

### 2021 ANNUAL MEETING/PICNIC

Last summer, the Association held its annual meeting and picnic at Byron Park August 28. There were 39 in attendance with 12 proxy votes. President Maggie Crowley recognized all the board members and thanked outgoing treasurer, Gail O'Brien, for her years of service. Maggie also announced she would be stepping down in the fall, at the end of her second three year term, last as president. Maggie was thanked for her leadership during the especially challenging Covid years. She introduced two new candidates for the board; Glenn Van Norstrand, who has been coming to Indian Lake since 1999 and owns a home in Birch Hills. Retired from UPS, he now lives in Indian Lake full time and is currently managing the Indian Lake Marina. Glenn is interested in getting more involved in the community and willing to join the board and take on the role of President. Russ Evatt has lived in Indian Lake for 60 years. He is a retired military and airline pilot and he and family members have served on the board previously. Russ has also volunteered for many years, along with Joe Hancock, to take water samples three times a year for the annual water quality report. At this time, Autumn Blanchard is eligible for her third and final term. Jon Vorhees is eligible for a second term.

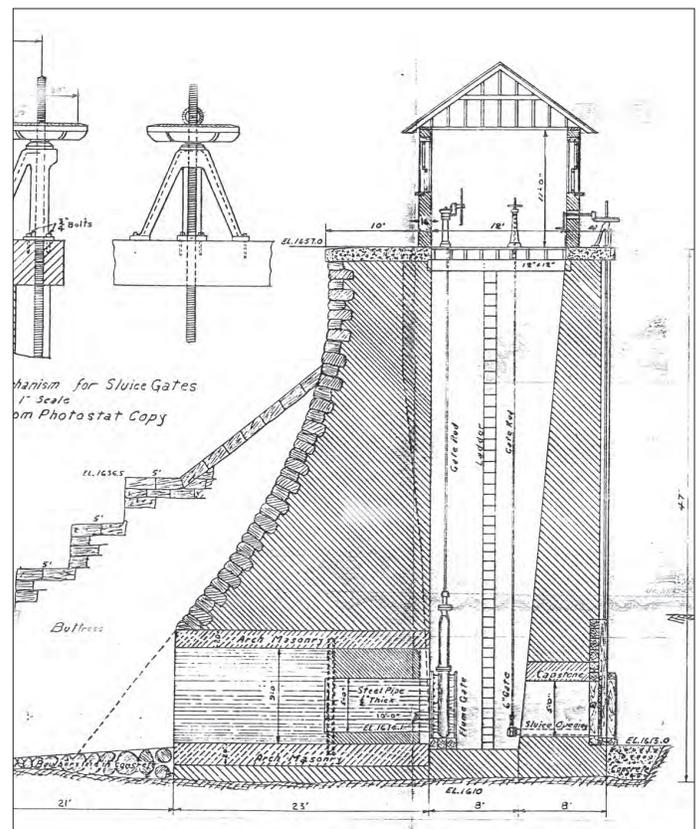
The passing of founding member, Dick Catlin, was noted with a recognition of his many years of involvement and a moment of silence. Dick, first came to Gavett Camp on Indian Lake in the 50s. He and wife Barbara, purchased the camp property in 1963 and transformed it into Timberlock, eventually selling to son, Bruce and his wife, Holly in 2000, who continue to operate it.

Treasurer Gail O'Brien reported membership revenues of \$1570.00 and expenses of \$1391.70 with a bank balance of \$8,736.52. Active memberships as of August 21 were 73, down from 84 last year.

The newsletter continues to be a team effort with board members contributing articles and photos,

including Jon Vorhees' always entertaining local news, reports by Paul Coppock, Joe Hancock, report and photos by Dan Way and layout by Bruce Catlin. There were 175 newsletters printed and all current members should have received one. There were also 500 Boaters Guides printed and distributed.

The guest speaker was John Callaghan, Executive Director of the Hudson River Black River Regulating District (HRBRD). John explained his role at HRBRD and updated members on the Indian Lake dam improvement project which has been awarded 4.5 million dollars. The plan is to use coffer boxes or plates to isolate the gates that need replacing and not draw down the lake level. There are also improvements planned for the earthen embankment. The work could start in the fall of 2022 or spring of 2023.



