

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I write this, the leaves have turned and are falling. The boats and docks are stored, and preparations for winter are under way. By the time you read this, the lakes will be iced over, and the snow will have fallen. We will be looking forward to spring and beginning the cycle of the lakes once again. The mission of the BLA is to preserve and protect the health and beauty of Long and Great Pond through preservation, education, and action. A question that I posed to our board, and I pose to you, is what does that mean, specifically, to you?



We speak a lot about invasive plants and algae, but what other aspects of the lakes are important? Is it the call of the loon, the night sky, the quiet fog of morning as the clouds rise from the water? Maybe it could also be the sense of community shared with your neighbors and friends? I suggest that these factors are all important and what easily make our place so special.

A big part of the Belgrade Lakes Association is raising funds and awareness to protect this place. As board members we are stewards of the investments that you make, and we seek to be prudent with those assets. For 2024 – we spent \$65,806 on the CBI (courtesy boat inspectors), \$20,000 on the YCC (Youth Conservation Corp), Invasives - \$25,000, and we pay \$20,000 towards the 7LA Erosion Control Manager's position. We have continued to increase the amount that we allocate to these important endeavors each year as the season stretches out longer.

The raffle not only raises money – but we use it as a means of education and awareness. This year we raised \$44,572. Great thanks to board members Andy Cook and George Atkinson as well as all the volunteers.

Loon chicks were monitored by two Colby interns again this summer under the stewardship of Dick Greenan and Lee Attix.

Membership updates – last year we added the youth membership – it was a hit. This year we added two additional community gatherings. I believe they were a success. By creating and encouraging a sense of community – we expand our impact. If you have ideas on events we should consider – please reach out to me or our membership committee.

This past summer we continued to build awareness of the water damaging septic issues. We had a pump truck from Stanley's in the 4th of July parade and have been pushing the issue on social media. Do you know where your septic pump out is? When was the last time you pumped? Pre-1974 systems probably need to be replaced, and systems installed before 1996 definitely need to be examined. Continuing to educate the public will be a priority for the BLA in the coming years.

Thank you for all your support, and let's continue to work together to keep our lakes safe and our community special.

Best regards,

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BLA President

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THE EMPTY NEST

By Dick Greenan, Chairman, BLA Loon Preservation Project

As this article is penned, our docks, boats, and camps have been put to sleep for the long, very long, inexcusably long winter! There are still a few loons around enjoying the solitude and great fishing without the competition, but the exodus south is about complete. A few of our loons leave as early as late August, but departures stretch to mid and late November for the stragglers. Adults with chicks, unsurprisingly, tend to stay later, but do not fly off together which is interesting. The males, females, and juveniles all leave at different times and for different destinations, but all head to the open ocean down near Biddeford Pool and parts a little further south.



Long Pond loon ready to dine



Long Pond adult seen in winter plumage

It has not been a great year for loon productivity or potential future residents. Long Pond had only one chick this summer who, as far as we can ascertain, made it to the Great Fly-Off. Great Pond started with seven chicks and were down to just four at season's end. Our lack of productivity has been due, in most part, to adult loon intruders that do not allow the habitual nesting pairs to work their magic. In several known instances, human interference in the form of inquisitive paddle boarders, kayaks, swimmers, etc., also haven't helped the situation.

To make matters worse, we collected eleven abandoned eggs in addition to a few that had been predated

by local raccoons, mink, and maybe an otter or two. Their loss could have accounted for at least another eleven chicks. To put things into perspective, we collected five abandoned eggs last year and seven in 2022. This is getting to be more common throughout the northeast and is being extensively studied to find some explanation. Let it be sooner than later! Without consistent chick productivity, the future for a healthy loon population might very well be in jeopardy. But, have we seen this before? Good question. The BLA is in its sixth year of our Loon Project Study, and we will continue to be proactive; but the work is only made possible with your support.

Our esteemed loon mentor, Lee Attix, will be assessing and compiling all of this summer's data and sharing our results with those of the rest of New England's wildlife biologists in order to figure out some of what is going on and to provide any new directions for our studies next summer and after. We'll be posting the findings later on this winter, so stay tuned. Thank you for your continued support!



An abandoned egg is marked and observed, prior to its removal.

CHINESE MYSTERY SNAILS

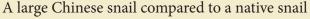
By Richard LaBelle, BLA Vice President

Have you ever heard of Chinese Mystery Snails (CMS)? Did you know they are in our lakes right here in Central Maine? According to the local experts I've spoken with (primarily, Sharon Mann, the 7 Lakes Invasives Director), I guess I have failed to stay current with all the snail news in the Belgrades...for well over a decade. That is, until this past summer when hundreds, if not thousands, of the golf ball-sized shelled gastropods showed up on the east shore of Jamaica Point on Great Pond. There isn't a record of the first time these snails were spotted in Great Pond, but there is no doubt they are here now, and likely to be forever.

Chinese Mystery Snails (Cipangopaludina chinensis, also known as black snails or trapdoor snails) are freshwater snails, native to southeast Asia; the locals find them to be delicious and nutritious. The snails are high in protein and low in fat. They are believed to have been introduced to the Americas in the late 1800s as they were brought to Asian markets in California for human consumption. The Penobscot Nation's website shares that it is generally accepted that the snails were intentionally introduced to American freshwater bodies to establish a local supply of the snails for human consumption. In the early 20th century, these slimy invasive creatures found themselves in New England, and they were first identified in Maine in 1965.

