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## Water study to help Hartwick

**By Tom Grace**

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A \$15,000 hydrological study of the state Route 28 corridor in Hartwick has concluded the area has plentiful, but not unlimited, groundwater.

Commissioned by the town of Hartwick and the Otsego County Conservation Association, the study was done by the Clifton Park firm Alpha Geoscience.

"This section of Route 28 is one of the fastest-growing parts of Otsego County," Erik Miller, OCCA executive director, said Friday. "We wanted to help fund this project so the town would have a scientifically documented planning tool to make decisions about using water resources."

Miller said OCCA and Hartwick divided the costs of the study equally, each spending about \$7,500.

"We thought it was important to do this because this corridor is under tremendous pressure," he said. "Sometimes planners hear anecdotal evidence about how much water there is, like, 'there's always been enough water for the cows,' but it's hard to rely on that."

Along this stretch of road, a shopping mall, the Cooperstown Dreams Park, the Cooperstown Fun Park, and several motels, visitor cabins, eateries and other businesses have sprung up in the last 20 years.

The Route 28 corridor is in the Susquehanna River valley, and near the river, the aquifer is full of water, he said.

"What we found is that to the east of Route 28, near the Susquehanna, the aquifer is very good, but conditions change as you move west," Miller said.

In recent years, on the western side of the busy road, some homeowners have reported their wells run dry in August, Miller said.

While water resources are better to the east, the risk of polluting rises as development approaches the river, he said.

The study discusses geology, soils, wetlands, well yields, aquifer recharge and potential, and surface waters, and provides a database of wells and contaminants, drawn from public records.

In an e-mail to The Daily Star, Hartwick Town Supervisor Pat Ryan said, "The report provides a lot of valuable data that will be helpful as we complete our comprehensive planning process."

"I feel strongly that before we reach the conclusion that a community water supply should be created along the Route 28 corridor, we must evaluate the use of other, potentially less expensive, land-use planning options that can help steer appropriate levels of development to the appropriate locations."