Cross-section of gate house at the Indian Lake dam

## MORE ILA NEWS

2022 has been a year marked so far by several significant events in the Town of Indian Lake that involve the Indian Lake Association. In addition to its traditional involvement in reporting significant events and changes occurring in the town, monitoring the water quality reports from the state, searching for invasive species around and in the lake, the ILA under the leadership of its new board President, Glenn VanNorstrand has helped to maintain the Indian lake marina, which is under the ownership of Richard Matthies from Rhinebeck. Although this relationship is on an ad hoc basis and not related to the ILA, it is hoped that the marina will remain open for at least the 2022 summer and fall season pending further developments. The marina is still on the market in case any member(s) are interested.

Due to the expiration of the term of the ILA treasurer, a new member of the ILA, Jennifer Copen, has stepped forward in our moment of need to take on the role so that the annual ILA expenses, including the Indian Lake High School scholarship program, can continue to be funded. Richard Hoffman, founder and owner of Acorn Hill Contracting, is also joining the ILA and will be helping to provide an ILA float in the Indian Lake Memorial Day parade as a means of elevating visibility

and awareness of the ILA by the townspeople. There will also be an ILA-sponsored watering station at the annual Black Fly Challenge on June 11, 2022.

The terms of several ILA board members are due to expire this year, making it especially important to bring in new members that can invigorate and maintain the ILA's role and presence in the community.

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

~Jon Voorhees

"A change in the weather is sufficient to recreate the world and ourselves." ~Marcel Proust

After barely managing to top off very late in the spring, Indian Lake completely refilled twice before Labor Day. I can't ever remember the lake refilling even once during July or August, let alone twice. No frost visited the area until November - also the first year that I can remember that happening. Significant snow held off until Martin Luther King weekend, shortening the snowmobiling season to less than two months, and again dampening winter business. It seems inevitable that practical accommodations will eventually have to be made to this change in the weather, such as moving hunting season later in the fall and beginning rafting earlier.



Looking north from north end of Indian Lake

Photo by Dan Way

The wet summer caused some buckling on the school's gym floor. The gym is over a two-part crawl space, which includes some soil, an old concrete slab and an unknown amount of asbestos. Indian Lake Central School, like all towns and school districts in New York, is required to retain the services of professional engineers. These engineers are paid a percentage of the value of whatever work they oversee. Even though the gym floor had settled back down around the time the kids returned to school, the engineers, Mosaic Associates, convinced the School Board and administration that the gym needs a new climate control system immediately; even though no one has investigated the crawl space, out of caution arising from the asbestos. The cost of mechanicals for air conditioning the gym, including the summer months, will be over \$800,000. No estimates were made regarding the ongoing operation and maintenance of the new system. The total cost for the project, including asbestos abatement, engineering fees, etc. will be just under \$1,200,000. Following as close on the heels as it does to the school's last \$1 million+ building project, it must give Mosaic a real fondness for our little town. Voters will be asked to approve this in May. Since basements throughout Indian Lake village are notoriously wet, and the present gym floor has been in place for decades before the present "emergency" occurred, it begs the question: Why not simply take care of the asbestos for now, and then see if there's a more economical solution possible by moisture-proofing the crawl space once there's safe access?

The school also decided to finally retire the old Indian head logo with the anachronous Great Plains headdress, and the town is doing the same. Nationally, the Federal Government moved to replace all their geographic designations that use the term "Squaw". While this will not impact the brook that separates Sabael from the rest of the town, it does create a feeling that our wagons are being circled as hostiles forces descend on our ID.

The town finally signed off on the bummed-up Lake Abanakee dam rebuild, their last engineers' extravaganza. They haven't yet scheduled the Adirondack Lake dam project. The anticipated rehabilitation of the Indian Lake dam will not be happening this coming year, but will probably be slated for 2023. Conservationist organizations have begun lobbying for a Constitutional amendment that would

codify the operations of the Hudson River Black River Regulating District's operations under Article XIV (the "Forever Wild" section). No changes in the actual operation of the Regulating District are being discussed so far. So, it doesn't appear to threaten the status quo here on the lake.

Route 28 was finally paved, and it looks great so far. But the job was just an overlay and did not address any underlying problems with the roadbed, so its longevity remains to be seen. In local politics, Kristina Eldridge and Sean Curry replaced retiring Sally Stanton and the seat previously vacated by Patricia Curry on the Town Board. Bill Farber yielded his position as Chair of the County Board of Supervisors after an almost uncountable number of years of meritorious service. He was succeeded by our own Supervisor Brian Wells.

