



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. Plans are a product of organized public input and information gathering. 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. A Draft Plan will be circulated among the communities for comment before it is finalized. Planners from NYS DOS have advised each step of the process and have approved the first phase – the Ausable Management Strategy – is available at: <http://www.ausableriver.org/>.

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.

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 places where there is **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.

Next Steps in Phase II: Ausable Watershed Management Plan

1. **Summary of findings**
2. **Community review and input of recommendations**
3. Management Plan will include **recommended actions** and a **strategy for implementing** them to maintain and improve the health of the watershed and its communities.
4. **Flood response strategy**

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