

# ASRA Newsletter

LATE FALL/ EARLY  
WINTER 2006



## Erosion on the Au Sable River

**S**ociety as a whole is becoming much more environmentally conscious. Less than 20 years ago, words like tropical rain forest and recycle were not even found in the dictionary. Now almost every kindergarten student knows that we should be saving rain forest and recycling our soda cans.



Figure 1. Example of erosion on a river bank.

But sometimes, a word can cause confusion. Take erosion, for example. Ask one person whether or not we should be worried about erosion and they may say yes. Another person would tell you that erosion is natural. So, who is correct? They both are.

Erosion is the displacement of soil and rock by wind, water, ice, gravity, or living organisms. A certain amount of erosion is healthy for the ecosystem. There-

fore, erosion is a natural process, but in many places it is increased by human land use. Poor land use practices, such as deforestation, overgrazing, unmanaged construction activity, and road or trail building, can drastically increase erosion. This excessive erosion can cause problems such as sedimentation, loss of soil, destruction of habitat, and fish-kills.

Luckily, there are many steps that can be taken to decrease the amount of erosion that takes place. These steps include tree and vegetation planting, terracing, the use of straw on recently disturbed soil, and fencing livestock out of stream. Processes that lead to the reduction of erosion are often referred to as best practices. (Continued on pg. 2)

## ASRA Receives Department of State Grant

**T**he ASRA, in conjunction with the town of Wilmington, was recently awarded a \$20,000 grant, from the New York Department of State, to complete a watershed plan. Creating a watershed plan is a process

that will involve collecting information about the river, current and past studies, and current and past projects. After assessing all of this information, a plan is written to help direct all organizations, agencies, towns, and individuals interested in

working towards the conservation of the Au Sable River. The ASRA is still waiting to find out more information from the Department of State and once given the permission will start this important project.

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### ASRA'S WISHLIST:

- Office Paper (preferably made from 100% recycled paper)
- Lined Notepads
- Envelopes in any size
- Shovels and spades
- Buckets/pails
- A canoe
- Hanging Files and manila folders
- Office Chair

If you would like to donate a please contact the director at (518) 873-3752 or [info@ausablriver.org](mailto:info@ausablriver.org).

## Erosion (continued from page 1)

The Au Sable River, because of its steep gradient and sandy soils, sees its fair share of erosion. To help better understand the amount of erosion going on along the banks of the river the ASRA conducted an erosion survey over the past summer. The entire river –east, west, and main branch – was completed. GPS (global positioning system) was used to map small sections of the river. The bank height and percent of erosion was then estimated for each section. The result, will a map that indicates areas of no, moderate, and severe erosion.

erosion state and where bank stabilization projects would be most beneficial. Electronic copies of the map will be available for download at the ASRA’s website by the spring.



Figure 2. Additional example of erosion along a river.

This map will provides us with a better understanding of the river’s current

## New Fishing Access On West Branch

**O**n a beautiful day in mid-August five folks from the Lake Champlain Chapter of Trout Unlimited, the Tri Lakes Chapter of Trout Unlimited and ASRA met Rob Daley of the New York Department of Environmental Conservation to clear a trail from the Wilmington - Black Brook Road to the West Branch of the Au Sable River.

the west side of the road. From the maps it appears that this trail gives access to over a mile of fine fishing water along the river. It should be noted that

or center of the river, so you are advised to keep to the north side of the river.

*“This trail gives access to over a mile of fine fishing water along the river.”*

it is not clear whether property boundaries are at the bank

Also note that there are unmarked trails from the parking space to Black Brook to the west. Private property is posted in the area so you are advised to observe posters on either side of the road and to stay on state land.

The trail has been marked and there is a nice parking place on

*Caption describing picture or graphic.*

## Summer Events Round-up

**T**he Au Sable River Association participated in several summer events this year. Here’s a quick summary of what we were up to:

- The annual Great Adirondack Trail Run was held on June 17th. For more information see the story and photos on page 4.
- The ASRA was asked to present the an Award for the Best Photo of the Au Sable River at the East Branch Friends of the Arts first Photosho. The Photosho was held

at the Marcy Field, in Keene, on August 18, 19, and 20. The award presented was several decorative hand-made ties, provided by John Spissinger.

- Wilmington held a waterfront awareness day on Thursday August 24. The ASRA had an educational table and led children on a nature scavenger hunt.
- ASRA members helped the DEC build a fishing access trail in mid-August. For more information see the above story.

- Almost the entire river was inventoried for erosion.
- An Indian cup plant inventory and control experiment was implemented.
- A section of streambank near the mouth of the river was stabilized.