The section of railroad from North Creek to Tahawus, on part of which the popular Revolution Rail operates, went up for auction, as part of the bankruptcy proceedings of the former owner. It was purchased for \$3.3 million by mining speculators from New Mexico. In addition to whatever titanium remains at the old mine site in Tahawus, it is thought by some that the enormous tailing piles might contain rare earth minerals. Federal Railroad Administration rules may not allow Revolution Rail to use the same track if it does wind up carrying freight from either Tahawus or Barton Mines, due to safety concerns. The FRA has very strict standards for freight rail usage and what types of equipment can share track. Revolution Rail had bid unsuccessfully for the property.

As of this writing, the Marina is under contract for sale; and (against all odds) it will likely remain in operation as a livery. The Lake Store was sold, and the building's fate is uncertain. It may be demolished or otherwise converted to an Airbnb-type short-term rental property. Sandy Beach Camp also was sold and will remain as vacation rentals. The Town of Indian Lake is considering buying and operating the old Cedar River Golf Course, and is holding public hearings on the matter.

Census data showed that Hamilton County grew by 4.1% between 2010-20 - one of only a few upstate counties to not lose population. Covid, telecommuting, and urban mayhem seem to be having a stimulative effect. A number of new businesses opened and

survived in town and several new, child-rearing families move in. But unfortunately, Frontier Communications fortified their position as major impediment to the Town's progress by allowing internet and long distance calling outages to become increasingly common. Admittedly, every enterprise struggles with the effects of inflation these days, not to mention the after-effects of the pandemic. But since Frontier is unable to reduce the number of Doritos in their bags, they came up with an even more ingenious solution. Whereas previously customers could pay for up to 200 mbps internet download speeds, even though Frontier is incapable of delivering more than 100; now you can pay even more money for up to a gigabyte (1000 mbps), while still only being able to receive 100 mbps in reality. While some might consider these practices and failures worthy of refunds or penalties, a disinterested NYS Public Service Commission remains deaf to complaints - no doubt preoccupied with broader social issues, foreign policy or something else more important than what their humble mandate legally entitles (and requires) them to do.

The NYS legislature made permanent the mild, temporary controls on aquatic invasive species that had been in effect the last couple of years. Despite the fact that the legislation in no way requires the DEC to supervise their own launch sites and only carries light, slap-on-the-wrist penalties for violators who might somehow be caught in the act of causing impossible-to-ever-eradicate lake infestations, the State and the various environmental organizations spent months patting themselves on the back and congratulating themselves for the tepid accomplishment. Terrestrial invasives continued their remorseless march toward Indian Lake. The emerald ash borer and the woolly adelgid (which wipes out Hemlocks) are now both found within the Blue Line. Spotted lantern flies, which feast on maple, pine, cherry apple, and poplar, are looming over the horizon. Yet, alas, campers continue to haul in illegal truckloads of firewood.

An absolutely mortifying environmental event occurred last September in the waters of Indian Lake: the shocking appearance of blue green algae, observed by myself and one of my guests, who happens to work for the EPA. Blue green algae is not actually algae at all. It's green-colored clumps of cyanobacteria, one primary cause of which are improperly functioning septic systems. The NYS Dept of Health says that if you're exposed

to blue-green algae you should "stop using the water and consider medical attention for people and animals if symptoms such as diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting; skin, eye, or throat irritation; and allergic reactions or breathing difficulties occur after contact with surface waters." The DOH has gone so far as to mandate mid-summer closure of beaches on Lake George more than once, in response to these blooms. Fortunately, its appearance in Indian Lake came after the summer season, when few people other myself were still swimming; and it was only apparent for two days, after which windy weather scattered the stuff. Nevertheless, it gave great cause to reflect. This lake, which we enjoy together, is something akin to the medieval commons, or what became the village green in Colonial times. But instead of grazing our livestock, we use it to nourish our souls. Being held in common implies a shared responsibility, not simply a shared benefit. When one of us exceeds the carrying capacity of our property and places unbearable demands on our sanitary system, the waste pollutes us all. When one of us allows a raucous gathering, or decides to ignite a fireworks extravaganza in the middle of August, instead of the Fourth of July, or allows their hounds to bark all day long, it disturbs the peace of us all. When one of us lights up their outdoor space like 42nd Street, it blinds the eyes of others to our glorious night sky. When a single person fails to properly clean their fishing equipment, we all must spend the rest of our lives backstroking through hails of spiny water fleas.