Invasive species spread on their own, but all too often, they are aided in a great way by humans. In the case of these snails, not only are they a food source, but they are also creatures commonly found in household aquariums. The unfortunate result of many aquarium setups is that, when people are tired of them, the contents are often emptied and are, thereby, introduced into the local ecology. This is the way that many of the invasive species in our water bodies were initially introduced.







Delicious and nutritious

As previously mentioned, Chinese Mystery Snails are sizeable, oftentimes as large as a golf ball. This is substantially larger than native snails. They commonly enjoy similar water conditions—shallow coves and slower-moving waters. CMS are somewhat unique in that they have an operculum (a trapdoor-like protein/tissue) that fully seals the shell's opening. This operculum provides the snail with a greater level of tolerance out of water. With the operculum fully sealing the shell opening, a CMS can survive up to two months out of water.

Maybe the most interesting and impactful fact related to the snail's operculum is its contribution to buoyancy, or lack thereof. The CMS can use their ability to control their buoyancy to find better feeding grounds or calmer water conditions. The snails hold and release air, and open and close the operculum, as they navigate the waters to different areas.

The mystery snails also get around with non-intentional human support. Snails have been observed on bait buckets, in live wells, and on the outside of boats which, like invasive plants, then have a greater potential of hitchhiking to another body of water. This is another example of the importance of good self-monitoring with the support of courtesy boat inspections. Make sure your vessel is clean before it enters a body of water, and ensure it is clean as it is removed.

In our case this last summer, it is suspected that a large walk of Chinese Mystery Snails (yep, I Googled "what is a group of snails called?") used their ability to suspend themselves in water and be transported to a different area of the lake. They rode the rougher waters until settling near a slight, sandy bend on the shore of Jamaica Point. Once they arrived, one might assume that they released their air and settled to the bottom.

At the end of the day, what do these snails mean to us? At this point, they are just a nuisance. They can end up covering the floor in your favorite swimming spot. They could also experience a die-off and create a rancid stench. In more severe situations, they've been noted to clog water intake pipes, too.

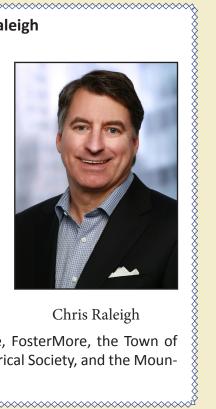
What can we do about Chinese Mystery Snails? You can remove them by hand picking, although they will likely never be fully eradicated (and don't forget to wash your hands properly afterwards... they can transmit diseases and parasites). Place them in a garbage bag, tie it up, and dispose of them. You can also put them in a bucket, let them dry out, and dispose of them (although, drying out can take several weeks given their operculum). Do not simply remove them from the water and dump them into the woods. They could find their way back to a waterbody, big or small, or they could also be transported by another animal.

Remain vigilant. Be observant. Look for (and remove) any potential aquatic hitchhikers on your watercraft or trailers.

The BLA Welcomes A New Board Member – Chris Raleigh

The BLA is happy to welcome Chris Raleigh to its Board. Chris's roots run deep in the Belgrade Lakes region. His family has lived in the Waterville/Belgrade Lakes area for five generations, with Chris and his three children proudly representing the fourth generation on Great Pond. He lived in one of the oldest houses in the village as a teenager, now occupied by fellow board member, Carol Johnson. Chris worked at the Village Inn and later for Rod Johnson, renting boats and motors at Rod's shop in the village.

Chris spent many years as a resident of New York City and Connecticut, but he moved into his Great Pond camp in 2020 to become a year-round resident. Chris holds an undergraduate degree from Babson College with graduate work at the University of Michigan and has built an impressive career in media, holding senior roles at companies such as NBC, Sony and The Weather Channel/weather.com. Today he is a Senior Advisor at McKinsey & Company, a leading global management consulting firm based in New York City. He also serves on boards including the Boy Scouts of America, Sandy Hook Promise, FosterMore, the Rome Planning Board, the Rome Water Quality Committee, the Belgrade Historical Society, and the tain Drive Road Association.



Chris Raleigh

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DAM REPORT

By Dick Greenan, Belgrade Lakes Watershed Dams Committee

Back in mid-September Essex Hydro, the operator for the Oakland Dam, dropped Messalonskee Lake's water level down to 11" below full pond to replace its spillway flashboards. Unfortunately, this resulted in extremely low water levels, boats stuck on their lifts, and other problems. The gates in the Oakland Dam resumed normal operations in time for the Columbus Day weekend.



Oakland Dam's new flashboards

As I write this update, all of our ponds are in their winter water storage levels – with the exception of Messalonskee which is dependent upon its electricity generation.

Our 2024-5 fall winter drawdown began on October 14th and calls for Great and Long Ponds to be drawn down from full pond to 1.5'- 2.0' and Salmon down to 1.0'-1.5' by November 1st. The drawdowns typically begin with a slow and regulated process so as to allow some with their boats still afloat to get used to the idea before they are outright stranded!

Why do we drop the lakes down in the winter? The primary objective of fall and winter water management is to lower the lakes to accommodate the increased rainfall and runoff which occurs in the fall and again in late winter and early spring. Lake ice has tremendous power that many of us experienced last winter with the excessive fall and winter rain events. The phenomenon is called "ice heaving" or "ice jacking." There are some positives and some negatives to this phenomenon, depending on your perspective. It can be extremely damaging to personal property on the lakeshore, but it can also be beneficial to the lake's health and its ecosystem.

First of all, why do these ice ridges form? Ice is not stagnant in the winter, and once it forms, it is continually changing by expanding and contracting as the temperatures rise and fall. When the temperature drops, the lake ice contracts and produces cracks which refill with more water and freeze. Then, when the temperature rises, the ice expands; but there is nowhere for the ice to go in the lake, so it pushes up against the shore. As ice continues to expand and contract throughout the winter, it produces a ratcheting effect. Each subsequent and cumulative push exerts tremendous pressure upon the shore.



