



BELGRADE REGIONAL CONSERVATION ALLIANCE



BRCA conserves the lands, water quality, and natural heritage of the Belgrade Lakes Watershed.

BRCA and BLA Announce Joint Campaign for the "Top of The Mountain"

Thirteen years ago the Belgrade Lakes Association (BLA) purchased 207 acres on The Mountain and donated the property to the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance (BRCA) for long-term stewardship. The BRCA and BLA worked together to design and construct the current "Long Pond Loop" and "Great Pond Loop" hiking trails, parking lot, and kiosk. This property is now heavily used by BRCA and BLA members, local residents, and visitors for hiking, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, and cross country skiing.

We now have an agreement to purchase an additional 41 acres that includes the highest point on The Mountain. The picture above shows the prospective new property in red, the existing Mountain property in green and the existing trail in purple. Acquiring this property will enable us to protect the top of the Mountain from development, add to our existing trails, permanently protect almost ½ mile of the existing snowmobile trail, and open up additional views, especially of Great Pond. Additionally, it would permanently protect and preserve the view of the skyline from Great Pond. The BRCA and BLA are working together to help purchase and take care of this special property. To make this happen we need your help to raise \$50,000 by February 28, 2011. If you are able, please consider a special tax-deductible gift or pledge for our current campaign. If you have appreciated stock or are taking mandatory distributions from an IRA, there are some very attractive options currently available. Please contact our Treasurer, Dick Greenan, at 495-3740 or Executive Director, Peter Kallin, at 495-6039 for details.



Please help us take advantage of this opportunity to add to our most popular property, The Mountain.

After serving for several years on the BRCA board, I am honored to serve as president. The BRCA works hard to preserve our lakes and lands, and as a member of the community I am happy to do my part to champion these efforts. I don't view this position as a chore; on the contrary, it's fulfilling to be part of such an important and successful organization. During my career I was very focused on "organizational capability", a measure of an organization's effectiveness, and in my opinion the BRCA is a highly effective organization! Why?

- We are blessed with a highly competent and enthusiastic staff; Pete Kallin, Mary Kerwood, and Corinne Dawson make a wonderful team and are fun to work with.
 - We have dedicated and diverse board members who work diligently to ensure that good decisions are made.
 - We have over 1200 members who willingly pay membership dues and make the contributions necessary to keep the BRCA running.
 - Our members volunteer their precious time to help us do our jobs better. For example, many of you volunteer to spend lonely hours performing Courtesy Boat Inspections. You also turn out to support a plethora of other volunteer opportunities, such as building benthic barriers to combat variable leaf milfoil discovered last year in Great Meadow Stream. What most impresses me is that we had members from all five lake associations turn out to help the BLA fight this threat to Great Pond.
 - We have an active and growing Education Program developed by Margaret Pietrak. If you haven't participated in one of our programs, then check out the BRCA website for a schedule that offers a variety of learning opportunities.
- We have members who go beyond the normal call of duty, such as the amazing effort to raise funds for our new Maine Lakes Resource Center championed by Tom Klingenstein, Scott Finlay, and Ted Alfond. This new center, a partnership between the BRCA, BLA, and Colby College will also provide office space to COLA, and is the next chapter in the BRCA attaining even greater organizational capability. We expect to move into the new Maine Lakes Resource Center this summer, and I look forward to working with all of you as we make this transition. I am very excited about OUR future! Mel Croft, BRCA President

Executive Director's Column

As I write this staring out the window at "white out" conditions during the post-Christmas nor'easter, I am struck by how awesomely beautiful all four seasons are in Maine! During lulls in the high winds, ghostly white snow sculptures appear where I remember trees with blazing foliage just a month or two ago. The ducks that are normally swimming about in the stream are hunkered down in the lee of the shoreline, covered with snow, looking more like a Conservation Corps rip-rap project than a flock of ducks. I am vividly reminded that most of Mother Nature's creatures don't have the option of cranking up the thermostat a bit or throwing another log on the fire. They are stuck with dealing with what Mother Nature, or in many cases Man, leaves for them. Our snow-covered ducks are much better off than their oil-covered cousins in the Gulf of Mexico, were last summer.

