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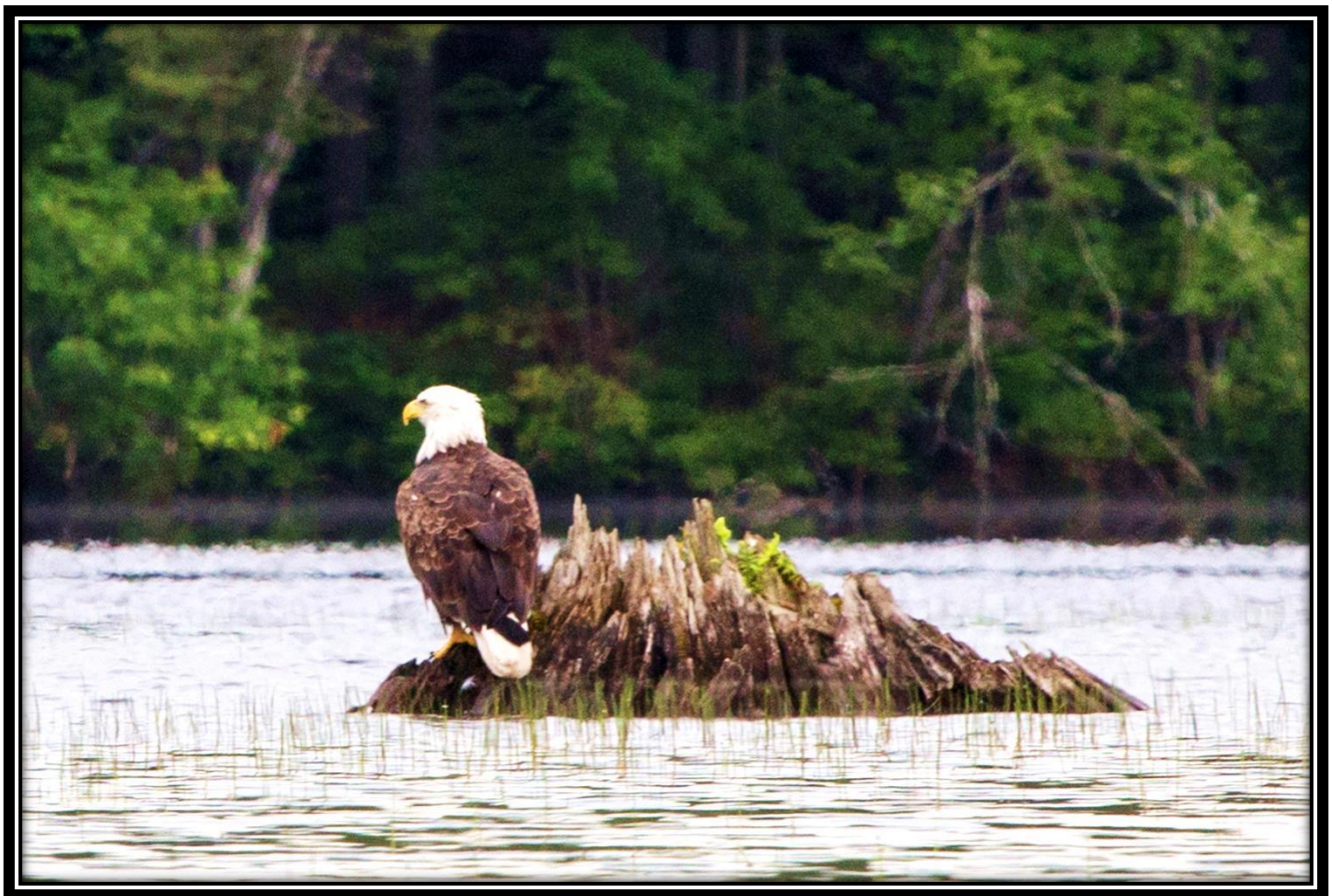


Photo by Jim Whalen

A bald friend rests along the Oxford shore

Report the Annual Meeting 2015

Co- Presidents Marcia Matuska and Kathy Cain opened our Annual Meeting on August 1 to an audience of over 80 people, one of the largest turnouts we have had. This was a very informative meeting, as well as an opportunity for some of the lake residents and visitors to meet one another. Our educational program included a talk from Alexa Ortiz of the Maine Audubon Society, who gave a talk on the biology and habits of loons. Board member Dan Pontbriand and his brother Ed, who are both retired U.S. Park Rangers, discussed the various state and federal laws that affect lakes and ponds. Trivia question here: What defines a Maine “lake” from a “pond”? Answer is on the last page, but no skipping ahead. Heather True from the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District gave an update on our 319 Grant that has funded multiple soil erosion prevention projects around the watershed.