Ice jacking, lower Long Pond 2024

For example, for a lake that is one mile across when the ice's temperature rises from 14 to 32 degrees Fahrenheit, the ice sheet will expand laterally, a total of approximately 32 inches, almost 3 feet! This can occur in a matter of hours when there is no snow cover on the ice sheet – exactly the conditions we had last winter.

Ice jacking is more severe in years where the temperatures fluctuate greatly and where there is little snow cover to insulate the ice and keep the ice temperature constant. The forecast for this winter calls for another winter similar to last year, so stay tuned!

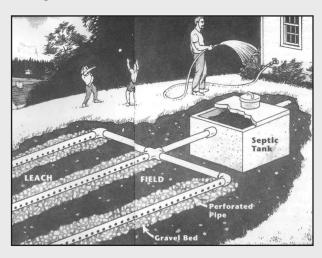
YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM - THE "KIDNEYS" OF YOUR LAKE

Compiled by Marcel Schnee

What is a Septic System?

Your septic system can be likened to your kidneys in that both are responsible for the treatment and disposal of waste products. Our lakeside septic systems are the "kidneys" of our lakes, and healthy kidneys make healthy lakes!

Household sewage (wastewater from sinks, toilets, showers, washing machines, garbage disposals, and dishwashers) flows into the setic tank. There, heavier particles settle to the bottom, and scum rises to the top. Bacteria in the tank help break down some of the solids. Baffles within the tank improve sludge settling and prevent scum from floating out of the tank. Effluent (liquid) flows to the leach field where it is distributed over crushed gravel or absorbent soil.



The liquid typically includes contaminants such as nitrates, phosphorus, disease-causing bacteria and viruses, dissolved metals, detergents, and solvents. The septic tank and leach field provide minimal treatment for these contaminants. Generally, phosphorus and dissolved metals are bound up by the soil; sand and gravel may not effectively remove these pollutants. Nitrates and solvents are diluted in groundwater. Bacteria and viruses are filtered by the soil or die off.

But septic systems can fail due to poor design or construction, overloading, or inadequate maintenance.

Environmental Impacts:

Improperly-functioning septic systems are major sources of water pollution and can leak harmful pollutants like bacteria and excess nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) into groundwater, lakes, rivers, and coastal waters. In coastal ecosystems, nitrogen is the nutrient of

greatest concern. In lakes, rivers, and streams, phosphorus is the biggest threat.

Lake Contamination:

Failing Septic Systems are the source of 5-10% of the phosphorus that reaches lakes. In a lake, increased phosphorus nourishes algae. When phosphorus levels rise, even by a small amount, algae multiply. The water becomes cloudy and green, leading to taste and odor problems; and dissolved oxygen levels are reduced, resulting in impacts to fish and other organisms that live there. As a result, lake use may decrease, and property values can plummet.

About half of the phosphorus that reaches a septic system is from household cleaners. Much of this phosphorus will be removed by a properly functioning system. But, if the leach field is clogged, for example, effluent may surface and flow over land to nearby streams and lakes. If the soil cleansing process does not work properly, phosphorus may flow underground to nearby streams or lakes through groundwater.

Groundwater Contamination:

The chemicals and organisms in untreated septic waste can be dangerous. Wastewater contains nitrates, particularly toxic to infants, and disease-causing bacteria and viruses. Wastewater also contains toxic chemicals from household products such as cleaners, spot removers, solvents, furniture polish, silver polish, bleach, and pesticides. These chemicals and organisms may migrate through groundwater and threaten nearby wells.

What Makes a Septic System Fail?

- Failure to pump out the tank. Wastewater will back up into the house or break out onto the ground when sludge and scum from an overfull tank flows into the leach field and clogs the soil.
- Poorly-sited or poorly-built systems. When the septic system is sited in or too close to the high water table, or is constructed with improper fill, saturated soil can cause wastewater to back up or break out. This is particularly likely to occur in the spring when the water table is high.
- Tree and bush roots. Tree and bush roots over a leach field can break or block pipes and interfere with the distribution system.

Four Signs of a Failing Septic System:

- 1. Sewage odor near tank or leach field. Standing water over the tank or leach field.
- 2. Slow running drains and toilets.
- 3. A patch of bright green grass over the leach field in the winter, or lush green growth in the summer when other grass is slow-growing.

Preventing System Failure:

Many homeowners believe that a septic system will last forever. This is not true! Most septic systems, even with maintenance, will work effectively for only an average of 15 to 25 years. To help protect against premature failure, the homeowner can follow a few simple procedures to help reduce sludge build-up: reduce water use, eliminate toxic waste, keep the system's bacteria working, and protect the leaching system.

For Clogged Drains:

- Use a plunger or mechanical snake.
- Or pour one handful of baking soda and 1/2 cup of white vinegar down the drainpipe and cover tightly for one minute. Repeat process as needed.
- Or pour 1/2 cup salt and 1/2 cup baking soda down the drain, followed by six cups of boiling water.

"DON'T" Checklist:

- Don't use a garbage disposal—it adds 50% more solids to your system.
- Don't pour automotive oil, cooking oil, or grease down the drain.
- Don't drive vehicles over the tank or leach field.
- Don't plant bushes or trees over the leach field.
- Don't use too much water, especially during rainy, wet seasons when the ground is saturated.
- Don't pour paint or paint thinner into your system.
- Don't use toxic drain cleaners or chemicals.
- Don't use chemical or biological septic system cleaners which can plug up the leach fields.
- Don't flush feminine hygiene products, cat litter, disposable diapers, or other non-biodegradables.
- Don't flush medicines, particularly antibiotics.
- Don't use products labeled "antibacterial."

