



# Sacandaga River, Upper, Main Stem (1104-0062)

Need Verific

## Waterbody Location Information

Revised: 12/13/2006

**Water Index No:** H-369.. (portion 1)      **Drain Basin:** Upper Hudson River  
**Hydro Unit Code:** 02020002/050      **Str Class:** B      Sacandaga River  
**Waterbody Type:** River      **Reg/County:** 5/Hamilton Co. (21)  
**Waterbody Size:** 14.7 Miles      **Quad Map:** LAKE PLEASANT (H-23-0)  
**Seg Description:** from Great Sacandaga Lake to West Branch

## Water Quality Problem/Issue Information

(CAPS indicate MAJOR Use Impacts/Pollutants/Sources)

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

### Type of Pollutant(s)

Known: ---  
Suspected: ---  
Possible: NUTRIENTS

### Source(s) of Pollutant(s)

Known: ---  
Suspected: ---  
Possible: UNKNOWN SOURCE

## Resolution/Management Information

**Issue Resolvability:** 1 (Needs Verification/Study (see STATUS))  
**Verification Status:** 1 (Waterbody Nominated, Problem Not Verified)  
**Lead Agency/Office:** DOW/BWAM      **Resolution Potential:** Medium  
**TMDL/303d Status:** n/a ()

## Further Details

NYSDEC Rotating Integrated Basin Studies (RIBS) monitoring of Sacandaga River in Wells (at Route 8) was conducted in 2002. Biological community assessment conducted at this time revealed water quality to be non-impacted. The macroinvertebrate community was a diverse array of clean-water mayflies, stoneflies, caddisflies. Water column sampling revealed mercury and lead to be present in concentrations above assessment criteria indicating a parameter of concern. However, macroinvertebrate tissue samples analyzed for metals showed no contaminants to be above levels of concern. Based on sediment quality guidelines developed for freshwater ecosystems, overall sediment quality is not likely to cause chronic toxicity to sediment-dwelling organisms. Chronic toxicity testing using water from this location showed no significant mortality or reproductive effects on the test organism. Based on the consensus of these established assessment methods, overall aquatic life support is considered to be fully supported in the river. However mercury and lead levels in the water suggest possible impacts on fish consumption. A general advisory for limiting the consumption of sportfish from all waters of the state is in place due to the common occurrence of some chemicals (such as mercury and PCBs) in fish, the inability to test all waters and the possibility of other unidentified contaminants. Regarding mercury, there are additional advisories for women and children further restricting consumption of fish from waters of the Adirondacks and Catskills. (DEC/DOW, BWAR/RIBS, January 2005)

Biological (macroinvertebrate) assessments of the Sacandaga River near Hope were conducted in 2001. Sampling results indicated slightly impacted water quality conditions. Species richness was low and aquatic worms dominated the sample, indicating possible organic waste. This site was previously assessed as non-impacted in 1993. Further sampling is recommended to determine if the 2001 assessment was anomolous. (DEC/DOW, BWAR/SBU, June 2005)

This segment includes the portion of the stream from the mouth at Great Sacandaga Lake to West Branch Sacandaga River (-20). Tribs to this reach/segment are listed separately.

# Sacandaga Lake (1104-0050)

# Impaired Seg

## Waterbody Location Information

Revised: 02/09/2007

**Water Index No:** H-369..P313-4-P314  
**Hydro Unit Code:** 02020002/010      **Str Class:** AA  
**Waterbody Type:** Lake  
**Waterbody Size:** 620.7 Acres  
**Seg Description:** entire lake

**Drain Basin:** Upper Hudson River  
Sacandaga River  
**Reg/County:** 5/Hamilton Co. (21)  
**Quad Map:** LAKE PLEASANT (H-23-0)

## Water Quality Problem/Issue Information

(CAPS indicate MAJOR Use Impacts/Pollutants/Sources)

Use(s) Impacted	Severity	Problem Documentation
Water Supply	Threatened	Possible
FISH CONSUMPTION	Impaired	Known

### Type of Pollutant(s)

Known: METALS (mercury)  
Suspected: - - -  
Possible: Other Pollutants

### Source(s) of Pollutant(s)

Known: - - -  
Suspected: ATMOSPH. DEPOSITION  
Possible: Other Source

## Resolution/Management Information

**Issue Resolvability:** 1 (Needs Verification/Study (see STATUS))  
**Verification Status:** 4 (Source Identified, Strategy Needed)  
**Lead Agency/Office:** ext/EPA  
**TMDL/303d Status:** 2b\* ( )

**Resolution Potential:** Low

## Further Details

Fish consumption in Sacandaga Lake is impaired by health advisories that recommend restricting the consumption of fish from the lake. Mercury contamination from atmospheric deposition is the source of the impairment. In addition, water supply uses in the lake may experience minor threats due to various activities in the watershed. The designation of water supply use as threatened is reflective of a need to protect its particular resource value, rather than specifically identified threats.