The new Maine Lakes Resource Center up the street is progressing rapidly. Mark Gliniewicz and his team of local craftsmen are transforming a long-time Village eyesore into a beautiful new (but old-looking) building that will become our new offices next summer. As I

regular basis, I am struck by the pride these guys take in their work and how hard they are working, in all kinds of weather, to give us a new center where we can "make conservation a tradition" and help better protect this special place. If you are travelling through the village in the



near future, stop by, check on the progress, and say "thank you" to these guys.

We are still continuing to try to expand our membership and encourage more volunteers to become involved in our programs. We are

looking for new members who are a lot like our current members- in love with this part of Maine and concerned enough to help protect it. The best place to find those people is among the friends and families of our current members. If you have a friend or family member who shares your con-

servation ideals who is not yet a member, please ask them to join or consider giving them a gift membership. If you have a new neighbor, a BRCA membership is a perfect welcoming gift! You send me their name and address and I will send them a gift membership on your behalf.

Any member who refers a new member will receive a special gift as a token of our appreciation. Please contact me or stop by the office if you have any ideas about how to make BRCA more responsive to your needs. All the best, Peter Kallin

Saturday, January 8 th Time and location TBA	Bird Tour	Join Don Mairs for a birding and small animal tracking hike. Easy-moderate walk. Call 495-6039 for details.
Wednesday, January 19 th 6:30 p.m. Long Pond, Belgrade	Full Moon Ski	Join Dick Greenan for a full moon ski. Call for meeting place.
Saturday, January 29 th , 9:00 a.m. Watson Pond, Rome	Ice Fishing	Enjoy ice fishing with our group on Watson Pond.
Saturday, February 5 th , 9:00 a.m. The Mountain, Rome	Snow Shoe Hike	Join Margaret Pietrak for a morning snow shoe hike on The Mountain to see views of the Long and Great Pond.
Saturday, February 12 th , 10:00 a.m. Wishing Well Farm, Norridgewock	Trees on Skis	Visit nature at its winter's best on cross-country skis with Warren Balgooyen and hear about trees. Easy-moderate ski. See photo below.
Saturday, February 19 th , 10:00 a.m. Location TBA	Ice Fishing	Bring your kids to learn about ice fishing with Phil Mulville.
Saturday, March 5 th , 10:00 a.m. Location TBA	Ski or Snow Shoe Hike	Join BRCA for a morning ski or snow shoe hike and enjoy the area outdoors.
Saturday, March 12 th , 10:00 a.m. Wishing Well Farm, Norridgewock	Maple Sugar Tour	Visit the Wishing Well Farm and see native trees sugaring with Warren Balgooyen. Call for directions, easy nature walk.

BRCA Land Trust Update

While it seems like it has been a slow year from the land trust perspective, the reality is exactly the opposite. We have been working numerous deals, many of which suddenly appear to be coming to fruition. In February, we closed on a conservation easement on three parcels totaling almost 200 acres in New Sharon, adjacent to the Kennebec Highlands. While this land will not be totally accessible to the public, the terms of the easement allow a pedestrian trail across a portion of the land. This will allow us to connect the existing Kennebec Highlands to three additional parcels totaling almost 500 acres that we have been pursuing as part of our Kennebec Highlands Phase III Campaign. We have recently reached agreements with those owners and, while we still have a couple of contingencies that must be met, expect to close on those deals early in 2011. Completion of those deals will complete KH Phase III. These deals will result in conserving over 1500 acres during this project, well in excess of our goal of 1000 acres.

In addition to our Kennebec Highlands campaign, we have been active on other fronts. We will shortly be receiving fee title to the Fogg Island parcel on lower Long Pond in Mt Vernon. This parcel, which is almost 500 acres, has about 10,000 ft of shoreline on Long Pond and another 3000 ft along the Ingham Stream. It is being gifted to BRCA for permanent protection by the Central Maine Power Company as part of their wetlands mitigation package for their \$1.4B Power Reliability Upgrade. CMP is also providing a modest stewardship endowment to help take care of this property in perpetuity. Another article in this edition has more information on this property and our plans for it.



In another project related to wetlands mitigation, BRCA was recently approved by the Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program (MNRCP) for a grant for \$120,000 to purchase and restore approximately 300 acres of wetlands and uplands in Smithfield along the Great Meadow Stream, bordered by Rte. 225 and Rte. 8, behind Sweet Dreams. This property contains Sandhill crane nesting habitat and is very popular with area canoeists, kayakers, and waterfowl hunters. It is also the area where the BRCA Milfoil Program has been combating variable milfoil. Finally, we recently reached an agreement to purchase another 41 acres on top of The Mountain. We are excited about adding to our most heavily used property and need your help to help bring this project to fruition by February 28th. If you can help, please do.