Note: The information contained in this article was compiled from the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership (207) 780-4820; The Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District (207) 856-2777; and from Maine DEP publication #DEPLW-57. Most portions of this document were written by Frank O'Hara. Illustration done by Jon Luoma.

"DO" Checklist:

- Do inspect your tank for signs of sludge buildup, and make sure the baffles are in working order.
- Do pump your tank as needed (every 2-3 years for year-round residences and every 4-5 years for seasonal residences).
- Do compost food garbage or put it in the trash.
- Do keep a grease can handy.
- Do mark your septic system so you can protect it from vehicles and encroaching trees and shrubs.
- Do conserve water; install water-saving devices, such as front-loading washers and low-flow faucets and shower heads.
- Do use non-toxic cleaning products such as baking soda to scrub toilets and boiling water to clear drains.
- Do contact a site evaluator if your septic system shows signs of failure; contact your local plumbing inspector if you see evidence of other malfunctioning septic systems.
- Do plant shrubs, trees, and grasses downhill from your system to act as a sponge (they will tie up excess nutrients and water as well as prevent soil erosion).
 Keep small trees and shrubs at least 10' away from your leach field and large trees at least 20' away.
- Do spread out your laundry loads to even out your water use and to avoid flushing your system.

What to do if Your System Fails:

- Call the Maine Department of Health Engineering, at 289-5672. They may refer you to your local plumbing inspector or a licensed site evaluator.
- Exercise caution when near an opened septic system. Toxic and explosive gases present are hazardous. Never enter a septic tank!
- Have your septic tank pumped.
- Conserve water in your home. This helps if your system has not failed completely and can help lessen the problem for a short time.
- Fence off the area. Prevent people and pets from coming into contact with seeping effluent.
- Have a licensed site evaluator design a new system or an extension of your existing system.

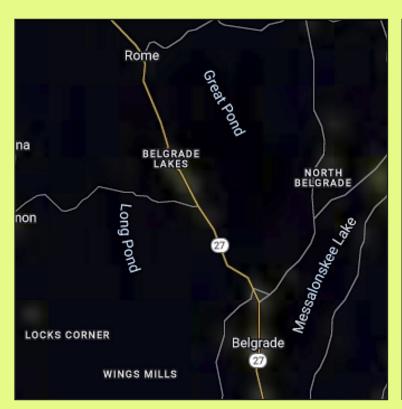


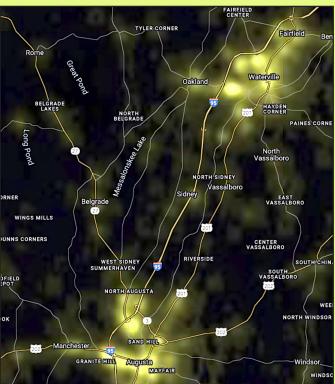
OUTDOOR LIGHT POLLUTION

By Blaine Horrocks, BLA Treasurer

"They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway," (credit to The Drifters, 1964). And that's a great concept if you're in New York City. But then again, there's a place for the opposite effect, too.

Over the course of the past several years, there have been a number of occasions where the Belgrade Lakes Association (BLA) and/or members of the BLA Board of Directors have been approached by individuals/groups of concerned citizens regarding intrusive outdoor lighting (parking lots, sports courts, camp flood lights, etc.) in areas around Great and Long Ponds. Though the core mission of the BLA has long been centric in protecting and improving the watershed of Great and Long Ponds, we are empathetic to the concerns that have been brought to our attention and the effect outdoor lighting levels can have on the overall enjoyment by property owners and visitors. BLA has no means to resolve complaints regarding 'light pollution,' but given the concerns we have received, a short discussion on possible resolution strategies may be beneficial.





2015 2023

Each of us has our reasons for visiting and investing in the Belgrade Lakes, ranging from generational camps, family get-togethers, the enjoyment of sparkling clean waters, rest, tranquility, and the list goes on. The rights of individuals and mutual respect are also hallmarks of the culture here in the Belgrades. For those concerned with night light infringement, the first step might be to reach out to the offending party and have a congenial discussion. That's what happened between me and one of our neighbors. I had no idea regarding the intensity of light that one of my yard flood lights had on their home. I lowered the flood light to shine more downward and installed a light dimmer.....issue resolved. You may also wish to contact your local town office to query if there is an ordinance(s) regarding outdoor lighting.

In yet another instance, a homeowners' organization on Long Pond funded an Illumination Study by Lighthouse Design Studio (https://light-housedesigns.com) to help address light pollution concerns between home/camp owners and a large privately funded organization. Thankfully and thoughtfully night sky friendly certified lighting fixtures (minimizing unintentional light scatter), combined with nodes to allow for management of light intensity/hours of operation, will be installed in the new village parking area adjacent to the village green. Stargazing is important to so many of us, and minimizing light pollution is critical to the overall mutual enjoyment of the Belgrade Lakes experience.



2023



Donate your redeemable bottles and cans to the Belgrade Lakes Association!

An easy way to support the Belgrade Lakes Association, the oldest Lakes Association in Maine, with their ongoing mission "To protect and improve the watershed of Great and Long Pond through preservation, education and action."

HOW TO CLYNK:

- 1. Place your redeemables in a green BLA-CLYNK bag.
- 2. Tie the bag securely.
- 3. Drop the bag off at your nearest Hannaford or CLYNK.