Although I have no polling data to back this up, I am quite certain that almost everyone who has gravitated to Indian Lake from different places (Lake Hopatcong, the Jersey Shore, or wherever) have come here because it is more peaceful, cleaner, with more stars to be seen at night, and is burdened with fewer obnoxious reminders of the more unpleasant aspects of humanity than wherever they came from. Why anyone would come here for those reasons, and then thoughtlessly reduce our blessed spot to something resembling the places from which they migrated puzzles the imagination. God forbid that the debut of blue green algae is a harbinger of the death of our commons. But unless we hold firmly to a sense of shared responsibility, I fear that may one day be the case.

P.S. The same may be said of our nice, blue planet.



Looking south from north end of Indian Lake

Photo by Dan Way

## ILA DICK MERRILL SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarship was named after Dick Merrill, a long time board member, educator and lake advocate. It is given to Indian Lake High School graduates that demonstrate interest in Environmental Studies. Last year's award of \$500 was given to ILCS 2021 graduate, Aiden Atwell. Aiden was the Salutatorian and will be studying pre-law at St. Lawrence University. Thanks to Maggie and Jon for serving on the scholarship committee.

## HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

~Dan Way

In the past year, Jon Voorhees and I have continued to promote the idea of installing hydro-power into the Indian Lake and Lake Abanakee dams. We have made some progress. Due to redistricting, Hamilton County is now in the DEC's Region 5 in the Adirondacks, and we have made contact with that office to seek their help navigating the administrative, logistical, environmental and legal landscapes. We hope to get political support from State Senator Dan Stec, and have already receiving the blessings of HRBRRD Chairman John Callaghan to forge ahead with our efforts. The HRBRRD, which owns and operates most of the hydroelectric dams in the Adirondacks, is scheduled to do significant maintenance work on the Indian Lake dam in 2023, and we hope to have cleared the political

hurdles by then. Peter Bauer, the director of Protect the Adirondacks, is keeping an open mind about the idea and has actually given us some helpful advice also. At this point, the future looks cautiously optimistic.

## MEMBERSHIP DUES

Dues are unchanged from the rates that went into effect in 2014. The basic membership options are \$15 for one year or \$35 for three years. In 2014 we instituted voluntary higher levels for members who would like to contribute more, and so far we have received many membership payments at the higher levels. This generosity is helping the Association strengthen its financial position and better prepares us to respond as issues that concern our membership arise.

The current membership dues levels are:

- Lake Level - \$15 for 1 year or \$35 for 3 years
- Baldface Mt. - \$25 for 1 year or \$60 for 3 years
- Dug Mt. - \$40 for 1 year or \$100 for 3 years
- Snowy Mt. - \$50 for 1 year or \$125 for 3 years

Please note that your membership expiration date is printed on the address label on the last page of this newsletter. Please check to see whether you are due to renew your membership.

## AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

~Paul Coppock

Last summer Russ Evatt and Paul Coppock surveyed a large portion of Indian Lake's 38 mile shoreline, inspecting for any aquatic invasive plant species, continuing the Association's participation in the monitoring program run by the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program. The search turned up no invasive plants. The only invasive that has been found in Indian Lake to date is the spiny water flea, that half inch long crustacean that clings to fishing gear and boat lines. They would be nothing more than a nuisance to boaters and fishermen except that they have the potential to interrupt the fish food chain by consuming the zooplankton that is a key food for young fish.

Our Indian Lake community is fortunate to have avoided the problems that neighboring lakes are experiencing with infestations of invasives such as Eurasian milfoil, variable leaf milfoil and zebra mussels. The Blue Mountain Lake Association is continuing its battle to contain and remove the infestation of variable leaf milfoil that was discovered several years ago in the channel between the Marion River dam and Lake Utowana, hiring professional divers to extract the plants. Lake George is contending with a host of aquatic invasives including Eurasian milfoil, curly-leaf pondweed, and three types of mollusks. Indian Lake has some natural advantages for defending against invasive plants taking root. It sits in a mountain ringed basin that provides a high flush rate and has a rocky shoreline, that is exposed to dramatic seasonal fluctuations in water level. But we are still vulnerable and need to be vigilant.

