

Black River Watershed Stakeholder Outreach Report

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2007, a Steering Committee was formed to begin implementation of various Black River Watershed Planning Initiatives. The Steering Committee includes representatives from Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District, New York State Tug Hill Commission, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and the Town of Greig, serving as the grants administrator on behalf of all communities within the Black River Watershed.

Bergmann Associates was retained by the Steering Committee to develop and implement a public outreach program in support of a variety of planning efforts being undertaken within the Black River Watershed region. The first series of public outreach meetings occurred in May 2008, followed by focus group sessions in July 2008, and concluding with a final series of public meetings in December 2008.

The development of the Black River Watershed Management Plan, which focuses on identifying water quality issues and developing a framework for improving and protecting water quality in the future, is the largest effort currently underway within the watershed region. Other planning initiatives, in addition to public / stakeholder outreach efforts, include a groundwater assessment for the watershed region and a Socio-Economic Analysis of the watershed.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The public outreach approach utilized four types of engagement, as described below, in order to adequately educate the public and interested agencies about the project, learn from their experiences about key issues and concerns facing the region, and identify potential actions to take in the future.

1.2.1 Steering Committee Meetings

The stakeholder outreach effort for the Black River Watershed began with a scoping meeting that included representatives of Bergmann Associates and the Steering Committee. The project team discussed their goals for the project, status of other ongoing planning initiatives within the watershed, and the best approach for defining the opportunities, issues, and concerns associated with the watershed study area. The project team decided on an approach for future outreach efforts which included a series of Visioning Workshops, Focus Group Meetings, and Public Meetings. Each of the meetings focused on the Black River Watershed study area and incorporated a wide range of topics from economic development to recreation to tourism and water quality, in addition to other topics of regional importance.



1.2.2 Visioning Workshops

Three identical Visioning Workshops were held over the course of a two-day period in May 2008. The workshops were held in three different locations within the watershed in an effort to ensure a representative cross-section of interests within the study area and to ensure convenient and accessible locations for people interested in talking about the issues and opportunities associated with the region. The workshop locations also corresponded to one location in each of the three study areas defined in the Black River Socio-Economic Analysis.

Workshops were held in Watertown and Lowville on May 20, 2008 and in Old Forge on May 21, 2008. Contact lists for invitations to the workshops were generated by the Steering Committee. Invitations were sent via email when electronic contact information was available and were sent via regular mail when email addresses were not available. The invitation letter included a brief summary of the planning initiatives currently underway that impact the watershed area. Meeting reminders were sent to all persons on the contact list prior to the meeting by members of the Steering Committee. Those invitees without email were telephoned. Visioning Workshop times and locations were also publicly advertised through a number of local and regional newspapers.

The Visioning Workshops included a presentation by members of the Bergmann Associates team as well as an open discussion period that focused on identifying the opportunities and constraints of the Black River Watershed. The presentation included a brief introduction to the watershed, an overview of the project timeline, and the introduction of project partners. An overview of the stakeholder outreach, groundwater analysis, and socio-economic analysis components of the watershed planning process were also presented. Following the introductory portion of the presentation, meeting attendees were asked to participate in an exercise to identify what they would like to see the same or different within the Black River Watershed in 2020. This exercise was followed by a group Opportunities and Constraints Analysis which sought to identify and prioritize the opportunities and constraints associated with the watershed area.

Statements from the 2020 Exercise and Opportunities and Constraints Analysis were compiled and summarized for further review and consideration. Six key theme or topic areas were identified based on comments generated at the visioning workshops – Agriculture, Economic Development, Environment, Forestry, Recreation, and Tourism. These themes were used to organize and develop the Focus Group discussions.

2020 Exercise

Meeting participants were asked the same question at each of the Visioning Workshops:

If you were to move away from the region, and return in 2020, what would you like to see the same, or different, within the Black River Watershed study area?

In general, meeting participants responded positively to this question, responding with things they would like to see the same or enhanced over the course of the next 10-15 years and identifying opportunities that already exist for improving the physical and economic characteristics of the Black River Watershed.

Responses focused on the desire for the region to retain the natural, rural character that it has today, while also expanding economic development opportunities, including agriculture, to ensure a continued high quality-of-life for current and future residents. Alternative energy resources and expanding opportunities associated with alternative energy in the region were discussed at all three meetings. Responses were generally consistent among all three Visioning Workshops, with a strong focus on economic conditions.

Opportunities and Constraints Analysis

Meeting attendees at each of the Visioning Workshops were asked to identify the key Opportunities and Constraints facing the watershed. Attendees were instructed that no topic was off limits – they were free to respond to the exercise on any topic they felt was relevant and important to the region. After individuals were given the chance to offer their individual perspective of the opportunities and constraints, they were given three stickers to place next to the three top issues they felt were most critical to the watershed region. A total of five working groups participated in this activity. While there was consistency among some topics, such as inter-municipal cooperation and recreation, other focus areas, such as lack of public transportation, were identified by only a single group. The geographic diversity of the three meeting locations also impacted the identification of the priority topic areas. For example, Old Forge meeting attendees identified area-specific topics as most important, including the Villages location as the Gateway to the Adirondacks and the benefits associated with the Science / Arts Complex.

The top rated opportunities and constraints associated with the Black River Watershed region for each of the working groups at the Visioning Workshops are summarized in Section Two of this report. Two of the groups also discussed potential action items associated with their prioritized list of opportunities and constraints. The action items are also presented and discussed in Section Three. All comments generated at the Visioning Workshops in association with the Opportunities and Constraints Analysis are included in Appendix 3 of this report.

1.2.3 Focus Group Meetings

Following the Visioning Workshops, six focus groups were identified for an additional level of meetings which concentrated on specific topic areas of particular importance and relevance to the Black River Watershed planning area. Topic areas and contact lists were identified by the Steering Committee based on feedback generated at the first round of Visioning Workshops with the public. The focus group meetings, held on July 30th and July 31st, were facilitated by members of the Bergmann Associates team and were geographically spread out through the watershed planning area in an effort to maximize attendance and diversity in the people involved in the process. The following table identifies the focus group topics, meeting locations, and meeting date and time:

Focus Group Topic	Location	Date and Time
Forestry	Old Forge, NY	July 30 th , 4:00 PM
Tourism & Recreation	Old Forge, NY	July 30 th , 6:30 PM
Environmental	Lowville, NY	July 30 th , 4:00 PM
Agricultural	Lowville, NY	July 30 th , 6:30 PM
Economic Development	Carthage, NY	July 31 st , 4:00 PM
Outdoor Recreation	Carthage, NY	July 31 st , 6:30 PM

Each of the focus group sessions was slated for a two-hour period and included a series of topic-specific questions, as well as six general questions that were asked at each of the different focus group sessions. Meeting attendees were asked to respond to each of the questions posed and the meeting facilitators from Bergmann Associates took extensive notes to document the verbal dialogue. A facilitator from Bergmann Associates, in addition to members of the Steering Committee, directed the focus group meetings and maintained the same format and questions among all groups to ensure consistency.

The focus group meetings were intended to be informal and attendees were directed to be honest and to express their views and opinions freely. Booklets were provided to each of the focus group attendees to help guide the discussion.

General questions, consistent between all focus groups, and topic specific questions for each of the focus group sessions are identified below:

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What do you like best about living / working in the region today?
2. What do you like least about living / working in the region today?
3. Look back 10-15 years. How would you compare the state of the Black River Watershed between then and today? Comparisons can consider any topic area of importance to you – natural resources, economy, recreation, tourism, etc.

4. Look forward 10-15 years. How do you think current trends may impact the watershed over the next decade? What will be the most significant differences between the watershed today and in 2025?
5. When considering the trends and changes that may occur, is the Black River Watershed region still a place you want to be in 2025?
6. What are the three most important projects you would like to see undertaken to help mitigate trends and change over the next decade?

AGRICULTURE FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What recent trends are impacting the region's agricultural base?
2. What threats to the agricultural industry do you see in the region?
3. Which sectors within the agricultural industry are expanding? Which are in decline?
4. What ideas do you have for diversifying the region's agricultural sector? What kinds of investment would be required to facilitate this?
5. How do agricultural businesses affect the natural environment? What are the significant environmental issues? How are they addressed?

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe the region's economic base? What industries contribute most to the region's economy? Which industries are growing? Which are shrinking?
2. Why do businesses choose to locate in the region? What makes it difficult for businesses to locate here? What makes it difficult to stay and grow? What facilitates expansion of existing businesses?
3. What opportunities do you see for diversification of the region's economic base? What industries are well suited for the region and why? What kinds of investments / programs are needed to attract those industries?
4. What would sustainable economic growth in the region look like to you? What does that phrase mean to you?

ENVIRONMENT FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What are the most significant threats to the quality of natural resources in the region?
2. How are these threats currently addressed?
3. What opportunities exist for the protection and conservation of natural resources in the region?
4. What investment is needed to address environmental concerns in the region?

FORESTRY FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Where are the most significant resources for the forestry industry in the region?
2. Describe recent trends impacting the forestry sector.
3. What are the most significant environmental issues associated with the forestry industry in the region?
4. What threats do you see to the future of the forestry sector in the region?
5. What kinds of investments, if any, are required to ensure the viability of the forestry industry in the region?

OUTDOOR RECREATION FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What activities or attractions draw significant numbers of visitors to the region? At what times of year?
2. Where do most of the visitors to the region come from? Do you see differences in visitor origins when you look at destinations across the region?
3. What are some of the issues facing outdoor recreation amenities / tourism destinations?
4. Are there any tourism markets that you think the region could attract that are not being targeted? What are some of the opportunities?
5. Any negative impacts to natural resources?

TOURISM AND RECREATION FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What activities or attractions draw significant numbers of visitors to the region?
2. Where do most of the visitors to the region come from? Do you see differences in visitor origins when you look at destinations across the region?
3. What are some of the issues facing tourism amenities/destinations?
4. Are there any tourism markets that you think the region could attract that are not being targeted?
5. What are the most significant impacts that recreation / tourism activities in the region have on the quality of natural resources?

Information obtained from each of the focus group meetings was summarized and compiled for future review and reference. A full summary of all comments can be found in Appendix 5 of this report.

1.2.4 Public Meetings

Final public informational meetings were held on December 8, 2008 to present the final results of the groundwater analysis, Socio-Economic Analysis, and to present an update of the Watershed Management Plan. The meetings were held in two different locations within the watershed in an attempt to ensure a representative cross-section of interest and geographic locations. The first meeting was held in the Dulles State Building in Watertown and the second meeting was held in the evening at the



Town of Lowville Town Hall. Meetings were publicly advertised in the form of press releases in local newspapers. The Steering Committee also sent out email notifications to an established list of representative interests from throughout the watershed. A copy of the invitation is included in Appendix 6 of this report.

Section 2: Findings and Analysis

2.1 OVERVIEW

A thorough review and analysis of the data and comments collected at each of the meetings showed the diversity of visions, issues, and opportunities within the Black River Watershed. Section Two outlines, discusses, and summarizes participants' comments and feedback during each phase of the stakeholder outreach process.

2.2 VISIONING WORKSHOPS

The purpose of the Visioning Workshops was to identify and define a future vision for the watershed and prioritize opportunities and constraints currently facing the region. This was achieved by engaging meeting attendees in two exercises – a 2020 Exercise and an Opportunities and Constraints Analysis.

2.2.1 2020 Exercise

Select respondent comments highlighting the key issues and visions for the watershed from the 2020 Exercise are included below. A full summary of all comments is included in Appendix 2 of this report.

- Stronger, diversified economic base
- Recognize unique character of communities and manage growth / change
- Variety of industries
- Same rural communities and landscapes
- More self-reliant regarding energy (alternatives)
- Hydropower on River
- Better organization and access to river
- More amenities for tourists are needed, including overnight lodging and campsites
- Economic development of Lyons Falls Old Mill
- Optimism – change of perception
- Nice people and communities
- Continued growth in manufacturing
- Balanced development
- Thriving communities
- Same peace, tranquility, and open space
- Amount of tillable land put to use for generation of green energy
- Dams as energy generators
- More accessibility to river
- More young people staying in area

- Green technologies
- Better retention of youth through better jobs
- Preservation of open space and natural resources

2.2.2 Opportunities and Constraints Analysis

At each of the Visioning Workshops meeting attendees were asked to rank their top issues and opportunities after completing the group Opportunities and Constraints Exercise. A total of five groups participated in the ranking exercise – three from Watertown and one each in Lowville and Old Forge. The top rated issues and opportunities varied among each of the groups and in Old Forge, for instance, the priorities were fairly geographically specific. However, a few key themes emerged from the prioritization exercise that should be considered and addressed by local governments, agencies, and regional planning organizations when undertaking future planning efforts:

- ❖ There is a need for greater inter-municipal cooperation and regional planning.
- ❖ Recreational opportunities should be improved to reach a broader audience and should be balanced to ensure protection of natural resources.
- ❖ Lack of transportation alternatives and options in the region need to be addressed.
- ❖ Environmental considerations - whether forestlands, water quality, or other environmental issues – remains a significant issue and concern and efforts should be made to improve and protect the region's natural resources.

The top rated priority issues from each of the working groups are identified below. A summary of all comments received at the Visioning Workshops, organized by identified theme and focus areas, is included in Appendix 3.

Meeting #1, Group 1 (Watertown)

- Public attitude
- Intergovernmental cooperation
- Maintain and improve environmental quality
- Maintain sustainability
- Desperation based development

Meeting #1, Group 2 (Watertown)

- Improving and increasing recreation – trails, water, all kinds
- Conserve and preserve forests (both in and out of Park), wetlands, water quality
- Quantity of water – needed for development
- Recreation support facilities needed – appropriate trails, bathrooms, amenities, housing
- Funding for all types of projects
- Lack of cooperation between municipalities and agencies

Meeting #1, Group 3 (Watertown)

- Tourism
- Ease of transportation
- Ability to regulate flows of the Black River
- Water usage, both surface and groundwater
- Cost of fuel has widespread impacts
- No regional plan for development

Meeting #2 (Lowville)

- Sustainability
- Green energy
- Expand on what we have (recreation)
- Lack of public transportation
- Value added agriculture

Meeting #3 (Old Forge)

- Science / Arts complex
- Affordable housing
- Low paying jobs
- Eco-tourism marketing and branding
- Gateway community to Adirondacks

2.3 FOCUS GROUP SESSIONS

Summaries of the focus group discussion are provided below to highlight the key areas of opportunities and concerns as identified by focus group meeting attendees.

2.3.1 General Discussion

The following section summarizes the responses to the general questions which were posed at each of the focus group sessions:

What do you like best about living / working in the region today?

“Strong community of neighbors helping neighbors.”

Responses from each of the focus groups were fairly consistent when responding to this question with “people” and “sense of community” being identified as the top key positive attributes of living in the Black River Watershed. Recreational opportunities, access to natural resources, schools, low crime rates, and overall quality-of-life were also identified consistently among each of the focus group meetings.

What do you like least about living / working in the region today?

"There is a lack of good paying jobs and as a result we have no expectation that our kids will stay here."

The length and intensity of the winter season and distance to everyday goods and services were cited as the reasons people disliked living in the region. Also discussed were the lack of employment opportunities for the regions youth, resulting in a young population that consistently has to move elsewhere to find a job and start their own family. The cost of living, including housing costs, energy costs, and taxes also were considered negative aspects associated with living in the region today. Focus group participants also discussed the lack of regional and inter-municipal planning as something that hurts the region.

Look back 10-15 years. How would you compare the state of the Black River Watershed between then and today? Comparisons can consider any topic area of importance to you – natural resources, economy, recreation, tourism, etc.

"People respect and value natural resources more than ever."

In general, meeting attendees felt that the Black River Watershed region has improved over the past 10-15 years. Positive changes that were noted include improved transportation corridors and greater levels of tourism which have helped with economic development. All agreed that pollution and impacts to the Black River were worse 15 years ago when compared to today's condition. Water quality has greatly improved thanks to new sewage treatment plans, education, and the closing of waterfront industries. However, some changes noted have had negative impacts on the region including the loss of small farms, the closing of mills which resulted in the loss of a stable employment base, and a general loss of a sense of community associated with a more transient and an aging population.

Look forward 10-15 years. How do you think current trends may impact the watershed over the next decade? What will be the most significant differences between the watershed today and in 2025?

"The cost of energy will have a huge impact on the region and determine which communities grow and which are going to shrink."

Residents within the watershed share the same concerns about the future of the region as many people do on a state and national level. Rising energy costs were noted as having the potential to greatly impact the Black River region. The impacts of those costs were noted as having spin-off effects, such as government consolidation. Also associated with energy, meeting attendees generally thought that alternative energy would be more widely explored within the region in the future. Historic industries, such as forestry and traditional value-added industries such as mills were generally expected to decline.

When considering the trends and changes that may occur, is the Black River Watershed region still a place you want to be in 2025?

"I hope my family will want to be here in 2025."

Almost all respondents enthusiastically agreed that they would still like to be living in the Black River Watershed region in 2025. A number of attendees pointed out that it depended on

specific future changes because their work was tied to a certain sector. Others stated they would still live here but they think the children of today's population will live elsewhere because of limited opportunities.

What are the three most important projects you would like to see undertaken to help mitigate trends and change over the next decade?

"Finding greener and cheaper energy sources."

The important projects identified for the study area focused on the areas of economic development and environmental preservation and covered a wide range of specific topics associated with those themes, such as green energy, subsidies to support local businesses, and tourism infrastructure.

2.3.2 Topic Specific Discussion

The following section provides a summary of the key issues that were identified and discussed specific to each of the focus group categories.

AGRICULTURE FOCUS GROUP

What recent trends are impacting the region's agricultural base?

"The next generation does not want to work 7 days a week, 365 days a year on a farm."

Recent trends indicate fewer smaller farms throughout the region with farm consolidation occurring more frequently. Specialty farm sectors, such as organics and wine, are also beginning to emerge.

What threats to the agricultural industry do you see in the region?

"The high price of diesel, gas, and fertilizer has huge impacts on agriculture."

A number of threats facing the agricultural industry were identified that could have significant impacts on the future of this industry in the Black River Watershed. A lack of future farmers, or second generation farmers is one of the biggest threats to the regional agricultural industry. This issue is further accentuated by a lack of in-school education – as stated in a focus group session "schools do not understand the diversity of professionals needed for farming." The costs associated with farming, whether labor, fuel, fertilizer, or other were also considered to be significant threats.

Which sectors within the agricultural industry are expanding? Which are in decline?

As previously noted, specialty and niche agricultural markets appear to be expanding in the region, including maple syrup, cheese, and organics. The dairy industry is also stable. The forestry industry is one large industry that has slowly started to decline.

What ideas do you have for diversifying the region's agricultural sector? What kinds of investment would be required to facilitate this?

The diversification of industries was stated as happening on its own in response to outside factors. Renewable energy agriculture and wind energy opportunities were discussed.

How do agricultural businesses affect the natural environment? What are the significant environmental issues? How are they addressed?

In general it was stated that large farms and CAFOs are managed (due to tighter regulations) correctly while smaller farms are not as well regulated and therefore have a greater impact on the watershed.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOCUS GROUP

How would you describe the region's economic base? What industries contribute most to the region's economy? Which industries are growing? Which are shrinking?

Focus group participants identified a number of industries that contribute to the region's overall economic base. Agricultural, the dairy industry, the maple industry, and the tourism industry are all said to be experiencing growth. However, the growth of the tourism industry – specifically as it relates to seasonal outdoor recreation enthusiasts – is being hindered by a lack of tourist amenities such as hotel beds in areas such as Lewis County. The health care industry, local school districts, and Fort Drum are all significant employers on a regional level. However, other government facilities are shrinking and the closing of the mills has had a long-lasting economic impact on the region.

Why do businesses choose to locate in the region? What makes it difficult for businesses to locate here? What makes it difficult to stay and grow? What facilitates expansion of existing businesses?

According to focus group participants, income levels and access to markets such as Canada are positive aspects of locating a business in the region. However, NYS business taxes and regulations, which are not region specific, are considered a negative aspect associated with attracting new businesses. Due to the abundance of recreational opportunities available in the North Country, participants felt that more could be done to make tourism and recreation a more significant economic development tool. The lack of industrial parks in Lewis and Hamilton Counties was also identified as a negative, as was the absence of secondary education facilities.

What opportunities do you see for diversification of the region's economic base? What industries are well suited for the region and why? What kinds of investments / programs are needed to attract those industries?

Meeting participants had enthusiastic and creative responses when asked to identify opportunities to expand the region's economic base. Alternative energy and power sources were identified from various perspectives, including hydropower, biomass, and ethanol. Recreation and tourism were also cited by many individuals, with specific opportunities associated with horse trails, marketing the region more holistically, and expanding tourism infrastructure. Smaller industries such as maple and wine were also identified as having growth potential.

What would sustainable economic growth in the region look like to you? What does that phrase mean to you?

Manufacturing was identified as a hard industry for the region because of the difficulty in recruiting skilled labor to the area. Today's workforce is near retirement and there are limited numbers of younger people interested in relocating to the North Country. In order to be sustainable, there needs to be better marketing to prospective employees, as well as customers and industries need to be more involved. Regional marketing campaign could benefit from the Come Farm With Us and Adirondack Harvest Label programs.

ENVIRONMENT FOCUS GROUP

What are the most significant threats to the quality of natural resources in the region?

Development pressures and planning, or the lack thereof, were cited as significant threats to the natural environment. Impacts from farms on the shoreline and water quality, increased recreational demands, and erosion were also identified as threats.

How are these threats currently addressed?

These threats may not be addressed currently, as lack of local planning was mentioned and discussed. A number of state programs and the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) were noted for their regulations and standards. More programs were identified as being needed including education on individual septic systems.

What opportunities exist for the protection and conservation of natural resources in the region?

Identified opportunities for the protection of natural resources in the region included Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Programs and a comprehensive GIS database to facilitate information sharing and management. A detailed soil survey was also identified as being needed for the region.

What investment is needed to address environmental concerns in the region?

Meeting attendants identified three different investment opportunities: 1) Inter-municipal cooperation for planning, 2) Need better capacity to serve on boards, and 3) Improved road salting process and education.

FORESTRY FOCUS GROUP

Where are the most significant resources for the forestry industry in the region?