Already have a CLYNK account?

 $Login > Donate > Donate from \ my \ account > Belgrade \ Lakes \ Association$



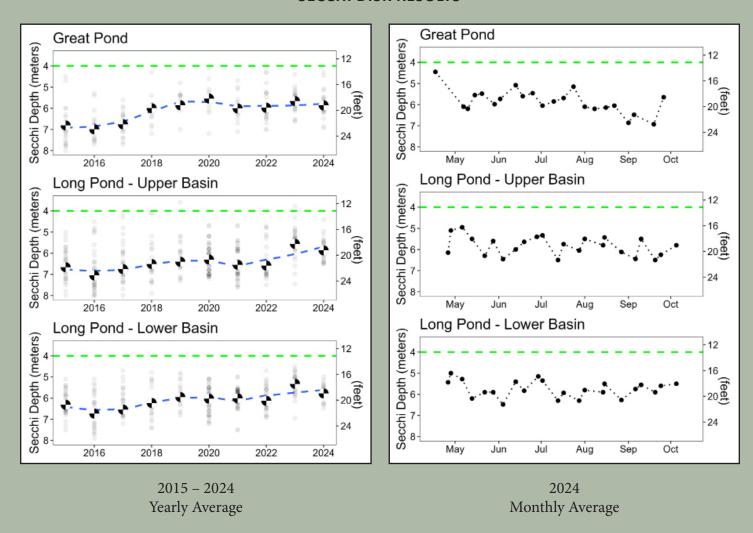
Bring it to your local Hannaford Supermarket and Clynk will take it from

WATER QUALITY UPDATE – GREAT AND LONG PONDS

By Dr. Danielle Wain, Lake Science Director, 7 Lakes Alliance and Matt Farragher, Lake Scientist, 7 Lakes Alliance

The Lake Science team at 7 Lakes Alliance has nearly completed another season of water quality monitoring on the Belgrade Lakes, and along with the contributions of our volunteer monitors, we have made 89 measurements of water clarity on Great and Long Ponds. Our season is not over yet, as we will be monitoring both lakes until they become thermally mixed, which can occur as late as early-December. To summarize this season, both Great Pond and Long Pond had better average water clarity in 2024 compared to 2023. Last year's reduced water clarity could be attributed to the record amount of rainfall and high frequency of storm events, and by comparison, having less rainfall this year meant less runoff and erosion of sediments into the lakes.

SECCHI DISK RESULTS



Water clarity, measured as Secchi disk depth, averaged 19.2 ft this year on Great Pond. While this is better than the 2023 average (18.5), it is still slightly below the average over the last decade of 20.1 ft. Similarly, the average clarity on Long Pond this year was 19.2 and 19.0 ft for the upper and lower basins, respectively. Again, while besting last year's averages of 18.2 and 17.5 ft, water clarity was lower than the previous decade averages of 20.0 and 21.1 ft.

While average water clarity was high this year, there were still instances of excessive algae growth. In late-June, patches of algal scums were observed in several shallow areas of both Great and Long Ponds. These scums were largely composed of cyanobacteria, a type of algae that can grow excessively when favorable conditions of hot temperatures and excessive phosphorus are met. These scums quickly dissipated, but they remind us to prioritize erosion control on the shoreline and upstream to keep as much phosphorus as possible from entering the lakes.



Aerial view of northern Long Pond

The BLA Welcomes A New Board Member – Christine Emmons

I grew up in Brigantine, New Jersey, a small island off the coast of Atlantic City, and moved to Maine in 1982 after graduating from nursing school. Brigantine is very similar to Belgrade Lakes as it is a summer vacation destination surrounded by water with a famous golf course. As a young teen, I spent many days at the beach or on the water. How did I end up in Belgrade? In the late '80's, while living in Norridgewock, I went out for a Sunday drive, ended up having lunch at the Dairy Bar, enjoyed the lakes, and visited Day's Store. I also had friends who lived on Long Pond where I spent many summers watching 4th of July fireworks at Belgrade Central School and attending the chicken BBQ. I decided I wanted to live here and made the move in 1988. My daughter Rachael attended SAD 47, now RSU 18, worked for the Conservation Corps, and was one of the first Courtesy Boat Inspectors. During her elementary school years, I served as president of the PTA and was a Girl Scout



Chris Emmons

leader. I continue to serve the Belgrade community as a board member of Friends of Belgrade Lakes Village and as past Belgrade Health Officer. I am an active member of Union Church where I have served in various leadership positions. I currently work as a nurse manager for MaineGeneral Community Care and have for almost 30 years. For fun I love to spend time with family and friends. I have three lovely grandchildren who live in upstate New York. You will often see me and my black lab walking through town. It is an honor to serve on the BLA Board of Directors to help protect the beautiful lakes, and I feel blessed every day that I live in this community.

