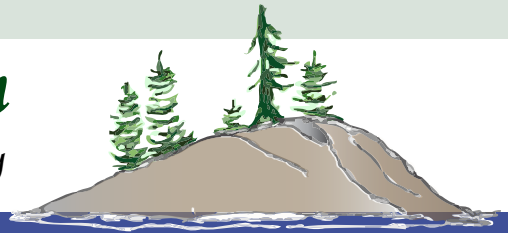


Upper Saranac Foundation

It still is, and always will be, about Water Quality



Edition 1

May 2013

WE ARE THE UPPER SARANAC FOUNDATION



The ice is out, snow has melted, buds are blooming, and the Foundation's milfoil divers are in the water harvesting this year's milfoil. If you're like me, you can hardly wait to get back to Upper Saranac Lake for the summer. It is a special place.

Over the years, there has been a significant amount of confusion over the basic responsibilities of the Upper Saranac Lake Association and the Upper Saranac Lake Foundation. Today, I would like to take a minute of your time to spell out what I believe we are each trying to do.

The Association was formed over a 100 years ago to serve as a homeowner's organization, which would protect the lake, promote culture on the lake, and politically advocate for the government positions that protected our lake. Its programs are supported by annual dues.

The Foundation was formed in the 1980s to manage large special projects like a significant deterioration of water quality (algae blooms), then a collapsing dam, which was purchased and rebuilt, and last year, had major repairs. Finally, the Foundation has been combating an invasive species (Eurasian Water Milfoil) for the past ten years.

~ continued page 2

All of these projects have been successfully executed with your tax deductible contributions. Our budget each year is about \$250,000. We spend \$155,000 on milfoil control, \$50,000 on a lake manager, \$30,000 on collecting and analyzing water samples, and \$15,000 on fund raising and administration. All of our programs are broadly supported on the lake, but the fact of the matter is that only about one third of the lake home owners contribute to the Foundation and financially support these projects.

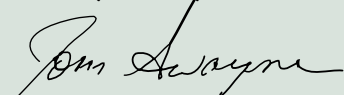
Some of the confusion is over names. People confuse Upper Saranac Lake Association with Upper Saranac Lake Foundation, or worse USLA with USLF. Some people think that when they pay their Association dues, they have made a contribution to the Foundation. This is not the case. This year the Foundation Board decided that we would do a better job of communicating who we are and what we do.



The first step was to rename the Foundation the UPPER SARANAC FOUNDATION. No more acronyms. We're the "Foundation". The second step was to communicate directly to the lake homeowners on a twice yearly basis. The spring report each year will deal with the quality of the Upper Saranac Lake water, and in the fall report, our lake manager will tell you what projects were completed during the summer and any ongoing issues which continue to be addressed.

I started this letter with a statement of what a special place the Upper Saranac Lake is. The Foundation was formed to ensure that the water quality in the lake was protected. We need everyone's financial support to insure that the important projects are funded and completed. This fall, we will again be sending out a letter requesting your donation to our programs. The Upper Saranac Foundation does important work on the lake, protects your real estate investment, and ensures that your summer experience is special.

Thank you for your continued financial support.



Tom Swain

President, Upper Saranac Foundation

The Top Ten things that you may not know about our Foundation

- #10 - We have great maps to guide you and Posters for that special place in your camp. You can order them using our web site.
- #9 - We acquired Tommy's Rock in the North Basin to preserve it for recreational use by everyone on the lake.
- #8 - In 1993, we bought the Bartlett Carry Dam. We rebuilt the dam in 1994 at the cost of \$500,000 and spent an additional \$39,000 last year for repairs to ensure our lake level for the coming years stays the same.
- #7 - We hired the Aquatic Watershed Institute to manage our 25 years of lake quality data that is sampled monthly. We believe it is the best lake quality data base in New York State.
- #6 - We employ a Lake Manager who is our eyes and ears on the lake. He monitors lake quality, manage milfoil eradication and supervise the Foundation's projects like our dam.
- #5 - Since 2001 the Foundation has spent over \$2.5 million on Milfoil harvesting.
- #4 - Your tax deductible contributions support our one quarter million dollar annual budget.
- #3 - The foundation is separate from the USLA. Dues to the Association fund their lake culture, water safety and political activism programs. Contributions to the Foundation focus on scientific programs which include water quality, invasive species like milfoil eradication and dam maintenance. Each has a separate and important lake function.
- #2 - You can visit us and see what we are all about at our web site, www.uslf.org or look for us on Face Book.

AND THE NUMBER ONE THING THAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT THE FOUNDATION IS . . .

That all of the above and more are funded by your tax free contribution to the Foundation. Are you one of our contributors? Consider making your tax exempt donation a yearly gift.