Participants were split on the location of most significant forestry lands, with some stating within the Adirondack Park Forest Preserve and others stating outside the park on private lands.

Describe recent trends impacting the forestry sector.

The most significant trend impacting the forestry sector was identified as the change in permit procedures and issues associated with no longer coordinating with Forest Rangers (now

conservation officers). Property taxes, fuel costs, and increasing land values for other uses are also contributing to a decline in the forestry industry. The loss of important local markets in Ethan Allen and Lyons Falls Pulp and Paper has also had negative implications.

What are the most significant environmental issues associated with the forestry industry in the region?

Sensitive environmental issues associated with the forestry industry were identified to include erodable soils, the presence of more and stronger winds, and forestry regulations in wetlands.

What threats do you see to the future of the forestry sector in the region?

Threats facing the forestry industry, according to focus group participants, are wide ranging. Less land is available as landowners look to sell land for development and demand for wood is decreasing. Tax strategies are needed to help the industry, as well as incentives to keep land available for forestry. Unrealistic taxes and government guidelines also have the potential to further hamper the industry.

What kinds of investments, if any, are required to ensure the viability of the forestry industry in the region?

It was unanimously agreed upon within the focus group that local governments, as well as citizens, need to understand the importance of the forestry industry on the local economy. Educating the local community and leaders must be a priority investment. Money must also be filtered to the remaining mills in the region as they play a huge part in supporting the forestry industry.

OUTDOOR RECREATION FOCUS GROUP

What activities or attractions draw significant numbers of visitors to the region? At what times of year?

Focus group attendees responded to this question with a comprehensive list of active and passive activities for each of the region's four seasons. In addition to the sport-related activities, maple syrup tours, fall foliage tours, water cross, geocaching, and jeep jamboree were also identified.

Where do most of the visitors to the region come from? Do you see differences in visitor origins when you look at destinations across the region?

The majority of visitors come from the northeast, including throughout NYS and New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. Specific to the white water opportunities on the River, visitors are drawn from paddle clubs throughout the world.

What are some of the issues facing outdoor recreation amenities / tourism destinations?

Issues range from perception, to marketing, to tourism infrastructure. The largest issues facing the Black River from a recreation and tourism perspective are based on perceptions of the river stemming from decades ago before it was cleaned up. The lack of a comprehensive, shared, cooperative marketing program also works against attracting more users. And if the users were

to come, the issue would be a lack of facilities, overnight accommodations, and amenities for them to enjoy while visiting!

Are there any tourism markets that you think the region could attract that are not being targeted? What are some of the opportunities?

A number of untapped tourism opportunities exist according to focus group attendees. Canoe races, rafting companies and excursions, adventure tourism, package plans, and adventure sports were identified and discussed in great depth. A discussion of marketing opportunities focused on utilizing the Internet, creating website linkages, and advertising by contributing postings on web blogs.

Any negative impacts to natural resources?

Recreational resources were identified as having a low impact on natural resources in the watershed. Agricultural practices were noted as having a far greater impact than recreational activities.

TOURISM AND RECREATION FOCUS GROUP

What activities or attractions draw significant numbers of visitors to the region?

The diversity of activities and attractions that draw people to the region is extensive and ranges from winter activities such as snowmobiling to summer activities such as boating. In addition to passive and active sport options, camping, cultural activities, special events, camps, scientific labs, and youth camps were also noted by meeting participants.

Where do most of the visitors to the region come from? Do you see differences in visitor origins when you look at destinations across the region?

The majority of visitors to the Adirondack Park appear to come from within New York, primarily the Utica, Rome, Rochester, and Syracuse markets. Snowmobilers tend to travel from Pennsylvania. High end travelers come from Baltimore, DC, Cleveland, and the Carolinas. It was also noted that many former Lake George visitors now choose to visit the Adirondack Park.

What are some of the issues facing tourism amenities/destinations?

According to meeting attendees, the current tourism market is higher end and available amenities and attractions need to keep up with the expectations of this visitor base. Local governments need to take responsibility for ensuring the local communities have adequate offerings to satisfy this market. A non-permanent population base also impacts community character and involvement. There is no region-wide tourism marketing or tourism map.

Are there any tourism markets that you think the region could attract that are not being targeted?

The high-end market wants an Adirondack experience regardless of cost. Participants also saw more opportunities for bundling amenities and attractions. Specific markets that are not adequately being marketed include hiking trails, cross country skiing, and snowshoe trails. One participant also identified the need to better promote and market the fishing opportunities

available within the Black River Watershed. This was identified as an untapped market that could help to support active accommodations, such as campgrounds, and could attract more tournaments and other special events, ultimately increasing tourist activity to the region.

What are the most significant impacts that recreation / tourism activities in the region have on the quality of natural resources?

Participants agreed that tourism and recreation opportunities have little to no negative impact on the quality of natural resources in the region. The environment looks better today than it has in the past.

2.4 PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Public attendance and involvement in the December 8, 2008 public informational meetings was limited. Due to the number of attendees a formal outreach exercise was not conducted but members of the public were provided the opportunity to ask questions of the planning process. A copy of the presentation made to the public at these meetings is included in Appendix 7.

Section 3: General Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis presented in Section 2, the following general recommendations are presented to help further the goals and objectives identified by the public and to address identified issues relevant to the Black River Watershed. They have been organized based on categories and topics presented in the report as being of particular importance to the region and study area.

3.1 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1: Ensure adequate opportunities are provided to residents in all areas of the watershed to participate in decision-making and planning.

Recommendation #2: Identify a public relations strategy to better educate the general public about the benefits of living and working in the region in an effort to improve general public perceptions of the region.

Recommendations #3: Develop a program to help educate the public about the cleanliness of the Black River and the clean-up efforts that have taken place so they are aware it is a valuable natural and recreational resource.

3.2 GOVERNMENT COOPERATION

Recommendation #1: Establish a local government consortium, open to all watershed communities, to discuss ways to improve cooperation and potential consolidation of services.

Recommendation #2: Ensure the continued coordination between regional planning agencies and local communities throughout the Black River Watershed.

Recommendation #3: Identify opportunities for greater inter-municipal cooperation and regional planning.

Recommendation #4: Create a regional land use plan for development that considers the long term impacts of fuel and energy resources, limited transportation alternatives, and the sustainability of the region's communities.

3.3 GOODS AND SERVICES

Recommendation #1: Work with communication providers to expand the availability of high speed internet access throughout the region.

Recommendation #2: Explore the benefits of municipal consolidation of services.

3.4 GROWTH CONSIDERATIONS

Recommendation #1: Prepare and adopt local land use regulations to ensure that new development or growth does not negatively impact or change the existing character of the region.

Recommendation #2: Identify areas in the watershed that are appropriate for future growth, so any new development could be targeted to designated areas.

Recommendation #3: Ensure new development is consistent with approved land use regulations and meets the overarching vision and goals of the community in which it is being located.

3.5 ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Recommendation #1: Continue to pursue and explore alternative energy development throughout the region, including wind power, biofuels, and hydropower.

Recommendation #2: Preserve natural resources, including waterbodies, forests, and open space.

Recommendation #3: Continue to implement land use controls and regulatory measures to maintain and improve water quality throughout the region.

3.6 TOURISM

Recommendation #1: Identify opportunities for expanded tourism, including branding the region with a unique identity that could be incorporated into marketing efforts targeting tourists.

Recommendation #2: Pursue the development of additional motel, hotel, and bed and breakfast accommodations for visitors and tourists in an effort to keep them in the region for a longer period of time.

Recommendation #3: Identify current gaps in outdoor recreation and opportunities. Define a strategy to fill gaps and expand outdoor recreation opportunities (four seasons) for both residents and visitors.

Recommendation #4: Develop additional recreation and tourist support facilities and infrastructure, including bathrooms, rest areas, lodging, and other amenities.

Recommendation #5: Market existing, defining attributes to attract visitors, with a primary emphasis on four season recreation options and emerging niche markets such as maple syrup, agri-tourism, and cheese.

Recommendation #6: Develop and market other attributes of the region above and beyond recreation, including maple syrup tours and fall foliage events in addition to special events such as the jeep jamboree.

Recommendation #7: Improve coordination between existing County tourism agencies.

3.7 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Recommendation #1: Work with local employers and educational institutions to identify opportunities for establishing training programs that teach students about local industries and employment opportunities in an effort to retain a greater number of the region's youth.

- Recommendation #2: Coordinate efforts between schools and farmers to identify ways to teach modern farming practices to the youth of the community.
- Recommendation #3: Identify programs to help support the local agricultural industry.
- Recommendation #4: Identify programs to help support the local forestry industry.
- Recommendation #5: Pursue programs to offer subsidies to local businesses so they do not relocate outside of the watershed.
- Recommendation #6: Promote niche agriculture, including organics, maple syrup, wine, and cheese.

Appendices

The following Appendices are included within the Black River Stakeholder Outreach Report:

- Appendix 1: Visioning Workshop Presentation
- Appendix 2: 2020 Exercise Responses
- Appendix 3: Opportunities and Constraints Analysis Results
- Appendix 4: Sample Focus Group Invitation Letter
- Appendix 5: Focus Group Summaries
- Appendix 6: Public Informational Meeting Invitation
- Appendix 7: Public Informational Meeting Presentation

APPENDIX 1: VISIONING WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE BLACK RIVER WATERSHED



Black River Watershed Stakeholder Outreach
May 21, 2008

meeting agenda

- Welcome
- Project Partners
- Project Introduction and Overview
- Process and Timeline
- 2020 Exercise
- Break
- Group Exercise and Discussion

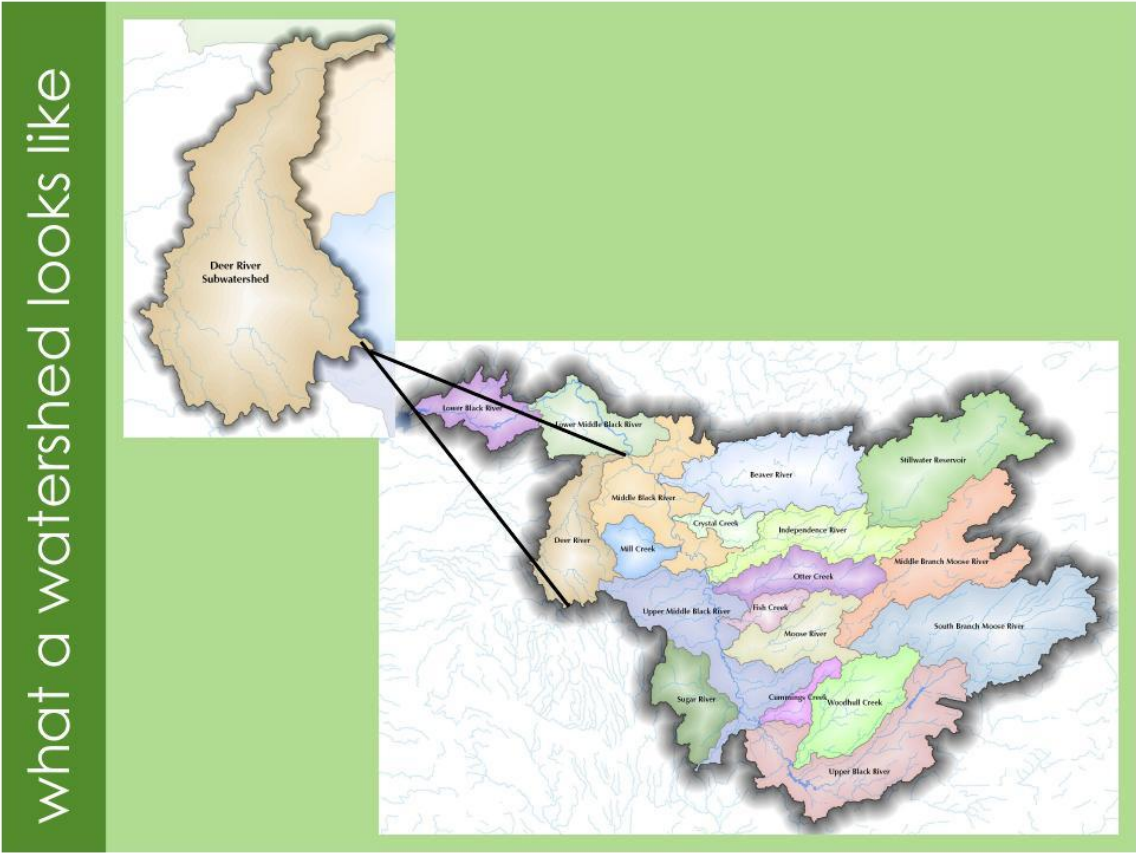


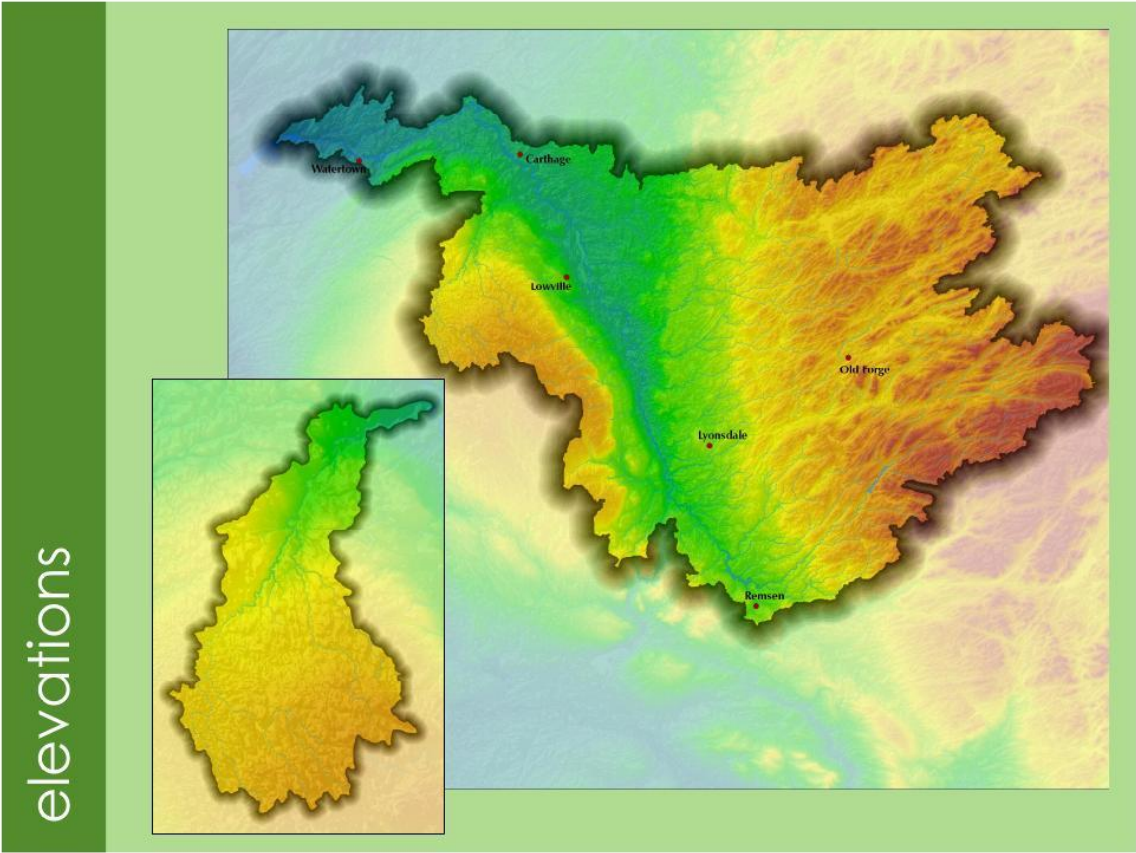
what is a watershed?

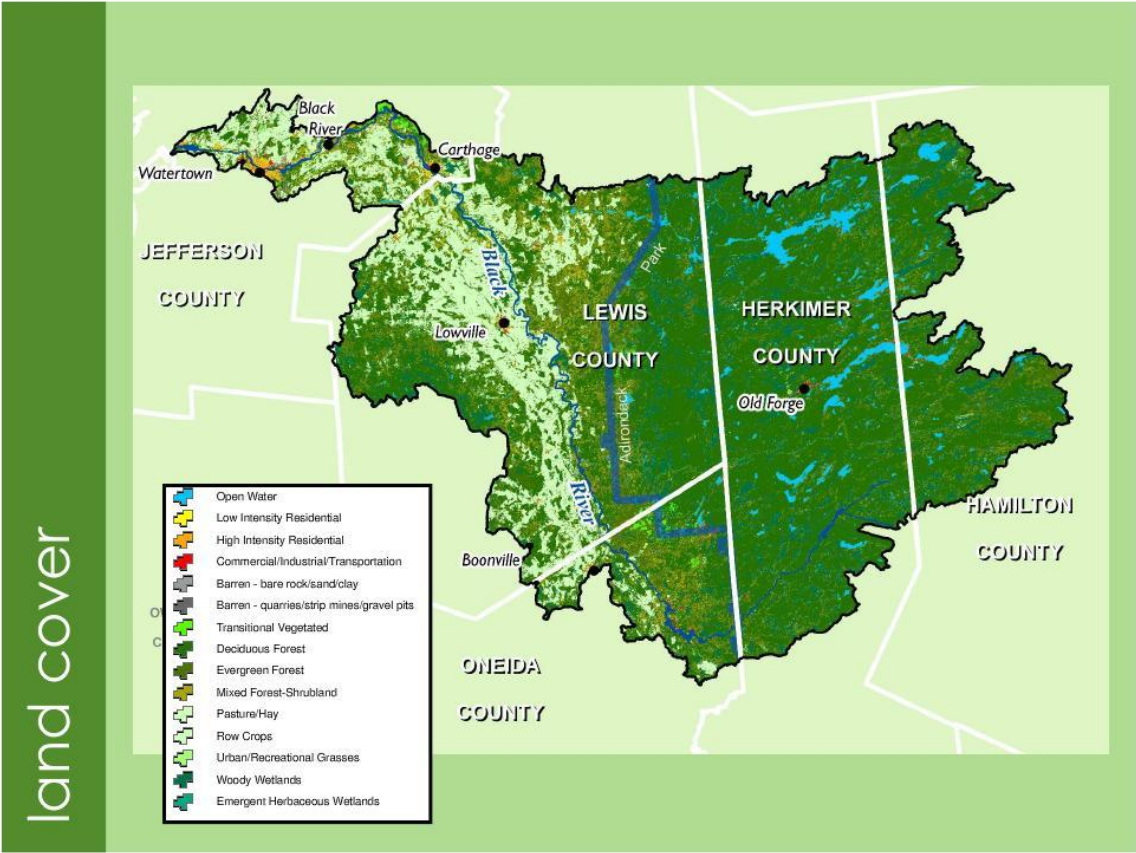
- A watershed is the area of land where all of the water that is under it, or drains off it, goes into the same place. All living things within a watershed are linked by a common watercourse.
- Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes – small towns, farms, big cities, and everything in between can make up a watershed.
- Watersheds cross municipal boundaries.
- **No matter where you are, you are in a watershed!**

project partners

- The Consultant Team
 - Bergmann Associates
 - Camoin Associates
- Regional Partners and Organizations
 - NYS Tug Hill Commission
 - Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District
 - NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
 - Town of Greig