INVASIVE AQUATICS PROGRAM UPDATES

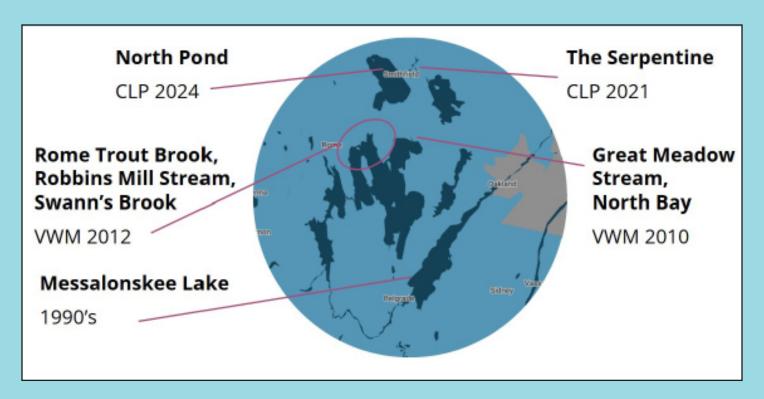
By Sharon Mann, Invasive Aquatics Program Director, 7 Lakes Alliance

VARIABLE-LEAF MILFOIL (VWM)

This summer marked the two-year anniversary of the herbicide treatment in Great Meadow Stream. As we know from other milfoil infestations treated with procellaCOR, milfoil regrowth is expected at some level at this time. Thankfully, we have not seen anywhere near the amount of plants return as some other treated lakes. Of the treated area, from the Route 225 bridge to the mouth of the stream, only 12 variable-leaf milfoil plants have been found and removed in 2024. This remains a huge success as 19 acres of Great Meadow Stream used to be dominated by invasive milfoil.

Interestingly, the 12 plants we did find have been scattered throughout the stream with no clear "hot spot." Our crew conducts SCUBA surveys of Great Meadow Stream every 3 weeks. These frequent and thorough surveys have allowed us to remove milfoil plants while they are still small and produce less fragments compared to large plants nearing the water's surface. On a chilly late October morning, we conducted the final survey of Great Meadow Stream for the year. We found a few small plants in the northern branch of the stream- close to the bridge. This area will be heavily monitored in 2025 to ensure that all new growth is removed before it can spread.

Thank you all for continuing to enjoy all the beauty Great Meadow Stream has to offer from low impact paddlecraft. The chatty red-winged black birds, elusive sandhill cranes, and busy beavers thank you for keeping their home wake—free.



Sites where Milfoil and Pondweed have been identified.

CURLY-LEAF PONDWEED (CLP)

Earlier in May, we discovered a sizable infestation of curly-leaf pondweed in North Pond. Luckily our year-round staff was able to quickly spring into action and tackle the large patches of curly-leaf before the seasonal crew began. During the summer months, when plants are typically the most active, curly-leaf pondweed was nowhere to be seen due to the unique life cycle of the plant. By the end of August, new growth was beginning to poke up out of the sediments below. Our management team has been busily removing curly-leaf from the icy cold water all September and October. Our final dive of the season will take place on Halloween. Hopefully nothing scary happens!



Diver in action

While the size of the infestation in North Pond indicates the plants have been there for a while, we are optimistic that with persistent and regular dives we can see great reductions in plant biomass over time. Since plant removal operations began in the East Pond Serpentine, where curly-leaf was found in 2021, we have seen an 89% reduction in curly-leaf.

This year we saw record breaking turnout in volunteers! Finding folks to volunteer for CBI shifts at boat launches is always a challenge. East Pond Association and McGrath Pond & Salmon Lake Association contributed 678 volunteer CBI hours, an increase of 230% from last year! Let's see some action from Great and Long Ponders!



Thank you, volunteers!



Invasive plant workshop

In addition to our regular weekly Aquatic Plant ID Workshops, we had a steady presence at the Belgrade Farmer's Market to reach the weekend crowd. We trained 84 workshop attendees, 25 of whom pledged to adopt their shoreline!

THE 2024 BLA RAFFLE - ANOTHER SUCCESS FOR OUR LAKES THROUGH DEDICATION, DONATION, AND PARTICIPATION!

By Andy Cook, BLA Raffle Chair

Through dedication, donation, and participation by us all, we had a superb 2024 BLA raffle for our lakes. Together we all achieved \$44,000 in raffle revenue for our mission to Protect and Preserve Great Pond and Long Pond. Dedication of the BLA board members and other volunteers who helped out at the tables, the valuable donations from our excellent suppliers, and the participation by many, including you, made this year's raffle a success.



Raffle attendees

There were many wonderful moments. Mike Barrett, a long-time Belgrade resident, won the first prize, Hamlin's boat! The winner of the Hammonds Shore Master Boat lift (2nd prize) asked that the prize be directed to the Pine Tree Camp for disabled children and adults on North Pond. They were excited to get it. Their rescue boat's home is the beach and, hence, hard to launch. The lift is a BIG plus for them!

The four \$25 Sadie's gift certificates at the drawing were a big hit. "Dad," an older gentleman, stood up and made the huge trip to the raffle table to get his. Another winner had torn her ticket into bits and had to patiently reconstruct it so the team could confirm her winning number.







"Dad"

Sally Whittington did the drawing.

"Did I win?"

We owe huge thanks to those who generously donated over \$40,000 of prizes. They all came through for us! Those contributors include Hamlin's Marine, Hammond Lumber, Bert and Sara Languet, Lynch Landscaping, Dick Greenan, Days Store, Gail Rizzo, the Village Inn, Trent & Sandy Shute, Skowhegan Savings Bank, Our Passion Alpaca, The Farmers Market team, Lakepoint Realty, and the Dilts family lemonade & cookie stand.

This year we had beautiful new laminated and updated maps of Great Pond and Long Pond for sale at our raffle tables and toy baby stuffed loons for those who joined the BLA Junior membership. The maps and baby loons almost sold out!





Many thanks to the Dilts family members who donated all profits from their lemonade and treats sale to the BLA!

Many deserve special recognition for their efforts on behalf of the raffle. Some of those include Directors Bert Languet, George Atkinson, Dick Greenan, Polly Beatie, Blaine Horrocks & Carol Johnson. Members Lynn Matson and Marcel Schnee did important work to help us along the path to success. Like all great successes, we owe this BLA raffle's results to hard work by many people and the generosity and participation of many more. It's paying off for the lakes. Nicely done, and thank you all.