The Indian Lake DEC boat ramp was guarded once again last summer by boat stewards provided through the Adirondack Watershed Institute with DEC funding. Those stewards inspected 2000 boats at the launch ramp and required cleaning of 145 that had plant or animal contamination. The contamination on several boats included spiny water flea and zebra mussels. This year stewards funded by the DEC will be staffing the state boat ramp from 7:30 am to 4:00 pm Thursday through Monday beginning May 28. The on-site boat wash station will also be in operation. The complete Adirondack Watershed Institute report on the stewardship program for 2021 will be available soon at: [www.adkwatershed.org/publications/annual-stewardship](http://www.adkwatershed.org/publications/annual-stewardship)

We can use more help surveying the shoreline for invasives. Anyone interested in getting involved should contact Paul Coppock at [pccoppock@gmail.com](mailto:pccoppock@gmail.com), or any Association board member. The Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program provides free on-line and in person training sessions in June, July, and August for new and returning volunteers. The dates will be announced on the organization's website: [www.adkinvasives.com](http://www.adkinvasives.com).

## INDIAN LAKE WATER LEVELS

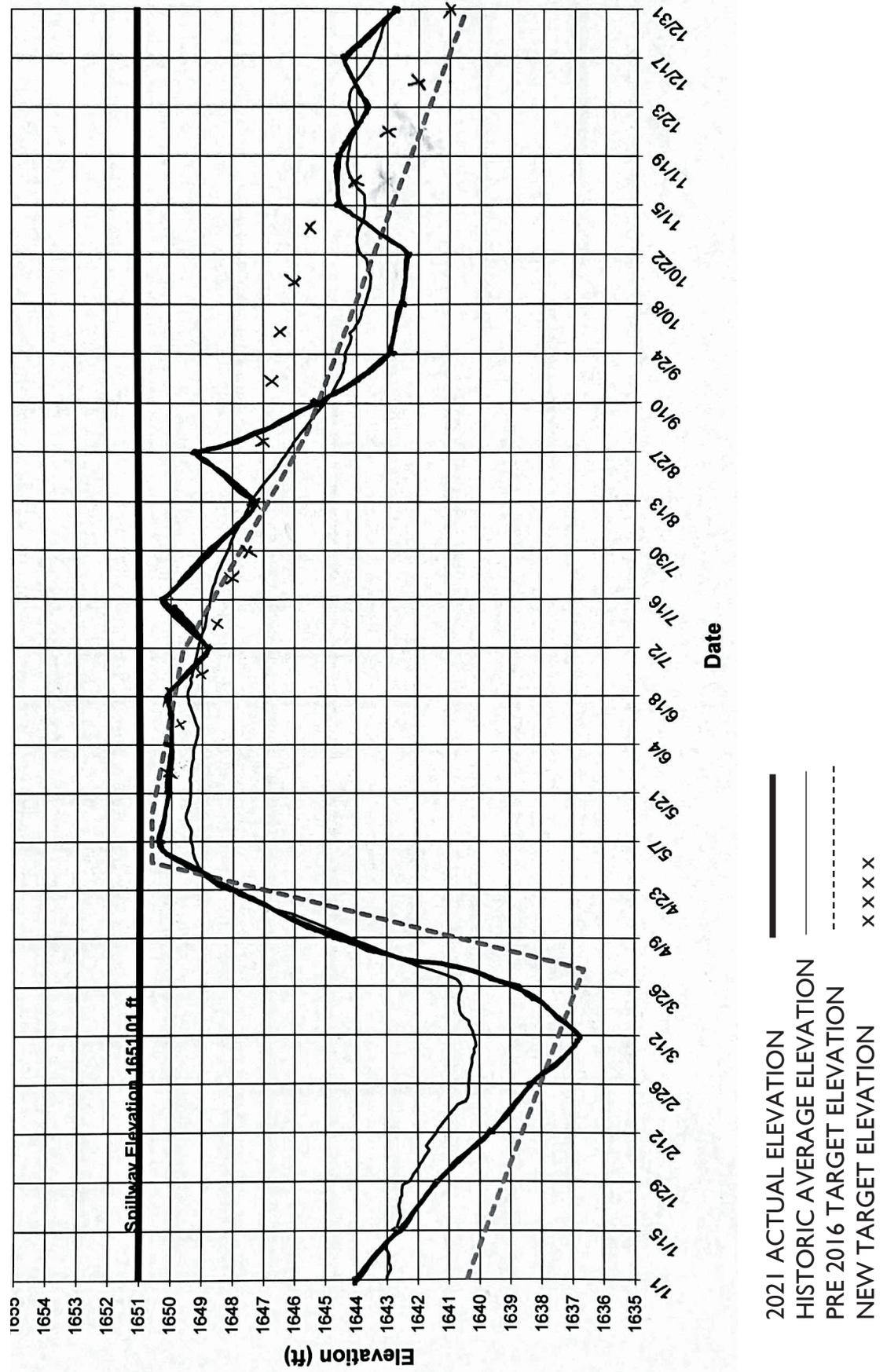
~Paul Coppock

Last season the Indian Lake water levels followed typical early season patterns allowing residents to go about their annual dock installations with only the usual challenges. The June weather was dry and the lake was comfortably near target levels through the Fourth of July weekend and into mid-month. Then the skies opened and the monsoons descended in two waves. Between July 17 and 20, the lake spiked up peaking at about 6 inches over the dam spillway. The operator of the dam, the Hudson River Black River Regulating District responded by dumping water at the furious rate of 1,100 cfs, far above the median rate of 230 cfs. They continued an elevated release rate of about 900 cfs into August, dropping the level to one foot above target on August 1, then receding to target level by August 17. That was the day the second wave of downpours arrived. From August 18 to 21 the lake rose 42 inches, peaking at 5 inches below the spillway. The Regulating District continued an elevated release rate of about 800 cfs, slowly bringing the lake back down reaching 14 inches above target on September 1, and then dropping sharply after Labor Day.

These surges of inflow to the lake triggered emergency dock adjustments along with searches up and down the lake for lost boats and beach furniture. This was an illustration of the tough balancing act the Regulating District faces in deluge situations. Due to Indian Lake's large steep watershed, water can flow in faster than it can escape through the dam. The other constraint is that the Regulating District's primary statutory mission is to control downstream flow to prevent flooding and support orderly wastewater treatment operations, hydroelectric generation, and other needs. They try to accommodate our lake front recreational interests to the extent possible. The statistics for lake levels and release rates are available in great detail at: [www.hrbrrd.ny.gov](http://www.hrbrrd.ny.gov).

