



Summer 2017

Issue No. 182



Photo by Robin Sayre

Look, love, what envious streaks do lace the severing clouds in yonder east?

DON'T FORGET: TLEA Annual Meeting, August 5

Annual Meeting

Our Thompson Lake Environmental Association Annual Meeting will be held from 9:00- 11:00 on Saturday, August 5, at the Oxford Recreational Center at the intersection of Rt. 121 and King Street, Oxford. This is your chance to hear about the environmental issues affecting the lake and what TLEA is doing about them. It is also a chance to have your voice heard if you have a question or concern about the lake. We will have elections for board members, a 50/50 raffle and plenty of baked goods and refreshments. Our key note speaker will be Tony Gray, Maine State Game Warden and local resident.

Make sure you mark this on your calendar. The following names have been placed in nomination for re-election to the TLEA board: Sarah Rice (new member), Karen Brown, Jade Doyle, Rosemary Nicklaus, Kathy Cain, Pete Laverdiere, and Sharon Rice. Peter Siebert will also be up for election as a new board member. Elections for the following positions will also be held: **Co-Presidents-** Kathy Cain and Marcia Matuska, **Treasurer-** Jade Doyle, **Secretary-** Karen Brown.

Tony will talk on issues currently affecting Maine lakes. This will include invasive species, endangered species, water safety and regulations. A general discussion will follow. This meeting is always informative and a great way to meet some of your fellow lake residents. We look forward to seeing you there.

TLEA's Capital Campaign for Mitigation of Invasive Aquatic Species

TLEA has started an ambitious and potentially historic program to remove milfoil from the Pine Point area of the lake and prevent its spread to other parts of the Thompson Lake. This is a 4 year program of laying down benthic barriers (tarps) throughout Pine point, hand pulling or suctioning plants as needed, and surveying problem areas of the lake to develop a long term plan to eliminate the threat of invasive species in the lake. Alex Bernardy, the crew chief of this project gives the following progress report:

The control of milfoil in the Pine Point has been an ongoing project for the past ten years. Pine Point was once a sandy bottomed cove with little plant growth, it now consists of roughly ten acres of milfoil. Our current milfoil remediation plan in this

area consists of suction harvesting, benthic barriers, and the installment and ongoing management of a boat specific channel.

This summer we have installed 1.5 acres of benthic barriers in the Pine Point area that will be rotated to an adjacent location within the cove once each season. We plan that within the next 4-5 years each acre of the cove will have covered with a benthic barrier system, along with suction harvesting around dock sites. The goal of the Pine Point project is to reduce and theoretically eliminate the fragmentation and spreading of milfoil throughout the lake.

At the start of this season a small cove located across from Pismo Beach had a significant amount of milfoil recurrence. However, with a consecutive 5 hours of diving this grow back was reduced greatly and we are pleased with the rate in which it is decreasing.

Of the five coves that are infested with milfoil we have had the highest elimination percentage in the Otisfield and Edwards Coves. At this point we are only able to find small growths of milfoil in these sites. Hancock Cove has also decreased significantly in milfoil retention. This project site is considerably larger than Otisfield or Edwards cove and therefore we have not been able to see as high of a reduction in milfoil growth. However, the milfoil growth in Hancock Cove is decreasing at a steady rate. The success in these coves will allow the TLEA milfoil operation to focus efforts on the most heavily infested cove of Pine Point.

This project is crucial to control the threat of invasive plants in Thompson Lake for the future. If we do not reduce the infestation in the Pine Point area it will inevitably spread to other parts of the lake. TLEA has made great gains in reducing this threat but we need to finish the job. Won't you help us? This project is labor intensive and the equipment is not cheap. Our fund raising campaign started this spring with a letter to TLEA members and lakeside residents. The response has been outstanding, but we still have a ways to go. If you have not donated to this campaign, please consider doing so. If you have, talk it up with your neighbors and consider giving more. If you have any questions about the project or are looking to make a contribution, contact Kathy Cain at kathryncain@myfairpoint.net. Or call 207 539-9122.

Water Quality on Thompson

The rainy spring and early summer has taken its toll on water clarity on Thompson this year. There even was a confirmed tornado in Otisfield. The subsequent deluges

caused an unusually large run off. TLEA director Ron Armontrout reports that our Secchi disc readings (this is the depth in the water at which the disc can be seen) are considerably lower this season compared to last, which was considered a drought. The reading in July was 8.71 meters compared to last year's figures of about 10 meters. The clarity of the water is a good measure of water quality, however some variation is expected. Our biologist Scott Williams says these recent high readings are secondary to the heavy snow pack from last winter, the recent rain and the fact that there was organic matter left in the watershed from last year's dry spell. This is a prime example of "non-point source pollution". We expect the clarity to improve later this year. Look for the TLEA annual water quality report for a more definitive assessment of the water quality of the lake.