project components

- Community Outreach
- Socio-Economic Analysis
- Groundwater Assessment



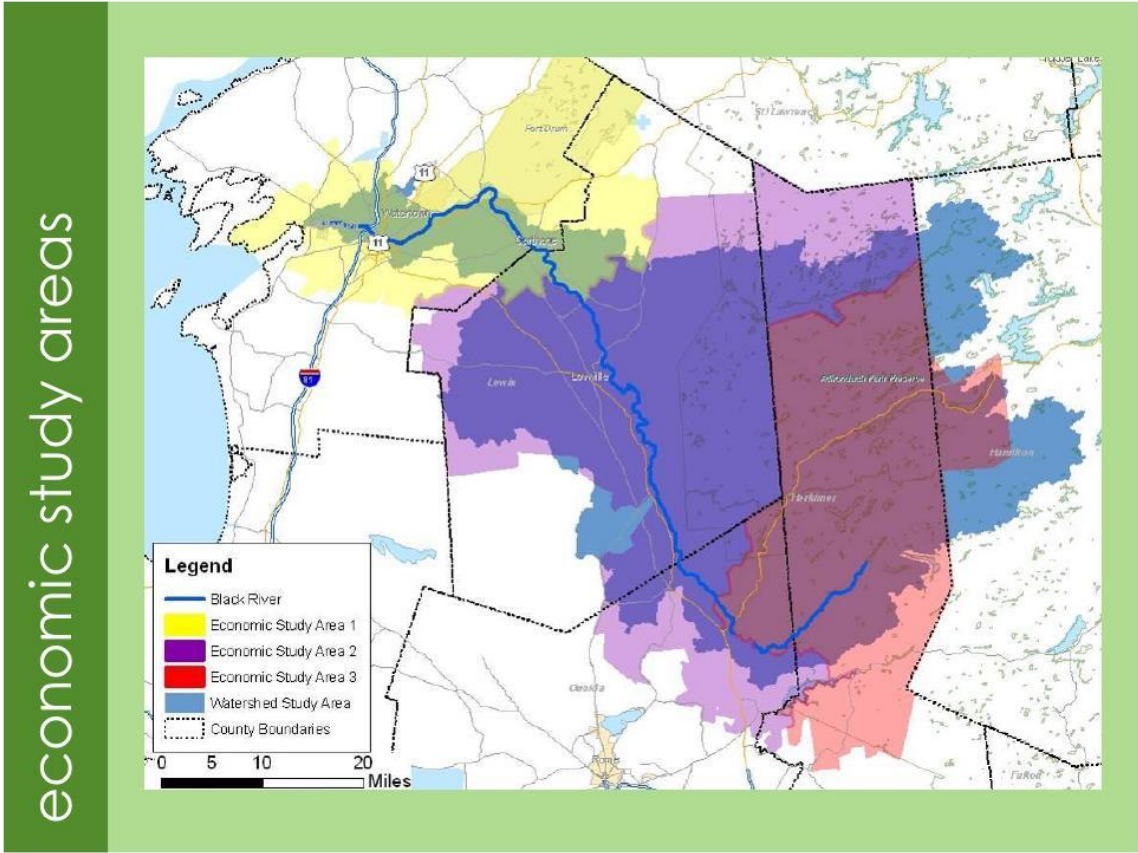


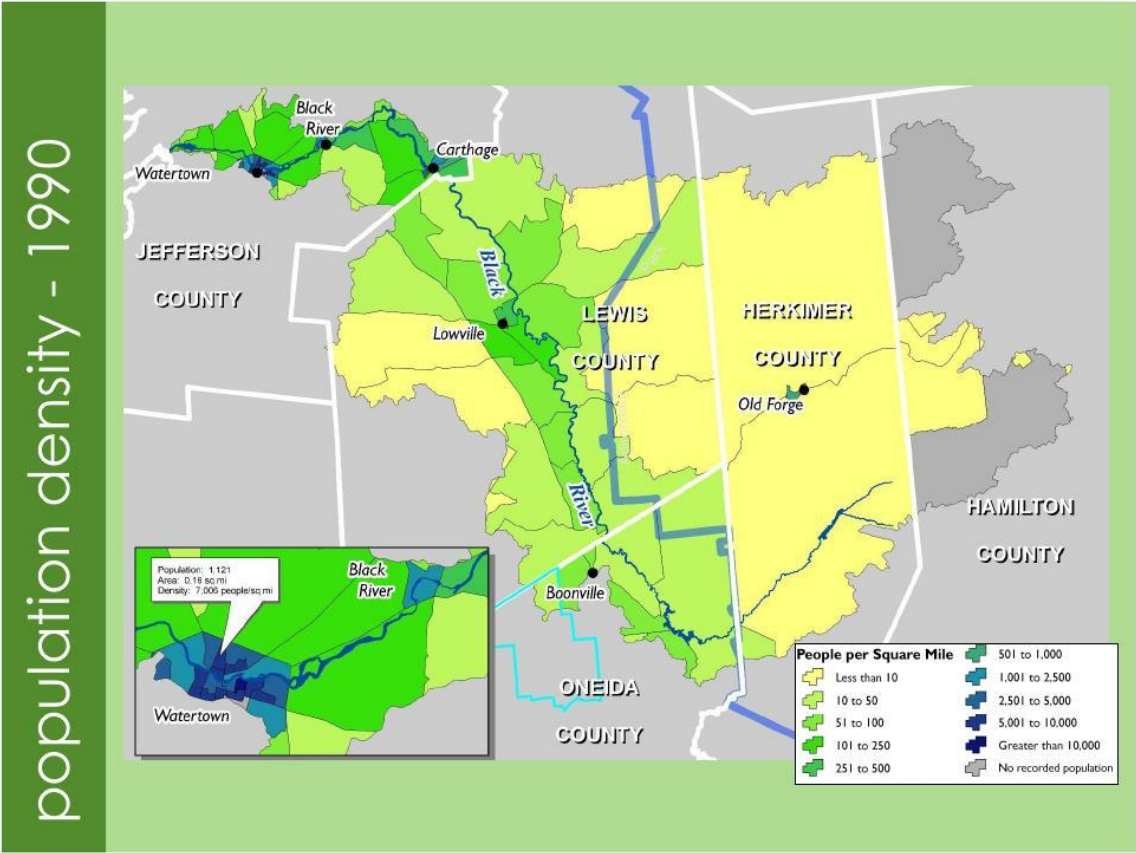
community outreach

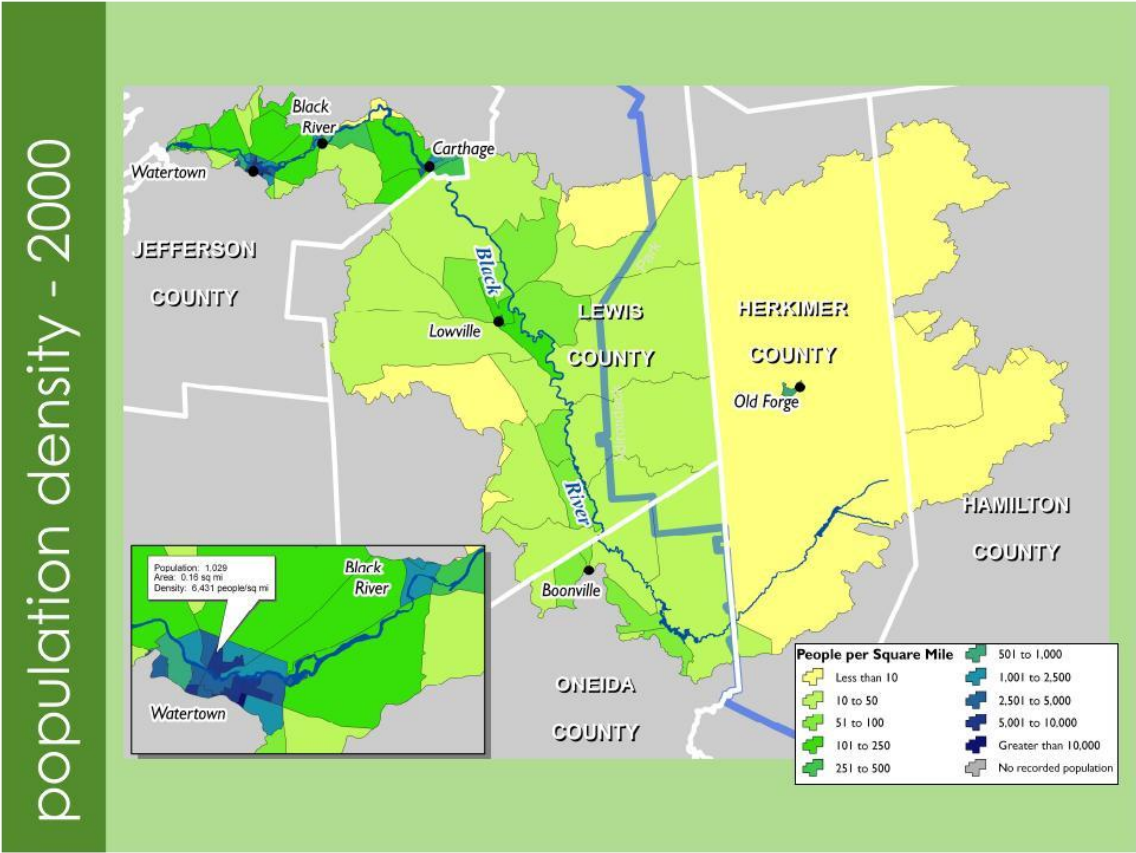
- **Steering Committee Meetings**
 - Held throughout process for purpose of information sharing and review
- **Visioning Workshops**
 - To identify community issues and objectives
- **Focus Group Sessions**
 - Held with stakeholders to discuss specific topics relevant to study area
- **Public Informational Meeting**
 - To present economic, groundwater, and community outreach plans

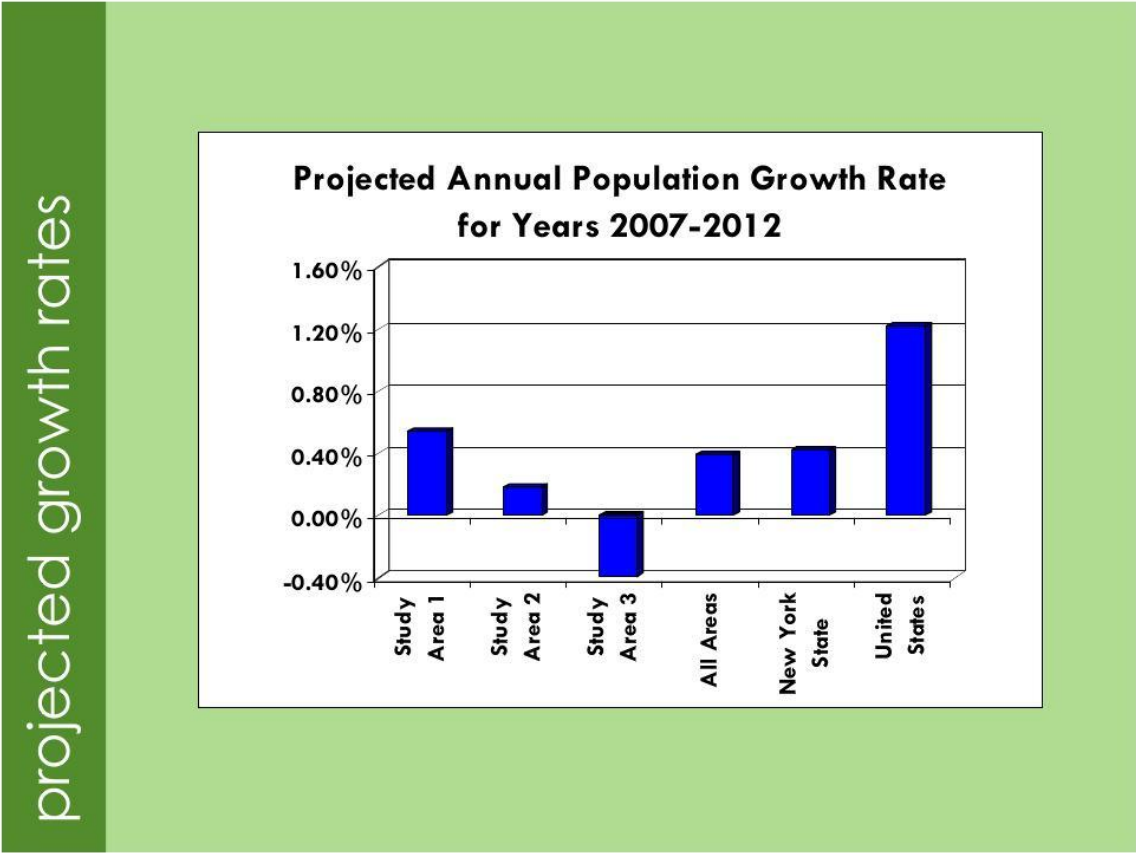
socio-economic analysis

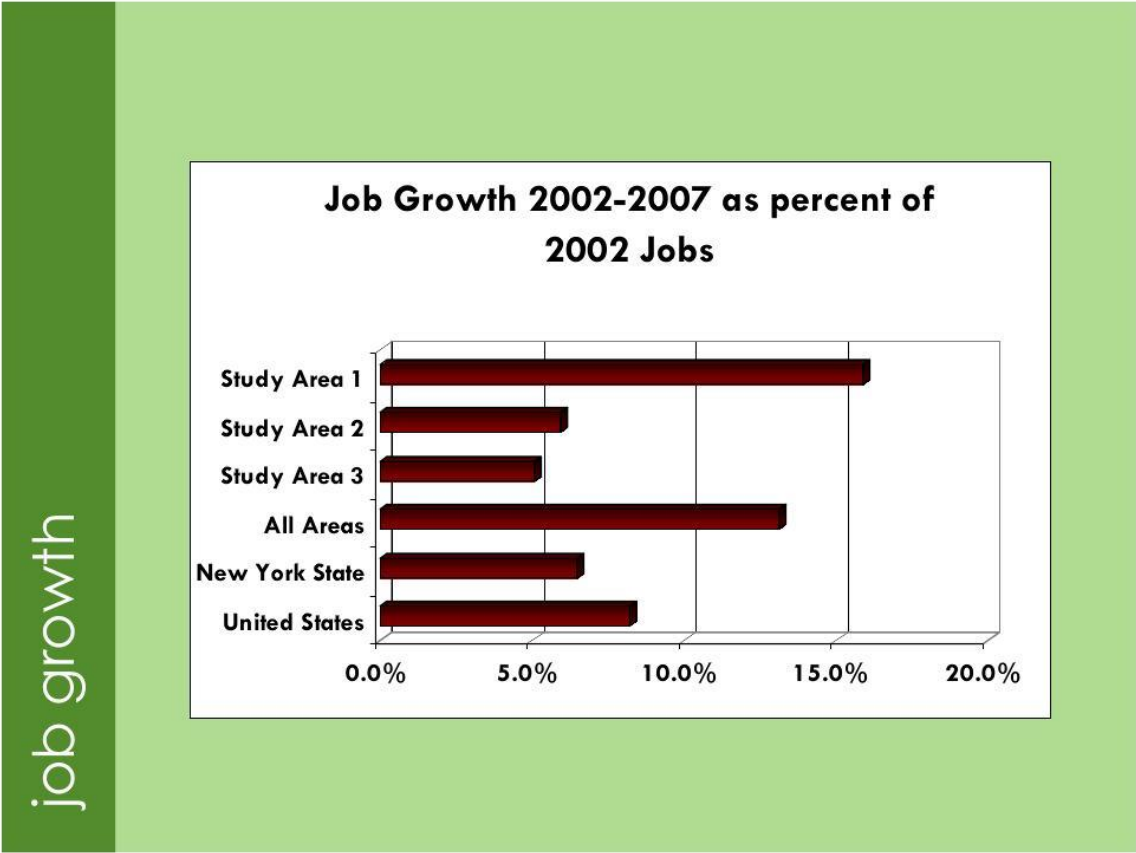
- Will provide an understanding of demographic and economic trends in the Black River Watershed area that will help to inform other planning processes occurring in region.
- Will highlight economic strengths the region can build on and will outline challenges the region faces as it seeks to improve quality of life and employment opportunities for residents.

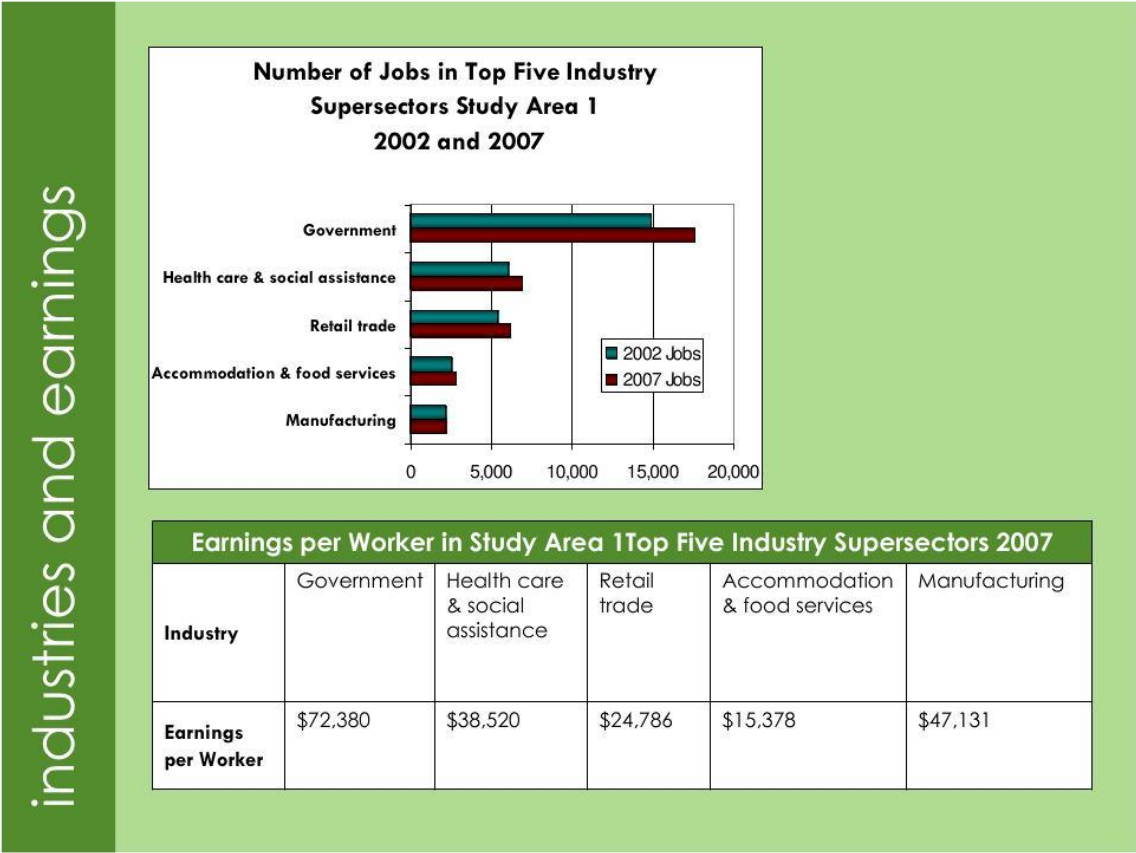




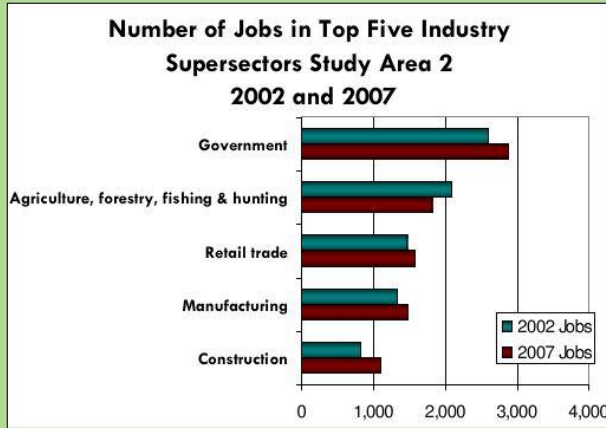








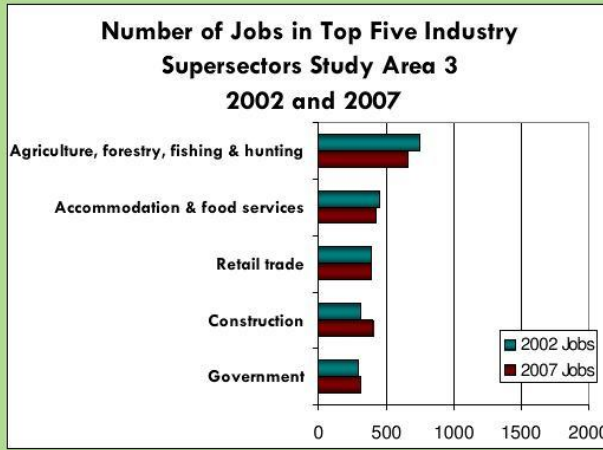
industries and earnings



Earnings per Worker in Study Area 2 Top Five Industry Supersectors 2007

Industry	Government	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	Retail trade	Manufacturing	Construction
Earnings per Worker	\$48,414	\$15,739	\$21,854	\$49,864	\$26,411

industries and earnings



Earnings per Worker in Study Area 3 Top Five Industry Supersectors 2007

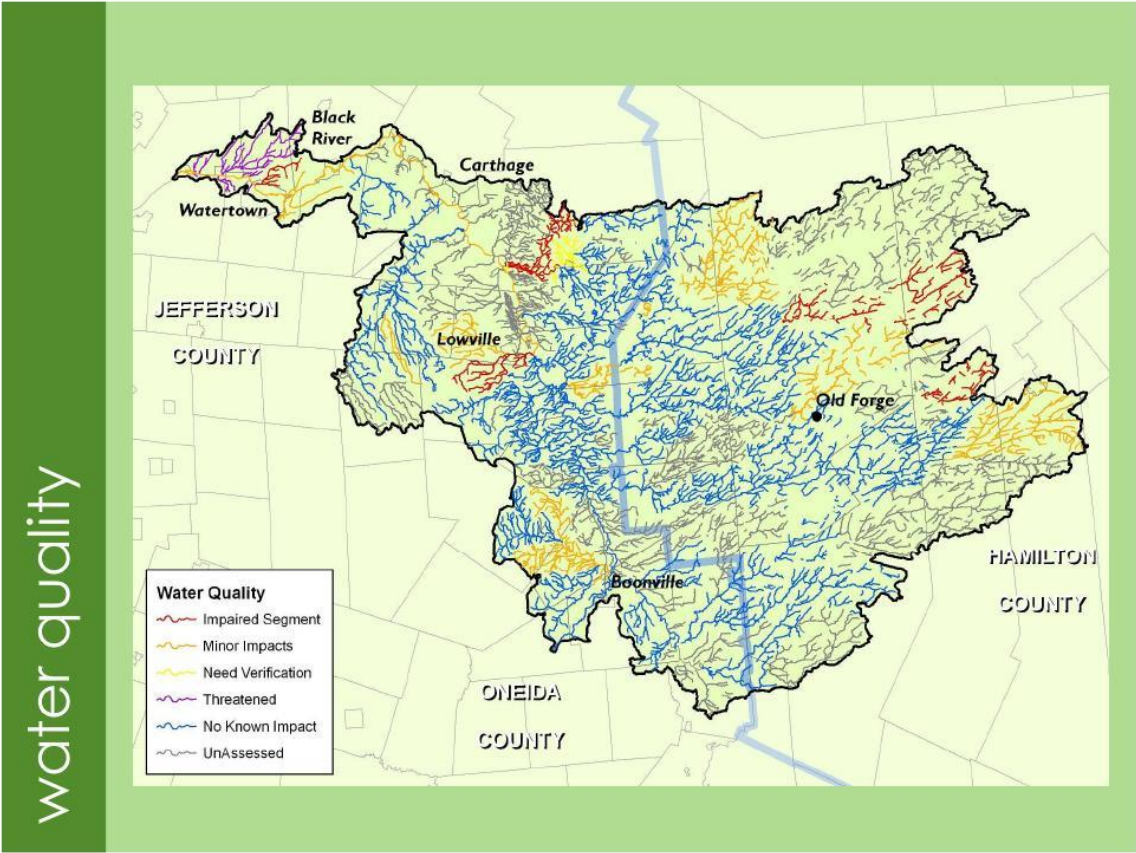
Industry	Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	Accommodation and Food Service	Retail trade	Construction	Government
Earnings per Worker	\$14,143	\$16,925	\$21,369	\$36,008	\$49,431

groundwater analysis

- Assess current use and future utilization of groundwater resources
- Potential adverse impact to groundwater resources
- Recommendations for future utilization and protection of groundwater resources
- Recommendations for monitoring program