WATER QUALITY

by Ross Whaley

It could be argued that the most significant short term environmental problem in the world is water quantity and quality. We are fortunate that the Adirondack Park has an abundance of clean water. While that is mainly good news, the potentially bad news is that because of this abundance and high quality, we take it for granted and ignore it. Don't we have more pressing problems to worry about? Fortunately, the Upper Saranac Foundation has done the worrying for us.

We now have a summary of water trends spanning 20 +/- years, and an active water monitoring and Eurasian watermilfoil control program. What follows is a brief examination of water quality trends over time on Upper Saranac Lake and a comparison with one other lake of comparable size. As will be explained later, the trend information is the most important, as we make evaluations about the over-all water quality of our lake and judgments about future monitoring and control options.

IT'S ALL ABOUT CHEMISTRY

This review will be limited to looking at phosphorus load, water clarity, conductivity, Chloride content and acidity. Many other variables have been measured, but these are reasonable indicators of water quality.

Comparison of five water quality measures for Upper Saranac Lake

An earlier report from the Adirondack Watershed Institute emphasized the following trends:

Variable	Mean 1989-1992	Mean 2007-2010	Mean CSLAP 2012
Total Phosphorous (ppb)	24	12	11
Transparency (meters)	4.0	3.5	4.0
Conductivity (mS/cm)	50	54	62
Chloride (Salts) (ppm)	2.6	8.3	NA
pH	6.9	7.4	7.7

- Total phosphorus showed a substantial decrease between the high period of 1989-92 and the present time.
- Transparency shows a gradual decrease, with substantial variation within years due to many varying factors.
- Conductivity (a surrogate for concentration of various salts) has increased slightly and may be explained by the rise in chloride concentration
- pH has experienced a slight gradual increase since the 1989-92 period.

While I am generalizing to a certain extent, the long term data bears out the trends we are currently experiencing on Upper Saranac Lake. For more information, visit the Upper Saranac Foundation web site where the full reports may be found.

There is danger in reaching simple conclusions based on complex chemical interactions, in which the variation within a year may be greater than the variation between years. Nonetheless, I will take the risk at making some simple conclusions, realizing that a seasoned limnologist would point out that I may be stretching beyond what we confidently know.

AN ELEMENTARY PEEK AT A COMPLEX QUESTION

- There is no doubt that the early studies indicating that the DEC fish hatchery was the principle source of phosphorus, and that cooperation from DEC have resulted in a substantial reduction in the phosphorus load in the lake--less phosphorus, less algae, clearer water. This needs to be monitored, as hatchery practices change over time.
- Clarity may well have been influenced by weather conditions more than direct impacts from human influence within the Upper Saranac Lake watershed. Increased precipitation and increased numbers of high intensity storms will cause a decline in water clarity. This may have caused the substantial variation seen within a given year.
- Other studies by the Adirondack Watershed Institute point to road salt as having a significant impact on chlo ride content. We will be monitoring this closely in the lake and in feeder streams. The New York State Department of Transportation is experimenting with different protocols for salting roads this winter, as a result of the AWI findings.
- Suits brought against Midwest coal burning power plants in the 1980s, and the resultant change in operations of these plants, have had a noticeable impact on the acidity of lakes across the Adirondack region.

Just as one must be careful in making quick judgments about cause and effect, comparisons with other lakes are fraught with traps because of difference in size of the lake, size and vegetative composition of the watershed, amount of development surrounding the lake and the rock structure underlying the lake. That said, let's analyze water quality in Schroon Lake vis-a-vis Upper Saranac Lake for 2012. What is striking is the similarity among the two lakes. However, this speaks to the relatively good water quality in most Adirondack Lakes.

Variable	Schroon Lake	Upper Saranac Lake
Total Phosphorous (ppb)	13	11
Transparency (meters)	3.4	4.0
Conductivity (mS/cm)	56	62
pH	7.5	7.7

WHAT ABOUT THAT *%#\$ EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL

The bad news about Eurasian watermilfoil is that using currently available techniques, it can only be controlled, not eradicated. Given the easy access to Upper Saranac Lake by the boat launches at Saranac Inn and from Fish Creek camp ground, vectors for introduction of new plants are readily available. In spite of this, the amount of Eurasian watermilfoil harvested is about a tenth of what it was in the first year of harvesting and has been relatively flat over the past five years. After two years of harvesting, the density of milfoil was reduced from 660 stems per acre in August of 2004 to about 25 stems per acre in August of 2006. While 2009 and 2010 showed increases in stems per acre, a modification of monitoring and harvesting protocols were effective in reducing the density of this plant, and we continue to believe it is under control.

SUMMARY

We are pleased with the condition of Upper Saranac Lake and proud of what the citizens of the lake have accomplished over the past two decades. A pervasive algae problem was corrected and the causes reduced, water levels controlled through a dam rebuild and ongoing maintenance, and Milfoil controlled. The lesson in this is that it took concern, commitment, and continued diligence to accomplish this. It will require your continued financial support in the future to protect this amazing recreational resource.

Thank you to all who have donated.

\$1,000 and Up

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