All photographs courtesy of Dick Greenan. Thank you Dick!

UPDATED LAKE CHARTS NOW AVAILABLE!

The BLA produced our newly updated charts for Great Pond and Long Pond this past year, and they've been well-received. Created by a leading cartographer, the new charts are 11" x 17" charts that have been laminated in a matte finish. They were available at our raffle tables and events, as well as select local retailers. We also have frameable 2' x 3' poster-sized versions which make great gifts. Some folks have even bought a set of laminated charts to use as placemats.

Last updated 16 years ago, our charts now reflect the latest chart data, and you can be assured that you have the most current information with which to navigate our lakes. They include updated bathymetric (depth) data from Colby College, additional landmarks, hiking trail heads, and updated buoy locations.

Please contact us at Info@BlaMaine.org if you would like to purchase any charts or posters in the off-season.

The BLA would like to thank Chris Raleigh for suggesting this project and for his tremendous work in bringing these charts to fruition.

Island Hoyt BELGRADE TWP Village Green MOU Lynch Cove Yallaly Hill ∆⁷⁴⁵ 10 foot depth contours (all depths in feet below average water level, 238ft) 20 foot elevation contours **LONG POND** Public Land Belgrade Lakes Association P.O. Box 551 Belgrade Lakes, ME www.belgradelakesassociation.org Kennebec 1:31,680 2 in = 1 mi



Buoy, Numbers, & Hazard Symbols

(some markers may not be used on this water body)

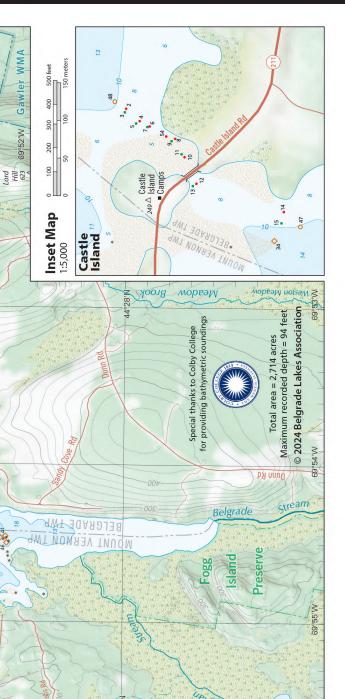
- **Buoy Number**
- Danger = hazard area, shallow area, rocks, or dam (white buoy with orange diamond) 16, 17, 19–22, 25, 31, 32, 34–36, 38–40, 43, 44, 46, 49, 52

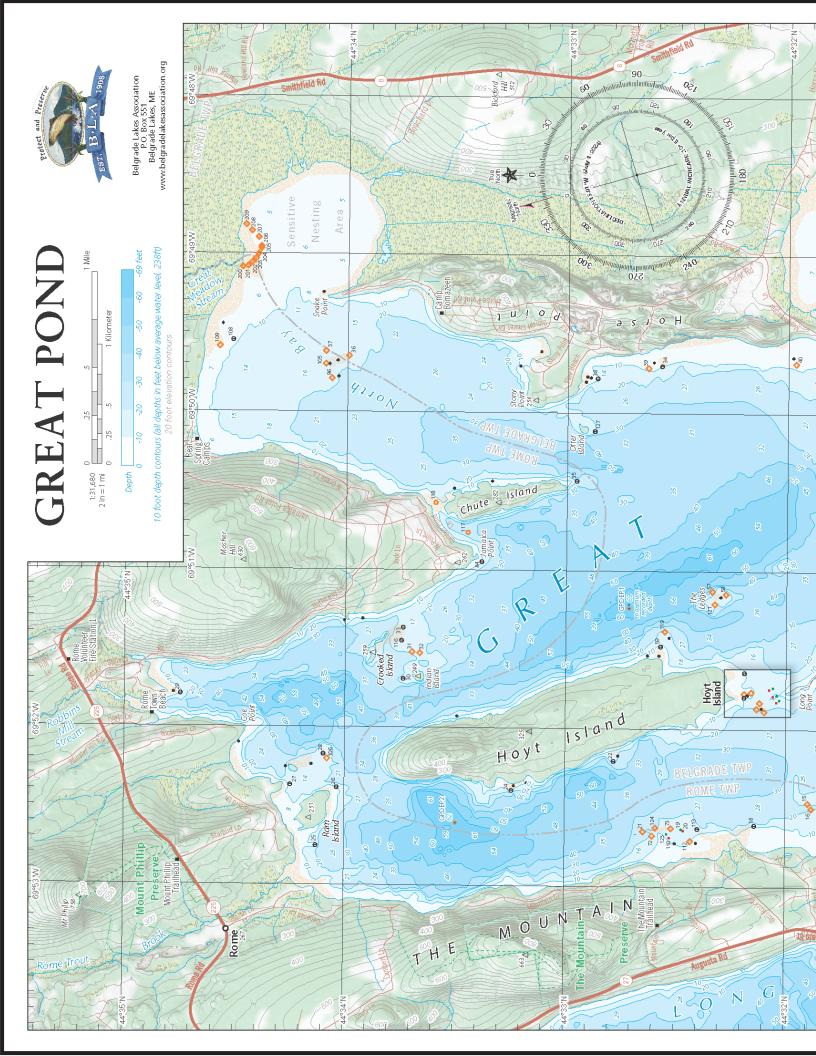
©51 ♦40 * ©42

♦

- No Boats or Closed Area = swim area or water intake (white buoy with orange diamond with cross)
- (white buoy with orange circle, restriction printed buoy) 47,48 50,53 Slow = restrictions, safety zone, headway speed only 0
- Do not pass between the buoy and nearest shore (black & white vertical strip) 18, 24,29, 30, 33, 37, 42, 51 Θ
- **Right side of channel** = red channel marker 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 26, 28, 54
- **Left side of channel** = green channel marker 3, 5, 9, 11, 13, 15, 23, 27
- Hazard area, shallow, and/or shoal
- (with name & depth in feet) Water Quality Buoys
- Wetland Forested