Conservation Corps -

You may want to take advantage of the Conservation Corps' free labor for erosion control on your property if....

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-you have more grass than other vegetation in your yard
-your shoreline is eroding (you noticed loss of soil, undercutting, exposed roots)
-you have a driveway or path that goes downhill towards the lake
-you have soil displacement under roof drip lines
-you have spots of bare soil in your yard
-you just want to know what you can do to improve the water quality of the lakes

Sample projects:

Before:



After:



Bottom line:

Phosphorous is in soil, when storm water carries soil (erosion) it gets into our lakes decreasing water quality and increasing the chance and number of algal blooms and gloeotrichia. The BRCA Conservation Corps works with homeowners, free of charge, to decrease erosion and filter storm water carrying phosphorous on your property. Email brcacc@gwi.net or call 495-6039 and ask for Corinne Dawson.

Before:



After:



Before:



After:



You may want to apply to be a Conservation Corps summer worker if....

-You're a high school student age 16 or over
-You live in or near Oakland, Mercer, Rome, Sidney, Smithfield, Mt. Vernon, Vienna, or Belgrade
-You love being outdoors in the summer and don't mind a little sweat
-You're dependable and hardworking
-You like to work on projects to help the environment
-You have a positive attitude and are a good problem solver
-You'd like a job where a lake is usually part of the scenery
-You want to have a fun summer working with other people your age



CC Crew 2010

Milfoil Program

The Milfoil Program's work to prevent further damage to the lakes from invasive plants will continue with your support. With your help, the BRCA completed over 10,000 Courtesy Boat Inspections for the second year in a row. Inspections took place on all the Belgrade Lakes from Memorial Day through Labor Day Weekend. The inspections were performed by a team of 25 paid inspectors and 15 trained volunteers and coordinators from the local lake associations and put in over 6400 hours. CBIs made two saves of Eurasian Water Milfoil this year on Salmon Lake and Great Pond.

A full invasive plant survey was completed on Salmon Lake's littoral zone (shoreline areas less than 15 feet deep) by BRCA staff and volunteers this summer. We are glad to report that we did not find any invasive Milfoil. DEP also

surveyed Kozy Cove four times this year and also reported no findings. Though controversial, the 2-4D used in Salmon Lake seems to have knocked it back this past summer. However, we will continue to survey it for years to come.

Unfortunately, there was another infestation found and verified this summer. Great Meadow Stream, a channel leading from North Pond under the 225 bridge to the North Bay of Great Pond has been confirmed to be infested with Variable Leaf Milfoil. Volunteers put in over 1000 hours after the discovery in July to remove as much as possible by hand and cover plants in difficult depths with barriers which will cause death due to lack of sunlight. There are plans for next year's efforts and we can use all the help we can get. We appreciate the time and effort towards controlling this infestation. Call Corinne at 495-6039 if you can help.

Courtesy Boat Inspections, By the Lake (2010 Season)

Great Pond	2,533
Long Pond	1,362
North Pond	1,192
East Pond	1,169
Salmon Lake	826
Messalonskee	2,755
Totals	10,151



Pete's Corner: Letters to the Editor

Dear Mel and friend,

Thank you again for a wonderful day on Saturday Dec. 4th. It was such a blast. My husband would be interested in doing the geo walk if you do it again this season or early spring. Sincerely, Marie LeClair (We have told our friends and they got a huge kick out of the "Lichen.")

The BRCA had a visitor last week who commented on his realization of how pertinent the Kennebec Highlands are to us as a region and a state. He had not seen the value of the open space until he had used it himself and saw what beauty it contains. He had recently decided to pick up mountain biking as a recreational activity and understands why undeveloped space is of importance. He had come in to let us know how grateful he was to be a part of an organization that works to protect open space. He also made a donation in a loved ones name for a holiday present.

Hi, My one hike was really enjoyable and I hope to cover all the trails and find their relationship to the trails on the west side of the (McGaffey) mountain. Now, after seeing the trails in use I realize how valuable a contribution it is to the state. I have lived in and hiked in nine towns in Maine. In addition to preserving the quality of the lakes, the towns should be happy they don't have to maintain roads to steep hillside housing developments.

