

FRIENDS OF LAKE WINNECOOK 2009 WINTER NEWSLETTER

MISSION STATEMENT: TO PRESERVE, ENHANCE AND PROTECT THE
BEAUTY OF LAKE WINNECOOK AND ITS ADJACENT AREAS.

Dates to Remember

March 20	Ice Out Contest Deadline (1st Day of Spring)
June 20	Maine Lakes Conference, St Joseph's College, Standish
June 28	Boating Get Together
July	Lakes Appreciation Month
July 11	Maine Annual Volunteer Lake Monitoring Conference
August 1	FOLW Annual Meeting - 9:00 AM at American Legion Hall

FRIENDS OF LAKE WINNECOOK
P.O. BOX 73
UNITY, ME 04988



PLEASE NOTE: The date on your address label is when you last paid your dues.

Unity Students Take Closer Look at Pond Sediments

Through the years, significant data have been collected about the water quality and fisheries of Unity Pond (aka Lake Winnecook). However, in our effort to better understand the health of this locally important water body, we need better information about the sediments in the lake. This winter, Unity College assistant professor Dr. Kevin Spigel is working with his students to help build a sediment-based record of environmental change and society's impacts on the watershed. The data collected through this project will help form the groundwork for future studies.

Kevin and his students in an Environmental Citizen class are analyzing and interpreting a set of lake sediment cores they recovered from Unity Pond in January. Through the project, we will learn about the productivity and sediment deposition patterns of the pond, wildfire history as revealed by charcoal, and sediment chemical properties, such as nitrate. The project is being done in partnership with the Friends of Unity Wetlands.

Kevin will share some of the early findings of this new initiative at the Friends of Lake Winnecook Annual Meeting on August 1. Early data will also be presented at the Unity College Spring Student Conference in April, and through the summer at the Friends of Unity Wetlands Education Center on Main Street in Unity.

Kevin joined the GeoSciences faculty at Unity College in 2008. He earned a PhD in physical geology from the University of Wisconsin. He and his wife, Lindsay, recently purchased a home in Unity.



Summary of 2008 CBI Program

The introduction of non-indigenous invasive aquatic plant and animal species to the United States has been escalating with widespread destructive consequences. The impacts of the spread of invasive aquatic plants are well known: habitat disruption, loss of native plant and animal communities, reduced property values, impaired fishing and degraded recreational experiences, and enormous and ongoing control costs. Invasive plants and animals are moved about in complex and often unseen ways. The speed at which a new introduction can explode into an ecologically and economically disastrous infestation is well documented. Once an invader is well established, eradication is extremely difficult and costly, if not impossible.

Since the summer of 2005 the FOLW has been active in educating the local community by providing workshop opportunities and CBI (Courtesy Boat Inspection[s]) monitoring at the Kanokolus Boat Launch, in Unity. The lake association has been diligent in seeking funds, through grant writing efforts, and participating in Maine's VLMP (Volunteer Lakes Monitoring Program) in order to prevent an infestation of evasive plants species in Unity Pond. In 2008 the FOLW and the Town of Unity partnered to provide for a paid CBI position and hired an interested and qualified UC (Unity College) student to conduct boat inspections. The highlights of a successful 2008 CBI program at Unity Pond are listed below:

FOLW and the Town of Unity formed a partnership to create a paid position at the Kanokolus Beach area in order to maintain and monitor the public access site and to conduct Courtesy Boat Inspections.

FOLW partnered with UC to provide a CBI workshop for paid and volunteer inspectors.

FOLW and local volunteers contributed a total of 196 hours of services in 2008.

403 boat inspections were conducted at the boat launch between late May and early September 2008.

- Approximately 65 plant fragments were removed, from boats prior to entering Unity Pond, as a result of boat inspections.

2008 Maine Loon Count Finds Rebounding Adult Population

(Maine Audubon Press Release)

After two consecutive years of declining numbers, findings from the 2008 Maine Audubon Loon Count show that the state's adult loon population is rebounding.

Over a thousand citizen-scientist volunteers—a record turnout—helped conduct the 25th annual Maine Audubon Loon Count in July. Surveying 332 lakes and ponds across Maine one morning, the group recorded a total of 2,083 adult loons and 184 chicks.

Of the statewide total, 1,728 adults and 164 chicks were seen on 280 lakes in the southern half of Maine. Using a sample of results from this region, Maine Audubon has estimated the adult common loon population in southern Maine to be 2,784—up from 2,432 adults in 2007 and 2,595 in 2006.

“We were worried that there would be a drop in the adult population for an unprecedented third year in a row,” said Susan Gallo, Maine Audubon wildlife biologist and director of the Maine Loon Project.

“The bounce back is a relief and puts the population back on a healthy track.”

The estimate of southern Maine's chick population for 2008 was 265, a drop from 2007's nearly record high of 422. Swings in the chick population are typical from year to year, and the population has remained stable over time.

