



lake champlain basin focusing events and media coverage

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Abstract:

Exploration into the media's coverage of the Lake Champlain Basin and the events and public opinions most publicized over the past two decades

Introduction:

Local, regional, and national medias have the power to direct attention and shape ideas. Over the years, media coverage of certain events in the Lake Champlain has influenced the attitudes and the decisions of citizens and policy makers. Thus, it is important to further investigate the role that news stories and subsequent public responses may play in Lake Champlain's future management.

Methods:

Obtained primary source information through newspaper databases, news websites, VT State Archives and UVM library resources

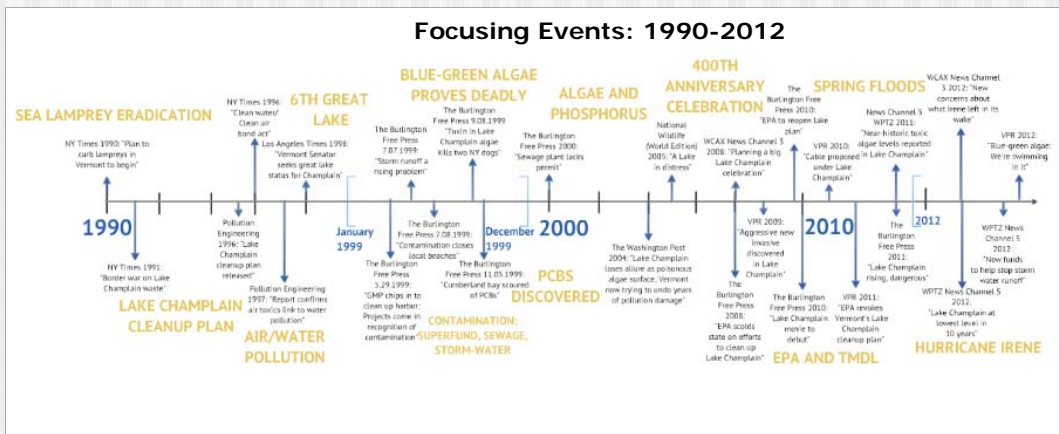


Figure 1. 1990-2012 focusing events as described by headlines from The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, Burlington Free Press, National Wildlife, Pollution Engineering, Vermont Public Radio, WCAX, and WPTZ news-station

Discussion:

1990-2012 Focusing Events include: sea lamprey eradication, air-water pollution linked, Lake Champlain's short-lived "Great Lake" status, dogs die from blue-green algae, EPA revokes VT TMDL, and Hurricane Irene (Figure 1)

After focusing events in 1999, media attention is directed more towards phosphorus pollution and toxic algae blooms (Figure 1)

Burlington Free Press' consistent coverage of Lake Champlain demonstrates Vermont's active involvement in the media's narrative (Figure 3)

News coverage of focusing events may be increasing, as demonstrated by the number of articles written during and after spring floods and Hurricane Irene in 2011 (Figure 3)

In the 1990s, no single agency or individual monopolized news coverage of Lake Champlain. LCBP, VT ANR, EPA, and Senator Leahy were among those most frequently mentioned in newspaper articles (Figure 2.1)

Since 2000, LCBP, VT ANR, EPA, and VT politicians have continued to appear in Lake Champlain-related articles, while UVM and CLF played a more dominant role than in years past (Figure 2.2)

Actors in the News 1990-1999



Figure 2.1 Prominence of individuals and organizations in a sample of newspaper articles on Lake Champlain focusing events from 1990-1999.

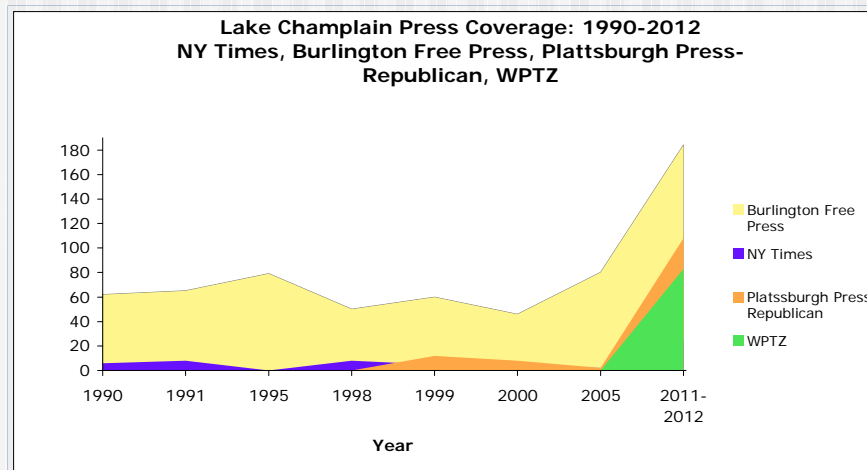


Figure 3. Estimated number of articles/broadcasts dedicated to Lake Champlain from 1990-2012. New York Times and Burlington Free Press (1990-Current), Plattsburgh Press-Republican (2005-Current), WPTZ (2011-Current).

Actors in the News 2000-2012



Figure 2.2 Prominence of individuals and organizations in a sample of newspaper articles covering Lake Champlain focusing events from 2000-2012.

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