Thank you, Minerva Chalaby

To Pete, Maggie, Mel and all;

I never would have believed we could come this far in so short a time. Congratulations to one and all. As Pete well knows from our meetings at the old BRCA office, I will use this new resource center a lot !! There are so many issues on our lakes that I need information about as a North Pond board member. I hope this small donation will help to match the Alford challenge.

See you next summer. Sincerely, Linda Rice

JOIN BRCA ON FACEBOOK ! Just visit the link below and be our friend to show your support for BRCA.

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/Belgrade-Regional-Conservation-Alliance/164579496740?ref=nf>

The NEW Maine Lakes Resource Center, 2011

The Docks to Doorways fundraising campaign for the new Maine Lakes Resource Center is near its goal with construction well underway. Please visit the Docks to Doorways website Construction Photos link to share in the latest progress: <http://www.dockstodoorways.com/ConstructionPhotos/tabid/193/Default.aspx>

Docks to Doorways is a community development and conservation initiative that was formed to address the current challenges within the Belgrade watershed as well as to provide a model for future lake studies.

The Post and Beam barn style 3,500 square-foot Resource Center is being constructed with 200 year old oak beams that have been hand selected for both their strength and character. Construction is on schedule for a July 4, 2011 Grand Opening!

Please join in the festivities by boat at the new docks or by car.

Our sincerest thanks are extended to all of you that helped make this dream and community effort a reality, particularly in such a short period of time.

Dick Greenan,
Treasurer



Photo: Groundbreaking ceremony at the new Maine Lakes Resource Center. From left to right: Colby College President, Bro Adams; BRCA Executive Director, Peter Kallin; Tom Klingenstein; and BLA President, Polly Beattie. (October 12, 2010)

CONSTRUCTION
IS ON SCHEDULE
FOR A JULY 4,
2011 GRAND
OPENING!

Below: The new docks at the
Maine Lakes Resource Center,
summer 2010.

Below: A member of the Grandview Timbers team customizing the 200 year plus timbers that will be used in the post and beam structure for the new Maine Lakes Resource Center.



BRCA to Take Ownership of "Fogg Island"

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Central Maine Power (CMP) Company has recently been approved for a \$1.4B Power Reliability Upgrade to their basic transmission grid. As part of their wetlands mitigation permit, CMP has purchased the 492-acre Fogg Island parcel on lower Long Pond in Mt Vernon. They will be gifting this property to BRCA shortly for permanent protection. CMP is also providing a modest stewardship endowment to help take care of this property in perpetuity.

This parcel, outlined in red on the map, includes about 200 acres of upland forests and nearly 300 acres of wetlands (shaded green in the map above), and has about 10,000 ft of shoreline on Long Pond and another 3000 ft along the Ingham Stream. The property is a complex mosaic of outstanding wildlife habi-

**Fogg Island Property
Mount Vernon, ME**



tat, including endangered species (Eastern ribbon snake) and at least four significant vernal pools with associated upland habitat.

The BRCA is working with the ME DEP to develop a management plan for this property that will protect this habitat while allowing public access for hiking, hunting, birdwatching, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling. Because of the sensitive habitat, no motorized vehicles (except for snowmobiles on designated trails) will be allowed on the property, which can be accessed from the Spring Hill Road on the southern property boundary. If you would like to get involved with developing plans for this property, please contact the BRCA office at 495-6039 and we will sign you up for our Stewardship Committee.

Volunteers Needed: Stewardship Workdays



The BRCA holds several stewardship workdays every summer. The dates will be announced this spring on our website, and it is a chance for you and new and old friends to work together on our lands and trails under the guidance of the stewardship committee. Some of the types of stewardship tasks include clearing of trail debris, cutting back overgrown trees and shrubs, trash cleanup, trail blazing, invasive species cutting, etc. Help us protect the land and trails we all love and use, and if that doesn't get you there maybe the free pizza will! Please call the office ahead of time to signup: 495-6039.

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BELGRADE REGIONAL CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

Photo: The new Maine Lakes Resource Center begins. Our new landmark in the Village, the Maine Lakes Resource Center, is planned for opening the middle of next summer.

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To view the BRCA Newsletters
in full color with active
hyperlinks visit our website



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BRCA Executive Director

Save the Date
GOLF TOURNAMENT
August 10, 2011

