

Ausable River Watershed Management Plan: A Summary of Progress to Date



Planning on a watershed scale allows communities to effectively and comprehensively address water quality issues throughout their watershed, while balancing the need for economic growth and development. Starting in 2007, the Towns within the Ausable River Watershed came together to inform the plan through public input and a citizen advisory committee. Together, we have accomplished Phase I of planning and Phase II is nearing completion.

Accomplishments to date towards completion of the Ausable River Watershed Management Plan are listed below.

✓ check marks indicate completed steps.

✓ Phase I: Ausable Watershed Management Strategy

- ✓ **Characterization of the Ausable Watershed** – an inventory and analysis describing the current state of the watershed:
 - geology, topography, soils, hydrology
 - demographics of the region's population
 - cultural, historic, biologic, scenic, and recreational resources
 - water quality issues, pollutants, acid rain, and corresponding water quality protections
 - floods and flood damage
 - land use and land cover patterns
 - possible effects of natural changes to the watershed, such as climate change
- ✓ **Public and Technical Input**
 - AsRA and Town partners held public input meetings throughout the watershed to document citizens' vision, appreciation, and concerns about the Ausable River.
 - An Advisory committee of interested citizens and technical experts met regularly for the past four years to direct and inform the project.
- ✓ **Priority Recommendations**
 - Describes projects and actions that will protect and restore water quality, public infrastructure, and the local economy (as it relates to the river) within the Ausable River Watershed.

The Ausable Management Strategy (Phase 1) available at: www.ausableriver.org/pdf/AusableWMPStrategy.pdf.

Phase II: Ausable Watershed Management Plan

- ✓ **Data collection**
 - Partners conducted two years of river water sampling to assess **water quality**.
 - We inventoried **local laws, ordinance, and practices** that affect water quality.
 - We prioritized **areas of opportunity for improvement**.
 - Partners collected information on **stream condition** and assessed **infrastructure** that acts as a barrier to flood flow and passage of aquatic organisms.
- ☐ **Watershed Management Recommendations**
 - Projects and actions needed to correct existing impairments and prevent future impacts to water quality, like: improved stormwater management practices; land use controls; training, education, and stewardship programs; and stream restoration or stormwater treatment system retrofits.
- ☐ **Implementation Strategy**
 - A prioritized list of actions needed to address specific water quality problems, including an implementation schedule, project partners, and budget needs.
- ☐ **Monitoring and Tracking**
 - Long-term monitoring and tracking needed to evaluate effectiveness of watershed management practices and to adapt the plan in order to continue to provide water quality improvement.

Public Input

The development of the watershed management plan is being guided by an Advisory Committee with representatives of all the watershed communities as well as county, regional and state agencies and groups representing stakeholders in the watershed. Once a draft watershed management plan is prepared, there will be ample opportunity for public review and comment before the plan is finalized.

Ausable River Watershed Management Strategy

Essex and Clinton Counties, New York

Compiled by: Ausable River Association; Advised and guided by Citizens of the Ausable River Watershed,

AND:

The Ausable Watershed Management Advisory Committee

State/County Representatives:

NYS Department of State Office of Coastal, Local Government and Community Sustainability
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
NYS Department of Transportation
Essex County Planning
Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District
Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District

Town/Village Representatives:

Town of Au Sable
Town of Black Brook
Town of Chesterfield
Town of Jay
Town of Keene
Town of North Elba
Town of Wilmington
Village of Lake Placid
Village of Keeseville

Partners in Planning:

Adirondack Chapter of The Nature Conservancy
Adirondack Council
Adirondack Park Agency
Ausable River Association
Boquet River Association
Lake Champlain Research Institute
Whiteface/Olympic Regional Development Authority
Adirondack Mountain Reserve/Ausable Club, Field, Lakes and Streams Committee
Adirondack Sustainable Communities
Shore Owners Association of Lake Placid
Mirror Lake Watershed Association
Trout Unlimited Adirondack Chapter



The Ausable Watershed Management Planning documents have been prepared for the NYS Department of State Office of Coastal, Local Government, and Community Sustainability with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.