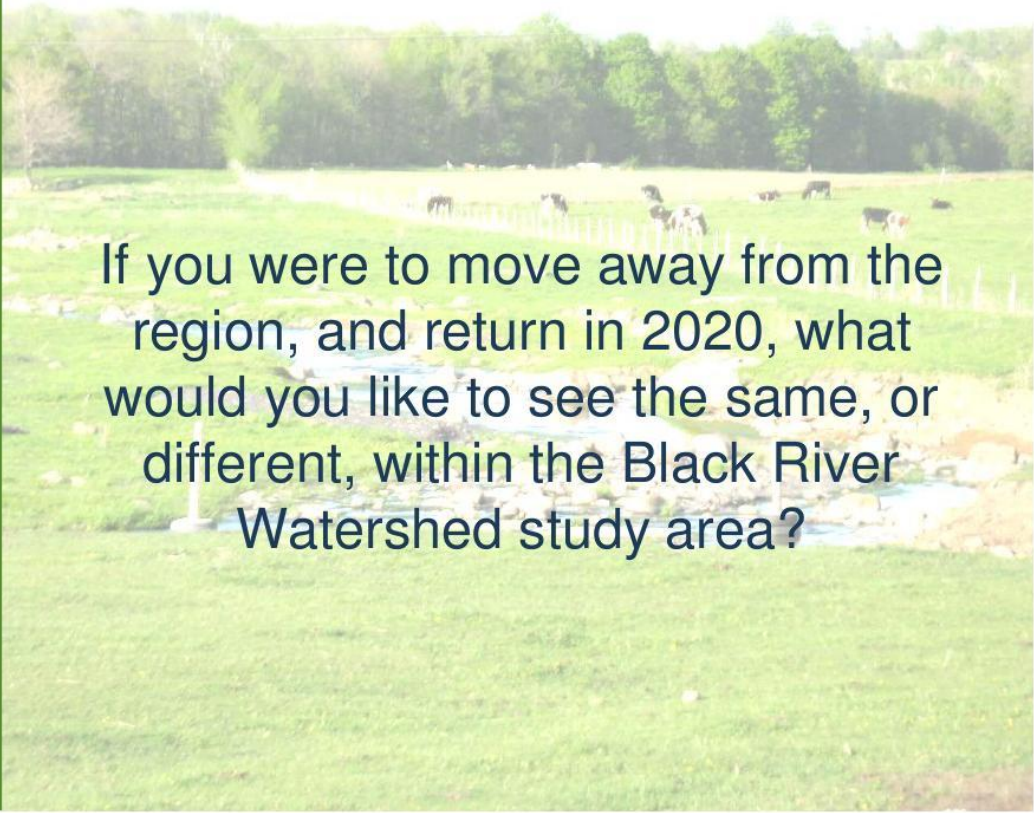
regional planning initiatives

- Black River Blueway Trail
- Black River Watershed Management Plan
- Fort Drum Growth Management Initiative
- Four Town Comprehensive Plan
- Lewis County Comprehensive Plan
- Maple Ridge Wind Farm
- NYS Route 28 Corridor Revitalization
- Watertown to Black River Recreation Trail
- Old Forge to Maine Canoe Trail
- Route 28 Corridor Revitalization
- Route 3 Sewer Board – Trail Planning & Commercial Revitalization
- Black River Scenic Byway
- Olympic Scenic Byway
- Adirondack Scenic Byway
- Maple Traditions Scenic Byway
- TOBIE Trail Extension
- RACOG Land Use Review and Comprehensive Plan
- And over 50 local community projects ranging from Main Street revitalization to infrastructure improvements to comprehensive planning to recreation and trails planning to energy projects



water quality

2020 exercise



If you were to move away from the region, and return in 2020, what would you like to see the same, or different, within the Black River Watershed study area?

group exercise & discussion

- What aspects of the watershed are important to you?
- What issues do you see facing the watershed over the next 5 years?
- What goals do you have for improving the ecosystem?
- What actions could be taken to achieve these goals?

APPENDIX 2: 2020 EXERCISE RESPONSES

The following list includes all responses generated from the 2020 Exercise as part of the Visioning Workshops.

- Improved agricultural viability
- Stronger, diversified economic base
- Research and development
- Waterfront development
- Brownfield redevelopment
- Recognize unique character of communities and manage growth / change
- Variety of industries
- Diversified economy
- Same rural communities and landscapes
- Fort Drum – Use 10% local products as in original plan
- More self-reliant regarding energy (alternatives)
- Shoreline vegetation protection
- Natural character preserved
- Forestry, ag, and recreation – Retain critical mass of support services
- Hydropower on River
- Good access to white water
- Good recreation opportunities
- Black River used more for recreation
- Better organization and access to river
- More tourism is needed and welcomed
- More amenities for tourists are needed, including overnight lodging and campsites
- Less government
- More government involvement for trail and recreation development
- Utilization of existing seasonal roads
- Overall promotion of healthier behavior – weight, air, social
- Rehabilitation for people with disabilities (make use of recreation resources)
- More organized creative community
- Intermunicipal cooperation
- Economic development of LF Old Mill
- Optimism – change of perception
- Is agriculture and tourism sustainable?
- Same – good property and healthcare
- Nice people and communities
- Continued growth in manufacturing
- Commercial growth – support services
- Balanced development
- Thriving communities
- Better water quality monitoring
- Same peace, tranquility, and open space
- Amount of tillable land put to use for generation of green energy
- Recreation opportunities for older population
- Walking paths along river
- Free recreation for all to enjoy
- Dams as energy generators
- More accessibility to river

- Make river user-friendly
- More young people staying in area
- Improve tax rates and structure
- Fewer government entities – consolidation
- Higher population densities in already developed areas
- Main Street revitalization
- Green technologies
- Better retention of youth through better jobs
- Satellite of University equals family
- Destination catalyst in region – build on regional strength
- Uniqueness of Adirondacks
- Preservation of open space and natural resources
- Economy that benefits from resource that does not deplete it
- Allow people to age in place
- Railroad back in service

APPENDIX 3: OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS

Summary of Opportunities

All of the opportunities identified at the Visioning Workshops have been organized under Themes which emerged from the meeting responses. A total of eleven themes were identified in association with opportunities for the Black River Watershed.

Theme 1 – Tourism / Seasonal Population

- Tourism
- Tremendous number of seasonal homes has significant impacts
- Promotion of creative community
- Tourism is easiest economy to grow
- Tourists spend differently – is service economy
- Synergy with Great Lakes communities
- Locally based tourism
- Create inventory of all attributes to market
- Involvement of seasonal population
- Recreation tourism branding
- Market whole package of region
- Year round tourism – make small changes to allow
- Need small branded hotel in Lewis County outside Watertown
- Gateway community to Adirondacks – Old Forge
- Science and Arts complex – green / LEED demonstration
- Eco-tourism marketing and branding

Theme 2 – Water

- City of Watertown faces the river
- Focus on streams that are really good and keep good – prevent contamination (Felts Mills Creek)
- Felts Mills Creek is a model for what we want to have
- Watertown CSO program – good work, especially important with white water rafting
- White water
- Regulation of water levels – quantity
- Accessibility to river
- Conservation of water
- Hydro power
- Improving fishery in flat lands
- Monitoring water quality and oxygen
- River navigability
- Moose River
- Cleanest watershed – monitor

Theme 3 – Community Character

- Lifestyle – good base of people, retirees, second homeowners
- Quality of life in region
- Multi-generational population – school age, seniors age in place, retired community
- Age in place, services required

Theme 4 – Recreation

- Large amount of water-based recreation
- Recreation
- Water-based recreation opportunities
- Establish greenway buffers like the Town of Leray
- Recreation – increase synergy
- Take advantage of what is here now
- Reverse rulings of APA and DEC regarding ATV use
- Expand on existing resources – trails, gorges, access, parks, bicycles

Theme 5 – Natural Resources

- Wilderness – AP preservation
- Quantity of significant, precious limited resources
- Protection of hydric soils (awareness)
- Scenic
- Digital soil survey is a great resource
- Environmental quality improvements

Theme 6 – Economic Development

- Brownfield redevelopment money
- Waterfront development
- Need incubator business
- Youth retention
- Diversified economy
- Extension of broadband capabilities
- International workforce

Theme 7 – Inter-municipal Cooperation

- Municipalities work together, get farther
- Some municipal electric
- Shared services between all municipalities along water
- Inter-municipal cooperation to implement goals and objectives for watershed area

Theme 8 – Alternative Energy

- What is going to replace fuel oil?
- Alternatives to fuel
- Green technologies
- Power / Broadband / Utilities
- Hydro and municipal power
- Geo-thermal

Theme 9 – Agriculture

- Diversify land base opportunities (vineyards)
- Farmland protection planning
- Access to markets

- More organic farming
- Proximity to Canadian border
- Local farms – food supply
- Expand on specialty agriculture – wineries, etc.
- Value added agriculture
- Better management and regulation of CAFOs
- Maintain diversity of land use
- Plan growth

Theme 10 – Transportation

- Need alternative transportation
- Mass transit

Theme 11 - Education

- Educational opportunities for landowners – need people to implement
- Education in schools –student involvement in community

Summary of Constraints

All of the constraints identified at the Visioning Workshops have been organized under Themes which emerged from the meeting responses. A total of six themes were identified as they relate to constraints associated with the Black River Watershed region.

Theme 1 –Government

- Local governments need to be more proactive – not just respond to development
- Inter-municipal cooperation, towns and villages don't talk
- Too many extra layers of government
- Lack of state and federal support for rural areas
- Need to have comparable programs and consideration as the Great Lakes
- Levels of government – consolidation would make things easier
- Municipalities don't have capacity for development
- All municipalities have different regulations
- No regional plan for development
- Funding and financing
- Getting people to work together
- External pressures
- Working across multiple government agencies to implement projects
- Jurisdictional restrictions – administration, programming, funding

Theme 2 – Energy and Infrastructure

- Geothermal not scaled for residential use yet, not many suppliers
- Impacts of windmills on natural character
- Infrastructure hard to rehab – paper mills
- Energy costs caused by remoteness
- Lack of support services, such as hotels
- Maintenance of infrastructure
- Lack of public transportation
- Seasonal roads want more roads and infrastructure and they have costs
- More people = more water and sewer needed
- Distance between places with regards to energy and transportation

Theme 3 – Impacts of Agricultural Industry

- Large CAFO's putting small farms out of business
- Need to farm in a different way – better ecologically
- Some of greatest polluters are farmers
- Feed costs

Theme 4 – Environmental

- Riparian buffers – will eventually need more buffers
- How is development impacting ground water recharge?
- Cottages along the lakes / flood zones
- Individual septic need work
- Most of big septic sources have been taken care of, need to focus on the smaller ones
- Need local code enforcement to solve problems

- Energy issues
- Potential contaminants in sedimentation
- Resources taken for granted
- Maintaining sustainability
- Control invasive species
- Structures along river are in disrepair
- Water usage is going to be an issue
- Global warming

Theme 5 – Community Outreach / Character

- Public attitude, weak stewardship
- Need to educate public
- Limited financial local resources
- Northern New York narrow-mindedness
- Turf issues
- Widespread regional sprawl from second homes
- Lack of permanent residents impacts community culture and volunteerism
- Greater draw on County resources – aging population
- Attitudes – loss of jobs, sometimes settle when we shouldn't
- Loss of mills creates depressed feeling
- Deterioration of community
- Seasonal residents – start to lose sense of community

Theme 6 – Local / Regional Economy

- Bottled water being shipped out of region
- Lack of education / understanding for encouraging entrepreneurship / cultural development
- Desperation based development
- Geographic scale
- Cost of fuel has widespread impacts
- Town versus County taxes
- Affordable housing
- Three populations to address – permanent, seasonal, mobile (how do we identify and address in socio-economic analysis)
- Utilities planned for a different economy
- Hard to rent vacant storefronts
- Local taxes increasing with influx of new residents
- “Brain Drain” of youth
- High cost of living and low wages
- Sustainability of projects – long term maintenance
- Rising land prices
- Low paying jobs
- Heating costs
- Dependence on seasonal economy

Prioritized Lists of Opportunities and Constraints

The following section lists all prioritized opportunities and constraints as identified at the Visioning Workshops. For those groups that identified actions associated with specific priorities, the actions are listed directly under the priority item.

Meeting #1, Group 1

- Public attitude
 - Educate, media campaign,
 - Information dispersion
 - Coordination of planning efforts
- Intergovernmental cooperation
 - Promote local ownership through involvement
 - Technical assistance
 - Incentives
 - Regional Conference
 - Community exchanges of municipal officials
- Maintain and improve environmental quality
 - Identify actions at local level
 - Monitor water and air quality
 - Public involvement
- Maintain sustainability
 - Inter-governmental cooperation
 - Champion
 - Follow and update plan
 - Volunteers
- Desperation based development
 - Education of better alternative
 - Promote better models – success breeds success
 - Vision of future – willingness

Meeting #1, Group 2

- Improving and increasing recreation – trails, water, all kinds
- Conserve and preserve forests (both in and out of Park), wetlands, water quality
- Quantity of water – needed for development
- Recreation support facilities needed – appropriate trails, bathrooms, amenities, housing
- Funding for all types of projects
- Lack of cooperation between municipalities and agencies

Meeting #1, Group 3

- Tourism
- Ease of transportation
- Ability to regulate flows of the Black River
- Water usage, both surface and groundwater
- Cost of fuel has widespread impacts
- No regional plan for development

Meeting #2

- Sustainability
 - Project in forefront, demonstrate results
 - Local government involvement
 - Inter-municipal cooperation
 - Involvement from schools and colleges
 - Effective materials for promotion
 - Green energies that will be sustainable over time
- Green energy
 - Partner with SUNY ESF
 - Enhance exiting hydro facilities
 - Wind energy and smart expansion
 - Need local ordinances (wind, etc.)
 - Digestors – cooperative methane plant
- Expand on what we have (recreation)
 - Regional marketing
 - Piggyback on Chamber of Commerce
 - Use bed tax for promotion of programs
 - Need facilities to support horse trail users
 - Destination trail network
 - Black River Blueway Trail – national level
 - Promote on Black River corridor website – www.blackriverny.com
- Lack of public transportation
 - Transportation Plan needed – coordinated regionally
 - Coordinate existing providers
 - Coordinate transit planning with future land use planning
- Value added agriculture
 - Farmers markets and cooperation with Amish
 - Maple syrup, vineyards, etc.
 - Expand “Made in Lewis County”
 - Niche dairy

Meeting #3

- Science / Arts complex
- Affordable housing
- Low paying jobs
- Eco-tourism marketing and branding
- Gateway community to Adirondacks

APPENDIX 4: SAMPLE FOCUS GROUP INVITATION LETTER

Dear XXXX,

We hope you accept this invitation to a focus group meeting in support of the Black River Watershed Initiative. Two recent articles about the Black River Watershed and various plans are included in this mailing. This Initiative involves outreach to small, targeted groups focusing on topics of particular relevance to the Black River Watershed study area. You have been selected to participate in this focus group meeting because of your expertise in forestry and logging as it relates to the Black River Watershed.

What::	Black River Watershed Initiative <i>Forestry Focus Group Session</i>
Where:	Town of Webb Municipal Building, 183 Park Avenue, Old Forge, NY
When:	July 30 th 4:00 – 6:00 pm (light refreshments served)
Who:	Partners: Tug Hill Commission, Lewis County Soil & Water Conservation District, NYS DEC & the Town of Greig (led by Bergmann Associates)
Why:	To gather input and ideas as part of the overall Black River Watershed Visioning effort

As part of this Initiative, a series of Visioning Sessions were held in the month of May to identify broad community issues and objectives. This next step includes a series of six Focus Group Sessions with key stakeholders to discuss relevant topics and issues raised at the Visioning Sessions. The goal of this session is to gather input and feedback about issues related specifically to forest management in the Black River Watershed area.

The focus group meeting will be an approximately 1½ - 2 hour session and will include an informal discussion about existing and future conditions in the watershed. The session will be facilitated by a member of our consulting team from Bergmann Associates.

Please RSVP to me, Jennifer Harvill, at the Tug Hill Commission by July 28th. You may RSVP by email (jennifer@tughill.org) or phone (315-785-2392) to confirm your attendance and to ask any questions you might have about the Black River Watershed Initiative.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Harvill
Natural Resources Specialist

APPENDIX 5: FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

AGRICULTURE - July 30, 2008 in Lowville, NY

1. What recent trends are impacting the region's agricultural base?
 - Farm consolidation
 - Agricultural land reduction in certain areas, although increasing in other areas
 - Sporadic land sales in active agricultural areas
 - Greater diversification of product in County – still primarily dairy but other sectors are growing
 - Farmland for renewable energy
 - Small and large farms are increasing, medium sized farms are dropping off
 - Land base is limiting expansion
 - Government regulations of CAFO's – farmers are staying below CAFO limits to avoid excess regulation
 - Recreation is taking land out of development – prime and/or formerly farmed areas
 - Land flooding due to Watson Road and 812 improvements
 - Amish transition
 - Larger farms
 - Older farmers want to retire but the next generation does not want to work 7/365

2. What threats to the agricultural industry do you see in the region?
 - Schools do not understand the diversity of professionals needed for farming; not encouraging them to look at the profession
 - Land value of residential is higher than in production
 - Sale of parcels in active farming areas
 - Lack of next generation to take over farming business
 - Sale of agricultural lands is increasing
 - CAFO is unfair to larger farms, smaller farms have no regulations
 - Potential loss of immigrant labor force
 - Wind farms take some land out of production
 - Loss of railroads
 - Cost of fuel and trucking
 - Small farms being squeezed out
 - Fuel prices
 - Fertilizer prices
 - Taxes
 - Cost of labor

3. Which sectors within the agricultural industry are expanding? Which are in decline?
 - Niche goods – winery, beef, cheese, organic expanding
 - Local foods movement
 - Maple syrup
 - Dairy is stable
 - Decline of forestry value added services, raw materials are still stable
 - Big farms are getting bigger and smaller ones are leaving

4. What ideas do you have for diversifying the region's agricultural sector? What kinds of investment would be required to facilitate this?
 - No need to diversify as long as milk remains profitable
 - Diversification is happening on its own
 - If feasible, maybe renewable energy agriculture
 - Wind energy – transmission lines are limiting factor
 - Maple processing
 - Commercial kitchen for value added products

5. How do agricultural businesses affect the natural environment? What are the significant environmental issues? How are they addressed?
 - Manure management
 - Small farm cow impacts on streams
 - Small farms are not managed well
 - CAFOs are managed correctly, lower impact
 - Animal waste
 - Planting willows along river banks
 - Most farmers are good stewards – manure disposal can be a problem, as can odor

6. What do you like best about living/working in the region today?
 - People
 - Relaxed environment
 - Rural environment
 - Know your neighbors
 - Weather
 - Good schools
 - Concentration of farms
 - Strong community of neighbors helping neighbors
 - Peaceful living
 - Abundance of wildlife
 - Low crime

7. What do you like least about living/working in the region today?
 - Taxes
 - Transportation
 - Access to services
 - Being rural
 - Lack of good paying jobs
 - Number of small farms going out of business
 - Loss of jobs
 - NY taxes are high

8. Look back 10-15 years. How would you compare the state of the Black River between then and today?
 - River is silted up, more flooding
 - Water is cleaner

- Increasing tourism and recreation
 - More organized activities on the River
 - Will have better standards
9. Look forward 10-15 years. How do you think the current trends may impact the watershed over the next decade? What will be the most significant differences between today and in 2025?
- Continued CAFO issues
 - Sporadic land development – need to manage growth
 - Floodplain accuracy – needs to be rezoned
 - Continued consolidation of farms
10. Is the Black River region still a place you want to be in 2025?
- Yes for all
11. What are the three most important projects you would like to see undertaken to help mitigate trends and change over the next decade?
- Protection of farmland
 - Land use management
 - Education of farmers
 - Soil survey update
 - Natural gas exploration
 - Shared highways
 - Control costs of fuel and fertilizer
 - Control taxes
 - Stronger cost sharing programs for river bank protection

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - July 31, 2008 in Carthage, NY

1. How would you describe the regions economic base? What industries contribute most to the region's economy? Which industries are growing? Which are shrinking?
 - Agriculture is growing
 - Largest industry is the dairy industry
 - Milk production has been pretty level – number of farms has declined but production has stayed the same because of more efficiencies
 - Mercers Dairy
 - Maple industry – trying to grow and add value
 - Tourism (recreation) is growing – falls under recreation umbrella
 - Winter recreation growth is flat
 - Growth potential is with other three seasons
 - Lewis County doesn't have enough beds in winter, no place to put anybody
 - County is opening back up some ATV trails
 - Forestry and wood products
 - Lots of land is maturing and rotting – need to get managed forests on state land
 - Hunting and sportsmen activities
 - Government facilities and employment numbers are shrinking
 - Mills have closed
 - Lewis County General hospital is a big employer and hospital is growing / Carthage Hospital is expanding / Watertown hospital is growing and expanding (Samaritan)
 - More nursing home beds – County's beds are filling up
 - School districts are good size employers, all are expanding near the fort to accommodate military children
 - Growth in town is all related to snowmobilers
 - Jefferson County economy based on Fort Drum

2. Why do businesses choose to locate in the region? What makes it difficult for businesses to locate here? What makes it difficult to stay and grow? What facilitates expansion of existing businesses?
 - Population concentration
 - Income levels
 - Distance for shipping products
 - To do business in NYS – regulation and tax wise – doesn't stand a chance when compared to other areas
 - Watertown – Chick hatching facility – market is Canada
 - Take advantage of location to other larger markets
 - Most industries were tied to lower energy
 - Missing the boat on recreation – could be Aspen of the East
 - Could be a bigger recreational/economic business but we don't have state support
 - All bed tax money designated for tourism marketing and advertising
 - Have to be able to promote – promote what you have and build on it
 - Don't have infrastructure for more tourists right now
 - No industrial park in Lewis County or Hamilton County
 - Need to redevelop a small industrial park and identify locations
 - Downside, don't have educational facilities or younger workforce or social activities / culture to attract these types of employers
 - Need some satellite college courses

3. What opportunities do you see for diversification of the region's economic base? What industries are well suited for the region and why? What kinds of investments / programs are needed to attract those industries?

