



Black River/Swiss Creek Watershed (0415010113)

Water Index Number

Ont 19 (portion 4)
 Ont 19- 22-P395
 Ont 19- 22-P395-
 Ont 19- 23 thru 38 (selected)
 Ont 19- 33
 Ont 19- 35

Waterbody Segment

[Black River, Middle, Main Stem \(0801-0251\)](#)
 Pleasant Lake (0801-0260)
 Tribs to Pleasant Lake (0801-0261)
 Minor Tribs to Middle Black River (0801-0262)
 Stony Creek and tribs (0801-0270)
 Swiss Creek and tribs (0801-0271)

Category

MinorImpacts
 UnAssessed
 UnAssessed
 UnAssessed
 UnAssessed
 UnAssessed

Black River, Middle, Main Stem (0801-0251)

MinorImpacts

Waterbody Location Information

Revised: 01/08/2007

Water Index No: Ont 19 (portion 4) **Drain Basin:** Black River
Hydro Unit Code: 04150101/*** **Str Class:** C Black River
Waterbody Type: River **Reg/County:** 6/Lewis Co. (25)
Waterbody Size: 20.9 Miles **Quad Map:** CARTHAGE (F-18-2)
Seg Description: from Carthage to Lowville

Water Quality Problem/Issue Information

(CAPS indicate MAJOR Use Impacts/Pollutants/Sources)

Use(s) Impacted	Severity	Problem Documentation
Aquatic Life	Stressed	Known

Type of Pollutant(s)

Known: ---
Suspected: NUTRIENTS
Possible: D.O./Oxygen Demand, Pathogens

Source(s) of Pollutant(s)

Known: ---
Suspected: AGRICULTURE, Urban Runoff (Lowville)
Possible: Failing On-Site Syst

Resolution/Management Information

Issue Resolvability: 1 (Needs Verification/Study (see STATUS))
Verification Status: 4 (Source Identified, Strategy Needed)
Lead Agency/Office: ext/WQCC **Resolution Potential:** Medium
TMDL/303d Status: n/a

Further Details

Aquatic life support in this portion of the Black River are known to experience minor impacts due to organic inputs from nonpoint sources. Agricultural activities, urban (Lowville) municipal runoff, and failing/inadequate on-site wastewater treatment system impacts are suspected sources.

A biological (macroinvertebrate) assessment of the Black River below Lowville (at Route 26A) was conducted in 2002. Sampling results indicated slightly impacted water quality conditions. Samples were dominated by aquatic worms, indicating likely organic inputs. These results are consistent with 1997 sampling at the site. Biological sampling of the Black River below Carthage (above Herring Dam) was conducted in 2002. Sampling results also indicated slightly impacted water quality conditions, but the assessment approached that of a moderately impacted water. Samples were dominated by midges and worms, indicating organic inputs to the river. The Carthage site is just below this reach of the Black River, but is likely affected by inputs between Carthage and Lowville. (DEC/DOW, BWAM/SBU, June 2005)

In August 2005, a large volume (estimated to be 7-10 million gallons) of liquid manure was released into the Black River as a result of a collapsed dike at a manure storage lagoon at the Marks Farm in East Martinsburg. This caused lethal levels of ammonia and very low dissolved oxygen in a 24 mile reach of the river. The resulting fish kill was

estimated to be 200,000 to 250,000 mortalities over the four days that it took for the slug of toxic water to move downstream. Subsequent sampling by NYSDEC found that a month or so after the spill water quality in the river had recovered sufficiently to support the fishery. In addition, much of the macroinvertebrate community which support the fishery survived the spill. While the conditions have largely returned to those prior to the spill, it will take considerable time to re-establish a population of larger and older fishes. (DEC/DFWMR and DOW/SBU, January 2007)

NYSDEC Rotating Intensive Basin Studies (RIBS) Intensive Network monitoring of the Black River at State Route 812 in Lowville, Lewis County, at the upper end of this reach was conducted during 2002 (multiplates) and 2003. Intensive Network sampling typically includes macroinvertebrate community analysis, water column chemistry, sediment and invertebrate tissues analysis and toxicity evaluation. Biological (macroinvertebrate) sampling (multiplates) indicated slightly impacted water quality. The invertebrate community was dominated by caddisflies, midges, and mayflies, indicative of minor impacts to water quality. The fish community was also assessed and found to reflect good water quality. Water column sampling revealed mercury and aluminum to be parameters of concern; results that are not unusual for a region of the state typically impacted by atmospheric deposition and acid rain but that should continue to be monitored. Analysis of sediments found zinc in elevated concentrations, but based on sediment quality guidelines developed for freshwater ecosystems, overall sediment quality is not likely to cause chronic toxicity to sediment-dwelling organisms. No organisms were collected for tissue analysis, so biological availability of these contaminants cannot be determined. Toxicity testing of water column and sediment showed no significant mortality or reproductive impacts. Taken together, these results indicate no significant water quality impacts and uses of the stream are considered to be fully supported. (DEC/DOW, BWAM/RIBS, January 2007)

This segment includes the portion of the Black River from the Jefferson-Lewis County line in Carthage to Mill Creek (-51) in Lowville. The waters of this portion of the stream are Class C. Tribes to this reach/segment, including Deer River (-31), Stony Creek (-33), Swiss Creek (-35), Hufnut Creek (-39), Beaver River (-40), Crystal Creek (-45) and Mill Creek (-51) are listed separately.