

RECREATIONAL BOATING MARINA SURVEY BEING CONDUCTED

BUFFALO, NEW YORK - On May 28, members of the Human Dimensions Research Unit at Cornell University began to survey marinas on the U.S. side of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River to identify:

- (a) the range of water levels at which each marina can operate without incurring economic losses,
- (b) high and low water level fluctuations beyond which marina owners begin to incur economic losses or costs, and
- (c) estimates of these costs as water levels rise or fall further from the point at which initial losses occur.

As part of the survey, Cornell University student and staff researchers will be taking water depth measurements from slips and docks at each marina, and interviewing the owner or manager at each marina. Data from the marina survey will be combined with data from a second survey of boaters using these waters, to be conducted starting in September, to produce overall estimates of losses to marinas, losses in boating opportunities, and losses in tourism-related revenues to local communities due to excessive high and low water levels. A similar survey was conducted last summer at marinas on the Canadian side of these waters.

The work will continue through the summer as part of the International Joint Commission sponsored five-year Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River Study. The study began in December 2000 to evaluate the impacts of changing water levels on commercial navigation; environmental quality; flood damages; hydroelectric power generation; recreational boating and tourism; shore erosion; and municipal and industrial water use.