

LOCAL & STATE

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Anthony Augustine

SEND GET-WELL WISHES TO IPD OFFICER AUGUSTINE

Community support and good wishes poured in this week with get-well cards and letters for Ithaca Police Officer Anthony Augustine.

Augustine returned to Ithaca on Thursday from Upstate University Hospital, where he was being treated for a bullet wound he sustained last week.

The cards arrived at The Ithaca Journal and are being forwarded to Augustine. The Journal encourages the community to continue to send

\$2.1M study ordered for Cayuga Lake

3-year effort linked to CU's cooling plant aims to limit impact of phosphorous on water

By D.W. Nutt
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ITHACA — The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and Cornell University announced a joint effort Friday they say will limit the impact of nutrient phosphorous in Cayuga Lake, although a local environmental firm questions the project.

Cornell will conduct a \$2.1 million water-quality study under the plan, which the DEC will then evaluate to determine a total maximum daily load, or TMDL, of phosphorous that can be safely discharged into the lake. While the study is being conducted, the amount of phosphorous discharges from the university's Lake Source Cooling facility will be reduced for an interim period as required by the draft State Pollutant Dis-

charge Elimination System permit.

Lake Source Cooling is the process by which frigid water is drawn from the lake's bottom — where phosphorous is present in the form of dead aquatic life and vegetation — and pumped into a heat exchanger, where it cools other water that is piped to campus to air-condition the buildings. The lake water is then returned to the shallow southern end of Cayuga Lake, about 10 feet deep, where any phosphorous in the water could be exposed to sunlight and act as natural fertilizer for algae.

Cornell will pay for the \$2.1 million study, which is estimated to extend more than three years, according to Simeon Moss, deputy spokesman for the university.

"Cornell will bring together a team of experts, with input from local stakeholders, to assess water quality conditions throughout

the entire lake, compile information regarding the contribution of nutrients and sediment from the watershed and develop a mathematical model that links the watershed inputs and the quality of the lake," he said in an e-mail.

After the study is completed, the DEC will use the data to allocate phosphorous reductions to all dischargers, including Cornell. But not everyone is convinced the lake will benefit from these efforts.

"The proposed Cornell study is simply a ruse to allow Lake Source Cooling to continue to pollute Cayuga Lake for years, if not decades, to come," said Walter Hang, president of the Ithaca-based environmental database firm Toxics Targeting. **"It makes no sense whatsoever to have Cornell have any role in dealing with the lake's problems. Cornell is causing the lake's problems."**

The DEC is accepting public comments on the draft discharge permit until Friday, Nov. 16.