## INDIAN LAKE WATER LEVEL - 2021

Below is a graph from the Hudson River Black River Regulating District that shows the Indian Lake Association target water levels accepted by the Regulating District for the Lake in effect prior to 2016 (dotted line), the new target levels effective 2016 (small 'x's) and the historic average water levels (thin solid line). Added to the graph are the actual levels from USGS data (heavy solid line).



## INVASIVE TRANSPORT LAW

~Paul Coppock

On December 10, 2021, Governor Hochul signed a new law that creates a clean boat certification procedure, and DEC enforcement powers. The law authorizes DEC to set up aquatic invasive species boat inspection stations anywhere in the Park or within 10 miles of the Park boundary. DEC can require any watercraft, whether motorized or non-motorized, to be decontaminated at the inspection stations. Any motorized boat arriving at a boat launch where there is an open invasive species inspection operation will be required to have an inspection or decontamination certificate before it can launch. That certificate can be from a state invasive species inspection station, or it can be a self-issuing "Permit".

The regulations have created these two new forms of certification that boaters can use as proof that they are in compliance with the state law prohibiting transport of a boat or trailer to or from a boat launch site, with any plant or animal material on or in it. In other words, the certificate or self-issuing Permit shows that the boat was clean and drained after it was last retrieved from the water and thus can be launched without risk of spreading invasives. The certificate may be issued by DEC based upon an inspection, or the boater can download and complete the DEC Permit form which allows the boater to self-certify. This form requires the transporter to certify under penalty of perjury, the water body the boat is being transported from, and the location it is being transported to for storage or repair.

The transporter further certifies that he or she understands "transport to, and launching on, another water body in New York is NOT allowed by this permit unless the boat is drained and cleaned of visible plants and animals." The self-certification form can be downloaded at: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/98246.html>

The text of the law is available at: <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/ENV/9-1710>

These rules may seem a little complicated the first time through. When the law goes into effect in June we will learn more about how this system will operate in practice.

