

March 14, 2007

Ms. Rebecca Brumagin and Mina Town Board  
Town of Mina  
PO Box 38  
Findley Lake, NY 14736

Dear Supervisor Brumagin and Town Board:

As you know, the Water Quality Task Force acted as a technical advisory committee for the Findley Lake Sewerage Study. In addition to securing and administering the grant that funded the project, we reviewed the progress of this project and Dr. Wilson's groundwater study during our monthly meetings. Through this process we developed a set of recommendations for addressing certain non-point source pollution issues in Findley Lake. Recommendations are listed below to address each specific contaminant.

**Phosphorus** - It has been determined that contamination of groundwater by phosphorus in the Findley Lake valley is primarily caused by septic systems. To address this contaminant, WQTF endorses the construction of a low pressure collection system and centralized treatment for sewage as outlined in the January 19, 2007 "Preliminary Engineering Report - Findley Lake Sewerage Study.

We recommend that the Town appoint a committee to initiate the following:

1) Request assistance from the NY Rural Water Association and the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) to develop a plan outlining the steps needed to pursue public sewers. They can provide free technical, managerial and funding assistance to the Town for a wastewater project.

NYRWA: Mike Dill, (888) 697-8725, [Dill@nyruralwater.org](mailto:Dill@nyruralwater.org).

RCAP: Catherine Rees, (607) 587-9219, [crees@rcapsolutions.org](mailto:crees@rcapsolutions.org).

2) Request that your attorney research what options are available to the Town to form a special district and management entity. Your attorney may want to consult Mr.

Greg Yaw, a local attorney from Jamestown who is very experienced with this.

3) Work with the Watershed Foundation to develop a public education campaign that promotes sensible lawn and garden care to reduce nutrient inputs to groundwater.

**Nitrogen** - A significant amount of nitrogen in the groundwater has been determined to come primarily from agriculture, but septic systems also contribute to this problem. Like phosphorus, nitrogen contamination from septic systems would be addressed by a central sewage collection and treatment system.

Nitrogen contamination of groundwater by agricultural activity is mostly isolated to areas where farming occurs on gravel soils. These are sensitive environmental areas where the utmost care must be taken by farmers to minimize nitrogen leaching. This can be done through careful nutrient management. The goal of agricultural nutrient management practices within the Findley Lake watershed will be to minimize nitrogen leaching into groundwater, and minimize losses of nitrogen and phosphorus to surface waters as well.

The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, in conjunction with Cornell University, has adopted the Conservation Practice Standard for Nutrient Management (NY-590) which outlines detailed measures for minimizing nutrient losses due to the application of nutrients from all forms to cropland.

The NY-590 standard is recognized as the best available technology for agricultural nutrient management in New York State. The latest version of the standard is available on the internet at:  
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/>

The single biggest farm in the watershed is owned by Matt Beckerink who follows the NY-590 standard. However, since the groundwater contamination study has identified farming as the primary contributor of nitrogen, certain best nutrient management practices can be selected to specifically target this issue. Representatives from WQTF will meet with Mr. Beckerink to review his current

nutrient management practices and make recommendations for implementing additional practices.

**Chlorides** - Ground water in the northern portion of Findley Lake contains high levels of chloride salts. The primary source of chlorides is from road deicing agents. WQTF recommends the following actions be taken by the Town to help reduce the chloride problem:

- 1) Construct a containment pad in front of the Town's salt storage barn for mixing salt with sand and loading trucks in the winter. The Soil and Water Conservation District can provide assistance for this. There may also be grants available to help pay for construction.
- 2) Do not use salt brine on Town roads for deicing, dust control or any other reason.
- 3) Discontinue dumping snow into the lake. The snow not only contains residual salt but also sediment and other contaminants.

The Chautauqua County Water Quality Task Force was pleased to partner with the Town of Mina and the Findley Lake Watershed Foundation to complete this project.

Sincerely,

David J- Wilson, Chairman  
Chautauqua County Water Quality Task Force

P.c.: Ed Mulkearn, Findley Lake Watershed Foundation  
Greg Edwards, County Executive  
James Caflisch, County Legislator