report. At the same time, Gena Gallinger (NYSDEC) and Bill Harman are continuing to meet and communicate with local agencies and organizations to gain input into social factors that need to be considered along with the science that will serve as a basis for the “Otsego Lake Watershed Management Plan.” A draft of that document should be ready by the end of 1996.

After review by the Otsego Lake Watershed Council and other groups it will ready for public consideration.
Otsego Lake Nutrient Budgets Available

Between 1991-1993 BFS personnel were on call 24 hours/day, 365 days/year collecting data on watershed streams to ascertain the amounts and distribution (spatial and temporal) of water running into the Lake, as well as the amounts of nutrients, chlorides, and sediments being transported by these streams. Data collected involved about 3,000 water samples, 27,000 chemical analyses, 600 additional analyses at the streams, 8,000 discharge readings taken manually, and 3 streams using automated constant monitoring devices.

This information, plus data since collected on other sources of pollutants, has enabled us to calculate how much phosphorus enters and leaves the Lake each year, where it comes from, and at what times. These calculations constitute a nutrient budget. We also know what is in the Lake, and how much the Lake is stressed as a result.

Knowing loading rates from each source, and how much they impact the Lake, compared to historical rates that were not overly stressful, enables us to establish reasonable management goals based on measurable thresholds. Using results from other lakes where remedial action was undertaken, we can make estimates of what any local effort (e.g. sewer lines, minimum lot sizes, barnyard improvements, no-wake zones) could do to correct our current problems.

Then several alternatives can be offered to ascertain which are acceptable, and in what degree, given our local socio-economic and cultural characteristics.


Updates, cont. from p. 4

France “The Relative Effects of Recreational Boating and Wind Conditions on Perturbation of Sediments on Littoral Substrates in Otsego Lake.” Bill Harman presented a paper “Zebra Mussels (Dreissena polymorpha) in the Susquehanna River basin in New York State: Yes or No?” which was co-authored by Marcy Goldberg, Chris Bender, Karren Illsely, and Mike LaGier.

• Annette Hinkley, from Grand Gorge, is helping BFS personnel with key-boarding associated with recent reports. As in the past her assistance is greatly appreciated.

• Brian Bitteker continues to bring us into the computer age. He has developed and maintains our homepage on the World Wide Web and is presently expanding our capabilities in communicating our research results and educational programs using state-of-the-art technologies. Our website is http://www.netheaven.com/-bitteker/cbfs/

Incidentally our E-mail address is HARMANWN@ONEONTA.EDU
In Memorium: John Urban

Mr. John Urban, a Robert C. MacWatters Intern in the Aquatic Sciences at the BFS last summer, died of natural causes in his dorm room at SUNY Cobleskill on the 20th of December.

John received his Associate's Degree in Fisheries & Wildlife from the State University of New York, College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill and was seeking his bachelor's degree in fisheries and Aquaculture at the time of his death. He was an honors student, while being active on campus and in the community. He often volunteered for extra work at Cobleskill and at the Biological Field Station, and frequently assisted visitors, faculty, and students. He always provided his best ability and effort and was very highly regarded by his professors and colleagues. His helpful and cheerful nature made him a pleasure to be with, and those that knew him looked forward to his presence each day.

John spent much of his free time last summer volunteering for OCCA waterwatch activities.

We will miss him.
Updates

- Dan Rosen was responsible for the "picture story" that took up most of the space in the winter issue of the REPORTER. He is providing monthly columns to the Cooperstown Czier elaborating on facets of the "story." We hope that more people will become aware of the problems facing the Lake, and that they will contribute meaningfully to, or at least support, the "management plan" as it evolves over the coming months.

- The families of Ted Beckingham, John McGlynn, and Robert Searles in the Shadow Brook watershed are cooperating with the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service by improving farmyard management in an attempt to keep phosphorus out of Shadow Brook. We congratulate them! The OCCA deserves thanks for helping to support the effort. BFS students Ken Heavey, Craig Cole, Carrie Miller and Jeff Fahey began monitoring streams last summer to get the "before improvement" picture. We will continue to monitor to see what effects these projects may have on stream and lake water quality.

- Oneonta Prof. Bruce Dayton will be offering selected high school students an intensive three week course at the BFS next July: Bio 108: Field Biology and Ecology. Students will earn 3 hrs. college credit. The OCCA will support 10 students with tuition and fees.

- Kathy Ernst deserves accolades for her graphics work! As REPORTER readers can attest, she has done a great job. Less well known, she has spent considerable amounts of time contributing to the "State of the Lake" report, as well as our Annual Reports and Occasional Papers. We have finally received $6,000 committed last year by the Great Lakes Protection Fund to produce copies of our Otsego Lake board game, "Sink or Swim" for testing in local schools. Kathy has complete responsibility for the layout and design of that product.

- After a successful first year, the BFS Council, under the direction of Lew Hamilton, has met and developed a goal of $50,000 for general fund raising activities during 1996.

- BFS faculty and staff attended three professional conferences this spring: The North American Lake Management Society meetings in Toronto, The 6th International Zebra Mussel conference in Dearborn, Michigan, and the New York State Natural History Conference at Albany. At the latter meeting Matt Albright presented a paper authored by himself and Kristen... Continued on page 2