- Otter Creek horse trails
- Still have a lot of power – can we tap into lower cost hydro power
- Hydropower is a difficult issue
- Methane gas electric – peel off some power to tomato hydroponis organization
- Lots of opportunities – recreation wise – tourism
- So many things in such a small area – how do you package the message?
- Transmission line limitations are an issue – capacity isn't there
- Renewable / green energy – wind, hydro, biomass
- Area way ahead, not intentionally but because we have the opportunities
- Two pilot projects going on simultaneously – scrub willow and ethanol
- Scrub willow doesn't need good soil – not going to compete with corn
- Floodplains not in production – is this a good place for scrub willow – yes it would serve a dual purpose as it could also be a buffer
- ESF website – willow biomass page
- Catalyst Renewables
- Brings tax dollars but not a big job generator
- Anti-growth mentality in Lewis County – new industries have to be able to deal with outcry
- Water bottling? Town of Greig? Village of Croghan?
- Value added dairy and maple industries have potential for job growth in future
- Wine ice cream
- All comes down to cost of energy
- Opportunity for growth of some paper operations
- Project with 50 jobs is appropriate for region – be realistic about what types of projects are a good fit for these communities
- Important to diversify – better to have a bunch of smaller industries than one large one
- ESD has no one at the helm right now – decision making – change in leadership, focus, and priority
- ESD is an important partner
- Partnering with colleges and ESF
- Need partnerships to be successful here
- Big question is Governors cuts? Nobody knows what will happen next.

4. What would sustainable economic growth in the region look like to you? What does that phrase mean to you?

- Manufacturing – hard time recruiting managers
- Workforce situation – have an aging workforce, average age is 50, in 10 years who will take their place
- Regionally getting manufacturers together to determine how they can be more proactive – reach out to younger people and tell them what opportunities are available
- Young people aren't learning about the sophisticated opportunities associated with ag and farming, etc.
- Industries need to become much more involved
- Regional workforce board
- Come Farm With Us
- Adirondack Harvest Label
- Home brand – way to sustain growth

- Maintaining the Fort
 - Need government support – local, regional, and statewide
 - Tourism, maple, and manufacturing
 - Opportunities for entrepreneurship associated with Fort Drum
5. What do you like best about living/working in the region today?
- Left in 1986 and came back
 - Friendly people
 - Clean air
 - Minimal drug problems
 - Best locations in US to live
 - Great climate
 - Four seasons – doesn't get terribly hot
 - No spiders or rattlesnakes
 - No tornados or hurricanes
 - Small town community character
 - Four seasons or recreational opportunities
 - Golf courses
 - Outdoor recreation – have everything you could ask for
 - Friendlier on west side of watershed
 - More commercialized on east side
 - Health care facilities in west are better
 - People
 - Beauty
 - Spring, summer, fall
6. What do you like least about living/working in the region today?
- Those three weeks in winter...
 - Commuting costs
 - Distance to services – clothes, doctors, shopping
 - Limitation on arts and culture – perception
 - Winter
7. Look back 10-15 years. How would you compare the state of the Black River between then and today?
- Highway systems improved
 - Rail system deteriorated
 - Loss of small farmers
 - Subdivision of farmland
 - Smaller end growth from Amish (Lewis County)
 - People respect and value natural resources more than ever
8. Look forward 10-15 years. How do you think the current trends may impact the watershed over the next decade? What will be the most significant differences between today and in 2025?
- Cost of energy is going to have a huge impact – which communities are going to grow and which are going to shrink – whats the future of Villages – won't be economically sustainable (small Villages) – larger Villages may see growth (Lowville)

- Will depend on level of services
- Freight
- More rail service
- County bus service
- People will always need food and energy from this region
- Consolidations of Villages and Towns
- Regional departments as opposed to individual municipalities – more County services
- Fewer jurisdictions in Lewis County
- School districts consolidating
- Internet based small businesses
- Technology is going to be important
- More home based workers and businesses
- More development for the better

9. Is the Black River region still a place you want to be in 2025?

- Yes from all

10. What are the three most important projects you would like to see undertaken to help mitigate trends and change over the next decade?

- Industrial park
- Expanding renewable energy
- Value added production
- Creating a tourism infrastructure
- Bio-mass is very important
- Finding greener and cheaper energy sources
- Smart community planning and development

ENVIRONMENT - July 30, 2008 in Lowville, NY

1. What are the most significant threats to the quality of natural resources in the region?
 - City of Watertown dumps snow into Black River and needs to stop
 - Low flow levels increases concentration of nutrients
 - Seasonal home development
 - Lack of planning, zoning, enforcement, training of board members
 - More intensive streams increases erosion
 - Boreal forest animal habitat
 - Mercury loads from acid rain
 - Cow and cattle impact on shoreline conditions
 - Limited buffering / conductivity
 - Adirondack Rivers are increasing acidification resulting in PH levels in some areas around 5
 - Development pressure
 - Increased recreational demands

2. How are these threats currently addressed?
 - Out of basin transfer (north lake) managed by Canal Corporation
 - FERC – Black River / Hudson River – much of this is managed by dams, minimum low flow levels set
 - Felts Mills and Great Bend are potential locations for future hydro facilities
 - APA has standards, lack of infrastructure decreases year round development potential
 - Lack of local planning
 - Ag environmental management and CAFO laws
 - State program – Conservation Reserve Enhancement
 - Northeast Regional Plan
 - Education on individual septic systems
 - Invasive weed control program

3. What opportunities exist for the protection and conservation of natural resources in the region?
 - Improve enforcement of laws and regulations
 - PDR Programs
 - Control development and recreational use to encourage environmentally sound progress
 - Push for detailed soil survey of the area
 - Develop GIS information to facilitate proper management
 - APA has very tight control, sometimes seeming too restrictive, but its focused on preserving great natural resources

4. What investment is needed to address environmental concerns in the region?
 - Inter-municipal cooperation for planning
 - Need better capacity to serve on boards
 - Improved road salting process and education

5. What do you like best about living/working in the region today?
 - People
 - Family oriented

- Rural character
 - Schools
 - Proximity to natural resources and recreation opportunities
 - No traffic jams
 - Affordable to live
 - No natural disasters
 - Vast wilderness area of Herkimer County
 - Recreational opportunities and tax base
6. What do you like least about living/working in the region today?
- Lack of cultural opportunities
 - Seasonal population
 - Limited job opportunities
 - Kids leave – no expectation that they will stay
 - Lack of good paying jobs
7. Look back 10-15 years. How would you compare the state of the Black River between then and today?
- Pollution was worse 15 years ago
 - Loss of pulp and paper mills results in better water quality
 - Greater tourism
 - Increased snowmobile and ATV usage
 - Lakes are cleaner due to septic system development
 - Recreation and tourism has grown in Old Forge
 - Timbering and gravel mining are better managed
8. Look forward 10-15 years. How do you think the current trends may impact the watershed over the next decade? What will be the most significant differences between today and in 2025?
- Land use, government changes likely
 - Potential improvements due to – reduction in industry, improved farming practices, greater seasonal tourism, recreation, energy
 - Property tax
 - Alternative energies
 - Carbon credits
 - Current trends on right track
9. Is the Black River region still a place you want to be in 2025?
- Yes to all
10. What are the three most important projects you would like to see undertaken to help mitigate trends and change over the next decade?
- Land use planning
 - Dredge Black River from Lyons Falls – Carthage
 - Stream bank erosion
 - Subsidies to agricultural uses to implement stream bank erosion

FORESTRY - July 30, 2008 in Old Forge, NY

1. Where are the most significant resources for the forestry industry in the region?
 - Not in park
 - Outside park on public and private lands
 - Some from within the park but that's private sector
 - Mostly non-industrial lands
 - AP Forest Preserve

2. Describe recent trends impacting the forestry sector.
 - Increased land tax
 - Property taxes
 - Fuel costs
 - Burdensome for large property owners, more expensive to maintain
 - Development, fragmenting land takes it out of forestry
 - Loss of Ethan Allen (Boonville), Lyons Falls Pulp and Paper – two local markets have disappeared
 - More value to subdividing land then keeping it
 - Shift in DEC in stream crossing permits, used to deal with forest rangers, now dealing with ECO and biologists who don't know forest industry, taking longer to get permits (about a year ago)
 - State boundaries aren't being maintained well, especially in Park
 - Transferring regulation of wetland operations to conservation officers from Forest Rangers who have the experience, training, and political knowledge

3. What are the most significant environmental issues associated with the forestry industry in the region?
 - Hard to operate on sensitive soils during winter without frost on ground
 - Some areas impacted because limited to frozen ground harvesting
 - More winds, stronger winds
 - Stream crossings, wetlands
 - Wetland cutting regulations are unrealistic and physically impossible to comply with

4. What threats do you see to the future of the forestry sector in the region?
 - DEC
 - Insect infestation
 - Higher taxes, landowners looking to sell to develop
 - Educational trends – wood products are renewable, not promoting conservation versus preservation
 - Revamp 480A system – tax strategy to reduce property taxes up to 80% as long as landowner follows management plan – places lien against property – works for clubs, etc. – doesn't seem to work if its just a family
 - For 50 contiguous acres, maybe it needs to go down to 30 or 29
 - Need better incentives to keep open space and grow timber
 - Additional acquisitions of private forest lands by the state, remove from tax base, shifts demand from private lands to other private lands, demand for wood products is decreasing
 - At one point do you have enough parkland?

- Fuel costs
 - Need to find woodlot tailored to market conditions, only thing paying anything now is hard maple
 - Demand for fire wood is going to be way up this year as people look for new ways to heat their home
 - Unrealistic environmental/government guidelines
5. What kinds of investments, if any, are required to ensure the viability of the forestry industry in the region?
- Local governments don't realize the importance of the forestry industry anymore
 - Fewer local people in industry with closing of mills
 - Maintain and protect remaining mills from leaving region
 - Only two mills left
 - The cost of fuel has required loggers to look for shorter routes, some traffic now going through back roads that weren't built for that type of traffic
 - Structure to act as dispatch to help independent structures to find the best routes
 - Timber in JC headed to Canada
 - NE wood pellet, Schuyler not taking any wood product from region, just wood pellets
 - Education in local governments and local population to value of forestry industry – not educated about positives or timber management
 - Public officials sit down with mills and find out what they need and what their concerns are – site down with people in industry
 - NYS Timber Producers in Boonville
 - Standing timber is real property and can be taxed
 - Tax relief for private forest lands
6. What do you like best about living/working in the region today?
- 38 inches of rain
 - Near lakes
 - Thankful to those who preserve the Park
 - Open space
 - Recreational opportunities – anything non mechanized
 - Not evacuated
 - No forest fires
 - Low crime rate
 - Great family place
 - Slower pace of life
 - No traffic jams
 - Fresh air
 - Good water, an abundance of fresh water
 - Climate
 - People
 - Local government
7. What do you like least about living/working in the region today?
- Threats of outsiders coming in
 - Development
 - Motorized vehicles damaging natural resources

- Lack of suitable employment
 - Hard to retain youth
 - Revamp tax system on property
 - People impacted by outsiders buying properties as property taxes increase
 - Land is worth more, taxes become more
 - Demand has impacted land values
 - Individuals who have lived here are paying for outsider increases
 - Reduce tax burden on locals
 - Infrastructure going to hell – where are the taxes going
 - Outsiders are high maintenance
 - State regulation of forestry which makes it difficult to operate economically
8. Look back 10-15 years. How would you compare the state of the Black River between then and today?
- 6 paper mills have closed from Lyons Falls to Lake Ontario
 - 300+ employed at each
 - Mills were committed to community
 - Impact on community service – fires during the day
 - Taxes weren't a concern
 - Seasonal population has greatly increased
 - Gradually declining
9. Look forward 10-15 years. How do you think the current trends may impact the watershed over the next decade? What will be the most significant differences between today and in 2025?
- Lose more mills and loggers
 - Bigger mills but wood will be problem
 - Loss of competitive advantage
 - Demand for different types of forest products
 - More self sufficient with regards to how we live
 - Local economy
 - More people working from home, tele-commuting
 - No tele-commuting infrastructure in many areas, however
 - More conservation easements, protect watersheds
 - Forestry will have less impact on economy than it does today
10. Is the Black River region still a place you want to be in 2025?
- People are here because they want to be, not because of opportunities
 - Kids will move where they want
 - Yes
11. What are the three most important projects you would like to see undertaken to help mitigate trends and change over the next decade?
- Restrictions on exporting water from watershed
 - Tax programs
 - Education and information about timber industry
 - More ways to get rid of waste products locally
 - Incentives

- Forestry friendly government changes – incentives
- Workers comp – insurance rates for lumberers
- Jobs aren't encouraged in schools
- Full scale environmental assessment of AP on lands not unique – culturally, ecologically – what is practical to use for forestry products – wise use of resources
- Be on guard for potential garbage dumps
- Common sense application of timber harvesting regulations
- Property tax relief
- Expansion of recreational use of open land and water

OUTDOOR RECREATION - July 31, 2008 in Carthage, NY

1. What activities or attractions draw significant numbers of visitors to the region? At what times of year?
 - Canoeing
 - Kayaking
 - Hiking
 - Hunting
 - Fishing
 - Snowmobiling
 - Snowshoe
 - Cross country ski
 - Kite ski
 - Geocaching, high tech / organized littering
 - Jet ski
 - Fly fishing
 - Maple syrup tours
 - Fall foliage tours
 - Mountain biking
 - Jeep jamboree
 - Water cross on snowmobiles

2. Where do most of the visitors to the region come from? Do you see differences in visitor origins when you look at destinations across the region?
 - New Jersey
 - Pennsylvania
 - Connecticut
 - Massachusetts
 - All of New England
 - East coast as far as North Carolina – Kite skiing
 - One the BR – new locals who have recently relocated
 - Paddle clubs from throughout world (white water element)
 - Canadians and connections to wilderness tours (white water element)

3. What are some of the issues facing outdoor recreation amenities / tourism destinations?
 - Perception of dirty river
 - Not packaged well – water resources are phenomenal
 - River lacks romance
 - Don't have accommodations
 - Black Water Development created a campgrounds of their ideal of the type they want to see along the river
 - Need collaboration – chambers, business community
 - Need to identify where to pull in and where to pull out, don't need amenities but just need place to get out of boat
 - Stretch of water with no place to get out
 - Permission to enhance – legally get out every 10 miles right now
 - No place to go!
 - It is still an economic river, it is an agricultural river

- Need a 30-minute “rest step” for river users
 - Its not a wilderness river
 - Nobody promotes river well enough
 - River clean-up in Watertown (Norm) – pick up trash and debris –beautification project
 - Shoreline erosion at north shore access
4. Are there any tourism markets that you think the region could attract that are not being targeted? What are some of the opportunities?
- Canoe race down the Black River
 - No place for spectators
 - Have water all year long – not many rivers do
 - People need to know what is here
 - Rafting companies bring in a lot of people
 - Rafting – ¾ as significant as in Colorado
 - Local people would never use it to that extent
 - Need to market together to connect the dots
 - Urban Adventure Tourism
 - Unite fishing, white water, flat water, etc.
 - Industrial day is gone focus should be on tourism and recreation
 - Draw attention to this area than administrative in-house stuff – series of events need to be held on river over season – flat water, fishing derby, white water, etc.
 - Canoe camp along the river
 - Draw on regional people
 - No leg of trail longer than 5 miles
 - Carthage up to Lyons Falls and determine who owns the land
 - Farmers – campsites
 - It’s a day-use river – start trying to attract them first
 - Black River gets lumped into Thousand Islands
 - Pool resources of different organizations
 - 8.5M in river monies to Watertown
 - Target local youth who have no pre-conceived views of river
 - Redesigned Black River guide
 - Connect dots from Dexter to Lyons Falls and then encompass the Thousand Islands – were not doing that
 - Adventure Sports theme
 - Internet – create usable website with web cam
 - Word press – you can change your content
 - Internet links on site to other major players
 - Now you need a blog, need a hook
 - Promote differences in character
 - Television – consensus
5. Any negative impacts to natural resources?
- Low impact
 - Think about how to access the water
 - Zoning issues on the river
 - Balance recreation with development
 - Carry in and carry out
 - Agriculture has a big impact and lots of run-off

- Liability – solved that question (ACA) – insurance policy – kayak legal liability free
- Administrations in each community
- Manure spreaders, run-off in river
- Impacts of farming communities
- Save the River – paint the drainage with stencils
- Secondary run-off from combined water and sewer in Watertown

6. What do you like best about living/working in the region today?

- Quality of life
- Lack of people
- Isolation
- Beauty
- Undeveloped
- Secret places that no one knows about
- Hidden treasures
- Schools
- Weather
- Love the River
- Less developed than similar areas
- People are friendly
- Low crime
- Big workforce in Watertown area

7. What do you like least about living/working in the region today?

- Employment
- Duplication of government
- Tax rate
- Winter is an interesting monster

8. Look back 10-15 years. How would you compare the state of the Black River between then and today?

- A lot of growth
- Military came in and made it grow
- High quality industrial jobs to more of a service type sector
- Losing a lot of young people in area
- Government has gotten lazy at attracting new industry
- Was more activity, more population, more jobs
- Job creation is minimum wage jobs
- Mills have closed
- Industrial-based river to tourism and recreation based river
- New industry – Department of Corrections
- Telecommunication, more and more people getting away from rat race and working from home – “last mile of high speed”
- Not a lot of cultural and arts stuff going on
- TIPAC
- Higher taxes now
- Energy costs are higher
- Cost of transportation is higher

- Housing was lower
- River had bad image – pollution
- Less traffic
- Less housing development

9. Look forward 10-15 years. How do you think the current trends may impact the watershed over the next decade? What will be the most significant differences between today and in 2025?

- More recreation
- More tourism
- Identify an image / character
- Growing outdoor recreation jobs in the community
- Education
- No schools in area that are teaching relative career that people can use along the river
- Focus on schools is too much on physical education
- People do not get taught leisure skills
- Less retention of youth
- Fort Drum in not sustainable
- Want sustainable growth – service, agriculture, skilled labor force
- Nothing has changed in Adirondacks – park is not suppose to change and have timeless quality
- “Frontier” communities attract eccentric people
- Don’t see a lot of change
- Hard to get off treadmill of not getting things done
- More dependent on federal money and activities
- Watertown is 50% subsidized today
- Need to teach community activism
- Market the people that enjoy the calmness and natural resources
- Key people need to act to get stuff done

10. Is the Black River region still a place you want to be in 2025?

- Depends, my lifestyle is married to business of white water
- Yes, all others

TOURISM AND RECREATION - July 30, 2008 in Old Forge, NY

1. What activities or attractions draw significant numbers of visitors to the region?

- Boating
- Outdoor activities
- Hiking
- Water Safari
- Adirondack train
- Campgrounds
- Rental properties on lakes
- Local ski area
- Snowmobiling
- Cultural activities – art center in old forge
- Central Adirondack Association
- Car shows, special events
- Events are saturated between Forestport and Long Lake
- Scientific lab for researchers – Colgate, Cornell, Fisheries
- Youth camp
- Youth camp at Raquette Lake
- Adirondack Museum
- Camp for Deaf on Fourth Lake

2. Where do most of the visitors to the region come from? Do you see differences in visitor origins when you look at destinations across the region?

- New York and New Jersey
- Utica, Rome bring most
- Rochester area bigger than Syracuse
- Buffalo, Albany, Binghamton
- Snowmobiles – counties down near PA border (Ulster, etc.)
- Not a lot of Canadians
- High end trips – Baltimore, DC, Cleveland, Carolinas
- New York City and Long Island – no public transit to here
- Former Lake George people now coming here – more pleasurable
- WARDA survey of property owners – Western Adirondack Recreation Development Association
- McCauley Mountain – owned by Town – WARDA through CAP 21

3. What are some of the issues facing tourism amenities/destinations?

- Town government is not keeping up with people spending money here
- Houses with no lights – houses bought by part-time users
- New people have higher expectations and look for “better” things
- Town has been targeting a lower economic group with regards to amenities offered to visitors
- Won't have activities and amenities that higher economic strata is looking for that can afford to support economy
- Town is not doing job of supporting organizations and businesses that want to offer upper scale amenities
- Higher quality product offered for rent – people want more of it

- Big spenders will come back again and again
- Wealthy residents want people to clean homes, maintenance, etc.
- Affordable places for workers
- Towns not keeping up with clientele
- Water itself – lake levels weren't up in time (late June)
- BRHR Water Regulating District – they report to no one (there is no oversight or accountability)
- People come for mountains and water and it is a problem when its not available
- NYS is biggest threat to business
- APA is biggest threat to my business
- Property dispute – have APA permit – landowner has it – APA did walk-thru, no advertising or signage no longer allowed on front lawn – bus off property because it is considered advertising
- No tourist map
- Regulations – State and APA
- Old Forge is Herkimer's cash cow – Old Forge wants to leave County

4. Are there any tourism markets that you think the region could attract that are not being targeted?

- Don't do a good job of bundling amenities
- Custom Adirondack trips – don't even ask what it will cost
- Shoulder recreation / fishing – White Lake
- State grant money available to promote fishing in region
- Park area in Town of Webb – promoting things that can be done – hiking trails
- Hiking trails
- Ski hill not promoted well enough (McKully Mountain)
- Cross country skiing
- Snowshoe trails
- Town doesn't have clue how to go after a higher level market

5. What are the most significant impacts that recreation / tourism activities in the region have on the quality of natural resources?