This chart is not for navigational use and is for informational purposes only. No attempt has been made to identify all hazards. Use caution when on the lake at warranty either expressed or implied to the accuracy or reliability of the information Unauthorized reproduction is strictly prohibited. Buoy data provided by the Boating Facilities Division of the Maine Dept. of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry. Depth soundings were collected by Colby College in summer of 2014. Actual conditions all times. Neither Belgrade Lakes Association, its agents or employees, make any shown on this chart nor are they liable for any damages from using this chart. may vary considerably, depending upon rainfall and other factors.







10 GOOD REASONS TO JOIN THE GREAT POND YACHT CLUB

By Andrew Dallas, Commodore of GPYC

Some say there are two seasons in Maine, Winter and Preparing for Winter. Well, I'm here to say that the Great Pond Yacht Club is a club for four seasons, and you should join us today! The GPYC is an incredible venue for meeting other year round and seasonal friends. Yes, we have amazing sail races (regattas) during the summer with a diverse fleet of boats and sailors, but that's just the beginning. Here are 10 good reasons to join:

- 1. Regardless of the event, each gathering provides a great opportunity to mingle with new friends. Our demographic is broad in age range, recreational interests, and professional and charitable association.
- 2. Year-round parties around the lake are a blast and allow you to visit beautiful properties while taking in the grandeur of the area. Some of these get-togethers include fun activities like pesto-making when the crop is cooperative. Other times are cozy, fireside warm-ups to take the chill out of your bones.
- 3. Cross-country skiing is a favorite outing on local trails with easy, flat traverses on the lake when the ice is suitable. These usually launch from a good picnic area or a homeowner's place that includes somewhere to warm up and enjoy snacks after a good workout.
- 4. For the more thrill-seeking amongst you, downhill skiing trips to local mountains are a blast. "Maine Days" allow residents to ski with highly-discounted tickets on Wednesdays at Sugarloaf and Thursdays at Saddleback. Legend has it, one of our members might still hold the record for fastest top-to-bottom schuss at Loon Mountain.
- 5. When the snow isn't cooperating, you might find us hiking local trails including the beautiful 7 Lakes Alliance's trails in the area. 7LA is doing an amazing job of land preservation and coordinates efforts with BLA to keep our local trails accessible.
- 6. Local restaurants provide alternatives to our private properties when one of us doesn't feel like hosting. In the winter we need to travel a bit further, but there are plenty of great spots nearby. Rumor has it that Sharon and Scott Horne will be opening a new place in Mount Vernon. They own Sadie's Restaurant, a terrific summer seasonal favorite at the marina on Great Pond.
- 7. Pickleball fans get together at different courts in the area. With the Center for All Seasons building new courts, it might be time to check out this racket sport that can be both highly competitive, but also easier on the knees than tennis.
- 8. If you like skeet, trap, 5 stand, and more, Arnold Trail Gun Club in Sydney has incredible ranges. The club requires a small annual membership fee and a sponsor, and the GPYC is a great avenue through which to join.
- 9. With our support of youth sailing, you can give back to the community by helping to set up and break down the physical assets of the program. GPYC members purchased a fleet of boats to ensure our local and summer kids have a means of learning to sail. This is a great sport on a fabulous sailing lake that develops confidence and camaraderie for generations.
- 10. When spring comes around, support from other sailors makes owning and maintaining your sailboat much easier. Experts from our club can advise you on proper rigging, and lessons are even available for a small fee.

Go to GreatPondYachtClub.com and join today. It's the best \$100.00 you can spend in Belgrade to develop new friendships.

YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS CONTINUES TO MAKE VISIBLE PROGRESS

By Stuart Cole, Youth Conservation Corps Director, 7 Lakes Alliance

Abnormally high temperatures and rainfall last December caused flooding and shoreline erosion on all of our lakes and ponds. The best way to protect your shoreline from flooding events like this is by ensuring it has a robust vegetated buffer. Roots from vegetation hold the soil together by preventing erosion and preserving your shoreline. This season the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) worked with many homeowners on Great Pond and Long Pond as well as in the towns of Belgrade and Rome on shoreline stabilization projects that included vegetated buffers. Please contact 7 Lakes Alliance's erosion control team if you have a shoreline in need of a vegetated buffer.

Behind vegetated buffers, infiltration steps were one of the most popular BMPs (best management practices) installed by the YCC this summer. Infiltration steps reduce runoff by allowing water to easily percolate into the ground and virtually eliminate erosion by providing a hard walking surface. They are most often used to provide stable footing on steep pathways (grades between 25% and 35%) and often accompanied by plantings on either side to add another layer of protection. While simple in construction, essentially wooden boxes filled with crushed stone and stacked on top of one another, infiltration steps are one of the most effective BMPs for steep pathways, especially ones close to the lake.



Center for All Seasons - Before



Center for All Seasons - After



Before - Simple path



After – Infiltration steps



Anne McCandish with LakeSmart Award



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Rarely seen Aurora Borealis over Great Pond

The newsletter staff (Polly, Liz, and Marcel) hope you enjoy this edition. Printed by The Print Shop in the Belgrade Depot, marcelprints@outlook.com.