



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Ausable River Association (AsRA) and Paul Smith's College Adirondack Watershed Institute (AWI) have released the 2018 Water Quality Report for Mirror Lake. The report shows that Mirror Lake continues to be negatively affected by road salt. The lack of mixing in the spring, first documented in 2017, remains a problem for the lake.

As detailed in the report, the lack of spring mixing limits habitat availability for cold-water species, such as lake trout, and makes the lake more susceptible to harmful algal blooms. Additional analyses and discussion outline the potential for a winter fish kill if fall mixing is also interrupted. The primary author, Dr. Brendan Wiltse, says "the combination of elevated chloride concentrations and a lack of complete mixing is reducing the lake's resilience to algal blooms and limits the habitat available for fish and other aquatic organisms."

Wiltse goes on to state, "while compiling the report, our ongoing monitoring documented the highest concentrations of chloride observed to date in the lake." Despite many efforts to reduce salt use around Mirror Lake there has not been an improvement in the condition of Mirror Lake. Corey Laxson from AWI says "the primary concern for Mirror Lake is the lack of mixing in the spring. If salt application were substantially reduced, we would see this process restored immediately, in fact, we saw this occur in 2016 after a mild winter."

In response to the need to find solutions to the concerns related to road salt, which include contamination of groundwater and private drinking water wells, AsRA recently announced the Ausable Sustainable Salt Initiative (ASSI). This program is a collaborative partnership to leverage science, technology, best practices, and community engagement to reduce road salt use in the Ausable River watershed. ASSI is a partnership between AsRA, AWI, and WIT Advisers, consultants widely considered leaders in snow and ice management. WIT Advisers, led by CEO Phill Sexton, manages the Sustainable Winter Management (SWiM) certification program. The Town of Lake George was the first municipality to receive SWiM ROAD certification. Working with WIT Advisers and The FUND for Lake George, the town has been able to reduce their salt use by approximately 30% and continuing to make progress toward a 50% reduction.

Lake Placid business owners and residents are delivering a letter and petition to the Town of North Elba and the Village of Lake Placid encouraging the exploration of alternative practices for sidewalk maintenance and requesting the town and village to pursue SWiM certifications. The letter includes signatures of 250 businesses, residents, and visitors. AsRA's Executive Director, Kelley Tucker, says "it is important that we work collaboratively across sectors to address the pollution of our water. Left unaddressed, road salt will continue to threaten the environment, local economy, and human health. This is a problem we created and one we can solve."

A full copy of the report can be found at www.ausableriver.org.

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