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## Cranberry Lake in the Adirondacks plucked off New York state's 'impaired' waterways list

By Glenn Coin / The Post-Standard

2010-02-03-bb-cranberry.JPG Courtesy of Brian Bullard Cranberry Lake was recently taken off the state's list of "impaired" waterways because its pH level has improved. It's no longer too acidic.

Syracuse, NY -- One of the biggest lakes in the Adirondacks, Cranberry Lake, has been cleaned up enough to be taken off the state's list of lakes considered to be "impaired" by pollution.

The pH levels in the St. Lawrence County lake, once considered so acidic it could harm fish and invertebrates, has dropped to acceptable levels, the state Department of Environmental Conservation said.

"What it indicates is that we are seeing places in the (Adirondack) park that are experiencing chemical recovery," said John Sheehan, spokesman for the nonprofit Adirondack Council. "The lakes that were on the cusp of being critically acidified are starting to recover."

The DEC and Sheehan credited the cleaning up of Cranberry Lake to stricter regulations that reduced pollution from land and air. New York has imposed restrictions on power plants in the state and pressed for regional efforts to reduce smokestack pollution blamed for the acid rain and mercury in its waterways, notably in the Adirondacks.

Cranberry Lake was among 62 water bodies in New York that were recently "delisted," or removed from the list of impaired water bodies. The lake was put on the list in 1998.

About 80 water bodies were added to the list, however, which now contains 590 lakes, ponds, streams and rivers. DEC spokeswoman Maureen Wren said most new listings are water bodies that had not previously been assessed for pollution. They come mainly from the lower Hudson basin, the Niagara River/Lake Erie basin and the Atlantic/Long Island Sound basin, she said.

Cranberry Lake has a large watershed — the area of land that drains into the lake — and a constant flow of water, so it's likely to be among the lakes that recover quickly, Sheehan said. It will take longer for the mercury bound up in the flesh of fish to work its way out, he said.

"Chemical recovery is just the first step," he said. "After that we need to see biological recovery."

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