## WATER QUALITY REPORT

This is our 18th year in the program. Joe Hancock and Russ Evatt have been doing the water quality report for about 11 years. Many thanks to Russ for providing the watercraft for the testing. The program is administered by Protect the Adirondacks and is run by the Adirondack Watershed Institute which is located at Paul Smiths College.

Joe and Russ do their sampling/testing 3 times each summer, once each in June, July and August. Sampling takes place in the "deep hole" of the lake. This is so that they have a consistent place they can draw a sample from and also by taking it from the deep hole they avoid potential contamination, primarily from shoreline influences, and discharges from brooks, streams, etc. Sampling includes three main areas. One area is taking a secchi disc reading. This is a round aluminum plate with an alternating black and white pattern. They lower it into the water, attached to a tape measure, until it is no longer visible. Their readings are typically about 4 meters, although their last reading was about 3 meters, probably due to the heavy rain and runoff that had occurred a few days prior. This test indicates the amount of dissolved solids and is a contributor to algae blooms productivity.

So far we have been very lucky that our lake has not had many algae blooms. This has become a major problem on the finger lakes and the Great Lakes and their harbors. What helps our situation tremendously is our lake has a very high "flush rate". This is the number of times each year that the lake turns over completely. In a normal year our flush rate is somewhere between 1 and 2 times. This year with the major rain events that we have had it is probably higher.

The second area is taking a measurement for chlorophyll. A sample of lake water is drawn through a very fine cellulose filter using a vacuum pump. Chlorophyll is the photosynthetic pigment in algae and cyanobacteria, which in high levels can produce algae and algae blooms. Our lake consistently tests in the good range.

The third area is collecting a small sample of water to be analyzed for PH, phosphorous, and sodium/calcium (road salt). Fortunately, our lake's test results are all in the good range. The reduction in acid rain has helped the PH, our readings are typically about 6.8, which is

about neutral on the PH scale. Phosphorus levels are low due to very little fertilizer influence, and by the time they do the sampling the residue from road salt has been primarily flushed out of the lake.

Overall, our lake is doing very well. Our source watershed which covers some 83,000 acres is primarily undeveloped wild forest. It is sparsely populated with very little agricultural influence. The readings have changed very little over the years. Please remember to keep septic systems in good working order, and don't apply fertilizers near the shoreline or where it could be easily flushed into the lake.



## MOTOR BOAT OPERATORS

As of January 1, 2020, new education requirements for motor boat operators are in effect under the recently enacted Brianna's law which provides that all motor boat operators:

<b>If you were born on or after:</b>	<b>You will need a boating safety certificate when operating a motorized vessel in:</b>
<b>Jan. 1, 1993</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Jan. 1, 1988</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Jan. 1, 1983</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Jan. 1, 1978</b>	<b>2024</b>

All operators of motorized vessels, regardless of age, will need a boating safety certificate by Jan. 1, 2025.

Certification generally involves 8 hours of classroom training. Online course options are also available. For a current list of New York training locations and times go to: <https://parks.ny.gov/recreation/boating/safety-courses.aspx>



Indian Lake Dam

Photo by Dan Way



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ILA ADK, INC.  
 Board of Directors 2021-2022

President – Glenn VanNorstrand  
 Vice President – Daniel Way  
 Secretary – Carmen Adler  
 Treasurer – Jennifer Copen  
 At-Large – Jon Voorhees  
 At-Large – Autumn Blanchard  
 At-Large – Martha Bilsback  
 At-Large - Russ Evatt

CONTACT US: [info@ilaadk.org](mailto:info@ilaadk.org)

WEBSITE: [www.ilaadk.org](http://www.ilaadk.org).

INDIAN LAKE ASSOCIATION  
 ANNUAL MEETING & PICNIC  
 BYRON PARK PAVILION  
 SATURDAY, AUGUST 27, 2022  
 4:00 pm

Food and drink provided

Fund raiser 50-50 raffle  
 2 tickets for \$5 and 5 tickets for \$10

The guest speaker will be from Hamilton County Soil and Water Department, where we will learn more about various environmental trends and conditions in and around our town and lake.

To help with estimating food and drink, please:  
 RSVP - <https://www.ilaadk.org/contact>