- Not to that extent
- Natural resources aren't being trampled and misused
- People use and leave, not a bad thing
- Looks better now than then
- Town doesn't deal well with congestion at high times, Town needs to be busy but maybe could be handled better
- No plans to deal with congestion

6. What do you like best about living/working in the region today?

- Outdoor recreation
- Like activities in winter and summer
- Change of seasons
- Winter is fun time
- Trees, water
- People are nice
- Good restaurants and shops
- School system is excellent

7. What do you like least about living/working in the region today?
 - Working within NYS government (49th worst state for small business)
 - Lack of medical facilities, demographics are really crappy
 - Young families can't afford to stay here
 - Need jobs
 - Need affordable housing

8. Look back 10-15 years. How would you compare the state of the Black River between then and today?
 - Water issue, 60 or 70 years ago Moose River was a sewer, Fulton Chain Improvement Association has managed lake well, cleaned it up and improved it greatly
 - People have lobbied for water levels
 - Cleaning lakes helped Rivers
 - New sewage treatment plan has helped clean up the river
 - River has more and more valuable properties and room for expansion of significant properties
 - What is status of fish below McKeever to Lyons Falls
 - Black River near Watertown poor water quality – will burn your eyes!
 - Waterfall are great now
 - Invasive aquatics – aware of it now and have been attacking issue (on-going maintenance costs are an issue)

9. Look forward 10-15 years. How do you think the current trends may impact the watershed over the next decade? What will be the most significant differences between today and in 2025?
 - River will be able to manage itself, lobby for itself, and be heard – will become more important
 - Cater to affluent or leave them behind
 - Maybe we will revert back to the great camps
 - Community could go away
 - Without tourists, no way to support the local economy
 - Water quality – we are 40 years ahead of many other places
 - Seasonal population doesn't have same commitment to community
 - Regulating district – they need more water, they will take it
 - Livelihood is with man with big red button controlling water levels

10. Is the Black River region still a place you want to be in 2025?
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes

APPENDIX 6: PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING INVITATION

Do you own a business, operate an agricultural operation, live, work, or recreate in the Black River Watershed? Chances are good you do! *Stakeholders interested in how issues in the watershed are being prioritized, which may lead to projects and land-use recommendations in the future, should attend this public meeting.*

The Black River Watershed Planning Initiative will hold two public meetings on Monday, December 8, 2008 to review a draft report that prioritizes the subwatersheds of the Black River by their unique issues (see report at blackriverstudy.org, lewiscountysoilandwater.com or tughill.org). The meetings will be held from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. in Watertown at the State Office Building (11th Floor Conference Room); and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in Lowville at the Town of Lowville offices. Refreshments will be provided by the Lewis and Jefferson County Water Quality Coordinating Committees.


The Black River Watershed comprises well known waterbodies such as the Moose, Deer, Sugar, and Independence Rivers; Soft Maple and Still Water Reservoirs; and Brantingham, Chase, and Pleasant Lakes. The Black River drains 1,920 square miles encompassing Lewis, Jefferson, Herkimer, Hamilton and Oneida Counties. It includes a significant amount of the Adirondack Park, including parts of Inlet, most of Webb; the bulk of Lewis County, particularly its agricultural area in the Black River Valley; and the central portion of Jefferson County, including the City of Watertown.

The goal of the Initiative is to look comprehensively at the watershed in a community-based approach. This process will build local knowledge on the resource and help communities set goals and objectives for the watershed. When completed, the products will give communities decision-making information, provide technical assistance to local governments on water quality issues critical to their well-being, provide better understanding of the link between water quality and economics, and identify opportunities for local actions to help improve and manage water quality. Additionally, a completed watershed plan that meets state and federal standards will position all communities within the drainage basin to compete for state and federal funds to implement identified projects.

The Town of Greig has contracted with Bergmann Associates to perform a Black River Watershed study on behalf of all the watershed municipalities and in conjunction with the Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's Division of Water, NYS Department of State's Division of Coastal Resources, and the NYS Tug Hill Commission.

APPENDIX 7: PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING PRESENTATION

**BLACK RIVER WATERSHED
PLANNING INITIATIVES**



**PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8TH, 2008**

The slide features a white background with a light beige gradient at the bottom. A decorative circle is centered below the main title. The text is in a serif font, with the main title in a larger size and the meeting details in a smaller size.

MEETING AGENDA



- Welcome and Introductions
- Project Overview
- Presentation of Management Plan
- Presentation of Groundwater Assessment
- Presentation of Socioeconomic Characterization
- Next Steps
- Opportunity for Public Input

PROJECT PARTNERS



Local Partners

- Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District
- NYS Tug Hill Commission
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
- Town of Greig

Funding Sources

- NYS Department of State
- US Fish and Wildlife Foundation

CONSULTANT TEAM



- Bergmann Associates
- The Academy of Natural Sciences
- Camoin Associates

PROJECT OVERVIEW

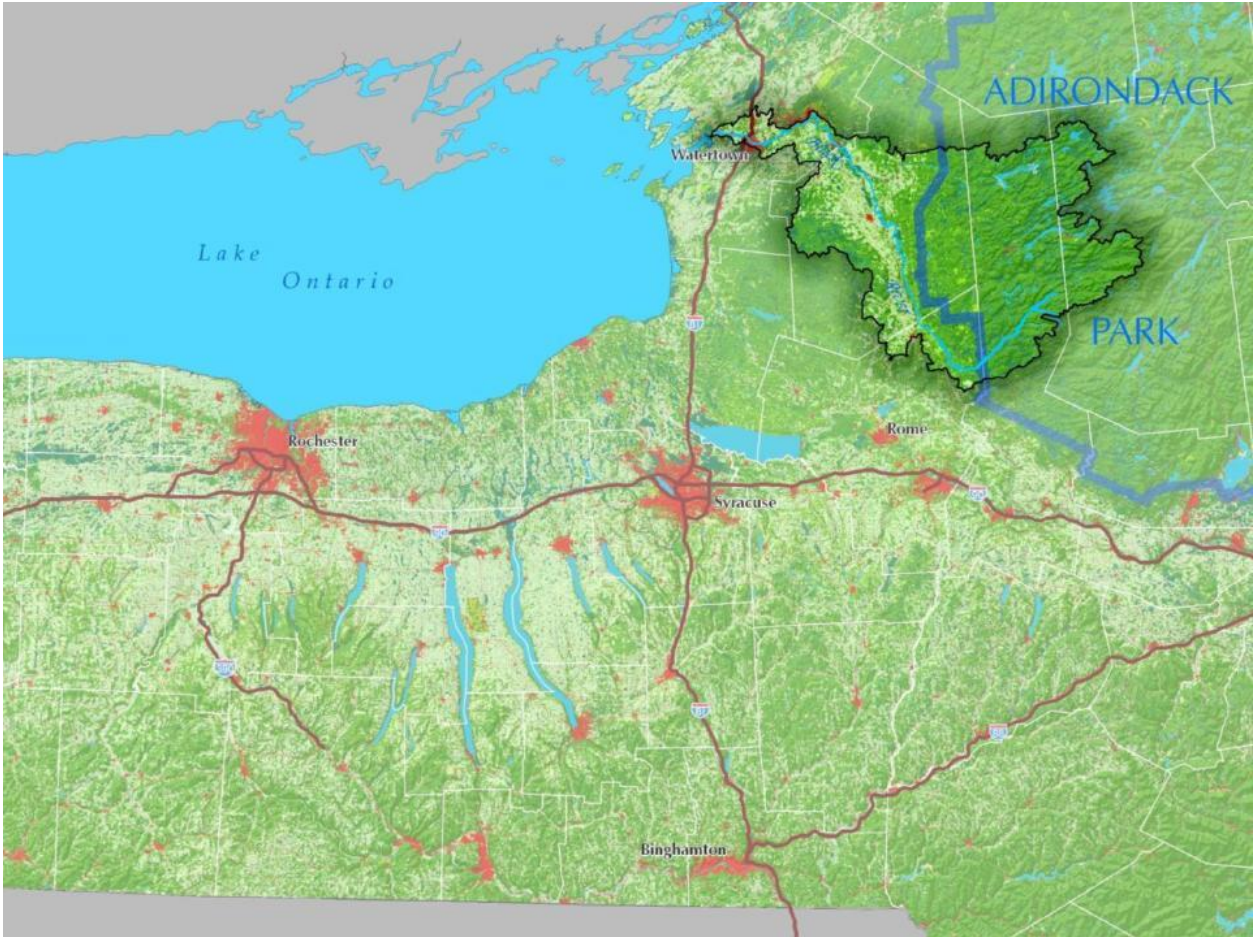


The Black River Watershed



- Encompasses approximately 1.2 million acres
- Includes land in 5 counties: Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, and Oneida
- 1 City, 37 Towns, 18 Villages
- Approximately 56% of the watershed is within the Adirondack Park





Planning Components



- Watershed Management Plan
- Groundwater Assessment
- Socioeconomic Characterization
- Stakeholder Outreach

Management Plan Schedule



Completed Tasks

- Draft Characterization Report
- Draft Prioritization Report

Next Steps

- Regulatory Measures (March 2009)
- Management Strategies (June 2009)
- Draft Watershed Management Plan (September 2009)
- Final Watershed Management Plan (November 2009)

THE BLACK RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

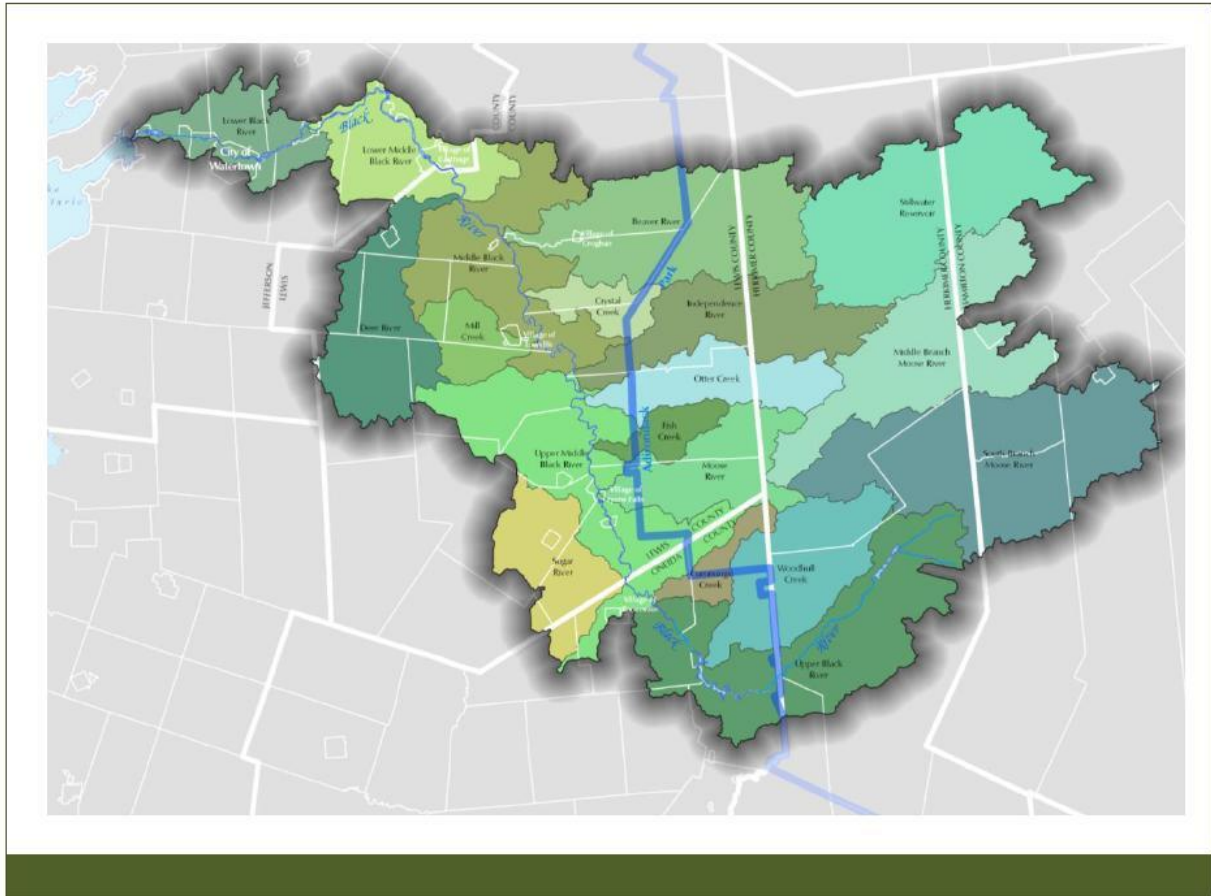


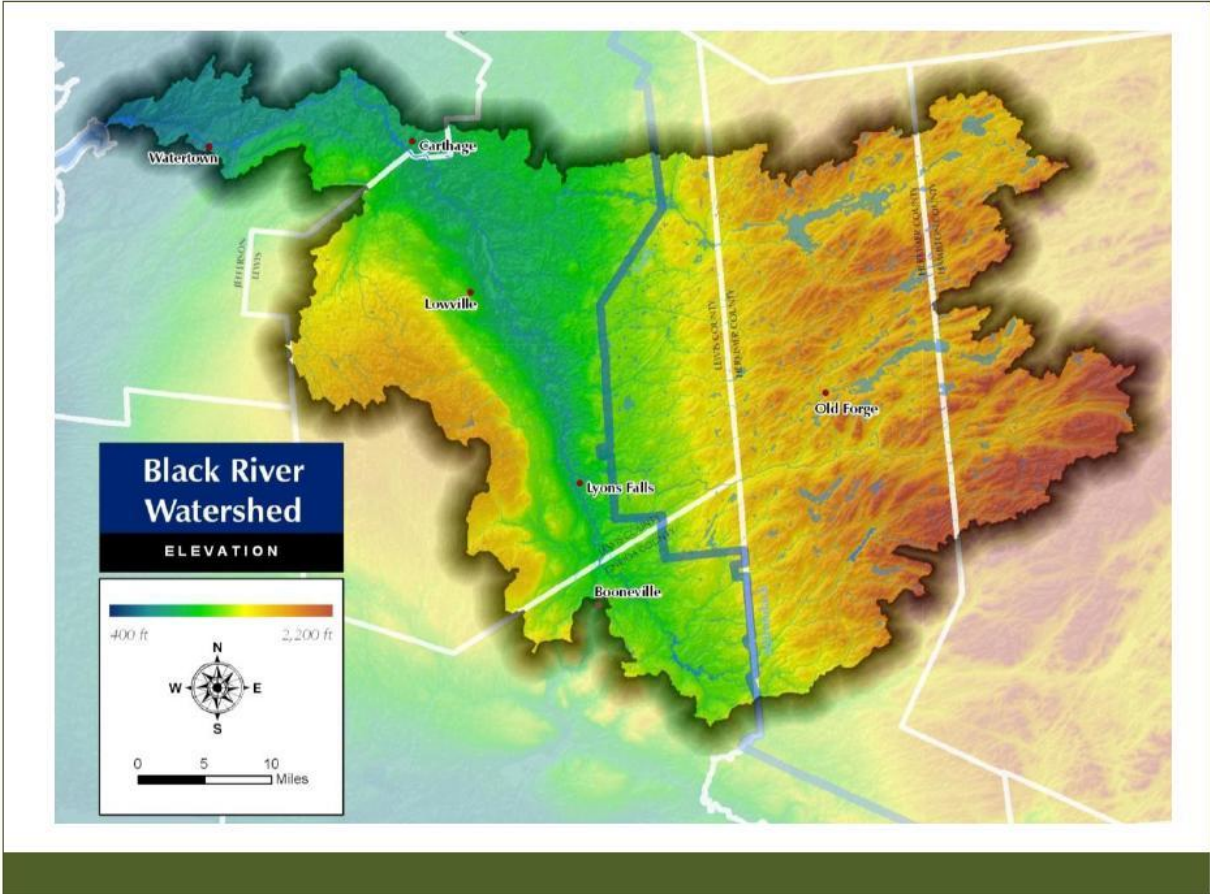
**SUMMARY OF CHARACTERIZATION REPORT
PRESENTATION OF PRIORITIZATION**

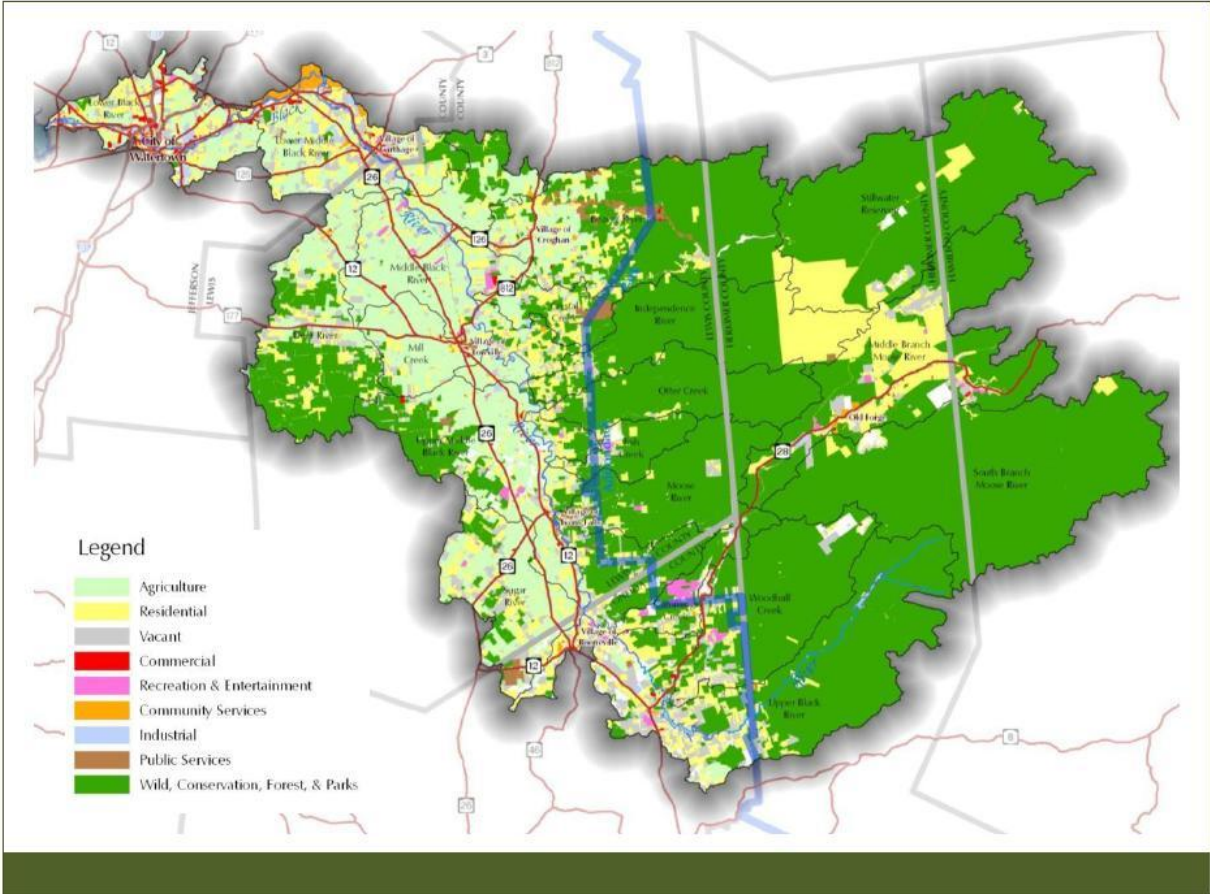
Summary of Characterization Report



- Presented to project partners & public in September
- Primary components include:
 - ✦ Description of study area
 - ✦ Summary of planning considerations
 - ✦ Inventory of physical characteristics
 - ✦ Identification of threats and impairments



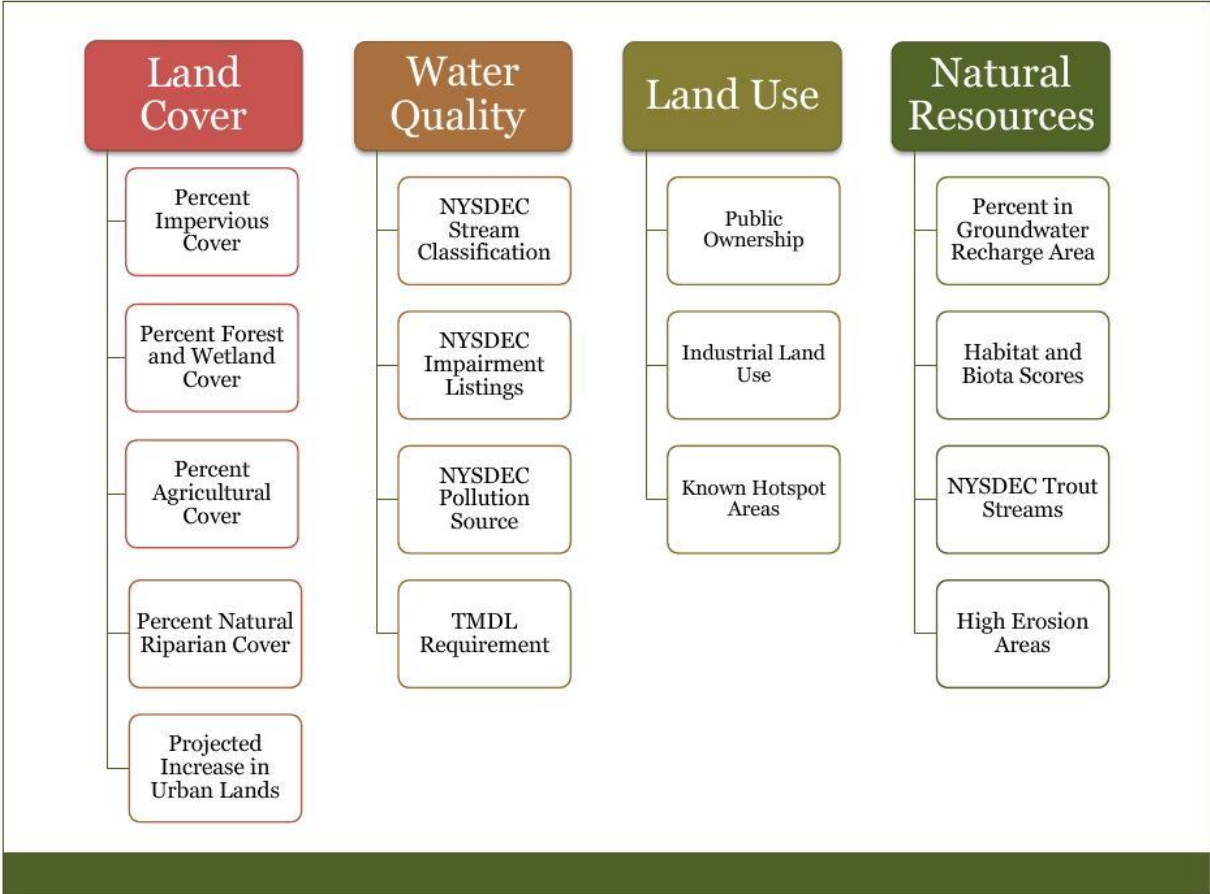




Draft Prioritization Report



- Methodology, Ranking Exercise, Findings & Analysis
- Purpose:
 - ✦ To assist in identifying problem areas and recommendations for mitigating and improving water quality
 - ✦ To assist in identifying areas with good water quality and identifying recommendations for maintaining water quality