Fish consumption in Sacandaga Lake is impaired due to a NYS DOH health advisory that recommends eating no more than one meal per month of smallmouth bass because of elevated mercury levels. The source of mercury is considered to be atmospheric deposition, as there are not other apparent sources in the lake watershed. The advisory for this lake was first issued in 2006-07. (2006-07 NYS DOH Health Advisories and DEC/FWMR, Habitat, December 2006).

Sacandaga Lake has been sampled as part of the NYSDEC Citizen Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP) beginning in 1987 thru 1991 and from 1997 to the 1999. An Interpretive Summary report of the findings of this sampling was published in 2000. These data indicate that the lake continues to be best characterized as mesoligotrophic, or moderately unproductive. Phosphorus levels in the lake are well below the state guidance values

indicating impacted/stressed recreational uses. Corresponding transparency measurements easily meet what is minimally recommended for swimming beaches. (DEC/DOW, BWAM/CSLAP, January 2000)

Public perception of the lake and its uses is also evaluated as part of the CSLAP program. These assessments indicate recreational suitability of the lake to be very favorable. The recreational suitability of the lake is described most frequently as "could not be nicer" and/or "excellent." (Occasional assessments of "substantially impacted" are mostly reflective weather and not water quality conditions.) The lake itself is most often described as "crystal clear" or "not quite crystal clear," an assessment that is consistent with the perceived water quality conditions in the lake and its measured water quality characteristics. Assessments have noted that aquatic plants rarely grows to the lake surface. Aquatic plant surveys of the lake were not conducted as part of this sampling effort, but non-native invasive species have not been cited as impacting recreational uses. (DEC/DOW, BWAM/CSLAP, January 2000)

This lake waterbody is designated class AA, suitable for use as a water supply, public bathing beach, general recreation and aquatic life support. Water quality monitoring by NYSDEC focuses primarily on support of general recreation and aquatic life. Samples to evaluate the bacteriological condition and bathing use of the lake or to evaluate contamination from organic compounds, metals or other inorganic pollutants have not been collected as part of the CSLAP monitoring program. Monitoring to assess potable water supply and public bathing use is generally the responsibility of state and/or local health departments.

Concerns regarding the management of onsite waste water treatment systems at the NYSDEC campsite at Moffits Beach have been raised in the past. Discharges of raw sewage into Sacandaga Lake have been reported in the past. It is not certain whether this problem still exists, but oversight of the campsite and beach should continue.

In addition to the use threats outlined above, the segment is considered a highly valued water resource due to its drinking water supply classification. The inclusion of this waterbody on the DEC/DOW Priority Waterbodies List as having threatened uses is a reflection of the particular resource value reflected in this designation and the need to provide additional protection, rather than any specifically identified threats.

This waterbody is proposed for inclusion on the NYS 2008 Section 303(d) List of Impaired Waters due to impairment to fish consumption.

# Kunjamuk River and tribs (1104-0170)

NoKnownImpct

## Waterbody Location Information

Revised: 07/06/2005

**Water Index No:** H-369..40  
**Hydro Unit Code:** 02020002/010      **Str Class:** C(T)  
**Waterbody Type:** River  
**Waterbody Size:** 63.3 Miles  
**Seg Description:** entire stream and tribs

**Drain Basin:** Upper Hudson River  
Sacandaga River  
**Reg/County:** 5/Hamilton Co. (21)  
**Quad Map:** INDIAN LAKE (G-23-0)

## Water Quality Problem/Issue Information

(CAPS indicate MAJOR Use Impacts/Pollutants/Sources)

Use(s) Impacted	Severity	Problem Documentation
NO USE IMPAIRMNT		

### Type of Pollutant(s)

Known: ---  
Suspected: ---  
Possible: ---

### Source(s) of Pollutant(s)

Known: ---  
Suspected: ---  
Possible: ---

## Resolution/Management Information

**Issue Resolvability:** 8 (No Known Use Impairment)  
**Verification Status:** (Not Applicable for Selected RESOLVABILITY)  
**Lead Agency/Office:** n/a  
**TMDL/303d Status:** n/a ()

**Resolution Potential:**

## Further Details

A biological (macroinvertebrate) assessment of Kunjamuk River in Long Level was conducted in 2001. Sampling results indicated non-impacted water quality conditions. The metrics denoted slightly impacted water, although this likely reflects wetland effects in a headwater situation, and the assessment is upgraded to non-impacted. The fauna was sparse, but contained clean-water mayflies, stoneflies, and caddisflies. (DEC/DOW, BWAR/SBU, June 2005)

This segment includes the entire stream and all tribs. The waters of the stream primarily are Class C,C(T), with some other portions in the forest preserve. Tribs to this reach/segment, including Silver Brook (-8), Shingle Brook (-9), Cisco Brook (-11) and East Brook (15), are primarily Class C,C(T), with portions in the forest preserve.