Next year we hope to be out and about even more!

## ASRA Seeking New Board Members

**H**ave you ever been curious as to what the ASRA board does besides hold a monthly meeting? Board members play an active role in organization. They are responsible for:

- Selecting the executive director and reviewing his or her performance,
  - Ensuring organizational planning,
  - Ensuring adequate resources,
  - Managing resources effectively,
  - Monitoring the ASRA's programs,
  - Enhancing the organization's public image, and
- Assessing the board's performance.

So what does that mean? It means that a board member attends the monthly meetings, participates in committee work, volunteers for assignments, stays informed on matters, participates in

planning and evaluation, and participates in fund raising. In essence, each board member plays a role in keeping the ASRA a hard working, dedicated organization.

I know that sounds like a lot of responsibility and work. And, I cannot lie and say that being a board member is all fun and games. What I can say is that the Board of Directors is a vital component of the ASRA. In return for providing a few hours of work each month, a board member gets to meet new people, learn new skills, put their current skills to good use, and gain a sense of satisfaction knowing they are directly helping to enhance and protect the natural and cultural resources of the Au Sable River.

Every few years, the Board seeks new

members. By rotating its members, the board is looking to the future by gaining new perspectives. One place to gain these new perspectives and new board members is the ASRA general membership.

*"By rotating its members, the board is looking to the future by gaining new perspectives."*

So, if you have a few spare hours each month and you would like to help the Au Sable River remain one of the jewels of the

Adirondack Mountains, please seriously think about becoming a board member. Interested individuals can call or e-mail the executive director for more information.

## Anchor Ice

**E**veryone knows that ice floats – ice cubes float in your glass of water and icebergs float in the ocean. Ice floats because it has a lower density than that of liquid water. But, what would happen if ice did not float? This phenomenon actually occurs in the correct conditions and is known as anchor ice. The exact definition of anchor ice is submerged ice that is attached to the river bed. This type of ice is a unique phenomenon to cold water streams and rivers.

In order for anchor ice to form, several nights of temperatures ranging from 10 to 15 F or colder or just one night of temperatures at or below 0 F are needed. The ice generally forms in a shallow, turbulent section of the river where molecules of water on the verge of freezing get tumbled to the bottom of the river. Once these almost frozen molecules hit a rock, they adhere. As time goes on, more and more molecules adhere to rocks and each other, forming

anchor ice. Eventually, the mass of soft, slushy anchor ice will break free, float to the surface, and move downstream as slush ice.

Unfortunately, since anchor ice forms on the bottom of the stream it can negatively affect the habitat of aquatic macroinvertebrates and the spawning beds of trout. As the ice attaches to the rocks and fills the spaces between the rocks, plant matter, macroinvertebrates, fish eggs, and even cobbles are scoured from the bottom. While periodic anchor ice can improve macroinvertebrate habitat by removing excessive amounts of plant life, most biologist agree that anchor ice can seriously impact a stream or river's

habitat.

So, this winter as you travel along the banks of the Au Sable, look for anchor ice. You will be more likely to find the greenish tinged ice in shallow areas. Deep areas bordered by thriving healthy riparian areas (trees and shrubs) are less likely to have anchor ice build-up problems.

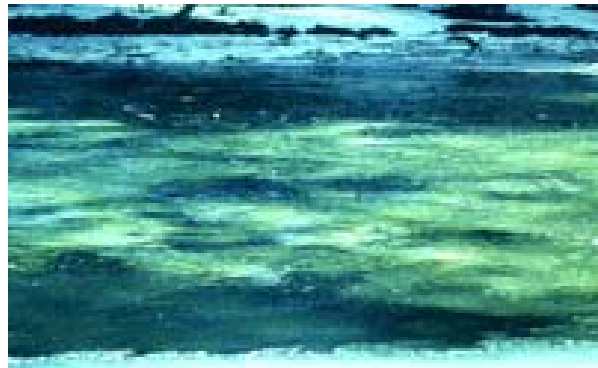


Figure 1. The formation of anchor ice occurs in shallow, exposed areas of the stream bed.

## 2006 Great Adirondack Trail Run A Success

Once again, the Mountaineer graciously organized a trail run festival to support the Au Sable and Boquet River Associations. This year's trail run was held on June 17, 2006. The event included an 11.5 mile trail run, a 3.5 mile fun run, a children's river bug hunt, live music, good food, good cheer, and lots of fun.

