

Leader-Herald  
June 19, 2011

## Bill makes river 'inland waterway'

Communities along Sacandaga may get aid to plan development

By JOHN R. BECKER , The Leader Herald

ALBANY - The state Senate passed a bill Friday that would make communities along the entire Sacandaga River eligible to apply for state grant money to finance waterfront development projects.

The bill, which passed in the Assembly earlier and now goes to Gov. Andrew Cuomo for his signature, includes all of the Sacandaga River in the definition of "inland waterways" eligible for the grants from the Department of State for Local Waterfront Development Program projects.

"The town of Hadley [in Saratoga County] requested that bill," said Peter Edman, a spokesman for state Sen. Hugh T. Farley, R-Niskayuna, who sponsored the Senate version of the measure. "They wanted to be able to promote their whitewater activities."

The Great Sacandaga Lake and the Hudson River were designated "inland waterways" several years ago, but areas along the Sacandaga were left out, Edman said.

The entire river, from Lake Pleasant to the Great Sacandaga Lake, is now defined as an "inland waterway," he said.

"The grant money is to develop a plan to improve your waterfront," Edman said. "You apply for money to develop a plan first, and that puts you in a position to apply for grant money to implement the plan."

The city of Amsterdam was awarded a grant in 2010, and used the money to develop a waterfront project, Edman said.

The town of Lake Pleasant in Hamilton County won a grant in 2010 and used the money to begin a project in partnership with the village of Speculator and the Lake Pleasant-Sacandaga Association.

A spokeswoman for 113th District Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward, R-Willsboro, who sponsored the Assembly bill, referred questions to Farley's office.

Assemblyman Marc Butler, R-Newport, was unavailable for comment.

John Sheehan, communications director of the Adirondack Council, an environmental organization whose mission is to "ensure the ecological integrity and wild character of the Adirondack Park," was pleased with the passage of the bill.

"There were stretches of the [Sacandaga] river where communities were not eligible for grants to pay for planning or implementation of waterfront projects," Sheehan said. "We had every reason to want the bill to be successful."

The grant money can be used for projects dealing with public community improvement, including such things as lighting or sidewalks, Sheehan said.

"Some communities might want to use the grant money to rebuild after the spring flooding we had, or to dress up their entrances, or just to make it easier for folks who are coming into that community to go fishing, have a picnic or just come into town."

The most successful projects are the ones that make the community a better place to live, Sheehan said.

John R. Becker can be reached at [montco@leaderherald.com](mailto:montco@leaderherald.com)