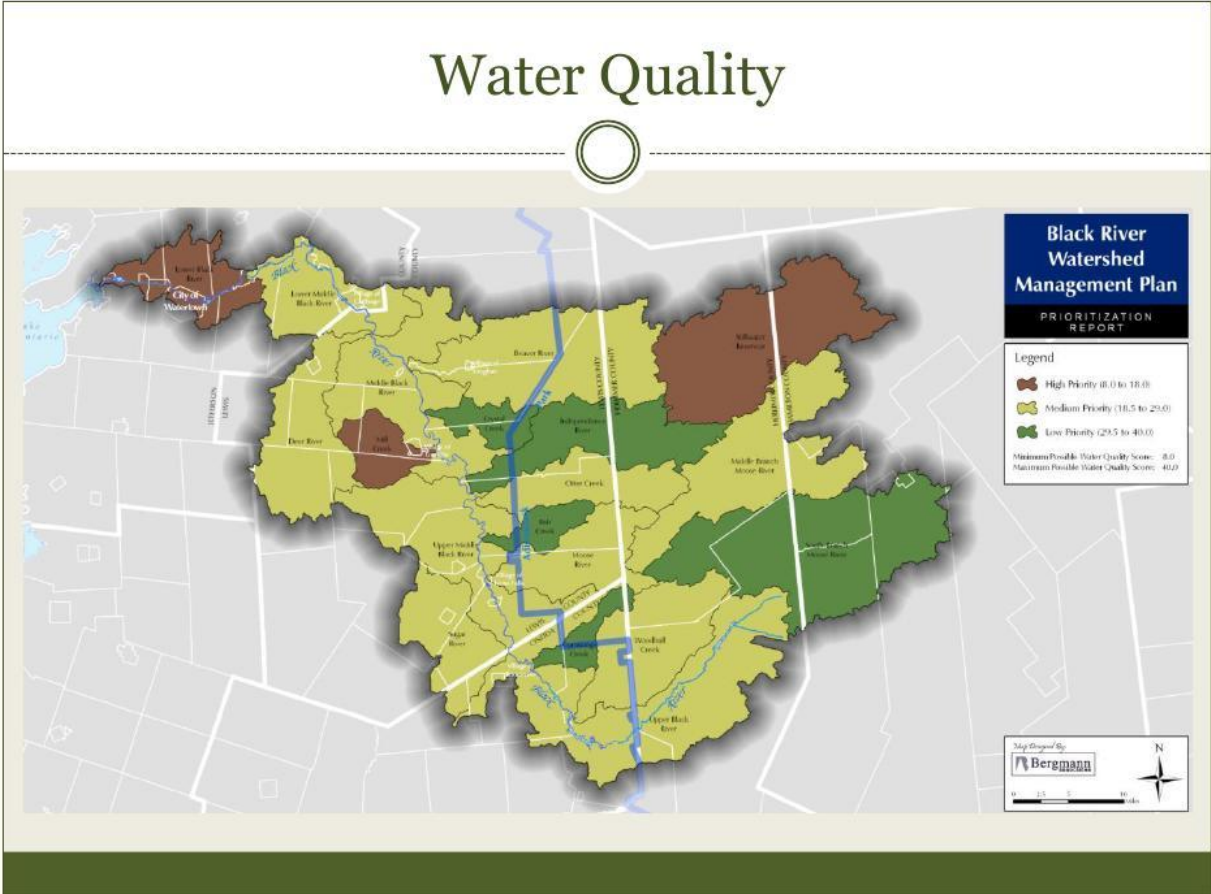


Water Quality



- NYSDEC Stream Classification
- NYSDEC Stream Impairment
- Pollution Source
 - Downweights acid-impaired
- TMDL Requirement
 - Excludes acid and mercury impaired with existing regional TMDL

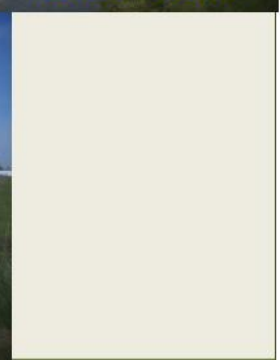




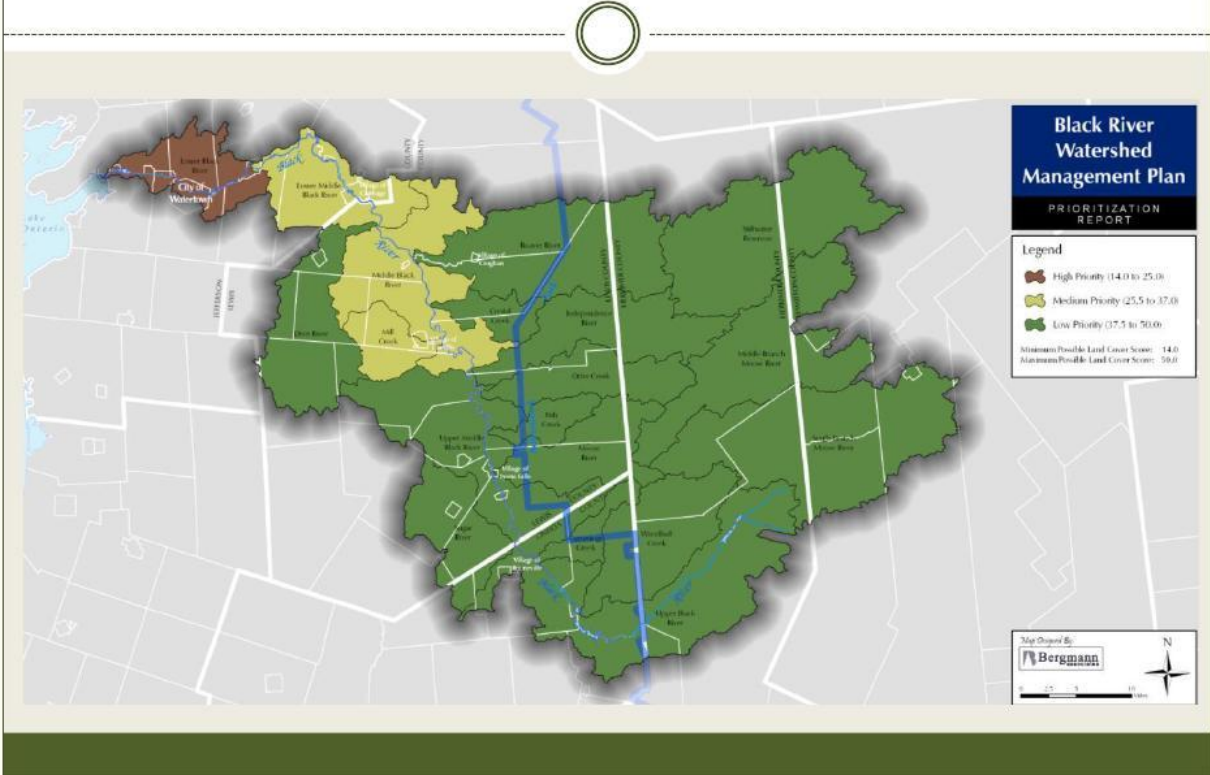
Land Cover



- % Impervious
- % Projected Increase in Urban Lands



Land Cover



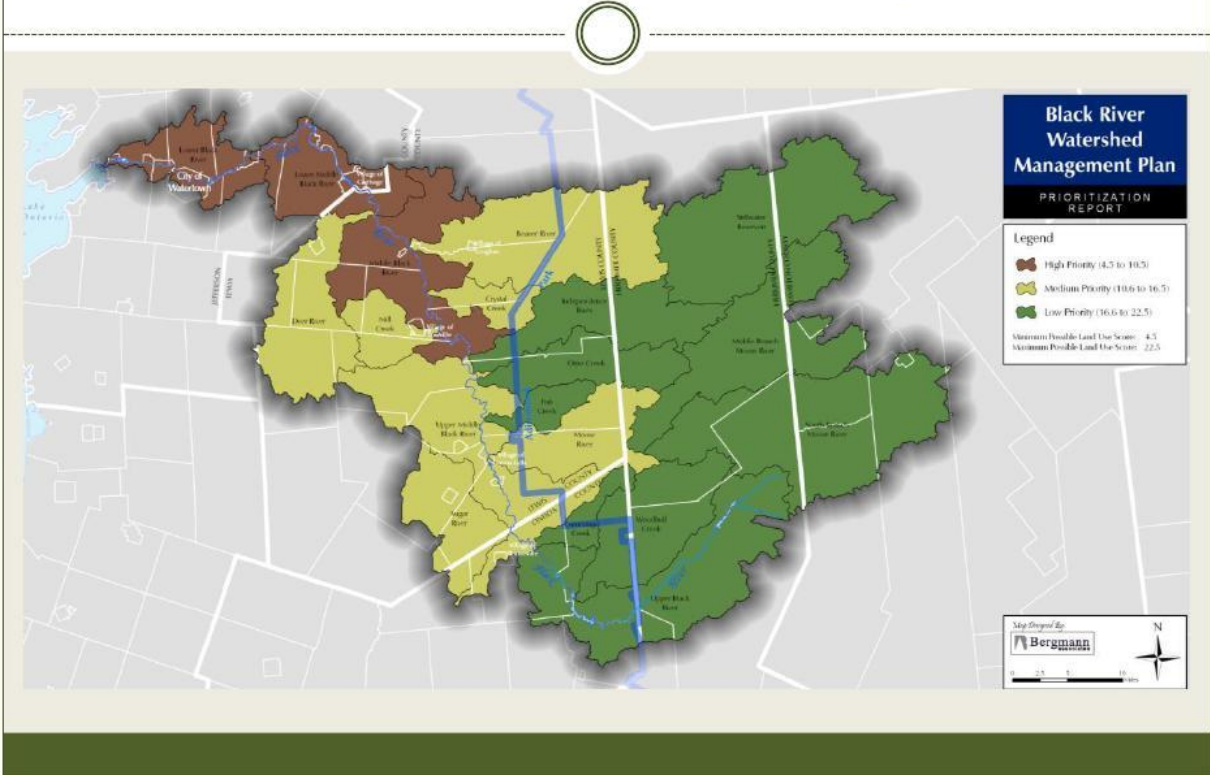
Land Use and Ownership



- Public Ownership
- Industrial Land Use
- Known Hotspots



Land Use and Ownership



Natural Resources



- **Habitat and Biota**

- Area of special lands (NHP communities, etc.)
- *Weighted scores for numbers of fish species (not in current draft)*
- *Weighted score for numbers of species of special concern (not in current draft)*



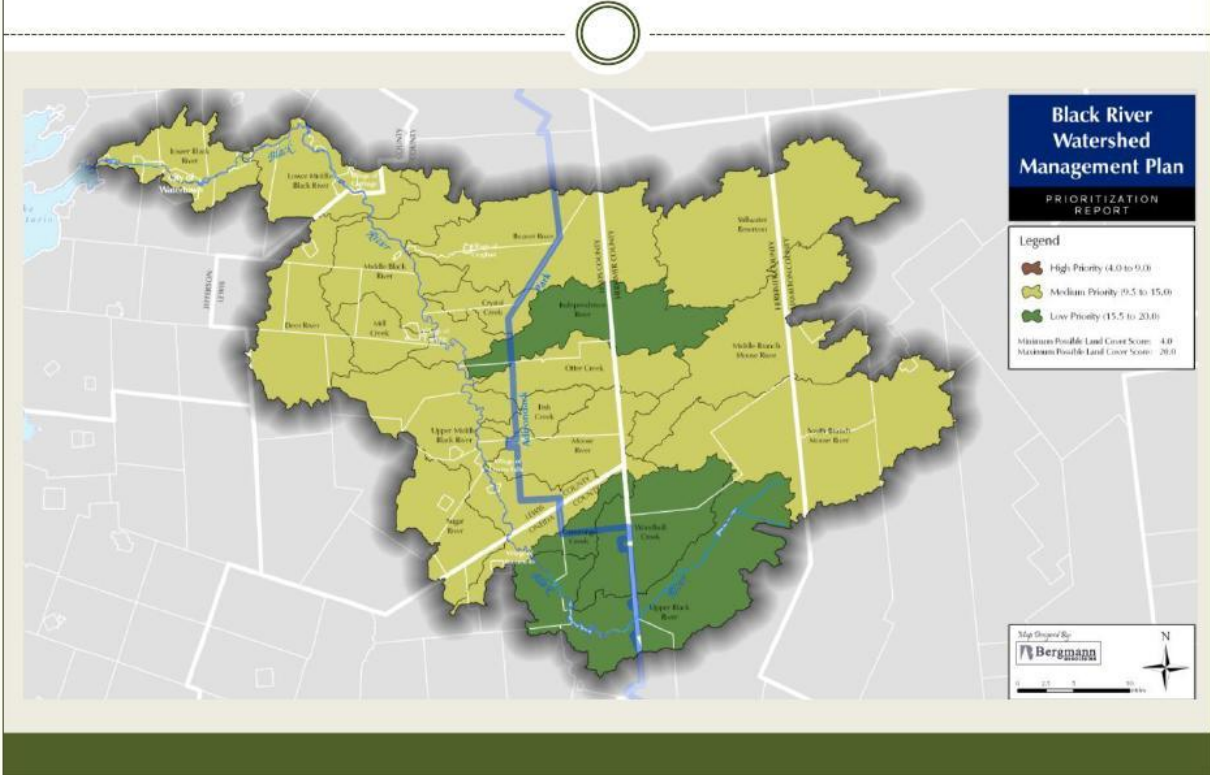
Natural Resources

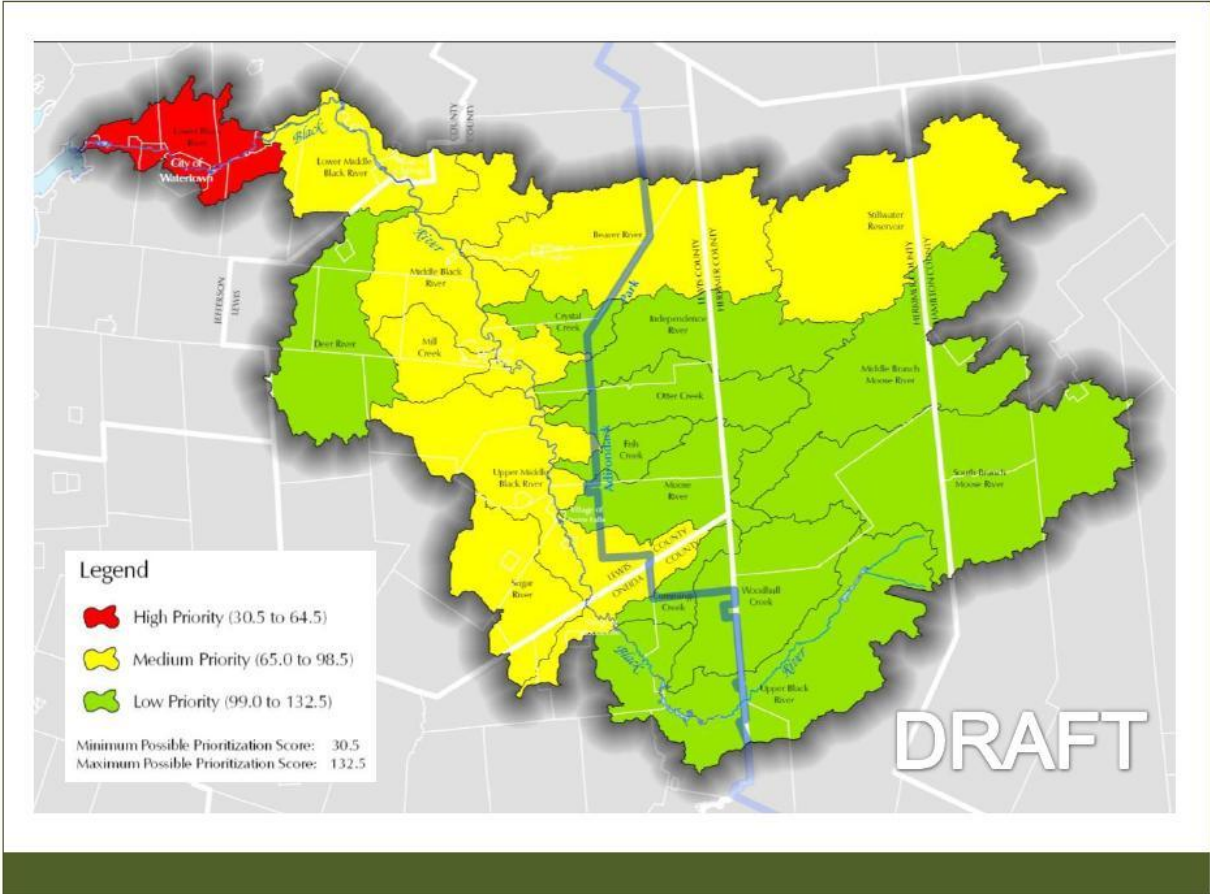


- Length of NYSDEC trout stream
- % Groundwater Recharge Area
- High Erosion Areas
 - Erodible soils with steep slopes on non-forested land
 - *GIS model (not in current draft)*



Natural Resources





THE BLACK RIVER WATERSHED GROUNDWATER ASSESSMENT



PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Report Summary

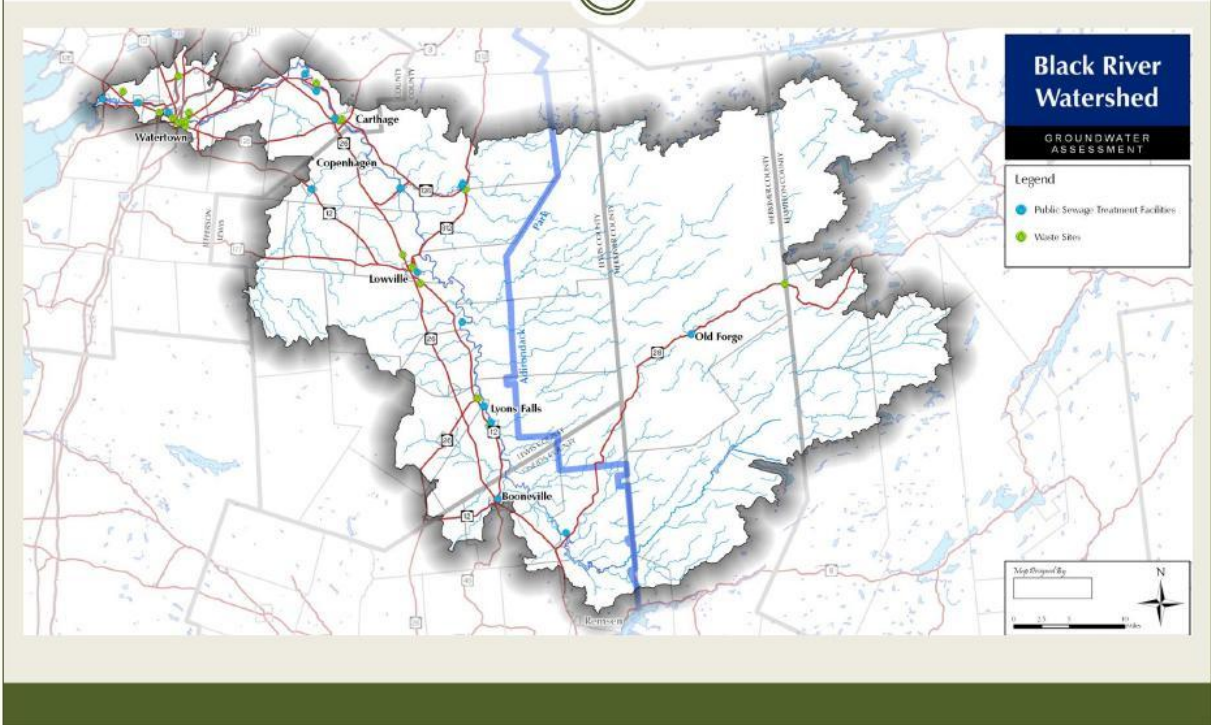


- **Municipal Systems**
- **Geologic Setting**
- **Black River Watershed Aquifers**
- **Bedrock Aquifers**
- **Potential Utilization and Protection**

Municipal Water Supply Systems



Waste Sites and Sewage Treatment Plants



Geologic Setting



Aquifers



Identified Major Aquifers



- **Overburden Aquifers**
 - Watertown Area Lacustrine Delta (Designated Aquifer 1)
 - Black River Recent Alluvium (Designated Aquifer 2)
 - Eastern Lewis County Gravel Outwash (Designated Aquifer 3)
 - Boonville-Woodgate Kame Delta (Designated Aquifer 4)
 - Minor Lacustrine Outwash Sand & Gravel Deposits (Designated Aquifer 5)
- **Black River Watershed Consolidated Bedrock Aquifers (Aquifer 6)**
 - Watertown Area Bedrock Limestone Aquifer
 - Lewis County Limestone Aquifer

Current Utilization



- **Hamilton County**
 - No municipal water supply systems
- **Jefferson County**
 - Watertown is largest provider of water
- **Lewis County**
 - 9 Villages, 1 Town with municipal water system
- **Oneida County**
 - Boonville Municipal Commission; Forestport
- **Herkimer County**
 - Town of Webb municipal water system

Future Development Considerations



- Establish formal listings of aquifers
- Expanded use of known aquifers in Lewis County
- Establish groundwater and aquifer protective measures
- Development of a GIS type database
 - Track municipal water system coverage areas
 - Plot the geographic locations of groundwater wells
 - Compile information on groundwater quality
- Establish municipal supply wellhead protection controls

Future Development Considerations



- Careful placement of future Sewage Treatment Plants
- Development of land use regulations to manage activities that would disturb surface water drainage patterns

THE BLACK RIVER WATERSHED SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERIZATION



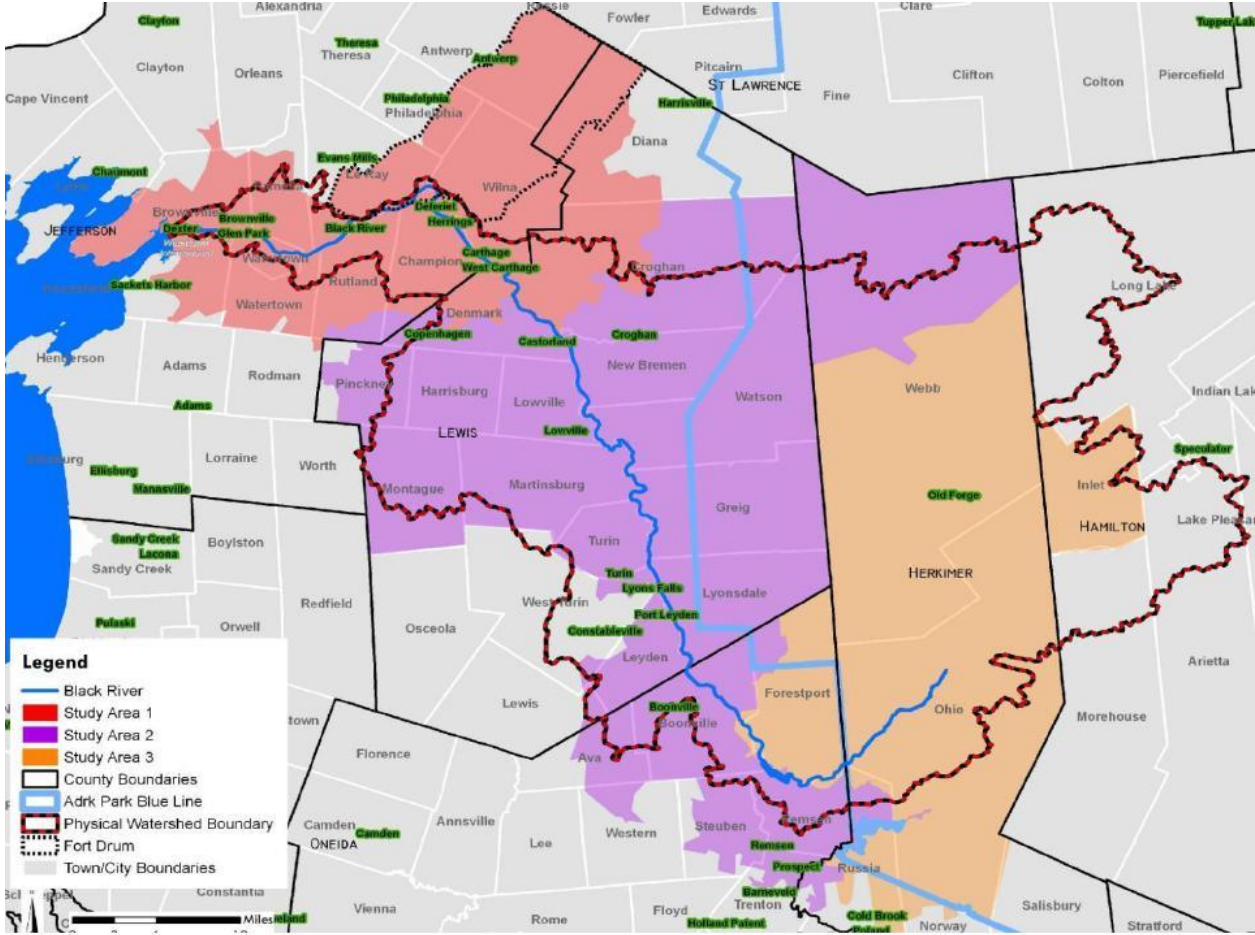
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

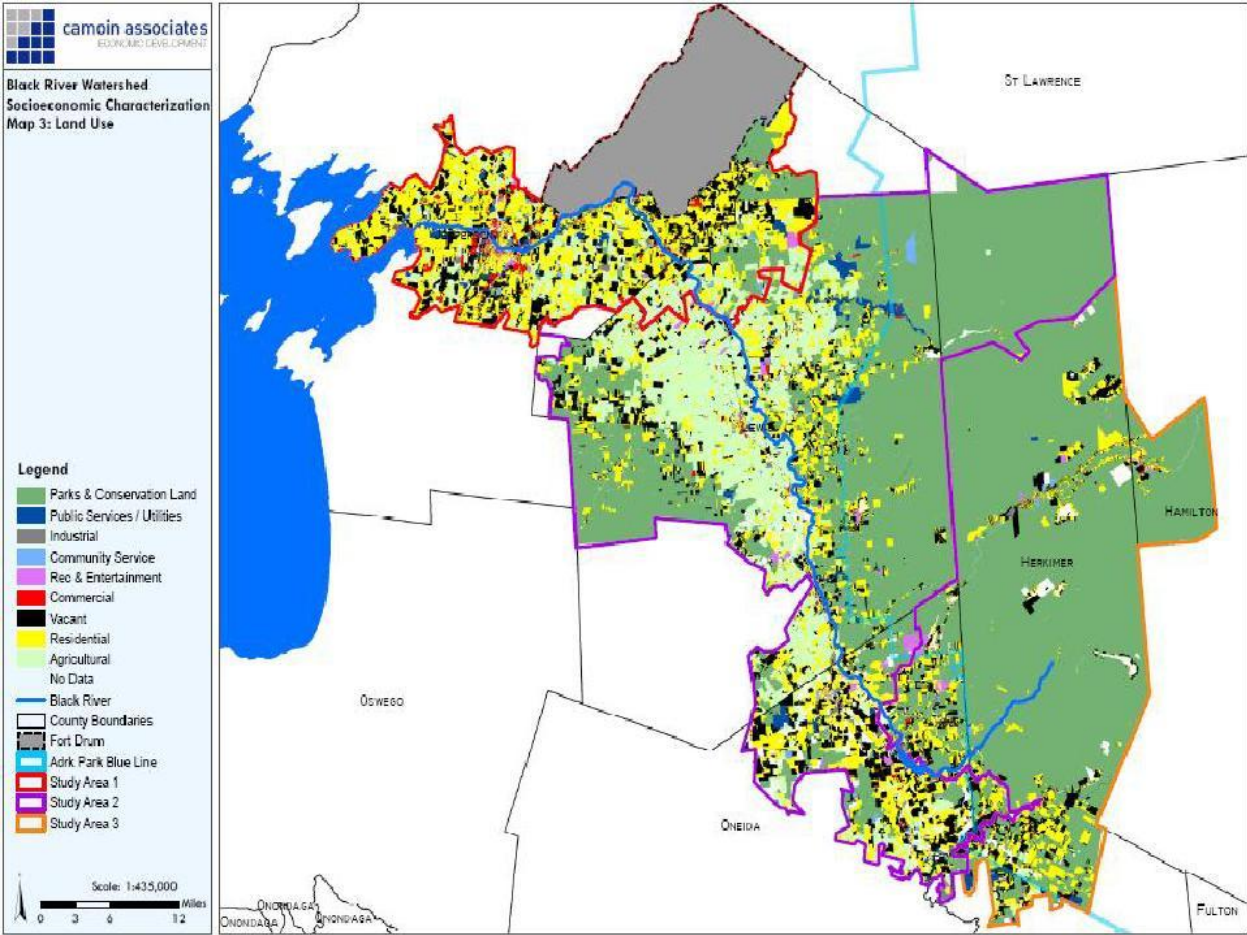
Report Summary

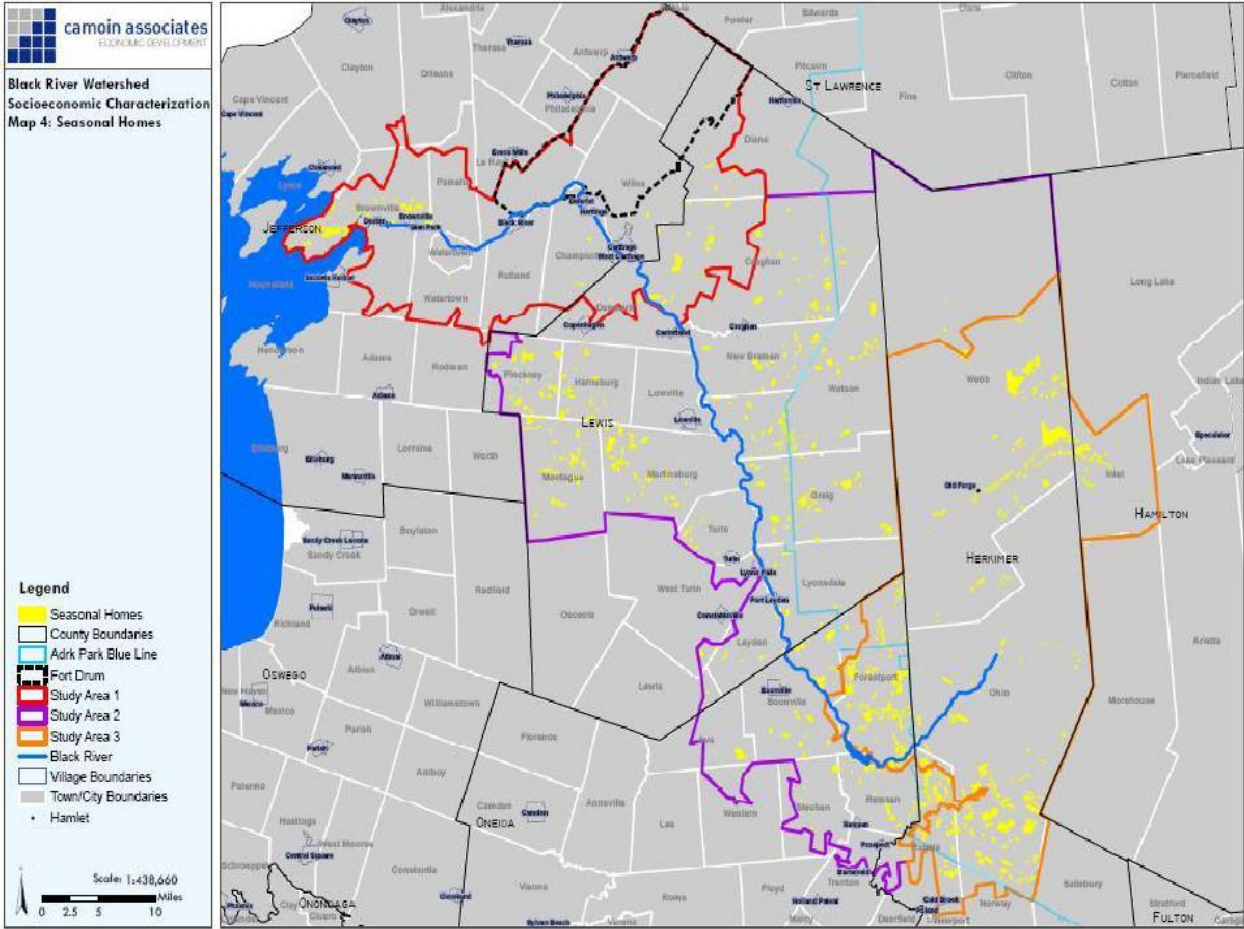


- Three Study Areas
- Examined
 - ✦ Demographics
 - ✦ Economics
 - ✦ Tax Parcel Data
 - ✦ SWOT analysis

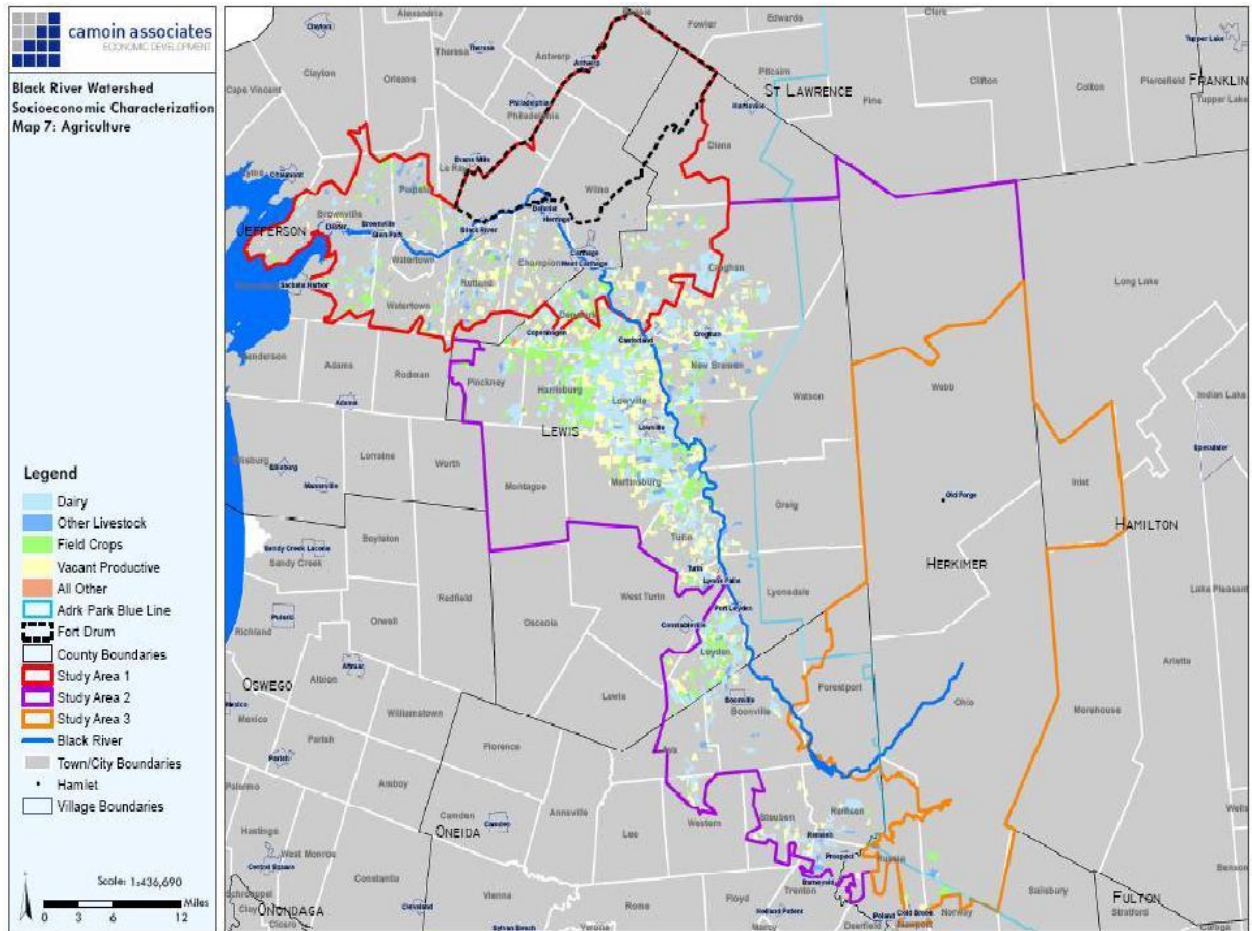
Black River Watershed Stakeholder Outreach Report







Black River Watershed Stakeholder Outreach Report



Study Area 1



- **Description:**
Watertown, Fort Drum & Carthage

- **Predominate Land Uses**
 1. **Community Services**
 2. **Agricultural**
 3. **Residential**

Study Area 1



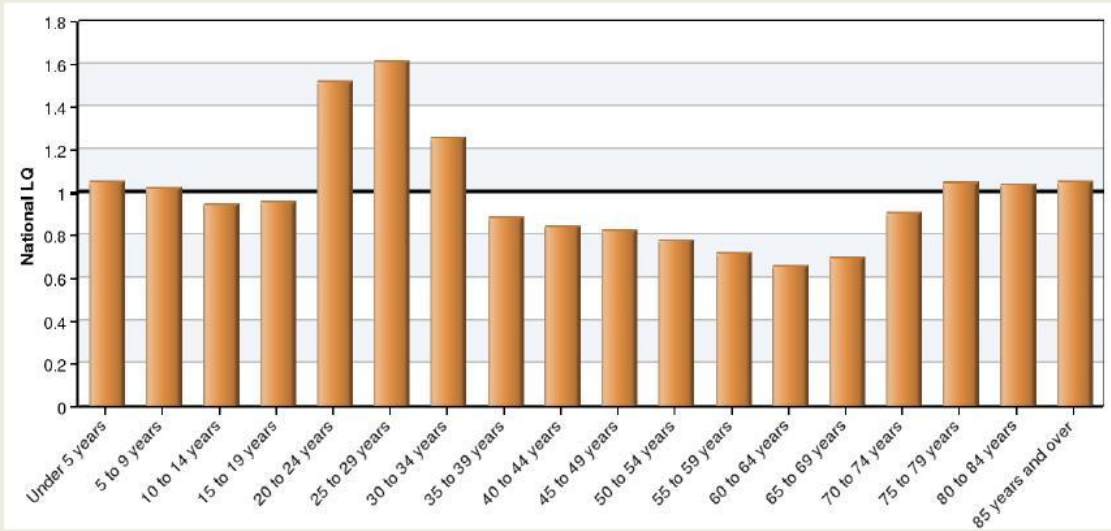
Largest Industry Sectors

Industry	Government	Health Care & Social Assistance	Retail Trade	Accommodation & Food Services	Manufacturing
Employment	17,637	6,932	6,182	2,820	2,192
Earnings per Worker	\$72,380	\$38,520	\$24,786	\$15,378	\$47,131

Study Area 1



Age Location Quotient



Study Area 2



- **Description:**
Rural Areas, Lewis County

- **Predominate Land Uses**
 1. Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands & Public Parks
 2. Agricultural
 3. Residential

Study Area 2



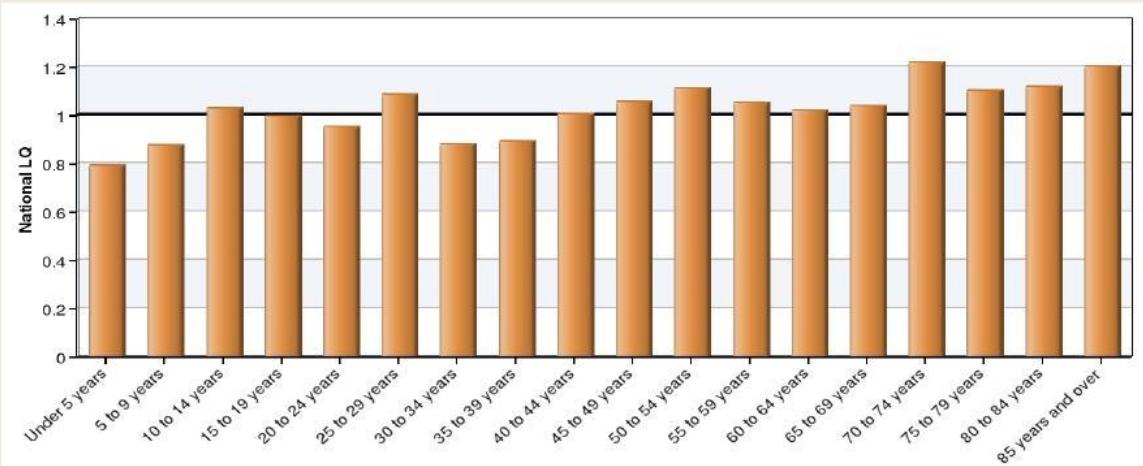
Largest Industry Sectors

Industry	Government	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Hunting	Retail Trade	Manufacturing	Construction
Employment	2,880	1,824	1,572	1,484	1,106
Earnings per Worker	\$48,414	\$15,739	\$21,854	\$49,864	\$26,411

Study Area 2



Age Location Quotient



Study Area 3



- **Description:**
Adirondack Park, Herkimer County

- **Predominate Land Uses**
 1. **Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands & Public Parks**
 2. **Residential**
 3. **Vacant Land**

Study Area 3



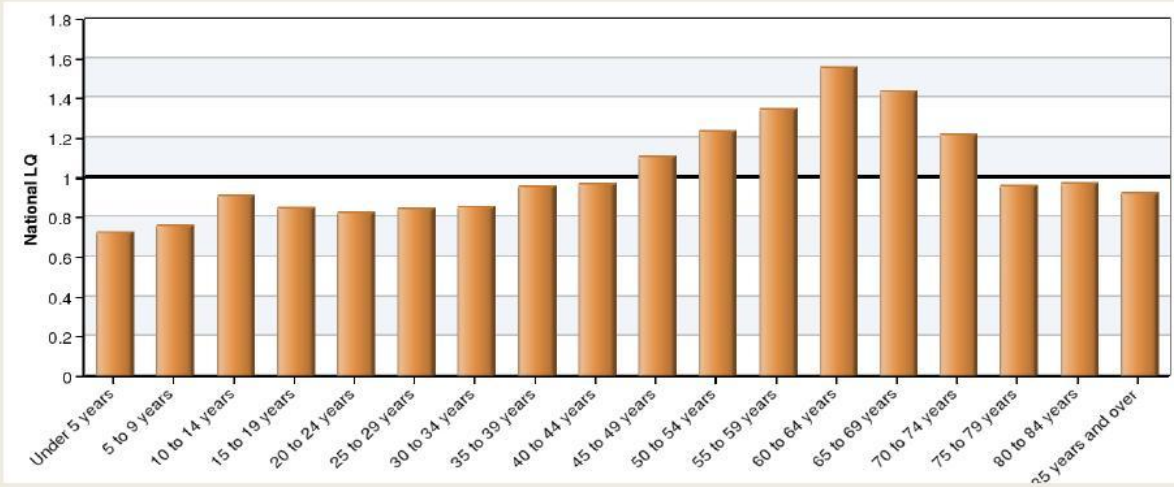
Largest Industry Sectors

Industry	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	Accommodation & Food Services	Construction	Retail Trade	Government
Employment	667	428	408	392	311
Earnings per Worker	\$14,143	\$16,925	\$36,008	\$21,369	\$49,431

Study Area 3



Age Location Quotient



Next Steps



- Incorporate comments on Prioritization Report
- Incorporate comments and finalize Groundwater Assessment and Socioeconomic Characterization
- Finalize Stakeholder Outreach Plan
- Evaluate the Regulatory and Programmatic Environment
- Look for next Public Meeting advertisement in March!!!

Opportunity for Public Input



Questions?

Comments?

We want to hear from you!