The 11.5 mile men's race was won by George Adams, who finished in 1 hour and 40 minutes. The 11.5 mile women's race was won by Courtenay Guertin with a time of 2 hours and 2 minutes. The winners of the 3.5 mile race were Joe Sullivan (23 minutes) and Melinda McAleese (24 minutes). Way to go racers!

The event raised over \$3,000, which was split between the organizations. The ASRA would like to thank Vinny McClelland and all of those

at the Mountaineer, [www.mountaineer.com](http://www.mountaineer.com), for all their hard work and continued support. In addition, we would like to thank the sponsors: Patagonia, Salomon, Montrail, Julbo, La Sportiva, and Darn Tough.

We look forward to the 2007 event!



*"The event raised over \$3,000, which was split between the organizations."*



## 2006 Membership

The ASRA would like to thank its many members who both joined and renewed their membership this year. Without your support we would not be able to continue our important work!

### Assisting Level (up to \$30)

Steve Waldschmidt  
Time and Kay Driscoll  
Barbara Strowger  
Robert Cressey

### Member Level (\$30-\$49)

Edward Prince  
Margaret and Paul Lo Galbo  
Yvonne Farmer  
Mary Lou Moore  
Pat Quinn  
Louise Gregg  
Linda S. Devo  
Philip Winterer  
Robert Bardbury Jr.  
John Ryan  
John Spissinger  
Mary Hays  
Edward V. Pasko  
Charles R. Larson  
Terry Blank  
Jim and Rosemary Olmstead

### Business Members

The ANC/ALT  
The Hungry Trout  
Putman Camp  
Ralas Timber Inc.  
Whiteface Mountain Visitor's Bureau  
Keene Valley Neighborhood Services

### Donor Level (\$50-\$99)

Sara and Robert Moerich  
David Stanley  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Peters  
Anita Deming  
William J. Johnson  
Bethany and Wesley Krawiec  
Jennifer Deming  
David Mason  
Tony Goodwin  
Dr. and Mrs. Jerry Burchenal  
Joan and Miles Kulukundis  
Pam Machold  
The Stover Family

### Supporter Level (\$100-\$249)

Robert Jeffery  
Michael Murray  
Philip Conway

### Sponsor Level (\$500-\$999)

Lorraine Duval

### Additional Donations/Gifts

Jim and Rosemary Olmsted Donated A  
Gift of a New Computer and Printer

### Town Donations

The Town of Wilmington  
The Town of Keene

Thank you for your generosity! We wish all of our donors the best in 2007!

Au Sable River Association

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Elizabethtown, NY

*Working to protect and  
enhance the natural and  
cultural resources of the Au  
Sable watershed.*

**We're on the web!**  
**[www.ausableriver.org](http://www.ausableriver.org)**



**Lake Champlain  
Basin Program**

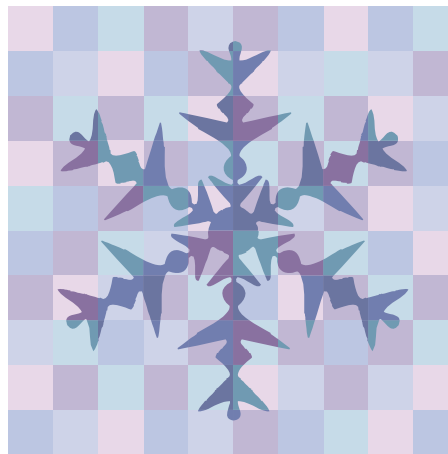
This newsletter was funded through a grant provided by the Lake Champlain Basin Program. For more information visit [www.lcbp.org](http://www.lcbp.org)

## Letter From The Director

**W**inter is starting to settle in around the Au Sable River watershed. The leaves have all turned and since fallen from the trees, adding nutrients to the river. And, frost covers the grass almost every morning. In fact, the higher elevations have even seen some snow already.

It seems like summer was quite some time ago already. But the fact is that the field season has just ended. And this summer was very productive one! Almost the entire river's banks were assessed for erosion amounts. In addition, a very large section of the river was inventoried for Indian Cup Plant and several control treatments

were tested.



the year is important for watershed associations, such as the ASRA, to look ahead. So, if you have any concerns you would like to see addressed next year or if you know of any events you would like to see the ASRA participate in, now is the time to speak up. Feel free to e-mail or call me to chat about future activities. I look forward to hearing from you.

And, of course, the board and I wish you a very happy holiday season and new year!

But just because the field season has ended, the ASRA is not sitting idle. During the fall and winter, grants are written, indoor projects are completed (such as creating maps, gathering data, compiling information, and much more). This time of

In Peace,

Anne Lenox Barlow  
Executive Director