While weather conditions stayed mostly favorable for loons leading up to 2008's count day, consistent rains in the weeks after may have had a negative impact on survival rates. With enough heavy rain, lake levels can rise enough to flood nests on the shore.

2008 Loon Count (Continued)

As the biggest citizen-science wildlife-monitoring project in New England, Maine Audubon's loon count is the centerpiece of the Maine Loon Project. Through the project, Maine Audubon actively engages people in conservation, educates the public about loon biology, and collects the scientific data needed to advocate for legislation that benefits loons.

Volunteers are needed for the 2009 count, which is scheduled for July 18. "The record number of volunteers participating last summer was a pleasant surprise," said Gallo. "People's enthusiasm about the loon count—no matter how old they are—is always amazing." Members of one count team on Echo Lake in Fayette ranged in age from 9 months to 103 years.

For more information, contact Maine Loon Project Director Susan Gallo at (207) 781-2330, ext. 216, or sgallo@maineaudubon.org.

How much are Lakes worth?

The answer probably would vary with each person asked. Seemingly, the value might be highest for those who live on a lake or for someone who swims, boats or fishes on a Maine lake. We all benefit from clean Maine lakes even if we don't live on one or use them.

Maine's lakes are the cleanest and least crowded in the eastern United States and forty million people live within a day's drive of them. Each year, we get more than \$160 million tourist dollars from folks coming to Maine to visit our lakes and this supports over 8,000 jobs. Mainers also spend money when we enjoy our lakes. Besides those who own a camp or live on a lake, well over 200,000 Maine adult residents use our lakes annually. About 78% swim, 64% recreate near the shore, 49% fish from a boat and 40% use powerboats and canoes. These users spend more than \$153 million annually on their recreation, much of it in the communities nearest those lakes. This use supports as many as 3,000 jobs and generates more than \$30 million in additional income for Maine residents. All together, use of Maine lakes generates \$2.8 billion in annual expenditures and supports over 50,000 Maine jobs.

The economic importance of Maine lakes exceeds tourist dollars. Clean lakes increase lakeshore property values, contribute to the economic well being of entire communities, and offer beauty and recreation.

The quality of the lake water makes a big difference. Surveys show that water clarity, quality of swimming, and scenic beauty are important to most people when they choose which lake to visit or where to buy property. A noticeable improvement in water quality could increase statewide use by up to 13% (1.6 million user days) each year, three quarters of this being Maine residents. It is also projected the state would gain about \$25 million in additional spending from out-of-state tourists. Conversely, a visible decrease in water quality would mean substantial losses.

Here are a few simple steps we can all take to protect clean water (lakes, streams, estuaries) everywhere.

- § Stabilize bare soil in order to prevent soil erosion by planting grass or shrubs, or better yet plant a buffer. Buffers are wide ribbons of trees, shrubs and ground-cover. They provide natural places for the stormwater runoff to collect and soak in.
- § Don't use fertilizer containing phosphorus unless you are starting a new lawn, reseeding or a soil test indicates you need it. Most Maine soils have enough phosphorus, so you save time and money by not using it.
- § Prevent bacteria from reaching our waters. If you have a septic system, pump the tank as necessary, usually every 3 to 5 years. Be sure to pick up pet waste and dispose in the trash.

This column was submitted by Barb Welch and Roy Bouchard, Biologists, with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Bureau of Land and Water Quality. In Our Back Yard is a weekly



Lake Winnecook's Beginning and End of Season Get-together

Do you want to know your neighbors on the lake?

Let's start a Winnecook tradition to meet in the center of the lake from 2:00-4:00pm the Sunday before the 4th of July and the Sunday of Labor Day weekend.

Listen for the boat horn, boat out, and tie up to the pontoon boats. Bring a snack to share.

Mingle and get to know your neighbors. Adults and kids can meet and establish new friendships that will last for many summers to come.

- Questions? Call Kim Cornish (207) 725-1141

Friends of Lake Winnecook

P. O. Box 73, Unity, ME 04988
www.lakewinnecook.com



Membership Form

Please complete the membership form and mail it with your check to the above address.

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Check Appropriate Boxes:

New Membership       Membership renewal       New/Changed Address

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you **do not** permit FOLW to share information with other lake organizations

Permanent/Mailing Address

Seasonal/Camp Address

|                              |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Street: _____                | Street: _____                |
| City: _____                  | City: _____                  |
| State: _____ Zip Code: _____ | State: _____ Zip Code: _____ |
| Phone #: _____               | Phone #: _____               |
| e-mail: _____                | e-mail: _____                |

**Donations are accepted and can be designated to support the following activities/efforts:**

General Donation       Boating Safety/Buoys       Wildlife/Fisheries  
 Education/Research       Watershed Restoration/Water Quality

**Membership Dues:**

Number of members joining \_\_\_ x \$10.00 per member = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(under 18 years no membership fee.)

Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL ENCLOSED** \$ \_\_\_\_\_