

## **LAKE CLEAR BULLETIN SPRING 2021**

### **ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULED**

Save the date! The Annual Meeting of the Lake Clear Association will be held at the Santa Clara Town Hall on Monday evening, July 19. The doors will open at six p.m. for an opportunity to meet your friends and neighbors, followed by the meeting at seven. Bring along your favorite beverage. In addition to reports on Association activities and an election of officers for two-year terms, the program will feature a special guest: Jen Denny from the Loon Conservation Society. Jen will acquaint us with the natural history of the loon population on the Lake. Thanks to Hannah Hanford and Joe Patrick for working with the Society! While we hope everyone will attend the meeting in person, we also hope to have a Zoom Call option for those who cannot. Look for an email invitation from JD Duval.

### **RAIL TRAIL CONSTRUCTION**

Now that the tracks and ties are being removed from the former New York Central right of way in preparation for constructing the Lake Placid to Tupper Lake multi-use trail, the Association is emphasizing the need to prevent all-terrain vehicles from encroaching on the right of way.

In a letter to the Department of Environmental Conservation, Association President Peter Lanahan asked the State Department of Environmental Conservation to establish a well-publicized telephone number where illegal uses of the trail can be reported. The letter also asked that the DEC enforcement staff prioritize addressing improper activities on the trail, especially as the trail is first being made accessible to the public.

Health and Safety Chair Bob Callaghan made these same requests as a member of a DEC planning committee for the trail three years ago. ATVs are a special concern because, in Lake Clear, homes are situated close to the right of way and during summer months residents routinely cross the trail. The Association has asked for a meeting with DEC officials to discuss enforcement plans for the trail and other concerns. If you have questions, please forward them to Kerri LaDue at [lakeclearassoc@gmail.com](mailto:lakeclearassoc@gmail.com) and we will attempt to get answers.

DEC representatives have been active in communicating with us about progress on the construction. The Regional Director, Joseph Zalewski, has told us that a management plan is being developed that will govern the trail in the interim time between removal of the tracks and development of the trail.

### **FLOAT PLANE WASH STATION**

Several months ago the Association worked with Corey Hurwitch, the Manager of the Airport at Lake Clear, and Brett Wimsatt at the Adirondack Watershed Institute to propose a wash station for float planes that land at the airport before proceeding to subsequent landings, such as on Lake Clear. The wash station, which was designed with help from the Watershed Institute to prevent the transportation of invasive species, was supported by the Town of Harrietstown and the necessary equipment was made available.

DEC, however, has raised potential concerns about the effects of the wash station discharge and asked that construction of the station be temporarily delayed. The airport groundwater is contaminated with fire fighting chemicals used in past tests of the fire protection system. Corrective action plans are being developed and Mr. Hurwitch hopes to get the wash station approved by DEC this year.

Thanks to Town Board Member Tracey Schrader who made a special effort to speak with float plane operators and let them know of the need to protect Lake Clear.

### **ROAD SALT UPDATE**

The Association spent much time and effort on road salt control over the past three years, with the primary objective of having the State establish a low salt zone in Lake Clear. Following is a brief summary of our activities.

**\*Background:** Chloride levels in Lake Clear are higher than in most Adirondack Lakes and trending higher, according to information from the Adirondack Watershed Institute. Numerous residential wells serving homes along Route 30 are contaminated, with chloride levels exceeding State Health Department guidance. Bipartisan State Legislation addressing the road salt problem Park-wide was supported by the

Association, the Adirondack Council and others. It was signed into law by the Governor last year. The legislation called for a Task force to study the road salt problem in the Park and make recommendations for possible reductions in use.

An amendment then changed that law, limiting the information that would be gathered on past salt usage and broadening the scope of the study to include salt usage at facilities such as parking lots. However, the law includes language raising the welcome possibility that individuals who have wells contaminated by road salt may eventually get assistance. The Task Force is to report by December 2021. As of this writing, the Task Force has not been appointed. The Association is writing to the Governor asking for action.

**\*Communications with DOT:** Emily Tyner, the Chair of the Association Environmental Committee, communicated several times with the Department of Transportation over last winter, forwarding videos and photos of what appear to be unnecessary and excessive applications of road salt by DOT personnel. In phone calls and emails, Emily asked the Department's County Engineer if the salt usage in the photos conformed to Department policy. She also asked if successful methods for salt reduction being employed elsewhere, such as on roads surrounding Lake George, could be considered for Lake Clear. The DOT County Engineer was very willing to explain the rationale and methods for current winter road maintenance practices. However, options to reduce salt usage such as cutting trees to allow sunlight to reach the road surface and enhance the melting process, developing improved drainage or reducing drifting snow, were dismissed for various reasons. We plan to continue our outreach to DOT staff.

**\*Communications with the media:** Association Board Member Kirk Petersen has repeatedly brought the road salt problem to the attention of the media. The Association President has written letters to the editors of *The Adirondack Enterprise* and the *Albany Times Union*, citing the need for a low salt zone in Lake Clear. These letters were also sent to elected officials, the Adirondack Council and others, as information.

**\*Communications with Elected officials:** Association President Peter Lanahan and Board Member Tony Kreuzer met recently with State Senator Dan Stec to ask for support of a low salt zone in the Lake Clear Watershed. They pointed out that such a zone was recently posted in

Lake Placid and along the River Road leading to Wilmington. Senator Stec said he would raise the possibility with DOT. The Association also discussed a low salt zone with numerous other elected officials and representatives of Assemblyman Billy Jones, who were supportive. Town Board Member Tracey Schrader successfully advanced an official letter from the Town of Harrietstown to DOT supporting the zone. However, DOT has been unresponsive.

**\*What's Next?** The Association is writing to the Governor asking that the Task Force be appointed. We are hopeful that, if a pilot low-salt project is on the Task Force agenda, Lake Clear will be a successful candidate. We will also continue our broad communications efforts.

### **SPECIAL THANKS**

Thanks to Bob Callaghan, Kerri LaDue, Grace Glascock of the Saranac Lake High School Chapter of the National Honor Society, Kirk Petersen, the Bionique Testing Laboratory and others for the post-winter cleanup of the roads surrounding Lake Clear and the Lake Clear Beach. An unidentified good Samaritan was also observed picking up trash. Thanks to him as well. If you are that person and are reading this, we would like to thank you in person. Let Kerri LaDue know who you are at [lakeclearassoc@gmail.com](mailto:lakeclearassoc@gmail.com).