TLEA member Warren Michaelsen addressed the meeting and gave a very informative discussion on fireworks and their potential effect on lakes. This will be summarized later in this newsletter.

Our business segment of the meeting then proceeded. Treasurer Jade Doyle gave the financial report outlining that we are holding to budget and are in a strong financial position, mostly through the fund raising efforts of the board and a successful membership drive at the end of 2014. Jade gave specific mention to director Stan Tetenman, who has steadily solicited funds from variously governmental and non governmental agencies. New expenses are expected for our Milfoil Mitigation program, as the equipment is aging and will have to be upgraded soon.

We then had Committee Reports from our various projects describing the work the association is doing to protect the lake. These are updated and summarized in this newsletter.

The following Board members were then nominated and elected to new terms: Kathy Cain, Karen Brown, Rosemary Nicklaus, Tom Ray, Jade Doyle, Pete Laverdiere, Dan Porter and Sharon Rice. Board members Tony Caggiano, Linda Gonya and Joy Lowe stepped down this year, we thank them for their service.

Committee Reports for 2015:

TLEA Receives 2015 Stewardship Award

Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District administers the Federal 319 Grants that were created through the Clean Water Act to assist local environmental groups and municipalities reduce soil erosion into watersheds. This year they have awarded their prestigious Stewardship Group award to the Thompson Lake Environmental Association. The District noted in their announcement of this award that “ We truly appreciate your dedication and proactive efforts in protecting and improving Thompson Lake. For over 40 years TLEA has been actively involved in lake protection efforts. Over this time, these efforts have included reducing sediment loading to the lake through education and outreach efforts, conducting watershed surveys, actively seeking out and supporting grant projects that address erosion sites, and yearly fundraising and oversight of your own Youth Conservation Corps program.”

This is an impressive acknowledgement of the work that TLEA has done over the years. Special recognition for this award should go to the 319 Grant Committee members : Marcia Matuska (Chair), Kathy Cain, Pete Laverdiere, Ron Armantrout and K C Putnam. Thanks for your dedication to the lake !



Youth Conservation Corp Completes Another Productive Season

Our YCC team completed 7 projects for erosion control in the Poland and Casco areas which were at least partially funded by our 319 Grant. These included razor bar construction, placement of rip rap, redirecting a pathway and stabilizing the inlet and outlet to the culvert at Highland Shores. The crew also performed various jobs in Oxford and Otisfield areas, stabilizing the shoreline, spreading mulch and planting.

Our YCC is one of our most important tools in preserving the water quality of the lake. We have been fortunate to receive funding from the membership and the EPA 319 Grant. Consider contacting the YCC if you have an area of soil erosion or run off on your property that you would like to reduce.

Milfoil Mitigation

Director Scott Bernardy reports that his crew wrapped up its season by the end of September. The three man crew spent close to 300 hours either removing milfoil, placing tarps on milfoil or conducting underwater surveys of the high risk shorelines of Thompson Lake.

Scott notes that the previously highly infested areas of Edwards Cove, Otisfield Cove, Hancock Cove show success. After removing several hundred pounds of milfoil these areas have never looked as good since they started this project over 6 years ago. Serenity Cove is still milfoil free for three years running.

There was some expansion of milfoil infestation in the Pismo beach and its nearby areas compared to last year. The Pine Point area will always be the epicenter of milfoil on Thompson Lake with over 10 acres of infestation. Next year the crew plans on using a new type of burlap tarps in this area that will not float up into boat props, so they can suppress milfoil around docks.

If your boat gets caught in milfoil the proper technique is to raise the propeller as high as possible to avoid making your motor a “milfoil juicer” and spreading plant fragments. Better yet, try not to boat into areas that are known to be infested with mlfoil!

