



## Hudson River - Black River Regulating District

Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor

Mark M. Finkle, Chairman

Robert J. Smullen, Executive Director

### Executive Director's Corner

The Regulating District welcomes you to the latest edition of our newsletter! It has been a busy summer around the district, with lots of rain to keep our reservoirs full. Sand Island has particularly been in the news lately, with lots of boaters visiting this season. Please be mindful of others, cleanup the areas where you recreate, and enjoy the lake.

The Black River Watershed Conference was held in Old Forge, NY on June 14th hosted by the Tug Hill Commission and the Lewis, Jefferson and Herkimer Counties Soil and Water Conservation Districts, as well as DEC Region 6. It brought together numerous stakeholders for various watershed conservation efforts. The Regulating District is glad to partner with Lewis County, the National Weather Service, and the United States Geological Service to assist in resource development of a rating curve for the Black River in Lewis County.



We re-launched the Regulating District's workboat on the Great Sacandaga Lake this summer, and have been busy doing erosion control in hard to reach areas. The boat was also helpful to NYS DEC as they put out navigation buoys and for removing trees that are hazards to boaters. Please see the safety corner this month on what hazards to navigation may be out there on the water.

Yours in service,  
Robert J. Smullen  
Colonel, USMC (Ret.)

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### Scheduled Board Meetings

The next meeting of the Regulating District Board is at 10:00 am on Tuesday September 12, at the Lowville Town Offices, Bostwick Street, Lowville, NY.

## How are Rivers Regulated?



A full "rain barrel" at Indian Lake in 2011.

River regulation is accomplished through the construction and operation of a water storage or impoundment structure known as a reservoir. French in origin, a *réservoir* or *reserver* is a structure used to store, contain or impound. In the regulation of a river it is a structure which is designed to, and is capable of, storing or impounding water, for the purpose of a planned, systematic, release, reserving that water for future use. The composition of the structure can vary greatly from timber, to rock, to earth, and concrete. Methods of passing stored water out of the storage structure can also vary with the type of structure, intended use, and purpose of the storage reservoir. Regardless of the composition or method of release, the function of the various types of storage structures remains the same, each with the same objective: store water when a river system has too much water and release that water when the river system has too little water.

The function of a water storage reservoir is not unlike that of a garden rain barrel. At some point in time the rain barrel is at its least full. Eventually, it rains - sometimes excessively - and the barrel, which collects rain from the greenhouse or tool shed roof rather than allowing it to run directly into the garden, fills with water. The barrel prevents the garden from being over-watered. The barrel also allows water to be removed and placed on the garden to compensate for the lack of natural precipitation when the weather is drier. The storage of water in the barrel properly regulates garden watering and the removal of water prepares the barrel for the next excess rain fall. River regulation is accomplished in the same way.

In the case of a river regulating reservoir, the time of the year when the "rain barrel" is typically least full is in late-winter or early spring. However, Mother Nature plays a large role in when a reservoir may become "least full." Both a January thaw and long-term drought can affect when the reservoir "rain barrel" is least full.

Although our reservoirs store water at various times of the year, more often than not, it is during the spring (when rainfall and runoff from snow melt is greatest) that a reservoir receives the most excessive runoff. Runoff can be so excessive that a river bed and channel is incapable of passing the water safely and without overflowing its banks. That's when the reservoir "rain barrel" comes in handy. In a gardener's terms - storage reservoirs prevent over-watering. Excess rain is collected in the reservoir, filling the "barrel" and reserving the water for future use. During the drier months, typically summer, fall and winter, water is "removed from the barrel" or, released from a storage reservoir, to compensate for naturally occurring low river flow and at a time when a river system can handle the additional water safely. This release of water prepares a storage reservoir to receive the next excess rain fall or spring-time runoff event and allows the reservoir to begin the cycle again.

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### **Weather Award**

<http://www.weather.gov/aly/>

Danielle Thorne from the Regulating District accepts the Honored Institution Award for 50 years of weather observations from Britt Westergard of the National Weather Service

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### **Safety Corner**

Hazards to Navigation

With high lake levels this spring and early summer, the reservoirs are full of water for recreation. It is also important to be on the lookout for hazards to navigation on these waters. Take a look at these two photos of the same tree, which was pulled off the Great Sacandaga Lake for the safety of their fellow boaters by Theresa DaBiere-Craig and her husband Ron and then removed by the Regulating District's workboat crew.



**In the water...**



**Out of the water...**

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## The Safe Lake Initiative

Peter M. Byron, President, Great Sacandaga Lake Association (GSLA)

Our lake is home for permanent and temporary residents and for visitors who make it a daily or weekend getaway. Our lake provides a haven during the summer as well as the winter. As an Association, the GSLA hopes to ensure that it is a SAFE haven!

In May, the GSLA sponsored a meeting of lake organizations at the Fulton County Sheriff's Department to discuss ways to reach out to our residents and visitors with a message promoting safety regardless of the season.

### Who joined the SAFE LAKE Initiative steering committee?

We are grateful to have a 'charter' membership that includes the Great Sacandaga Lake Association; the Sheriffs of both Fulton and Saratoga Counties; Sean Craig Memorial, Inc.; Sacandaga Protection Committee; Hudson River-Black River Regulating District; Adirondack Jet Ski Club; and the Fulton/Montgomery Chamber of Commerce. We also had commitment from Supervisors of towns around the lake.

### How can we spread the SAFE LAKE message to the lake community?

We wanted to have a broad impact on the lake community and invited many lake organizations to be part of our group. We hope as other organizations and individuals hear about the initiative our membership will expand and our outreach will grow. Members of the lake community are also invited to share recommendations on the best ways to spread the SAFE LAKE message.

### What was accomplished to date?

Committee members received various national and local boater safety reports including the results of GSLA membership boater safety surveys. Our discussion targeted safety priorities and techniques on sharing information with the entire community. Organizations were asked to use their Facebook, website and e-burst resources including short video presentations to spread the word.

### This is only the beginning.

We need to continually evaluate what members accomplished and make a plan for the winter season. We recognize that safety habits do not change overnight or in a single summer! Together, let's ensure that the SAFE LAKE Initiative is not a fad but integral to summer and winter recreation on the Great Sacandaga. It is the lake community which will make this initiative a success ..... be safe and become part of this very important initiative!

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**The geography of the Regulating District encompasses nearly six million acres in the Hudson and Black River watersheds.**



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