Youth Conservation Corp

The most effective way to reduce non- point source pollution of the lake is to reduce soil erosion at the lakeside. This is the most important factor in reducing phosphorus run off and the subsequent growth of algae. High algae counts and even algae blooms significantly detract from the recreational use of the lake and will lead to low oxygen levels which adversely affects the fisheries and ecology of the lake. TLEA director Steve Arnold reports that the Youth Conservation Corp is hard at work on a full slate of erosion control projects around the lake. This may be an unstable shore line, a bank with runoff or a driveway with inadequate drainage that allows water to flow into the lake. The YCC crew provides the labor to construct barriers, do plantings, create culverts and drains or build rip rap to stabilize your bank. This is just another example as to how TLEA is working for the membership and protecting the lake. If you have a question regarding an erosion problem on your property or about what the YCC does contact Steve at:sa03842@yahoo.com.

Courtesy Boat Inspections

(Submitted by TLEA Co-President Marcia Matuska)

TLEA has 3 returning courtesy boat inspectors this year and one newbie from Oxford Hills High School. We love hiring high school students and introducing them to the importance of protecting the lake from invasive plants and fish.

The weather has not cooperated for boaters this spring and summer. However, our 4 courtesy boat inspectors have inspected 324 boats entering the lake and 161 boats leaving the lake. Only one plant has been removed from a boat leaving the Marina. It has been sent to be identified and that identification is pending. The inspectors are only there Friday through Sunday. Please inspect your own boats every time you enter and leave the lake.

TLEA Chips in on Greeley Brook Clean Up

Members of TLEA including Marcia Matuska, Kathy Cain, Jean Hankins, John Powers, Pete Laverdiere, Ethel and Craig Turner; as well as Tom Ray and members of his clan, assisted the Otisfield Historical Society in cleaning up Greeley brook on Saturday, June 3rd. Greeley brook is the feeder stream for Thompson lake at the Otisfield cove Unfortunately, the brook has been used as a dumping ground over the years resulting in collection of assorted debris; including tires, household appliances, TV's, cans of oil based paint, deer carcasses and even an inflatable pool. This debris was not only an eyesore, it also ruined the fishery (brook trout used to be stocked here) and was potential for contamination of the lake with toxic material. As noted in the Fall 2016 Observer, Todd Eachus of Otisfield has been hard at work cleaning up this debris for some time. This year the Otisfield Historical Society expanded this effort and recruited the residents of the surrounding area, as well as TLEA, for a clean up day. It was a day of working in the muck pulling out various and sundry objects but at the end of the day there was a large delivery sent to the transfer station. There were some good laughs and some bonding along the way. The brook is significantly cleaner now and we hope the trout will return. Thanks to these TLEA members and the Otisfield Historical Society for their efforts to improve our environment.

Meet Your Directors

Although she didn't realize it at the time, a trip to Maine in the late '70s had a lasting effect on new TLEA director Robin Sayre. Born and raised in New Jersey, Robin first came to Maine with the Outward Bound's Hurricane Island program as part of a Dartmouth College Psychology course. This road trip included the requisite stop at L.L.Bean. Robin was immediately taken with the scenery and lifestyle of Maine. Little did she know that twenty years later, after 5 years as a NYC movie publicist and 15 years in AT&T's Boston Public Relations Department, she would move to Maine full time and work at good ol' LL Bean.

“My husband, Terry Romano, had bought property in Wayaka (Edwards Cove) in the mid-70s and built a camp. I started coming to the lake in the mid-80s and helped winterize and finish off the inside. We lived in the Back Bay of Boston for 15 years, coming to camp nearly every weekend. Finally, in 1998 I took an incentive retirement package from AT&T that required me to be off the payroll on June 30th. I came to camp for Fourth of July weekend and never went back! I often say we traded the sounds of car alarms and sirens for loons and peepers.”

After enjoying the restorative tranquility of Thompson Lake for that first summer and volunteering at the Casco Public Library, Robin took a seasonal job in

L.L.Bean's Order Fulfillment Center. After two Peak seasons, she moved to Bean's corporate headquarters, where she is currently a merchandiser.

Married to Terry for 25 years, Robin has 4 stepchildren, 8 grandchildren and a goofy golden-doodle named Cooper who is the unofficial mayor of Wayaka.

“As someone who grew up in suburban New York and lived in Back Bay for 15 years, I never imagined I'd be fortunate enough to live on a lake in Maine. We've been TLEA members for as long as I can remember, wanting to do what we can to preserve this remarkable resource for future generations.”



Robin Sayre

Briefly Noted

Annual Loon Count: will be held Saturday, July 15, 7:00-8:00 AM. We need volunteers. If you can help, please contact Peggy Dorf at

Dining to Donate: Come out to dinner and raise funds for TLEA by coming to Applebee's in Oxford on August 22. To join us, download an Applebee's coupon from the TLEA web site and print it out. Then gather some friends (or come alone)

and dine at Applebee's from 4:00 to 9:00 PM. 15% of your food tab will be donated to TLEA. Have some fun with TLEA members and help a good cause. See you there!

Clynk Program: Don't forget to support TLEA by donating your used bottles to our Clynk program. The Clynk bags can be picked up at the TLEA office or at 37 Black Island Rd. For more info call the TLEA office at 539-4535

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Milfoil Busters Sullivan Tidd and Nick Ryan at work. Photo by Alex Bernardy.

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www.thompsonlake.org

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