The Milfoil Mitigation crew is proud to say that the areas of milfoil removal in the first several years of this project have now gone back to the native plants ecology. These native plants will help support the fisheries and keep the lake clear by using up the phosphates that get into the lake.

Thompson Lake Water Quality Report 2014

Scott Williams, our contracted lake biologist, samples the lakes water annually from May to September. He collects the following data: Secchi disc readings, total phosphorous, chlorophyll-a (a direct measurement of algae growth), dissolved oxygen, conductivity, color and gloeotrichia levels (an algae that is becoming more prevalent in Maine lakes). This is his summary of the “state of the lake”:

Overall, the water in Thompson Lake was less clear than the historical average for the lake in 2014. Phosphorus levels averaged slightly lower than average, and the concentration of algae in the lake was very close to the historical average. Late summer oxygen levels in the deepest area of the lake have been relatively low during the past few years, possibly due to shorter duration of the period of ice cover, warmer water temperatures, and a resulting lengthening of the period of thermal stratification. The September, 2014 oxygen concentration at the deepest area of the monitoring station was not as low as it was at the same time of year in 2013, but any factors that cause the temperature of the lake water to increase, or the period of thermal stratification to be longer, will very likely have a negative effect on late season dissolved oxygen levels in the lake. Thompson Lake very likely remains stratified well into October, and possibly November, depending on annual weather patterns.

Thompson Lake continues to exhibit water quality that is significantly above the average for Maine lakes. The number, and complexity of threats to Maine lakes will very likely continue to grow as climate change exacerbates the effects of everything

from watershed development to the breadth of invasive species infestations. TLEA has played a critically important role in protecting the lake for more than four decades. Many of the historical sources of financial and technical support available to lakes are imperiled, and in some cases, no longer exist, as tight budgets continue to force difficult decisions concerning the monitoring and protection of natural resources. The protection of our lakes is ultimately a local issue, and TLEA is well positioned to be the leader in the Thompson Lake watershed community.

Editor's note: Director Ron Armantrout has been doing yeo man's duty in monitoring the lake's water quality by collecting bimonthly Secchi disc readings: On 8/27/25 the reading was 11 meters or close to 30 feet.

Scott's full report is available at the TLEA website.

Fireworks on Thompson Lake

The following are segments of the report Warren Michaelsen presented at the Annual Meeting-

What you need to know about consumer fireworks and lake environments:

Fireworks became legal in Maine in 2012. The discharge of fireworks in and around our lakes and waterways pose significant risks to the quality of water, wildlife and nesting habitats, protected birds (Bald Eagles, Purple Martins), animals (Bats) and serenity.

Not all fireworks burn and the fallout from "duds", unburned compounds and packaging debris land in the lake.

Fireworks contain toxic and poisonous elements. By-products from the propellant or launch compounds contain highly water-soluble perchlorates. Perchlorates are known to interfere with thyroid functions in humans and amphibians, affecting metabolism and growth. Perchlorate contamination of drinking water supplies is a major national concern.

What you can do to help protect our precious resource:

Remove any and all debris from fireworks found on and around the lake as quickly as possible.

Educate your neighbors about the hazards, short and long term risks associated with the discharge of fireworks on and around the lake.

If you rent or lease your property, and you do not want tenants to discharge fireworks, make sure you stipulate that clearly in your agreement.

If you are concerned about the potential effect of fireworks on the water quality of the lake and wildlife habitat or have questions regarding this issue contact Warren at: wmichaelsen@environmentalsolutions.us.com

Interview with Peter Lowell



Photo by David White

Peter Lowell is considered to be the state's foremost advocate for environmental causes affecting Maine lakes. He has been the Executive Director of the Lakes Environmental Association in Bridgton since 1972. He has worked tirelessly to promote programs that preserve the water quality of our lakes. In 2014 Peter received the Natural Resources Council of Maine Conservation Leadership Award. We recently had this discussion regarding his career and the future of Maine lakes:

Observer: What does the Lake Environmental Association do?

PL: We have 2 full time educators and 1,000 students every year. We test 40 lakes. We're pioneering new lake testing protocols and trying to work with other lake associations to upgrade their lake testing programs... making sure they are doing phosphorus and oxygen profiles frequently.

One of our mantras is to build capacity within the lake associations so that they don't have to hire consultants, which can be prohibitively expensive.

We lobbied for the passage of the state's Milfoil Bill and organized the first Milfoil Summit in 2000. We developed the Courtesy Boat Inspector program and try to be advocates for a strong state program and local capacity for land use control and surveys.

Observer: What do you see as the largest environmental threats to our lakes in Maine?

PL: There are 2 levels here: You have to look at the invasive plants obviously and the challenge here is that there are still not enough resources on the ground for actual plant control work. We've shown with the Songo River and Brandy Pond that given enough time and resources, and with a good team you can beat it, but it requires a lot of resources. Belgrade is finding this out, you guys (TLEA) have found this out.

In terms of traditional lake water quality, I don't think we fully understand where our lakes are on the trajectory of deterioration. I mean, they are all deteriorating and with the Maine Lakes Science Center we've been trying to solve the puzzle as to what information you need to target where our lakes are in terms of their stage of

decline. We are trying to make that happen by connecting people, empowering people and doing our own research. Ultimately, if we can get a better handle on where are lakes are then we need to look at changing policy and standards to reflect the needs.

Observer: Thanks Peter, for your time and efforts in protecting Maine lakes. How do you enjoy our lakes?

PL: I do a lot of water skiing and fishing and I have recently built a special pirate ship for my grandchildren. I have done about every water sport known to mankind.



Meet Your Directors

This editions profile is of Paul Cain. Paul is married to Kathy, TLEA's co-president (according to him that makes him First Dude) and is very active as a director. He took over the position of editor of the Observer in August of 2014.

He and Kathy purchased a camp near Lunt Point in 1991, replaced it with a house in 2010 and now live here full time.

Paul was born and raised in Vermont and did his undergraduate and post graduate studies at the University of Vermont. His surgical training was completed in

Pittsburgh, PA and he was fortunate to find work back in New England. He works as an orthopedic surgeon and has practiced in the Lewiston-Auburn area since 1987. Paul and Kathy have three grown children who are frequent visitors to the lake.

His hobbies include maple sugaring, fly fishing, cycling, reading and occasionally hacking it up at golf.

Paul enjoys the lake for its spectacular scenery, relative solitude, water quality and excellent fishing. They have had great family times on the lake with boating, water sports and reunions.

Briefly Noted

Loon Count : Peggy Dorf reports that our loon counters this past July spotted 13 adults and 5 chicks. This is one of the highest counts she can remember. Thanks to all the volunteers who took part in this Maine Audubon sponsored activity.

Membership Count: Rosemary Nicklaus reports that are 442 current members of TLEA. This count is roughly ½ of the lake side residents. We can do better. Join now! Talk to your neighbors!

Thompson Lake Selected for Study: The lake will be part of a pilot study of 24 Maine lakes and their volunteers, funded through the Senator George J Mitchell Center at the University of Maine. The study will ultimately contribute to the development of a new lake vulnerability index for the State.

Maine Passes Law to Restrict the Use of Lakeside Fertilizer: This law prohibits the application of fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and soil amendments within 25 feet of fresh surface waters.

HELP! If you have not made your TLEA membership donations yet for 2015 please consider sending your check in. Many accounts are delinquent. We can protect the waters of Thompson only with your consistent annual support.

TLEA Office hours: Office hours for TLEA is now by appointment only. If you would like to receive information or literature about the lake; have a question or wish to purchase some merchandise, please call our office telephone, 539- 4535 or Kathy Cain at 539-9122.

Clynk Program: Support TLEA by enjoying your favorite beverage and returning the empties to participating Hannaford stores. You can pick up the green “Clynck” bags at the TLEA office (May- November) or at 37 Black Island Rd (year round). The TLEA label on the bag needs to be scanned at the store when the bottles are returned.

Oh yeah... The trivia answer: If a body of water in Maine is less than 10 acres it is a pond. If the body is 10- 80 acres it is a “great pond” and if it is over 80 acres it is a lake.

If you have any comments or input for the Observer please let me know at paulcain@myfairpoint.net.



Photo by Dan Porter

Visit our website at:
www.thompsonlake.org

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